

**Plan for the Central Delaware: Transforming Philadelphia's Waterfront
Civic Cluster Meetings, Round 1: 5/4/10 and 5/5/10
Public Input Summary**

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Process:

People were asked a series of questions. For each question, they were given a few minutes to discuss with people sitting near them, and then we asked for input to the whole group. People were not asked to come to consensus.

The questions included some variation of:

- What issues do you think are most important for the Master Plan to address?
- What do you want to be able to do on the waterfront?
- If there were new parks or recreation spaces along the waterfront, what activities would you want those spaces to support?
- What would get you to go to the waterfront more often?

Key Ideas:

- The top concerns include:
 - ACCESS - desire for improved pedestrian/bike access to the waterfront
 - TRAFFIC CONGESTION - desire for improved vehicular flow along Delaware/Columbus
 - PUBLIC SPACE - desire for improved and additional public space
 - PARTICIPATION - desire for transparency and meaningful participation in decisions about the waterfront
 - SAFETY - better lighting, more people, preventing children from drowning
 - NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER - desire for development on the waterfront to reflect a Philadelphia character
- There is a tension between the desire for more amenities on the waterfront (recreational, housing, commercial) and the desire to limit density as a way of limiting traffic congestion.

NORTHERN CLUSTER MEETING, 5/4

First Presbyterian Church, 418 East Girard Avenue in Fishtown

Participants:

- About 20 members of the public attended.
- Neighborhoods represented included Fishtown, Northern Liberties, Kensington, Pennsport, Society Hill, Hawthorne.
- About half of the attendees had participated in the Civic Vision process.

Key Issues:

- Identify, preserve, and build on existing assets.
- Public access to waterfront
 - There is a need for good connections to Delaware/Columbus and on to the water.
- Traffic congestion
 - There is a need to improve vehicular flow, especially along Delaware/Columbus Ave.
- Safety concerns
 - Especially at night and especially in public spaces, like Penn Treaty Park - need better lighting, more people, more “eyes on the street”
- Participation
 - People want to be involved in discussions, even about some technical issues such as traffic, at an early stage when their participation can make a difference.
- Coordination
 - There are many different entities engaged in planning and construction efforts throughout the project area, and their different “visions” need to be coordinated.
- Public transit along the waterfront
- Public space
 - There needs to be more and better useable passive and active public space

What people want on the waterfront (brainstormed list, not prioritized)

- More programming
- More public spaces and venues for different types of programming
- Expand Penn Treaty Park to include the parcel to the south of the park
- Beauty
- Growing awareness of the Delaware Waterfront through programming, marketing, wayfinding, etc.
- An educational and interpretation component, especially related to ecology, historic issues, and children
- Moderate cost, low-scale housing
- No more big box
- No highrises
- Low-scale mixed use with commercial on ground floor and residential above
- No more traffic
- Highlight / preserve the artistic graffiti at the Ore Pier on the Conrail site
- Don't want new public spaces to take away resources from maintaining existing public spaces in neighborhoods
- Skate park
- Indoor water park
- Dog parks - several
- Access to water for canoes, kayaks
- Basketball courts
- Driving range
- Ball fields
- Children's playgrounds / tot lots
- Bike path
- Community gardening space
- Pocket parks
- Streetscape improvements

Questions that came up during open Q&A (not an exhaustive list):

- If I want to develop my property now, how do I know what rules to follow?
- How will the Master Plan address community facilities, such as schools?
- Will the Master Plan develop a comprehensive traffic study for the whole plan area?
- Do neighborhoods along the waterfront still have their traditional role in the public process for reviewing development proposals? How will the proposed zoning changes and the Master Plan affect this role?
- The Civic Vision outlined principles to guide physical development? What principles are you following for the social and economic portions of the Master Plan?
- How can archaeological resources be identified / highlighted in a way that the public can enjoy them?

SOUTHERN CLUSTER MEETING, 5/5
EOM Hall, 138 Moore Street in Pennsport

Participants:

- About 20 members of the public.
- Neighborhoods represented included Whitman, Queen Village, Pennsport, Society Hill, Bella Vista
- About one-third had participated in the Civic Vision process

Key Issues:

- Public access to waterfront
 - There is need for good connections to Delaware/Columbus and on to the water.
- Traffic congestion
 - Especially along Delaware/Columbus Ave, need to improve vehicular flow.
- Safety:
 - Concern about safety at night in public spaces, especially on the new bike trail - need better lighting, more people, more “eyes on the street”
 - Concern about children being attracted to the water and drowning
- Participation
 - People want to be involved in discussions, even about some technical issues such as traffic, at an early stage when their participation can make a difference.
- Neighborhood character
 - People want new development to reflect local, Philadelphia, character (“not Disneyland”).
- Density
 - People think that “density” will make the traffic worse
- No more big box
 - People are opposed to additional big box development
- Green open space
 - People want some green public space
 - Specifically mentioned the green buffer in the Civic Vision

What people want on the waterfront (brainstormed list, not prioritized)

- Small restaurants with local flavor
- Uninterrupted green space along the river (like Schuylkill River Park)
- Living wage job opportunities
- To be able to see the water
- Ability to walk to river from east/west streets
- Small- and medium-sized events and programming (like the art exhibit under I-95, small concerts)
- Easy, safe pedestrian access across Delaware/Columbus (one suggestion was a pedestrian ramp over Delaware/Columbus)
- Improvements to Penn’s Landing - too hot with all the concrete
- Water sports and water recreation
- Swimming pods in the river
- Family-oriented parks: playgrounds, tot lots, amenities for grilling and picnicking
- Mini golf (like Franklin Square)
- Benches, places to sit in the shade
- Unprogrammed green space, like a lawn
- Open air theater
- Films
- Waterpark
- Destination to live, work, and play (with restaurants, housing, businesses, recreation, entertainment . . .)
- Sports: volleyball, basketball, soccer, etc.
- Boating
- History of waterfront
- Open air rock climbing wall
- Water taxi
- More parks south of Washington

Questions that came up during open Q&A (not an exhaustive list):

- Since 91% of the property in the plan area is privately owned and controlled, how can the plan be implemented?
- Don’t riparian rights give you some public control over land?
- Have there been any thoughts about adding fill to widen piers or change the shoreline?
- How will you coordinate the Master Plan with the Zoning Code Commission’s work?