GROUP E OPEN SPACE AND STREETSCAPE, GERMANTOWN AVENUE, PHILADELPHIA

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Introduction

We have focused on open space and streetscape elements along and near Germantown Avenue. Our study area contains several types of open space: playgrounds, vacant lots, green areas, parking lots, space around institutions, residential front lawns, church yards and space around historic landmarks.

We have learned from the data previously gathered that the first planned use of open space along Germantown Avenue transformed Native American lands into long and narrow farming plots. Of course, Germantown Avenue also served as open space. Over time, the land bordering Germantown Avenue has developed a patchwork of open spaces serving many functions. A parallel network of open spaces also emerged in the areas lying to the east and west of Germantown Avenue.

Germantown Avenue was historically and remains today a transitional commercial corridor between the county and the city, one that is marked by dense development and punctuated by areas of open space. Germantown Avenue is still the unifying element in the study area, providing a continuous link between three very different communities. The trolley in particular contributes to the bustling character of this corridor, a modern form of transportation that replaced the horse-drawn trolleys and omnibuses.

Open space is a rare commodity, one that should be treated in a special way in order to maximize its usefulness to the surrounding communities. We recognize that open space, and notably "green" open space, is fragile and requires further protection and preservation. Similarly, the various streetscapes of the Avenue also require design guidelines to protect or enhance the character of a given area.

With these ideas in mind, our main objective was to preserve and to protect open space and elements of the streetscape from further deterioration and overdevelopment. Our second objective was to create new uses of open space. Other goals were to suggest a more effective way to manage and improve existing resources and streetscape amenities, and to suggest specific improvements to the accessibility of these valuable open spaces.

Several general guidelines were discussed before making any specific recommendations. They are as follows:

- Security and maintenance recognized as a major consideration in any plans for open spaces.
- The historic scale and density of the streetscape and open space be considered as important factors in any planning decisions.
- Transportation modes, in particular the trolley and its belgian block, continue to be considered in any streetscape and design decisions.

We have considered several tools to facilitate our mission. The application of the following list of tools will be discussed in detail: 1-zoning, page 5; 2-historic and other special district nominations, page 5; 3-design guidelines for new construction and adaptive reuse page 6; 4-regulatory extensions, page 6; 5-incentives, page 7; and 6-educational outreach, page 7.

Using the various tools named, we have made specific design recommendations and have applied them to eight chosen study sites. The discussion of these sites begins on page . Our findings were also graphically communicated through figure grounds of each of the sites.

Methodology for choosing the eight study sites

We have chosen eight study sites to exhibit our findings. We considered the following in choosing these sites:

- 1-Areas of open space that exhibit varied used with close proximity to each other.
- 2-The historical importance of the open space
- 3-The relation of the open space to Germantown Avenue
- **4**-The relation of the open space to transportation networks, i.e. railroad and the trolley
- 5-The accessibility of the open space, or lack of accessibility
- **6**-Geographical distribution within the study area: goal was to achieve a sampling of the open spaces throughout Lower Germantown, Mount Airy and Chestnut Hill
- 7-Distribution according to homogeneity
- 8-Areas that are successful examples of open space
- ${f 9}\mbox{-}$ Areas that could have potential development, enhancement, reconfiguration

Each site was first mapped into a figure/ground, including vacant lots. Next an overlay of the site was created to display the topography and landscape features of the site, such as high fences, paths, areas of brush and trees. Our next step was to develop an overlay that offered recommendations concerning such issues as zoning changes and linkages.

Several sites will be explained in detail to demonstrate our findings. They are as follows:

- 1-Howell Park, Germantown Friends School, School for the Deaf and Dumb, and Market Square
- 2-Vernon Park, Germantown High School, Morton Playground
- 3-Cliveden, Upsala, Mallery Playground
- 4-Sharpnack Street
- 5-Mount Airy Playground, Acme, Germantown Home for the Aged, Free Library
- 6-Spring Garden College and Lutheran Theological Seminary
- 7-Water Tower Recreational Park

8-Pastorius Park and Historic Lincoln Drive **Tools**1-Zoning:

We acknowledge that zoning is one of the most effective tools to protect open space. We have attached zoning recommendations to strengthen the existing codes for the following: recreational zoning; parking lot design regulations for residential, and for commercial parking facilities. We also expanded the existing zoning variance and permit guidelines. These recommendations we have added to the existing zoning codes in bold face in Appendix I, page 19.

- One of the most powerful tools, zoning, we recommend be enforced to enhance protection of recreational properties. Existing recreational zoning codes can be strengthened by adopting different kinds of recreational zones.
- We propose three new types of zoning, Rec 1, 2 and 3, all based on the amount of "green" exists on the property. We have defined this word "green" as a space that is covered with grass and plantings, and the word "non-green" as a space that has generally more active recreational use and is occupied by sporting fields, asphalt courts and recreational-oriented buildings. Rec 1 has 85-100 percent green space, Rec 2 has 15-85 percent "green" space, and Rec 3 has less than 15 percent "green" space. Appendix I highlights our recommendations to the existing zoning codes.
- We recommend that zoning for parking lots abutting Germantown Avenue in residential and commercial districts be changed to include a natural visual barrier (grass, trees or plantings) between the street and the set back line.
- We recommend the criteria for granting zoning Board of Adjustment Certificates require a study of traffic patterns, a public safety study, a study relating to the population increase, a conjectual study which should include the historic fabric, neighboring structures and issues of light and air, and a water, sewer, and public safety facility study.

2-Special Districts:

- Open spaces/sites to continue to be part of existing historic district nominations, and continue to be protected by a historic district
- Development of new potential historic districts. See page 16 for a possible application in Chestnut Hill.
- Development of new potential historic districts that focus on historic open space. The Sharpnack Street area as a hypothetical historic farm will be discussed on page 11.

