

PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
September 22, 2005

PRESENT:

Jeffrey S. Batoff, Vice Chairman  
Duane Bumb, representing Stephanie Naidoff  
Vincent Jannetti  
Loree Jones, representing Pedro A. Ramos  
Gloria Levin  
Marcia Moore Makadon  
Peggy VanBelle, representing Vincent Jannetti

ABSENT:

David Adelman  
Lynette Brown-Sow  
Patrick J. Eiding

Acting Executive Director  
Deputy Executive Director

Thomas A. Chapman, Esq.  
Warren Huff

Acting Chair Marcia Makadon convened the Planning Commission Meeting of September 22, 2005 at 3:20PM.

1) Executive Director's Update.

Mr. Chapman stated that it is an honor to announce that Warren Huff has accepted the position as the new Executive Deputy Director of the Planning Commission. Warren has been working at the Planning Commission for about 30 years, first as the Northeast Planner and then as the Center City Planner before becoming the Division Director of the Urban Design Division. Mr. Chapman commented that in regards to the Marina View Towers Plan, he is happy to report that the community and the developer are working together. Our next agenda will have an item for 1919 Market Street for the proposal for a 37-story structure, with 293 dwelling units with public parking.

2) Information Only: Upcoming neighborhood plan for South of South

Victoria Mason-Ailey, Division Director of Community Planning, gave a brief overview as she passed out the neighborhood plan to the Commissioners. She offered to give a briefing of the plan to the Commissioners at their request.

3) Information Only: A presentation of "Extending the Vision for North Broad Street, the Avenue of the Arts Plan".

Mr. Huff stated that earlier this week this presentation was made to the Avenue of the Arts Board, and next week it will be presented to the Neighborhood Transformation and Initiative. Later next month it will be published with the help of Mayor Street, Councilmember Clarke, and Councilmember DiCicco. He also stated this plan was produced under the leadership of Maxine Griffith while she was here. He gave a brief history of the area since the 1960's. He said this document sets forth a plan for North Broad Street that builds upon its present assets and opportunities and plans for its vital future as an extension of the Avenue of the Arts.

Nafjie Browsh asked Mr. Huff what is the timeline. He answered any where between 2 months (already in the Capital Program) and 10 years.

4) Approval for release of the design guidelines for the River Greenway.

David Schaaf, member of the Urban Design Division, stated this item is for the approval for the release of the design guidelines for the River Greenway. The Commissioners saw this item at the May 20, 2005 Commission Meeting, and City Council passed it on June 16, 2005. He gave an overview of what the design guidelines would entail. The Planning Commission staff recommendation is for adoption.

Mr. Batoff arrived at 3:50PM.

Mr. Jannetti left at 3:55PM, and was replaced by Ms. Van Belle.

Ms. Makadon turned over the Chair to Mr. Batoff.

Mr. Batoff thanked Mr. Schaaf for the extensive plan, and stated that he wants it to be distributed to the press.

Upon motion by Ms. Makadon, seconded by Mr. Bumb, the Planning Commission adopted and approved the release of the design guidelines for the River Greenway.

- 5) Cottman Riverview Blight Certification (Tacony Expansion) and Cottman Riverview Redevelopment Area Plan (Tacony Expansion). (6<sup>th</sup> District Councilmember Krajewski)

Michael Thompson, City Planner in the Community Planning Division, stated this is a Blight Certification and a Redevelopment Area Plan for the area generally bounded by the Delaware River, Cottman Avenue, Milnor Street, New State Road, and Unruh Street. Two plans have been approved for the Northern Shipping site and the Tacony Warehouse site.

This area exhibits three of the criteria necessary to produce a finding of blight under the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law. Those criteria are the following:

- 1) Unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate or overcrowded conditions;
- 2) Faulty street and lot layout;
- 3) Economically or socially undesirable land use.

The Planning Commission staff recommendation is for approval.

The Redevelopment Area Plan objectives are for residential and mixed use, as well as, public access. The area is currently zoned "G-1" General Industrial, "L-3" Limited Industrial, Recreational, and "R-5" Residential. The proposed zoning is "Waterfront Redevelopment District". The Planning Commission staff recommendation is for approval.

Mr. Batoff asked Mr. Thompson several questions.

Upon motion by Mr. Bumb, seconded by Ms. Levin, the Planning Commission approved the Cottman Riverview Blight Certification (Tacony Expansion) and Cottman Riverview Redevelopment Area Plan (Tacony Expansion).

- 6) Institutional Development District Master Plan Amendment Drexel University.

William Kramer, Senior Zoning Planner with the Zoning and Development Division, stated this proposed amendment to the Master Plan has several elements. The first calls for the construction of an 11-story structure to be used as a dormitory. The building will contain 144 units providing 492 beds. The second element is the construction of a 4-story building to be used to provide additional classroom, auditorium, seminar, and office space. It is planned as the initial home for the proposed Law School at Drexel, and will be located on Market Street east of 34<sup>th</sup> Street. The third element is the additional of two stories to the parking garage located at the southeast corner of 34<sup>th</sup> and Market Streets. This addition will provide 290 additional parking spaces for the University. Under Institutional Development District zoning requirements these proposals will require an additional 41 parking spaces. This will raise the number of required spaces for the District to 572. There are currently 668 spaces in the District, with an additional 290 being proposed raising the total to 958. The University has met with the West Powelton Village Association. The Planning Commission staff recommendation is for approval.

