

The Riverfront Plan

**Township of Whitemarsh
Borough of Conshohocken**

June 2016

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Planners/Landscape Architects

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Architecture and Transportation Planning

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Economic and Real Estate Analyst

The project was funded in part by a Transportation Community Development Initiative grant from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission\

**TOWNSHIP OF WHITEMARSH
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
RESOLUTION NO. 2016-18**

**A RESOLUTION OF WHITEMARSH TOWNSHIP, MONTGOMERY COUNTY,
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE
'RIVERFRONT PLAN' AS AN AMENDMENT TO THE WHITEMARSH TOWNSHIP
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF 2003**

WHEREAS, the Township adopted a Comprehensive Plan on November 20, 2003, pursuant to the provisions of Article III of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code; and

WHEREAS, the Township may amend the Plan from time to time to keep it current in accordance with the provisions of Article III of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code; and

WHEREAS, the Township applied for and secured a 2014 Transportation and Community Development Initiative ("TCDI") Grant through the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission to prepare a Riverfront Plan (the "Plan") as a joint plan with Conshohocken Borough; and

WHEREAS, the Township issued a Request for Proposals and engaged a consultant team led by Carter van Dyke Associates (with offices in Doylestown, PA) as a result of responses to said Request; and

WHEREAS, the consultant team worked with Township staff, an appointed Steering Committee and Stakeholders and has completed the Plan; and

WHEREAS, a joint meeting of the Conshohocken Borough and Whitemarsh Township Planning Commissions was held on May 10, 2016 which was advertised pursuant to public notice as the Whitemarsh Township Planning Commission Public Meeting required pursuant to Section 302(a) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, at which time the Plan was presented in detail and discussed with the Planning Commissions and public in attendance;

WHEREAS, the Township Planning Commission held a subsequent discussion at their May 24, 2016 meeting and passed a motion recommending adoption of the Plan to the Township Board of Supervisors; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors held a Public Hearing on this date, advertised pursuant to public notice, and in conformance with the requirements of Section 302(b) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code; and

WHEREAS, the Riverfront Plan seeks to encourage continued inter-municipal cooperation, inspire public and private partnerships and meet the goals of the riverfront community for establishing a more vibrant and sustaining riverfront experience; and

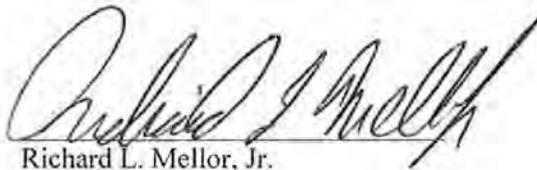
WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors has determined that the Plan represents an appropriate vision for the riverfront area, as such is defined in the Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED this 9th day of June, 2016, by the Board of Supervisors of the Township of Whitemarsh, that:

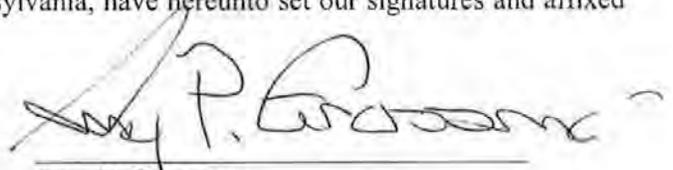
The Riverfront Plan (2016), is hereby adopted as an amendment to, and made a part of the Comprehensive Plan of 2003, with consideration of comments provided by the Whitemarsh

Township Planning Commission, the Montgomery County Planning Commission and other review agents, as well as the comments made at the Whitemarsh Township Planning Commission Public Meeting and the Board of Supervisors Public Hearing.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we, the undersigned authorized officials of the Township of Whitemarsh, Montgomery County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, have hereunto set our signatures and affixed hereto the Seal of the Township.



Richard L. Mellor, Jr.
Secretary
[SEAL]



Amy P. Grossman
Chair, Board of Supervisors

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Riverfront Plan Steering Committee

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Special Thanks

Charles L. Guttenplan, AICP, *Director of Planning & Zoning*

Whitemarsh Township

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Planning Commission

Aaron Weems, *Chair*
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David Bertram
Elizabeth Schreiner



In 2014, Conshohocken Borough and Whitemarsh Township jointly sought and were ultimately awarded grant funding for the preparation of *The Riverfront Plan*: an assessment of each municipality’s riverfront access, usage and development opportunities.

This funding, provided by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) and its Transportation and Community Development Initiative program, especially supports efforts to improve the overall character and quality of life within the region, to retain and attract business and residents, to promote the use of transit, bike and pedestrian transportation modes, and to protect our environment through growth management and land preservation.