Special Services District: An opportunity to have a privately funded cleaning crew along the west corridor of Germantown Avenue from Louden at to Upsala. This concept was modeled after the Special Service District in Center City Philadelphia and will be discussed in more detail in Appendix II, page 23.

3-Design guidelines for new construction and alterations

- Parking lot Guidelines: Amendments to existing parking lot regulations for residential and commercial uses abutting Germantown Avenue. See Appendix I, page 19.
- All changes to be approved by the residents by form of surveys and questionnaires
- Criteria for Granting Zoning Board of Adjustment Certificates strengthened to include a study of how traffic patterns will be effected, a public safety study, a study relating to population increase, and most notably a contextual study which should include historic fabric, neighboring structures and issues of light and air.
- Consistent system of fencing and enclosures for public sites
- New construction to conform to existing scale of area
- Visual corridors/view sheds to open space and green areas to be protected
- Germantown Avenue to remain filled with commercial structures, punctuated by green spaces,
- Germantown Avenue to continue to have trolleys, and belgian block to remain on Germantown Avenue with the exception of the center strip being concrete for ease of track maintenance

4-Regulatory extensions

- Strengthen criteria for granting Zoning Board of Adjustment
 Certificates by mandating an inclusion of the following:
 A study of how traffic patterns will be effected; a public
 safety study, a study relating to population increase, and
 most notably a contextual study which should include
 historic fabric, neighboring structures and issues of light
 and air a water, sewer and public facility study
- Any nationally registered building or site within the Colonial Germantown Historic District or Chestnut Hill Historic District to be reviewed by the Philadelphia Historic Commission before demolition is granted or new construction/alterations is performed
- Any decisions concerning landscape issues to comply with the most current standards by the Secretary of the Interior
- We propose that an advisory committee be instituted composed of the Fairmount Park Commission and the Department of Recreation

officials and representative from each "Friends Of. . ." community support groups. This way the community has direct input in safety, maintenance and design decisions.

5-Incentives:

- We recommend that security and maintenance be a major consideration in any plans for open spaces. These issues, if controlled by a comprehensive management system, could provide an incentive for more businesses and homeowners to move into the study site. Options could focus on consolidation of management groups, or a open system of communication between separate agencies.
- Link schools to open space--receive incentives with tax breaks if school watches over adjacent open space
- Jointly sponsored events and activities by parks throughout the study, i.e. Pastorius Park and Vernon Park
- Appoint Special Service Districts to provide an incentive for the employment of local residents, to attract people to move into neighborhood, to attract visitors and shoppers, and to make area more safe. See discussion of Special Service District, page
- Easements: provided an incentive for tax breaks if owner of open space donates land to a to a non-profit group. One such group could be Philadelphia Green. See discussion of Philadelphia Green, Appendix V

6-Educational outreach

- Maintain "Green Up--Clean Up Campaign" supervised by the Friends of Philadelphia Parks
- Bring recognition to Germantown Avenue and surrounding areas by offering tours of historic open spaces sponsored by various local groups
- Same as above, but focus on a theme of historic homes on Germantown Avenue, and utilize the trolley to facilitate travel between sites
- Implement an "Adopt a park/tree" program
- Continue to offer workshops for residents, such as how to maintain trees, gardens. Philadelphia Green presently offers such programs. Other groups could be encouraged to set up such a project
- Networking: Set up a mediator representative council of local residents to provide a link between the city park management groups and the community

Specific design recommendations for eight chosen study sites

Site 1: Prepared by Gay Vietzke: Recommendations for Howell Park, Germantown Friends School, Market Square study site

Access

- Howell Park should have more places where one can enter the park.
- Germantown Friends School should also be opened up to the public. Access points should coincide with proposed pedestrian links
- A user group has been identified, the residents of several major elderly housing complexes and rest homes. Consideration should be given to who will use the links the most and make sure paths lead in their direction.

Links

- A system of pedestrian links should be developed to link Howell Park, Germantown Friends Campus, Market Square, the School for the Deaf and Freedom Square to the surrounding community.
- These paths should be behind the Avenue and utilize existing open space, when possible.

Zoning

- Howell Park should be re-zoned Rec 1.
- Germantown Friends School Playground should be zoned Rec 2.
- Parking lots should incorporate natural visual barriers in accordance with new zoning ordinances.

Incentives

- The School for the Deaf's Campus may be an appropriate place for an open space easement.
- The Friends of Howell Park should be encouraged; leaders of the group should be involved the planning issues relating to their recreational facility. (i.e. the proposed links)
- This case study area should be included in the proposed special services district. Please refer to Appendix II for information about special services districts, Appendix III for Center City Services District information, and Appendix IV for the area recommended in Germantown for a Special Services District

Development

- Sites appropriate for new construction include:
 The soon to be demolished 5300 block of Germantown Ave
 The two parking lots on the intersection of Germantown Ave
 and Coulter
 The vacant lots on either side of Germantown Ave between
 Penn St and Queen Lane
- Further development on the Germantown Friends Campus and the School for the Deaf's Campus should be discouraged.

Design Guidelines

- If new construction cannot be avoided, a series of guidelines must be developed for the Germantown Friends Campus. Parking should not abut streets directly, but include a natural buffer of grass or plantings. Scale of new buildings should exceed historic structures in the immediate area. Green open space should be prioritized.
- New construction should also prioritize scale and its relation to the Avenue.

Adaptive Re-use

- The closed structure located in Howell Park appears to be historic and therefore should be preserved. Upon thorough research and documentation, the building could be restored and reused as a management center for all the public recreational sites in the study area or as the offices of the proposed special services district.

Traffic

- The Thriftway and Post Office Parking lot should be redesigned so not to allow thru traffic to use the lot as a right of way.
- Ashmead Street should be made into a two-way street.