Mr. Batoff asked if we approve this item does it then go to City Council. Mr. Kramer answered yes with the presumption of approval by City Council if Council does not reply in writing to the Commission after 45 days.

Mr. Batoff asked what will happen if we disapprove this item. Mr. Kramer answered that it will not go to Council.

Mr. Bumb asked what is the community's concern with this proposal. Mr. Kramer stated parking is one of the concerns, and that the University does meet the requirements of the code.

Mr. Batoff asked about permit parking. Mr. Kramer said permit parking is block by block and the owner of the vehicle must have a Pennsylvania license.

Mr. Batoff suggested that maybe there should be permit parking for Philadelphia residents, and parking for students who are not residents of the state of Pennsylvania.

Carl Ewald, from Robert Sugarman's office, asked the Commission to table it at this time so that something could be work out with Drexel.

Alice Beck Dubow, attorney for Drexel University, stated the urgency of the approval of this item.

Mike Jones, of the Powelton Village Civic Association, stated they had meetings for the past several weeks and they have not been able to agree upon it. The parking on the IDD is insufficient, and that the building of parking lots are not necessarily the answer. He said there is a 1985-86 Dormitory Agreement between Powelton Village Civic Association and Drexel University. This was a settlement agreement for a consultation with the community for any future projects. The Civic Association has not been asked for their input, but was given the plan for approval.

A question and answer session ensued between Mr. Batoff, Mr. Jones, Mr. Bumb, and Ms. Makadon.

Ms. Dubow stated that 6 months ago Drexel decided to open a law school, which will increase the freshman class and their need for residential housing. This proposal was solidified at the end of July. A letter was sent to the President of the Powelton Village Association in which they had ten days to respond to it, and we did not hear from them. At the end of July, Mr. Sugarman contacted us to say he was representing the neighbors. On August 22, Mr. Sugarman said to meet after Labor Day to discuss the issue. We asked what their concerns were. The neighbors are concerned with the way Drexel contacts them.

Mr. Batoff read from the agreement that Drexel is to meet with the community before making any designs or plans.

Ms. Levin asked Ms. Dubow a question regarding building and architect. Ms. Dubow stated three construction firms were contacted, and one was chosen to work with Drexel's internal architect.

Mr. Jones stated that they want input into the plan, and they have had to fight for every copy of the plan.

Alisha Orduna-Sneed, Councilmember Blackwell's representative, tried to help and then stepped out of the mediation. She felt that Drexel could give in some more.

Mr. Batoff stated that he is not sure if due process has been fully compiled with according to the agreement.

Mr. Jones stated that the Powelton Village Community Association first saw the plans on Tuesday, September 29, 2005.

Ms. Dubow stated that at the dormitory plans were at the August 18, 2005 meeting with Councilmember Blackwell.

Sharon Holt stated that Drexel has presented us with plans but have not followed the procedures of the agreement.

Mr. Ewald said that it is hard to voice concerns if we don't have any plans, and that cooperation is the key.

Ms. Dubow asked the Commissioners if they could vote on the law school building and the garage today, and have a special meeting in two weeks for the proposed dormitory.

Mr. Jones agreed with her suggestion, but said they would need more than two weeks to work with Drexel on the proposed dormitory.

Upon motion by Mr. Bumb, seconded by Ms. Levin, the Planning Commission approved the Institutional Development District Master Plan Amendment Drexel University for the proposed Law School and the parking garage, but tabled the proposed dormitory to allow Drexel University and the Community to meet to attempt to resolve their differences regarding that structure.

7) Minutes of the Meeting of August 18, 2005.

Upon motion by Ms. Van Belle, the Planning Commission approved the minutes of August 18, 2005.

Mr. Batoff adjourned the Planning Commission Meeting of September 22, 2005 at 4:55PM.

## SUMMARY

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- 1) Executive Director's Update.
- 2) For Information Only: Upcoming  
only  
neighborhood plan for South of South  
(Victoria Mason-Ailey) Information
- 3) For Information Only: A presentation  
only  
of "Extending the Vision for North Broad  
Street, the Avenue of the Arts Plan". This  
document sets forth a plan for North Broad  
Street that builds upon its present assets and  
opportunities and plans for its vital future as  
an extension of the Avenue of the Arts.  
(Warren Huff) Information
- 4) Approval for release of the design guidelines  
for the River Greenway. (David Schaaf) Adopted
- 5) Cottman Riverview Blight Certification  
(Tacony Expansion) and Cottman Riverview  
Redevelopment Area Plan (Tacony Expansion).  
(6<sup>th</sup> District Councilmember Krajewski)  
(Michael Thompson) Approved
- 6) Institutional Development District Master  
Plan Amendment Drexel University.  
(William Kramer) Approved the proposed Law  
School & the parking garage,  
but tabled the proposed  
dormitory to allow the  
parties  
involved to resolve  
their  
differences re: this  
structure
- 7) Minutes of the Meeting of 8-18-05 Approved