The Riverfront Plan seeks to realize the sentiment of the awarded grant especially because it furthers the past goals of the residents and officials of Conshohocken Borough and the Township of Whitemarsh. It builds on nearly 20-years of in-depth analyses and thoughtful contributions of residents, businesses and professional planners who hoped to improve the shared frontage of the Schuylkill River. And, it honors the many hours of public participation each analysis and report required to arrive at specific recommendations. With this information in hand, Whitemarsh and Conshohocken formed a Riverfront Plan Steering Committee and identified the main goals of this plan.

- Goal 1: Improve Access to the Riverfront
- Goal 2: Connect Our Trails
- Goal 3: Make Our Riverfront a Destination
- Goal 4: Meet Our Recreation & Open Space Needs
- Goal 5: Provide Opportunities for Economic Development
- Goal 6: Incorporate Sustainable Design Initiatives



Whitemarsh Township and Conshohocken Borough Regional Context

Purpose of this Report

In 2015, Carter van Dyke Associates, Inc. (CVDA) was retained, in collaboration with Campbell Thomas & Co. and 4Ward Planning, Inc., to prepare *The Riverfront Plan*, and to assess each municipality's riverfront access, usage and development opportunities. Using the three main goals of the plan for guidance, this report points Whitemarsh Township and Conshohocken Borough in the direction of the Schuylkill River. Recommendations are made to improve existing land use regulations, to acquire key parcels of real estate and to create collaborative enterprise districts for the benefit of each community. An Action Plan is included and especially promotes the joint pursuit of existing public and private grant dollars.

Defining the Study Area

The boundaries of the Study Area were defined by a Steering Committee and, in part, by previous planning analyses. The Riverfront Plan Steering Committee was made up of local, county and state officials, as well as members of area boards and commissions, who have had an ongoing involvement with the riverfront planning initiatives.

Participating committee members were asked to do the following:

- Establish the Study Area Boundaries
- Lend their expertise to a collaborative effort
- Select and voice the concerns of their stakeholders
- Build on the foundation of previous plans
- Discuss outstanding riverfront issues
- Identify key players in the riverfront future
- Promote The Riverfront Plan

Each of the previous planning analyses below was reviewed and found to acknowledge an ongoing effort to understand and improve the riverfront:

Whitemarsh Township

Riverfront Open Space Plan 2011
Pedestrian & Bicycle Network Plan 2009
Parks & Recreation Plan 2007
Greenway Plan 2007
Open Space Plan 2006
Open Space Plan 1996 (per 2006 Audit)
Roadway Analysis & Transportation CIP 2006
Comprehensive Plan 2003
Township of Whitemarsh Zoning

Conshohocken Borough

5-Year Infrastructure Management Plan Map 2015
Comprehensive Plan 2015
Open Space Plan 2013
Schuylkill Riverfront Linkages Study 2005/2015
Revitalization Plan: *The Community Revisited* 2011
One-Way Avenue Study 2010
Vision for the Conshohocken Train Station 2007/2009
Park and Recreation Plan 2007
Parking Management Study 2004
Revitalization Plan: *Community at the Crossroads* 2002
Borough of Conshohocken Zoning

Please Note: The most recent Borough of Conshohocken Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2007, not in 2015.

Study Area Boundaries

The simplest boundary is the Schuylkill River. From the river’s edge moving in-land, the highest boundary is a composite of First Avenue and Spring Mill Avenue in Conshohocken and Righter Street and North Lane in Whitemarsh. In Conshohocken, the western boundary is determined by Colwell Road (aka Colwell Lane) and Old Elm Street. In Whitemarsh, the eastern boundary is determined by East Hector Street and Center Street and River Road.



Riverfront Plan Study Area



Location

Conshohocken Borough and the Township of Whitemarsh share nearly 2 miles of frontage along the Schuylkill River, in southeast Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. From the 1600's to the current day, each municipality's portion of that frontage was used intensely for business and industry and included quarries, iron furnaces, grist and textile mills as well as manufacturing and office. Canals, rail lines and major roads all transported goods to and from the river's edge. With the success of these businesses, and the close proximity of the City of Philadelphia, the population grew.

By the year 2020, nearly 100,000 residents will live in the five municipalities adjacent the study area.

Population	2010	2020 est.
Conshohocken Borough	7,833	8,917
Whitemarsh Township	17,349	17,852
West Conshohocken Borough	1,320	1,353
Plymouth Township	16,525	16,763
Lower Merion Township	57,825	58,600
Total 100,852	103,485	

Source: US Census, Montgomery County Planning

Located at the crossroads of major transportation routes, the riverfront of Conshohocken and Whitemarsh is also potentially shared with the entire population of Montgomery County. Each day, nearly 200,000 vehicles pass through the area on major highways. Almost another 12,000 people ride through on buses and trains and still another 1,600 are counted on bikes.