Site 2: Prepared by Mark Isaksen: Recommendations for Vernon Park, Germantown High School, Morton Playground

Vernon Park

As the most expansive open space in the central business district of Germantown it is a vital asset to the surrounding residents, businesses, & institutions. Reinforcing existing use patterns and

enhancing crossover areas are the planning tools suggested to improve this area.

Rezoning

- -to designate areas of the park by use, the portion facing Germantown Avenue to be Rec 1, providing most restrictive protection
- -the upper portion off of Greene Street to be Rec 2, reinforcing current use as a baseball field.
- -the narrowest portion at the corner of Chelten Avenue designated Rec 3, ensuring protection of this important link.

Parking Guidelines

-Create sympathetic barriers at edges of parking lots, to reinforce street scale and mitigate contrast towards recreational areas.

Redevelopment

-locate new construction in historic context, e.g. the old train depot site should be redeveloped for commercial or residential use rather than as open space due to its historic use a gateway to Germantown.

View shed Reinforcement

-new development at the corner of Germantown Avenue and Price Street at the old depot site, should be oriented towards Vernon Park in a way which respects the "view upon arrival" as experienced in its historic use. See Appendix IV of 1911 Map of this area showing the old train lines.

Germantown High School

A site of high activity, the school compound is composed from several building eras, and occupies an entire block with another religious institution. While expansion has often occurred at the expense of demolition, it has resulted in the creation of several areas of open space. Primary emphasis is on using these areas to maximum benefit for the main user group: the students of the school.

Rezoning

- -emphasize front lawn of school as a public space, designate as Rec 1 to protect from expansion.
- -rear of school, currently parking lots and basketball courts, protected with Rec 2 designation, with emphasis on increasing recreational use

Parking Guidelines

-create definite barrier between recreational space and parking at rear of school along Baynton Street, perhaps identifying actual need for parking or adjacent lots better suited for this use.

Morton Playground/Fulton Elementary School

Enhancement and expansion of this recreational space will benefit residents of the neighborhood and students of the adjacent grammar school on Haines Street. Expansion of the open space to include vacant lots on Rittenhouse and Lena Streets would be an appropriate and feasible recommendation

Rezoning

-designate Morton Playground as Rec 2 to protect existing levels of greenery and location of playing fields.

Expansion of Recreational Space

-vacant lots rezoned as Rec 1 creating maximum area of green space, balanced by heavier use of adjacent asphalt yard of Fulton school and playing fields of Morton Playground.

Site 3: Prepared by Gay Vietzke: Recommendations for Cliveden, Upsala, Mallery Playground Study Site

Links

- Recognize that Cliveden and Upsala are successful in their use of open space, and are independent sites. Linking these two institutions is unnecessary.
- Recognize that Mallery Playground and Cliveden Playground serve different communities and are also successful independent resources. Again, a link is unnecessary.

Zoning

- Mallery Playground and Cliveden Playground should be re-zoned Rec 2.
- The landscaping of the parking lot at the corner of Cliveden and Morton Streets is a good example of the proposed natural visual barrier between street and parking lot. Let is serve as an illustration of the our intent in adding that clause to the ordinance.
- Down zone blocks with large homes and large yards to more restrictive residential designations to protect the relatively low level of density in the area.

Design Guidelines

- Fencing around the perimeter of Mallery Playground should be consistent. Replace the chain link fence with iron fencing to match the other three sides of the park.

Site 4: Prepared by Paula Sagerman: Recommendations for 1-200 Block of East Sharpnack Street

This section of Sharpnack Street was chosen as a study site to deal with the issue of vacant lots and abandoned buildings. Only two blocks north of the well-maintained neighborhood adjacent to Cliveden, it is an unstable neighborhood in a declining condition, with a non-unified streetscape. The street was visited twice for inspection, where eight abandoned buildings and about twenty vacant lots were counted. This primarily residential street now has two double lots that are car junkyards and a double lot that holds tractor trailer containers. These incompatible uses and unattractiveness of them are either the cause of or were caused by the deterioration of this street. This condition continues onto Germantown Avenue, where a block of historic structures are abandoned and deteriorating, revealing that this spreading deterioration has also non-unified the Germantown Avenue streetscape.

There are four options to improve the condition of Sharpnack Street. The owners of the vacant or abandoned properties could obtain easements to create a community garden, rehabilitate their buildings, or infill the vacant lots with replacement structures. If a garden option is chosen, Philadelphia Green and the American Community Gardening Association, organizations that are part of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, provide community outreach programs that work with empty city lots. Philadelphia Green provides technical assistance, site development and educational workshops for garden projects (see Appendix for more information), and would help organize a gardening group for this neighborhood. The ACGA takes this a step further and provides volunteers and professionals for assistance with community gardening. Perhaps the church on the corner of Sharpnack Street and Germantown Avenue could create a community garden program. A combination of these three options could also be successful to unify and rehabilitate this street.

If these recommendations can not be accomplished, another option is to demolish the remaining structures and rezone the site for a historic district to create a hypothetical historic long-lot farmstead. The National Trust for Historic Preservation could develop this site, taking advantage of the proximity to Cliveden and Upsala. Also, this

farm could be involved with the nearby Department of Agriculture testing area in Montgomery County.

An option for the abandoned buildings on Germantown Avenue is to take advantage of the fact that they are listed with the National Register for Historic Places as part of the "Colonial Germantown Historic District." A demolition permit should only be acquired if the Philadelphia Historical Commission approves of it first, which in this case they would probably not.

Site 5: Prepared by Mark Isaksen: Mount Airy Playground, Acme, Germantown Home for the Aged, Free Library

Germantown Home for Aged

Easement

-designate gateway fronting Germantown Avenue as site for an open space easement, protecting this green area from development.

Development

-orient all future development towards the rear of the complex, where open land is under-used and development which respects the scale and context of the neighborhood would be appropriate.

Rezoning

-use an Institutional Development District to manage growth.

