



Questions answered during the panel presentation:

**Q: Why not cover parts of I-95 that are already partially covered, rather than talk about burying more. We all know the issues surrounding the Big Dig in Boston! It has the added benefit of eliminating the traffic problems during the New Years and Fourth of July fireworks festivities.**

A: This is, in fact, very similar to the strategy that the consultant team intends to pursue to civilize the pedestrian and bicycle connections between the waterfront and surrounding neighborhoods. By improving existing connections both over and under I-95, as well as examining potential new connections over and under the highway, it is thought that much of the negative effect I-95 has on connectivity can be mitigated.

**Q: The connections over and under I-95 exist now. I-95 can ruin this whole project. Explain how short of burying or removing it you can ever connect neighborhoods to the riverfront.**

A: There are a number of existing connections over and under I-95. These connections are, however, both weak and unwelcoming to pedestrians and bicyclists. There are a number of ways in which these connections can be strengthened and made more welcoming. The extreme cost and extended timeline of an infrastructure project on the order of submerging I-95 are prohibitive in the context of the master plan. However, by civilizing the connections that exist presently and potentially creating new connections between the waterfront and its surrounding neighborhoods access to the waterfront can be improved for all Philadelphians. Some possibilities for improving connections include streetscape and landscape improvements, public art and lighting installations, and bike lanes.

**Q: What kinds of funding will draw new businesses to the waterfront?**

A: Incentives will be necessary to attract new business to the waterfront. Over the long term, developing parks and open space will in itself be an attractive draw for businesses because of the amount of people that will come to the waterfront to enjoy the parks.

**Q: Can you have high density with only low- and mid-rise development?**

A: High density does not inherently mean high-rise development. The development pattern that the consultant team sees as most appropriate for the project area is similar to the scale of the row houses and townhomes that are native to Philadelphia. This development pattern creates the kind of urban environment cherished in so many of Philadelphia's existing neighborhoods. Interestingly, this is also the scale of development that is most viable, based on the economics of Philadelphia's real estate market. Further, because these projects can be done by a number of small developers – rather than requiring a single large developer, as a high rise would – development can progress much faster. This does not preclude selective high-rise development at strategic points along the waterfront.

**Q. How is the plan addressing industrial/port expansion that creates jobs? Industry should be just as important as open space.**

A. We are working closely with the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority as well as the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation to identify the appropriate locations on the waterfront for industrial activity. The project area is large enough to have balance between many diverse uses such as port and industrial, recreation and open space, residential, retail, and commercial. We recognize that this is a working waterfront and the plan will definitely address how to create jobs and transform of the waterfront into an economic generator for the city.

**Q. Why is the Cramp Shipyards warehouse being allowed to be condemned to demolition due to I-95 construction? It is a spectacular building.**

**Q. Can't we save the Cramp Shipyards warehouse from demolition? Can't we cut through it?**

A: Though a subject of continuing public consternation and debate, the decision to demolish the Cramp Shipyard building is final. That planning process was done by PennDOT many years ago, well before the Central Delaware master planning process began. However, this situation highlights the need for an integrated master planning process. It also highlights the importance of identifying buildings and other historic resources such as industrial ruins and archaeological sites for potential preservation, such as the PECO building adjacent to Penn Treaty Park.

**Q: I saw a slide of people swimming in the river. Can we really have beaches for swimming? (At your own risk, of course!) Is that viable?**

A: There's no reason that, with proper protection, people couldn't swim at specifically selected locations along the Delaware River. Obviously, given the lack of locations designed for this purpose, the river's treacherous currents and heavy marine traffic

make this kind of recreation extremely unsafe at present. An additional concern is the water quality. In the past the water was very polluted and unsafe for swimming. Though the health of the river has improved drastically in the past 50 years there are still sewer outfalls along the river that occasionally overflow and cause unsafe conditions for humans to be in the river at these locations, so any recommendations for swimming facilities also need to take this into account.

**Q: What is being done to entice people to go swimming/kayaking/etc.? Is a river that has industry perceived as dirty?**

A: There are already kayaking activities taking place along the river, including at Penn's Landing. The planning process intends to identify other potential locations for aquatic recreation such as kayaking and swimming.

As stated in the above question, the health of the Delaware River is of great concern. The DRWC regularly partners with the Philadelphia Water Department in an effort to address issues related to pollution and trash. Together we advocate for the continued improvement of the health of the river and its environs. It is our goal to maintain a healthy river that will allow for Philadelphians to recreate in and on the river.

**Q: There has been a transit plan proposed by the DRPA. Can that plan be paused, to allow your planning process to inform the DRPA plan?**

**Q: How is the DRWC coordinating the design of the Delaware Ave. light rail line with DRPA/PATCO?**

A: The next phase of the DRPA project has been in the contracting stage for the past several months. While that work has not started, the master planning work is progressing rapidly. We plan to have our alternatives for the master plan developed by September, which will provide the opportunity to inform the DRPA/PATCO light rail plan as it gets underway.

**Q: Are there any updates from SEPTA regarding the trolley on Girard Ave. and Richmond St? Will this trolley route be a significant consideration further along in the planning process?**

A: SEPTA is currently calling the trolley relocation project a "temporary" re-routing. However, in the future we know that transit projects such as the light rail planned for Delaware Avenue are most successful when they connect to other transit, so it would be beneficial for the waterfront light rail to connect in some way to the Route 15 trolley line. Our transportation planners will look at this as a possibility for the future.

**Missed the meeting? Have more questions? For full coverage of the June 7<sup>th</sup> Public Meeting, visit PlanPhilly. Through PlanPhilly you can access video excerpts from the public meeting .**

<http://planphilly.com/central-delaware-master-plan-team-reports-their-analysis-phase>