Passing by	Persons	Vehicles
Schuylkill Expressway		101,991
PA Route I-476		117,577
SEPTA Bus	1,356	
SEPTA Rail	10,478	
Trails (esp. bicycles)	1,633	

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

Demographics and Employment

The combined population of the Borough and Township is growing and surprisingly trending toward younger and smaller households. U.S. Census and Montgomery County data project it to increase by a minimum of 825 persons between 2010 and the year 2020 and reveal the median age of a Borough resident was 32.7 years and in Whitemarsh 42.6 years, in 2010. Both municipalities show less than the county's average persons per household: Conshohocken with 2.05 persons and Whitemarsh with 2.52 persons compared to the County's 2.53 persons in the year 2010.

2010 Housing	Total Units	Ave. Household
Conshohocken Borough	4,686	2.05
Whitemarsh Township	<u>7,105</u>	2.52
Total	11,791	

Source: US Census, Montgomery County Planning

According to recent U.S. Census data, Conshohocken and Whitemarsh enjoy above average labor participation and below average unemployment. In Conshohocken, as much as 78% of the population, 16 years of age or older, participated in the labor force and in Whitemarsh that rate was 68.6%. The number one industry in Conshohocken and Whitemarsh continues to be the service industry.

Resident Labor Force by Industry	Conshohocken	Whitemarsh
Agriculture	0%	0.10%
Construction	4.3%	6.4%
Manufacturing	9.6%	7.3%
Wholesale	1.6%	3.3%

Retail 9.8%	8.6%	
Transportation	4.2%	2.3%
Information	2.7%	2.6%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate/Leasing	12.7%	12.2%
Services	52.1%	55.7%
Public Administration	<u>2.9%</u>	<u>1.4%</u>
Total Persons	4,971	8,942

Source: US Census

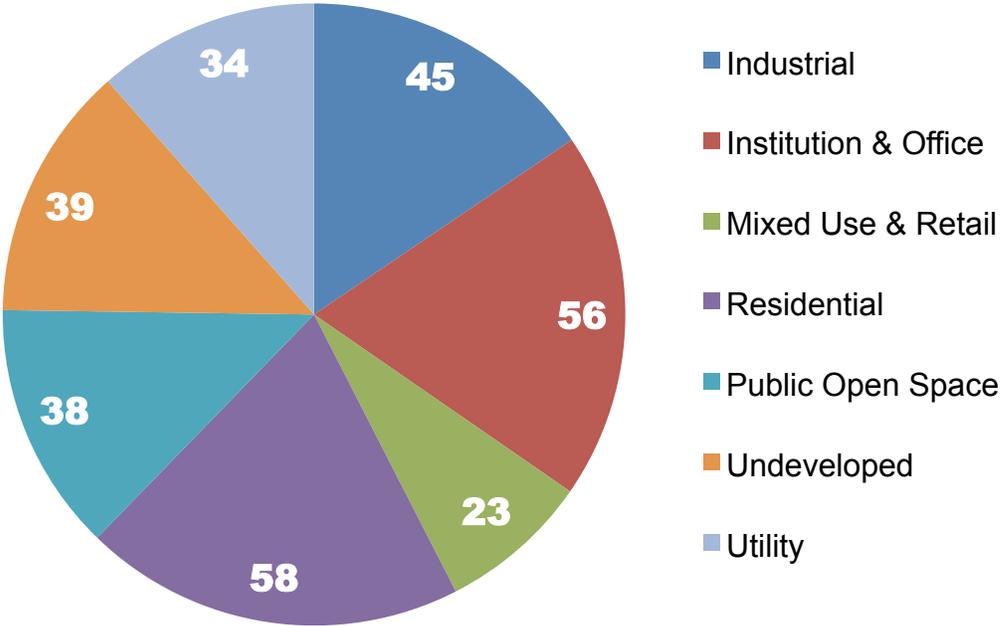
Existing Conditions

Defining the boundaries of the Study Area revealed two distinct areas of riverfront experience: the land, and land uses, along the river's edge and then also areas immediately in-land, from which a view of the river might be important. Land uses, and buildings, between the edge of the river and train tracks exhibit larger parcels of land and seemingly unfettered access to the water. Those above the train tracks exhibit smaller, vintage-sized parcels with physical obstacles to access the river but opportunities to view, or improve views of it.