Acme commercial area: Rezoning

- -as the only high-density commercial zone on all of Germantown Avenue, this area should be down-zoned to a lower category, which respects the scale and context of the neighborhood.
- -adjacent sites above the Acme, which are residential in scale yet zoned in a similar way, should be down-zoned to a more restrictive category

Parking Guidelines

-most of this site is an example of favorable design towards the landscape, where the parking area faces a wooded slope. However, guidelines can encourage improved orientation to Germantown Avenue.

Mt. Airy Playground

Rezoning

-designate site as Rec 2, existing use as playing fields is best use for the playground.

Free Library of Philadelphia, Mt. Airy Branch
No Changes Necessary

Site 6: Prepared by Paula Sagerman: Recommendations for Spring Garden College and Lutheran Theological Seminary

The campus of Spring Garden College was chosen as a study site because it is one of the most expansive open spaces on Germantown Avenue, and its historic buildings and landscape provide a beautiful, well-maintained parklike setting that should be preserved and protected from further development. The site was visited twice, where it appeared that the open spaces are not used by the students, faculty, or the neighborhood residents. It seems to be cut off from the surrounding high stability neighborhood. A wrought iron fence around the southern perimeter of the campus is impassable and the entrance gate at the southwest corner is closed and has a "No trespassing" sign posted. The low stone wall between the campus and Germantown Avenue is low, with an entrance gate, providing a barrier, yet not an impassable one, to the public. The railroad tracks around the rest of the perimeter, separated from the site by a chain link fence, completely cut the campus off from Fairmount Park.

Just beyond the wrought iron fence there is a flat open area that could be used for recreation. At the gate of this fence and at the entrance gate on Germantown Avenue, perhaps a small attractive sign could be posted stating that visitors are allowed. The abandoned railroad track at the north end of the campus could be a bike path that would lead eastwards towards Stenton Avenue in a wooded trail, and could also link with a bike path from Pastorius Park in Chestnut Hill, to Fairmount Park. The abandoned track bed is about eight feet above the grade of the campus, so some grading changes would be necessary for bikes to reach the elevation. Access points to the bike trail could be from the campus, near Germantown Avenue, and the open space adjacent to the bridge over Germantown Avenue. This bike trail should not lead too close to the travelled railroad tracks. The "Rails to Trails" program that converts abandoned railroad track beds into bike trails, has been successful in other areas.

Zoning can also be used as a tool to preserve the Spring Garden College campus. If the administration of the school will agree to it, the open area surrounded by the buildings and Germantown Avenue could

be rezoned "Rec-1." This means the site must retain 85% or more green space. Since the school is in danger of closing, this rezoning should be undertaken immediately.

The Lutheran Theological Seminary is also a beautiful well-maintained open space with historic structures. Although there is a parking lot near Germantown Avenue, it is hidden behind a wall and aesthetically landscaped. The well-maintained historic homes that surround the campus are actually part of the institution, and integrate well into the stable residential neighborhood. This site and the college help unify the Germantown Avenue streetscape, and join commercial Mt. Airy to Chestnut Hill. The Seminary is a successful open space and planning attention should be focused elsewhere, perhaps using this site as an example.

Site 7-Prepared by Sheryl Mikelberg: Recommendations for Water Tower Recreational Park and related areas

This area functions very well as a community-based recreation field. Two baseball diamonds are located on the larger plot of land behind the school on Hartwell Lane. The community and two adjacent schools use this recreational area, and it is carefully maintained. The actual water tower provides a visible gate into the park for this highly dense, residential neighborhood. The recreation park is shielded on all sides essentially by elevation changes and tree infill. The Friends of Water Tower Recreational Center are presently very active in the maintenance and care of this park. This level of concern should be maintained as long as possible.

Other areas within this study site can be considered as continuing the sense of open space just beyond the realm of Germantown Avenue. These pieces of green and openness relieve the high density of this commercial strip on Germantown Avenue.

Zoning:

Water Tower Recreational Park should be rezoned Rec 2,

Lot at Germantown Avenue and Hartwell Lane at the northeast corner to be rezoned Rec 1

Small triangular lots on Winston Road should be rezoned Rec 1

Parking lot behind automobile sale shop at Germantown Avenue and Hartwell Lane, the northwest corner, to incorporate natural visible barriers to make a smoother transition to Pastorius Park just beyond in accordance with new zoning ordinances.

Parking lot on the northeast corner of Germantown Avenue and Gravers Lane should incorporate natural visual barriers in accordance with new zoning ordinances.

View Sheds:

Maintain view to Water Tower Recreational Center from Germantown Avenue

Links:

Provide an overpass or underpass for pedestrians over train tracks from Winston Road on the east side of the tracks to the junction where Hartwell Lane meets the west side of Winston Road. This link would reduce privacy, but allow more residents to access the recreation center.

Development:

Fill in vacant lot at Ardleigh Street and Winston Avenue: could function as a community garden or housing infill

Utilize the open spaces along Winston Avenue at Ardleigh Street to lead into these passive green spaces better.

Design Guidelines:

Develop new vocabulary of enclosure for front of school on Hartwell Lane that is consistent and more visitor-friendly

Identify this park and especially the Water Tower with signs that are unobtrusive, but instructional

Make back end of rec center behind tennis courts more level to entice use--presently it is difficult to reach

Incentives:

This community functions very well and has a strong sense of pride that provides a powerful incentive to keep this area clean and safe.