Geography and Land Use

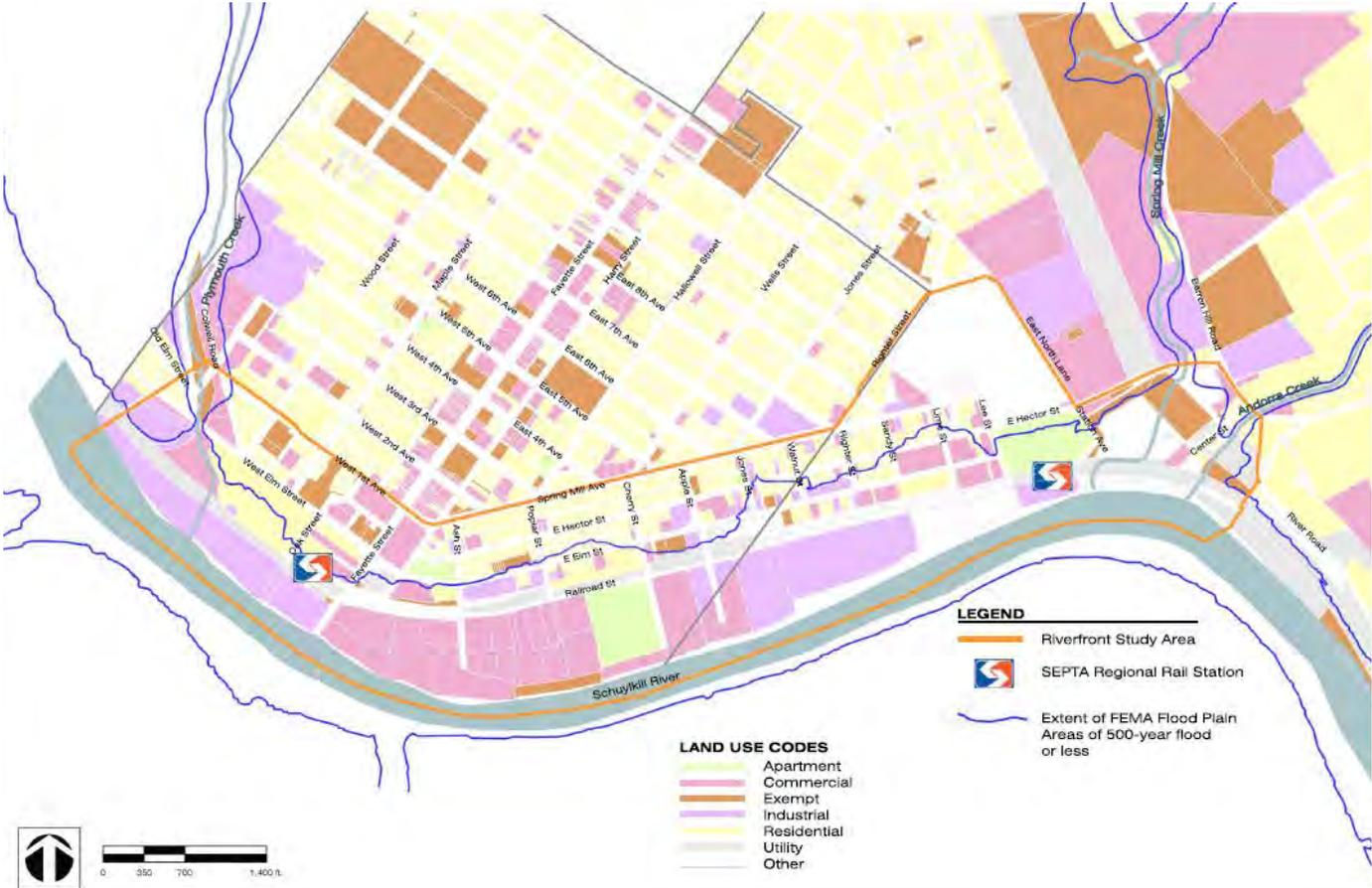
The Study Area captures geographic portions of southern and western Conshohocken Borough and Whitemarsh Township. Regardless of some areas of steep to moderate slopes, each municipality found firm geology of schist, gneiss, quartzite, dolomite, and some firm limestone, to build an industrial legacy.

Today, the Study Area exhibits as much a built environment as ever with only the types of land uses changing and not necessarily the bulk of the buildings. Neighborhood sized residential lots still exist above the train tracks. But where heavy industrial buildings once sat between the tracks and the river, large office towers and multifamily complexes now stand. As a result, a first glance suggests the riverfront is more business than neighborhood. However, looking closer at the Study Area, and some current real estate development projects, nearly 25% of the riverfront could be considered in residential land use.



Source: Montgomery County Planning, 2016

Land Use Type: Share of Study Area in Acres



Existing Land Uses of the Study Area

Conshohocken and Whitemarsh recently received proposals for the development and construction of at least **five** new office buildings in the Study Area of this Plan and nearly **1,317** housing units. When completed, the users of these developments will no doubt cherish the riverfront amenities and the supporting retail and commercial offerings of Conshohocken and Whitemarsh.