Site 8-Prepared by Sheryl Mikelberg: Recommendations for Pastorius Park and Historic Lincoln Drive

This park was created in the late 1930's as a W.P.A. project. It is a successful example of a community open space that offers open-air theater in the summer, a skating pond, a place to picnic, a place to walk dogs, a place to play frisbee and to relax. Easy to access by pedestrian travel, Pastorius is a "discovery" park, one that reveals itself upon closer inspection. Pastorius Park is meticulously maintained mostly by the efforts of the Friends of Pastorius Park. A

few suggestions could help Lincoln Drive better act as the corridor between Cresheim Valley Drive and Pastorius Park:

Zoning:

Rezone Pastorius Park as Rec 1

Rezone Fairmount Park-owned property on Lincoln Drive between Springfield Avenue and Willow Grove Avenue as Rec 1

Development

Bike path from Cresheim Valley Drive to Lincoln Drive to
Pastorius Park: this path would reconnect the Cresheim Valley
Drive and bike paths in Fairmount Park to Pastorius Park. The
bike path should have a smooth transition from Cresheim Valley
Drive to Lincoln Drive without the biker ever having to move
the bike over the guard rails now presently there.

Develop network of open space using Woodward Pines and adjacent lot of Park land.on Lincoln Drive at Springfield Avenue.

Historic District:

Pastorius Park would be an excellent candidate for inclusion in an historic district nomination, for example, the Woodward Homes District. Such a nomination could protect this park and the areas that feed into it

Incentives: Adopt a Tree/park--Pastorius is a good candidate

Educational Outreach:

Offer tours of the historic open space and historic homes of Cresheim Valley Drive, Lincoln Drive and Pastorius Park area

Sign to note Pastorius Park on Germantown Avenue

Conclusion

We have found that the areas chosen for this open space study are key places in the larger study site. Each of the eight diverse sites provides a profile of the surrounding neighborhood and the problems they face. However, the individual sites share Germantown Avenue as a common link.

Each site exhibits room for development and enhancement and further investigation. The implementation of tools, such as zoning changes, historic districts, special service districts, incentives, and educational outreaches can make a great difference to the communities that use these areas of open space. Although some sites are functioning very well, without protection and planning these open space could be changed overnight if laws are ineffective or if communities lose interest.

As a group, we would urge planners to regard open space as a commodity, one that needs special attention of its historic character. The historic qualities of open space and the streetscape could provide a a means to recall the past, but more importantly to suggest a possible path for planning for the future.

Appendix I: Alterations to the City of Philadelphia's Current Zoning Code

(This was prepared by Gay Vietzke)

* bold typeface indicates the additions or changes

14-700 Recreational Districts

- (1) Parcels of public land under the jurisdiction of the City of Philadelphia Department of Recreation, Fairmount Park Commission, the Department of Forests and Waters of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the National Park Service of the United States Government which are devoted to park and/or recreational purposes, and parcels of private land which are devoted to park and/or recreational purposes, may be designated on the zoning map as Recreational, according to one of the classifications specified in paragraph (4).
- (2) Use Regulations. The specific uses permitted in these districts shall be the erection, construction, alteration or use of buildings and/or land for any type of recreational use or activity; provided, that any private operation for private profit located within the district at a distance of 500 feet or less from any district boundary shall be permitted only if a certificate from the Zoning Board of Adjustment is obtained.
- (3) Area and Height Regulations. Where a Recreational District is in the same block with any other district, said Recreational District shall comply with the area and height regulations of the most restrictive district which abuts upon said Recreational District.
- (4) Definitions and Classifications. "Green", in the context of this type of district is defined as open space of grass, plantings, hedges, woodchip and mulch ground cover, trees, and pedestrian paths. This is generally land used for passive recreation. "Nongreen," in the context of this type of district is defined as space occupied by buildings or construction, asphalt courts, sporting fields (baseball diamonds, football, soccer, cricket fields), and bike paths. This is generally land used for active recreation. The designations following use these definitions.
 - (a) Rec 1 Recreational district characterized by 85-100 percent "green" space, and 0-15 percent "non-green" space.
 - (b) Rec 2 Recreational district characterized by 15-85 percent "green" space.
 - (c) Rec 3 Recreational district characterized by less than 15 percent "green space."

- 14-1402 Parking in Residential Districts.
 - (1) b. With every multiple dwelling or hotel erected in any residential district and altered or converted in "R-17" and "R-18" Residential Districts after the effective date of this ordinance, there shall be provided on the same lot an area or garage containing parking spaces with adequate access to a street or driveway connecting to a street, for the use of the occupants of the dwelling. If open-air parking is provided, and it abuts the street, a natural visual barrier (grass, trees, plantings, etc.) must separate the parking and the street.
 - (5) Location of Parking. Parking structures which are attached to the building in any district shall be governed by the same provisions as the building itself. Open-air parking, and parking in detached garage structures shall be governed by the provisions set forth below:
 - (a) One-Family and Duplex Dwellings:
 - (.2) Where open air parking is provided:
 - (.c) In front of the building, it shall be behind the required building set back line and be separated from the street by a natural visual barrier (i.e. grass, trees or plantings).
 - (b) Multiple Family Dwellings, except conversions in R-17 and R-18 Residential Districts:
 - (.1) When open air parking is provided:
 - (.c) In front of the building, it shall be behind the required building set-back line and be separated from the street by a natural visual barrier (i.e. grass, trees or plantings).
 - (c) Conversions in "R-17" and "R-18" Residential Districts only:
 - (.1) Open-air parking may occupy any part of a side or rear yard, and need not be any required distance from any structure. If however, the parking abuts a street, a natural visual barrier must separate the parking lot from the street (i.e. grass, trees or plantings).
- 14-1403 Parking in Commercial Districts
 - (4) Open-air Parking Provisions:
 - (c) In cases where ten or more parking spaces are required or provided;
 - (.4) If the lot abuts a street, a natural visual barrier must be provided that separates the parking from the street. (i.e grass, trees or plantings)

14-1803 Criteria for Granting Zoning Board of Adjustment Certificates

- (2) The applicant shall have the duty of presenting evidence relating to the criteria set forth herein. This should include:
 - (a) a study of how traffic patterns will be effected
 - (b) a public safety study
 - (c) a study relating to population increase
 - (d) a contextual study which should include historic fabric, neighboring structures and issues of light and air
 - (e) a water, sewer and public facility study

Appendix II: Special Services District: Protection and Enhancement of the Streetscape and Commercial Areas of Germantown

(This was prepared by Mark Isaksen)

Establishing a Special Services District for Germantown can reinforce the existing commercial areas, while providing added security and maintenance to the streets and open spaces of the area.

Currently, a Center City Special Services District exists in an 80 block area of central Philadelphia. The district was created in 1990, for a five year operational period, which is funded by property owners within the district who pay an annual charge based on property tax assessments.

The chief aim of the district is to supplement city services.

Emphasis is on "improving safety, cleanliness and image of public areas, marketing and promoting the district as a shopping destination, (and) providing discounted parking." (see appendix)

The district is a legally incorporated body, designated by the City Council. Specific guidelines for establishing a district are found in the appendix to this report titled, "Establishing Your Own Business Services District".

A special Services District would treat the two most immediate and treatable problems confronting central Germantown; maintenance and security. By supplementing city cleaning services and providing a constant presence on the Avenue, the streetscape would become more inviting to local residents, shoppers, and workers. Special effort would be made to coordinate with business associations to promote and attract commercial enterprises. New development such as the Freedom Square project would be encouraged as well as adaptive re-use of existing buildings. Long-term emphasis would be focused upon aesthetic improvements to buildings and elements of the streetscape such as signage, facades, lightning etc.

The District is designed to reinforce the historic pattern of central Germantown. The proposed district is bounded by Green Street to the south, Logan to the east, Wakefield and Baynton to the north, and High and Harvey to the west. Additionally, Howell Park and Vernon Park

would be the site of headquarters, maintenance and service buildings for the district. Buildings exist on each site that are likely targets for rehabilitation for the district

Thus, a Special Services District would provide a comprehensive solution to the most immediate problems of the study area, in a feasible and appropriate manner. Once the primary issues of security and maintenance are under control, a coordinated effort to make larger improvements could then be implemented.

Appendix III: Center City District Information

CENTER CITY DISTRICT

917 Filbert Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Telephone 215.440.5500 Facsimile 215.922.7672



ESTABLISHING YOUR OWN BUSINESS SERVICES DISTRICT

Board of Directors

Ronald Rubin Chairman Byron K. Atkinson John K. Binswanger

William M. Boone Richard D. Breslin, Ph.D.

Paul C. Brucker, M.D.

M. Walter D'Alessio John E. Farrell

David M. Felder

Caleb L. Fowler

Patrick B. Gillespie

Nancy Gold

Rosemarie B. Greco

Gerald Gushner

Robert Heim

John Indrieri

Ronald J. Naples

Joseph F. Paquette, Jr.

Charles P. Pizzi

Kenneth C. Rideout

Peter Solmssen

John F. Tucker, III

Joseph Zuritsky

Michael M. Dean Counsel

Paul R. Levy Executive Director A Guide for Neighborhood Business Associations

prepared by the Center City District

October 29, 1991



I. BACKGROUND

A Business Services District, or special services district, is a legal mechanism for property owners in a commercial area to act in concert to achieve common goals, such as improving the safety, cleanliness and image of public areas, marketing and promoting the district as a shopping destination, or providing discounted parking.

A Business Services District is an organization managed by property owners that need not rely on voluntary contributions because a legal mechanism has been established to fund specific services. In the simplest terms, it creates the type of "common area maintenance fund" that retailers in all shopping malls are required to support through their leases. In return, property owners obtain a critical economic development tool that enables them to provide supplementary services from a fund that they control.

II. THE PLANNING PROCESS

Prior to commencing the legal process necessary to create a district, property owners should undertake a planning process that answers at least the following questions:

- (A) <u>How Much Support?</u>: Is there an active business association with broad support from the property <u>owners</u> within the proposed district? Although property owners are likely to pass on to their tenants the charges assessed by the district, under State enabling legislation it is the property owners who must assent to the formation of the District.
- (B) <u>Voluntary or Mandatory?</u>: Because the creation of a district can be a time-consuming process, businesses associations must first decide if they can fund the desired services through voluntary contributions.
- (C) How Large an Area?: State enabling legislation limits the areas eligible to blocks with primarily commercial properties. Within such an



area, proponents must decide both where the problems are the greatest and from which blocks the program would enjoy the most support.

(D) What Services?: A wide-range of services can be funded through a Business Services District. As a first step, proponents should assess and attempt to quantify the current level of city-provided services. Property owners will want to know what they are already getting for their tax dollars, before they agree to pay for supplemental services. Second, it is necessary to develop cost-estimates for the proposed services both to set priorities for limited resources and to advise property owners and their tenants of the specific charges which will be assessed to them.

A suggested way to proceed:

- (1) make a "wish list" of all desired services.
- (2) cost-out these services
- (3) through discussions with property owners and their tenants, establish priorities and determine how many additional dollars each property owner, or that owner's tenants, are willing to pay on a monthly and annual basis for these services.

Creating a business service district is a decision like any business investment: every property owner or tenant needs to assess whether the benefits outweigh the costs.

III. THE LEGAL PROCESS

(A) BACKGROUND: Business Services Districts are authorized as municipal authorities under the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Municipality Authorities Act of 1945. Before deciding to proceed under the state legislation, proponents should complete the planning process outlined above. Once this process is complete, the state legislation indicates that the government of the local municipality (City Council and the Mayor) has the authority to approve the creation of the district for a specific period of time. Once the district is created and its plans are approved by the local municipality, it is a legal entity, operating independently from city government, with the power to assess and collect



mandatory charges from property owners and to use these resources to provide its own supplementary services.

(B) REQUIREMENTS OF THE MUNCIPALITY AUTHORITIES ACT: What follows is a summary of the steps necessary to create a business services district as a legal municipal authority under the Pennsylvania Municipality Authorities Act of 1945. This is intended only as a summary. The Municipality Authorities Act of 1945 should be consulted directly for precise guidelines. Organizations seeking to proceed should also seek the advice of an attorney.