Proposed Development within the Study Area

Name	Location	Residential/Office	Status
Conshohocken Borough			
401-433 Washington	401 & 433 Washington St.	598 units in 4 buildings	Construction
51 Washington	51 Washington St.	310 units & parking	Permitting review
The Boathouse	Cherry Street		Built
Millennium – all phases	225- 227 Washington St.	Office plus plaza	
Tower Bridges – all	Elm Street	Office building	Permitting review
SEPTA parking lot changes			Pending
Train Station plan			Pending
Corson Street	West Elm	Office and 6 story parking	
400 West Elm	400 West Elm St.	5-story Office over parking	Approved 06/17/2015
One Conshohocken			Pending

Whitemarsh Township			
10th Ave Condominiums	10th Ave & Spring Mill Ave.	12 units over parking	Approved 1/23/2014
The Courts at Spring Mill	1101 E Hector St.	385 units w/ 2500 sf Office	Units Leased
AVA Landholdings/ Tison Homes	805 & 807 Spring Mill Ave.	10 units	Completed
Washington Street Assoc III LP	401 & 433 Washington St.	598 units in 4 buildings	Approved 5/28/2015
901 Washington Partners, LP	901 Washington Street	2-story Office over parking	Approved 11/12/2015
Hines Rowing Center	801 Washington Street	15,000 sf boathouse	Approved 2/20/2014
Spring Mill Corporate Center	North Lane	2-Lot Minor Subdivision	Approved 8/13/2015

Hydrology

There are three primary bodies of water affecting the Study Area, and the recommendations, of this plan: the Schuylkill River, the Plymouth Creek and the Spring Mill Creek.

At nearly 135 miles long, the Schuylkill River is one of Pennsylvania's most important rivers. Measured in its contribution to our state's heritage, economy and natural environment few other rivers impact Pennsylvania in so meaningful a way. From early Lenni-Lenape Native American life along the river to its use in the industrial age of 19th and 20th centuries to its status as a Pennsylvania Scenic River, the Schuylkill River is a defining element of Pennsylvania life.

Two creeks flow, and drain storm water, through major portions of Conshohocken and Whitemarsh. The Plymouth Creek flows to the Schuylkill from Whitemarsh, through Plymouth Township and finally through the Borough, near Colwell Lane and Elm Street. Spring Mill Creek is at the opposite end of the Study Area and flows from south-central Whitemarsh to the Schuylkill River at Spring Mill County Park.

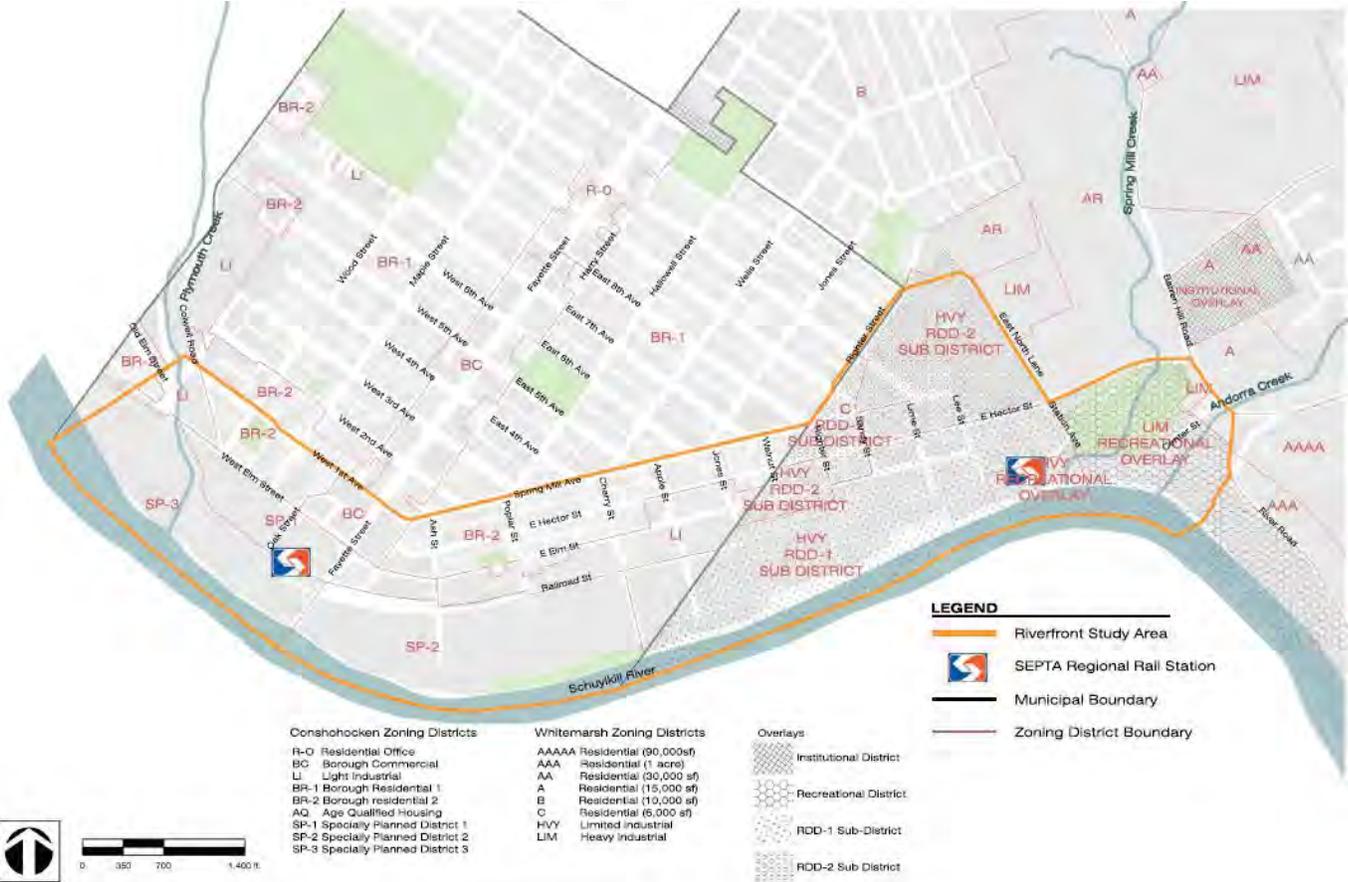
Enjoying the use and views of the Schuylkill River comes with an understanding that at times, its banks, and the banks of its tributary creeks and streams, may spill over with floodwaters. Nearly half of the Study Area is considered within the 100-year and 500 year floodplain of the Schuylkill River and Plymouth and Spring Mill creeks. The boundary of the river floodplain runs generally from the river's edge to 1,200 feet in-land, parallel with Elm Street.

Zoning Districts of the Study Area

The Study Area boundary also collects the riverfront zoning districts of Conshohocken and Whitemarsh according to “River’s Edge” and “River View” categories. These categories are named as such to help maintain the sentiment of the Riverfront Plan.

River’s Edge districts are located nearest the river and will be reviewed for their ability to enhance the riverfront experience. River View districts are located above the train tracks and below Spring Mill Avenue. These districts will be reviewed for the opportunity to enhance views of the riverfront (see Appendix III. Zoning).

Study Area Zoning Districts	River's Edge	River View
Conshohocken Borough		
Specially Planned District 3 (SP-3)	●	
Specially Planned District 2 (SP-2)	●	
Specially Planned District 1 (SP-1)		●
Borough Residential 2 (BR-2)		●
Limited Industrial (LI)		●
Borough Commercial (BC)		●
Whitemarsh Township		
Residential District (6,000 sq. ft.) (C)		●
Heavy Industrial District (HVY)	●	
Limited Industrial (LIM)	●	
(RDD-1 Sub-District)	●	
(RDD-2 Sub-District)		●



Existing Zoning of the Study Area

Circulation: Trains, Cars, and Trails

The riverfront of Conshohocken and Whitemarsh is especially known for its movement of commuters to and from the City of Philadelphia. Two train stations, multiple bus stations and scores of parking garages reveal a busy place with near constant movement of people. Add a record number of bicyclists on the trails, for recreation and commuting, and it becomes nearly a 24-hour destination.

Trains

Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) transports nearly 10,478 people, through the Study Area, on the Manayunk/Norristown rail line; and maintains two commuter stations with parking for daily and weekend riders.

Conshohocken Train Station

Located just west of the intersection of Harry Street and Washington Street, this station is under study for redesign near the Fayette Street Bridge, in the Borough. A morning ticket booth and waiting area and 118 free parking spaces are available to riders. Bus services are available via SEPTA's Route 95 and Route 97 buses.

2013 Daily Ridership	646 boardings	682 alightings
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Ridership to and from this Station has, in the past, revealed an interesting statistic of “reverse commuting” from Philadelphia to Conshohocken businesses.

Spring Mill Station

Located at the intersection of Station Avenue and North Lane, in Whitemarsh, this station is at the edge of the Schuylkill River. Daily and weekend riders have a small shelter, a bike rack, and dedicated parking available to them; with over 100 parking spaces at \$1.00 per space per day. Bus service to Spring Mill is provided by SEPTA's Route 97 bus.

2013 Daily Ridership	378 boardings	358 alightings
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This station is located at the confluence of Spring Mill Creek and the Schuylkill River and combined floodwaters often lead to temporary closing of the station.

Cars

The *Crossroads of Montgomery County* is the name given to the county's busiest transportation interchange and it includes portions of Conshohocken and Whitemarsh and the volume of cars passing by the riverfront is staggering. In past years, two major thoroughfares, the Schuylkill Expressway and the PA Blue Route, recorded nearly 219,568 vehicles per day near the Study Area. This volume can have a negative impact on the environmental health of a community and a positive impact on the economic vitality of it; depending on how it is managed.