The process can be divided into two phases:

(1) Forming and Legally Incorporating an Authority

- (a) Legislation must be introduced in City Council authorizing the creation of an authority. The legislation must include the proposed Articles of Incorporation as well as a listing of the proposed Board of Directors. (As a practical matter, the Board of Directors should be both representative of the community to be affected by the proposed services and contain those property owners or commercial tenants who will bear the greatest share of the costs.)
- (b) A public hearing must be scheduled in City Council no less than thirty (30) days in advance of a vote by Council to approve the legislation. The hearing must be advertised in a notice published in a newspaper of general circulation.
- (c) The ordinance or resolution must be passed by City Council and signed by the Mayor.
- (d) The proposed Authority's Articles of Incorporation must then be signed by the Mayor and President of City Council and filed together with proof of adoption of the ordinance or resolution with the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

At the end of this phase, the Authority has been created and is authorized to develop an operating plan and budget.



(2) Development and Approval of the Authority's Plan and Budget

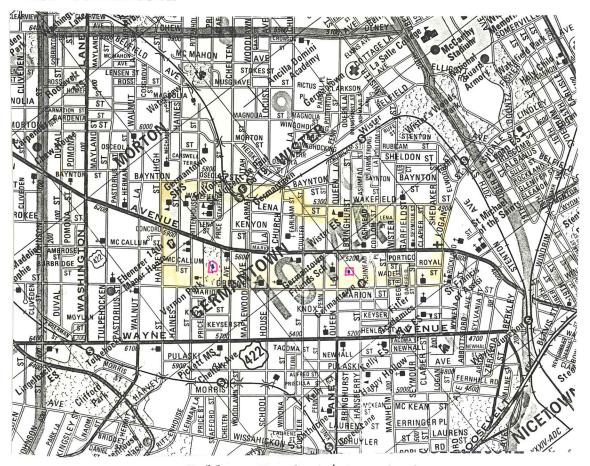
- (a) The Authority must conduct planning or feasibility studies justifying the need for the services and determining the types of services to be provided. These studies may have already been performed during the initial planning process outlined in Section II above, but a written document needs to be created to formalize the findings.
- (b) The Authority must develop a plan to provide the services and must determine the cost of these services.
- (c) The Authority must calculate the portion of the total annual cost to be borne by each individual property owner and must determine the method to be used to assess this cost to each owner. The two methods allowed by state law are:
 - (i) Multiplying the total annual cost of services by the ratio of the assessed real estate value of the benefited property to the assessed real estate value of the entire services area, or
 - (ii) Developing an assessment by "viewers appointed in accordance with municipal law" as to the amount each benefited property should pay, based on the nature of the services proposed. (For example: calculating the assessment for sidewalk cleaning services based on linear feet of a property's sidewalk frontage, or based on total square footage of a building.)
- (d) The Authority must notify each affected property owner and commercial tenant within the boundaries of the service area of: (i) the plan, (ii) the total cost, (iii) the proposed method of assessing the cost, and (iv) the portion of cost to be borne by each property owner. (Commercial tenants must be informed of their landlord's cost under the plan.) This notice must be given to each property owner and commercial tenant at least thirty days prior to the public hearing.
- (e) The Authority must conduct its own public hearing on the proposed services and method of assessment. Notice of the hearing must be published at least ten days prior to the hearing in a newspaper



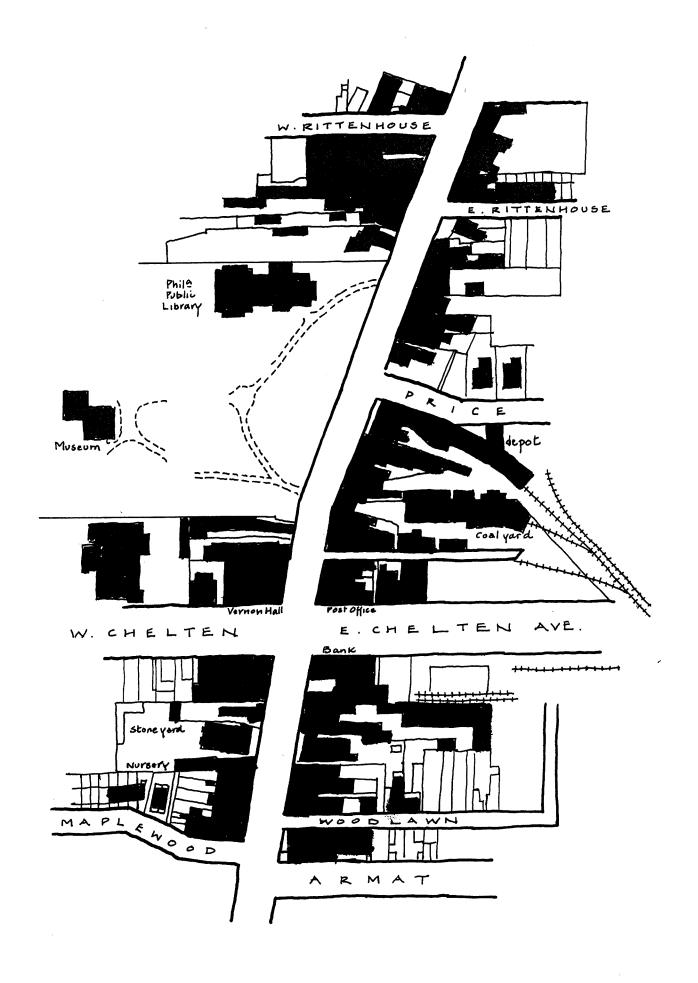
of general circulation within the municipality in which the Authority was established.