For the residents and businesses of the Study Area, traffic can be overwhelming at times, especially during peak morning and afternoon rush hours. Many studies have recorded the volume of cars, in and out of the Study Area. The primary repository of traffic data, for the streets and intersections now included in the Study Area, is the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). For more than a decade DVRPC has worked toward an interactive database of Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) for the region at large.

In 2015, DVRPC recorded large volumes of vehicles travelled along Fayette Street especially in mornings and evenings toward the Schuylkill Expressway and PA Blue Route highway interchanges and locally to the Conshohocken train station.

	AADT
Fayette Street Bridge (Eastbound)	18,379 vehicles
Fayette Street Bridge (Westbound)	26,466 vehicles

DVRPC also captured peak morning and evening traffic counts for Whitemarsh near the Spring Mill Train Station. The limited access, via North Lane and Hector Streets, makes the traffic count especially important. In 2011, DVRPC recorded:

	AADT
Hector Street	11,738 vehicles

Parking along the riverfront of Conshohocken and Whitemarsh can, on most weekdays, be a challenge. Residents, commuters and local businesses all compete for parking: in train station lots, parking garages and street-front metered spaces; with more than one strategy employed to ease the burden. Free and charge-as-you-go spaces exist. Shared parking exists in the Borough, parking permits, too. But in all cases the demand overwhelms the available land use in the Study Area.

Of special concern for the Study Area are the existing parking garages. Dominant features in the landscape these garages either offer relief to parking issues or, if their location is outdated, present challenges. Five separate parking garages are located in the Study Area, at the following intersections:

Conshohocken Borough

1. West 1st Avenue & Robinson Alley
2. Oak Street & Stoddard Avenue
3. Fayette Street & East 1st Avenue
4. Harry Street & Washington Street

Whitemarsh Township

5. Station Avenue & North Lane

Parking lots, of considerable size, also exist throughout the Study Area and additionally offer relief or present challenges to riverfront land use planning.

	Acres in Parking Lots (approx.)
Conshohocken Borough	11 acres
Whitemarsh Township	7 acres

Trails

Conshohocken and Whitemarsh residents and visitors currently have access to four separate riverfront trail systems, with improvements to each hoped for.

Cross County Trail

Montgomery County is steadily increasing the number of available walking and multi-use trails. To date, nearly 25 trails have been completed, proposed or planned for construction. One such trail, The Cross County Trail, will when completed, extend 17.5 miles from Conshohocken Borough eastward through several municipalities and parks to the border of Bucks County.

From near the intersection of West Elm Street and Old Elm Street in Conshohocken, the Cross County is launched north along the Plymouth Creek. It runs, 12 feet wide, for ½ mile, until it slips under PA Route 476 to head east.

Schuylkill River Trail

The Schuylkill River Trail (SRT) is one of the largest trail planning and installation projects of the entire region. When completed, this paved trail will travel nearly 100 miles from Schuylkill County to the Delaware River in Philadelphia.

In Conshohocken Borough and Whitemarsh Township, the SRT runs through the entire riverfront area. It begins in the western portion of Conshohocken at Old Elm Street and West Elm Street, high on a ridge overlooking the river valley, then slides downhill to run parallel the train tracks. It stays above the train tracks, crossing 7 streets, and through a tree-lined corridor past the Spring Mill County Park, in Whitemarsh Township, onward to Philadelphia.

The Walking Path/ River Walk

Conshohocken Borough and Whitemarsh Township are actively promoting the development of a riverfront walking path along the Schuylkill River. Early in the days of the Borough's riverfront redevelopment, developers complied with each municipality's zoning and established portions of the improved path.

Today, a walking path exists from a point just west of the end of Ash Street meandering eastward approximately ½ mile to the very end of Cherry Street; with a handful of sitting areas and landscaped zones along the way. This path is intended to run the entire 2 miles of riverfront for Conshohocken and Whitemarsh residents and visitors.

Spring Mill County Park

Spring Mill County Park is an exceptionally large woodland for a near-urban setting with nearly 38-acres of land and easements now owned by Montgomery County. Located adjacent the Spring Mill train station and with three very small points of park access: Center Street, in the village of Spring Mill, Station Avenue and the Schuylkill River Trail, this mostly undeveloped park offers explorable streamside habitat, shaded footpaths and the potential for environmental education.

Spring Mill County Park is situated alongside the Schuylkill River Trail, above the train tracks and the river’s edge.