- (f) The affected property owners have 45 days after the public hearing to object in writing to the plan and budget of the Authority. The objections must be made in writing and filed both in City Council and at the registered office of the Authority.
- (g) If at least one-third of the property owners, or owners representing one-third of the total assessed value of the affected area, object in writing to the plan and budget of the Authority in the manner outlined in (f), above, then the Authority may take no further action on its plan.
- (h) If fewer than one-third of the property owners object in writing in the manner specified in paragraph (f), above, then legislation approving the plan and budget of the Authority must be introduced in and approved by City Council and by the Mayor.

Appendix IV: Special Services District recommended for Germantown



Yellow: Borders/ Boundaries Pink: Headquarters Buildings Appendix IV: Drawing of Vernon Park, Adapted from Bromley Atlas of Philadelphia, 1911



Appendix V:Philadelphia Green

(This was prepared by Paula Sagerman)

Philadelphia Green was founded in 1974 and is a Pennsylvania
Horticultural Society Outreach Program. With funds from the annual
Philadelphia Flower Show, it helps organize gardening groups, provides
technical assistance and educational workshops, planting and
construction materials, and aids with site development. It works with
the Fairmount Park Commission, which has jurisdiction over
Philadelphia's street trees, the Philadelphia Anti-Graffiti Network,
which paints murals, the Office of Housing and Community Development,
the Streets and Water Departments, the Department of Licenses and
Inspections, and the Neighborhood Gardens Association. The University
of Pennsylvania Landscape Architecture program was recently involved
with a Philadelphia Green project in West Philadelphia.

Philadelphia Green publishes newsletters and instruction pamphlets and flyers on numerous gardening topics. It hosts a City Gardens Contest, that encourages garden development and provides an opportunity for communities to get together. The Horticultural Society hosts a Harvest Show and the Junior Flower Show which also involves community gardens.

Contacts and Supplies

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Philadelphia Green 325 Walnut Street or 329 Chestnut Street, 8th Floor Philadelphia, PA 19106 625-8280

American Community Gardening Association 325 Walnut Street

John Collins
Chairman, Department of Landscape Architecture and Horticulture
Temple University

David Froehlich Executive Director, Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association

Bettie McGill Philadelphia Green

Mercer Rubber 3650 Richmond Street Philadelphia, PA 19134 425-7700 hoses, hydrant wrenches, and hydrant adapters

Rubber Corp 2545 N. Broad Street Philadelphia, PA 19132 225-3700

Fairmount Park Recycling Center wood chips and compost, Ford Road and Chamounix Drive

Tree Request, Pruning, Damaged Trees and Permit Request 686-0016

Tree Care Information 922-8043

Utilities 800-242-1776

Publications

Green Scene

Philadelphia Green Newsletter

Tree News

PLACES TO BUY GARDENING MATERIALS

I. <u>GARDEN CENTERS</u>: Bagged soil, fertilizers, pesticides, pots, plants, seeds, tools, window boxes, wine barrels, etc.

BENNETT'S GARDEN CENTER 61st & Passyunk Avenue 727-5200

FRANK'S NURSERY & CRAFTS CENTER
Roosevelt Boulevard at Levick Street
NE Philadelphia - 535-2982

PRIMEX GARDEN CENTER 435 Glenside Avenue Glenside - 887-7500

HECHINGER'S Rising Sun & Adams Avenue North Philadelphia - 342-7404

SEARS ROEBUCK & COMPANY

69th & Walnut Streets Upper Darby - 734-7100

F. W. WOOLWORTH COMPANY
2013 S Broad Street
South Philadelphia - 467-4414
1330 Market Street
Center City - 735-7578
2524 W Lehigh Avenue
North Philadelphia - 229-0974

II. NURSERIES: Shrubs, Annuals, Perennials

ALBRECHTS FLOWERS & NURSERY

Montgomery Avenue & Meetinghouse Lane
Narberth - 664-4300

LAUREL HILL GARDENS 8125 Germantown Avenue Philadelphia - 247-9490

PHILADELPHIA GREEN

Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, 325 Walnut Street, Phila., PA 19106 625-8280

NURSERIES - (continued)

HOLOD TRUE VALUE HARDWARE & GARDEN CENTER 700 Ridge Pike Lafayette Hill - 828-4505

III. SOILS (purchased by the truck load)

BUSTLETON LANDSCAPING COMPANY

9916 Bustleton Avenue

NE Philadelphia - 673-8791 - NO Delivery - pick-up only

JOE L. LEO, INCORPORATED (Mushroom Soil)

612 E. Baltimore Pike

Kennett Square - 1-444-2755, 1-444-3892 - pick-up available

SUBURBAN SOIL COMPANY

5095 Old York Road, P.O. Box 818

Buckingham - 343-1161

IV. LANDSCAPING SERVICES: (for a fee) Tree and shrub trimming, lawn care, planning, planting gardens, and spraying.

Please see the heading of Landscape Contractors in the Yellow Pages.

V. TILLING SERVICES: (for a fee)

Mr. Butler	879-8439
If no answer, call Ella Artis @	878-8380
Rick Foster	463-8228
John Jorden	747-2650
E-Z Tool Rental (Rent a tiller)	329-4400
138 E. Luray Street, (Front & Lu	ray)

GARDENING QUESTIONS?

CALL:

PENNSYLVANIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY'S HOTLINE

922-8043

Answer questions about houseplants or outdoor plants Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday - 9:30 to Noon

PENN STATE'S URBAN GARDENING PROGRAM

560-4167

Garden Phone (answer questions about vegetable gardening)

Monday - Friday, 9:00 to 5:00

PHILADELPHIA GREEN

625-8280

Answer questions about starting a garden, garden blocks, and

the street tree program.

MORRIS ARBORETUM PLANT CLINIC

247-5777 Ext.105

Answer questions about plant problems - specializing in trees and shrubs Monday - Friday, 1:30 to 3:30

3/90