Existing Trails of the Study Area

Public Participation

The Riverfront Plan incorporates the public participation input and stakeholder interviews of various previous plans. Two plans offering key insight to the sentiment of Conshohocken and Whitemarsh are the *2011 Riverfront Open Space Plan of Whitemarsh Township* and the *Conshohocken Revitalization Plan Update: "The Community Revisited."*

Borough and Township feedback asked for:

- A passive recreation trail for leisurely use, with signage suggesting as much, along the river (unique to more intensive trail activity of Schuylkill River Trail)
- A civic gathering space, artwork, and new concessions along the waterfront
- New signage for visiting back and forth to the river, including historic and cultural resources
- Boat launches staged at various locations, including revised usage of the Borough's "Riverwalk" at Millennium ramp
- Improvements to existing parking and clarification of shared parking
- Installation and improvement of safety and emergency response elements are critically important
- Improvements to Spring Mill County Park
- Potential license agreements and trail improvements in the PECO utility easement to provide non-road access to the riverfront trail system

The Riverfront Plan also incorporates the input of more recently selected Borough and Township Stakeholders. Each Stakeholder received the following questions:

- What history do you, or your organization or group, have with the redevelopment of the previously industrialized areas of the riverfront?
- What history do you, or your organization or group, have with development of the Schuylkill Riverfront Trail or Cross County Trail?
- What benefit do you feel public transportation brings to your business or organization; ie. do you or your employees take advantage of the existing train or bus stations?
- What plans, reports or studies have you contributed to in the past for the analysis of the riverfront's revitalization opportunities?
- What are your primary concerns for shared use of the riverfront, by way of a riverwalk, boating access, etc.?
- What land uses or amenities, if any, would you introduce to make the interaction between the public and the business space more interesting:
 - *Land use:* active recreation areas, sports arena, retail, commercial entertainment, museum/art gallery or other (s)
 - *Amenities:* outdoor cafe-like seating and lunch areas, food festival/event/small concert venues or other (s)?

- If it could be demonstrated that improvements to the riverfront will enhance the value of your property would you support municipal or joint financing of these improvements; for example would you support a government issued bond, the use of government awarded grants, or possibly recruitment of private foundation monies?

Most of the Stakeholders recently selected by the Borough and Township contributed their input via phone, email and meeting attendance. For those attending Stakeholder meetings held **September 16, 2015** and **September 17, 2015**, presentations and discussions used the goals of the Steering Committee and the Stakeholder Questionnaire as a basis for gathering feedback.

Top Stakeholder Concerns

Traffic

Parking

Flooding

Access

Enjoyment

Boating

Safety

Collaboration

The concerns of the Stakeholders, Steering Committee and the public are incorporated the recommendations of this plan, including opportunities for further input to the implementation of its Action Plan. See *Appendices of Meeting Minutes and Comments from Stakeholders*.



The Recommendations of the Riverfront Plan acknowledge an early assessment of the desires of Whitmarsh and Conshohocken, through a review of past plans, and a list of opportunities and constraints discovered through the plan process.

The early assessment revealed the following shared interests:

- Whitmarsh and Conshohocken both would like a passive recreation trail, for leisurely use and with trail signage suggesting as much, along the actual river
- A civic gathering space, artwork, and new concessions along the waterfront are desired
- New signage for visiting back and forth to the river, including the Borough's historic and cultural resources, are greatly desired
- Improvements to existing parking and clarification of shared parking is much needed
- Installation and improvement of safety and emergency response elements are critically important
- Improvements to Spring Mill County Park are desired
- Boat launches staged at various locations, including revised usage of the Borough's Riverwalk at Millennium ramp, are hoped for
- Potential license agreements and trail improvements in the PECO utility easement could present Township residents with non-road access to the trail system

Opportunities and Constraints

The Opportunities and Constraints discovered through the plan process reveal greater opportunity for positive change than actual constraints. And, despite the condition of the Study Area prompting the development of the plan itself, the riverfront still possesses room enough to meet the goals of each community.

Constraints

- Access to the riverfront is limited in part because of private property ownership but also lack of signage promoting riverfront access points;
- Trail planning has not yet accounted for trail user needs:
 - Lack of dedicated restroom facilities, parking and rest areas
 - Signage is uncoordinated between municipalities and other agencies
 - Street crossings are in need of upgrading
 - Lack of lighting and dedicated emergency facilities; police-rescue station and/or emergency call boxes
 - Trail edges lack consistent management and interesting landscaping
- Steep slopes in Conshohocken limit walking tourism and casual exploration from the riverfront
- Traffic is congested near existing train stations, in part because Oak Street and Washington Street do not allow logical flow of vehicles
- Lack of artwork and facilities dedicated to the history of the riverfront limits the connection the community has with its own identity and past
- Lack of event space limits the community's ability to celebrate its riverfront and/or community milestones
- Limited recreation opportunities discourage off-week interaction with the riverfront, and cannot possibly meet the needs or desires of residents
- Parking is awkward and in some cases off limits for visitors
- Zoning districts are in need of alignment; some density differences exist.

Opportunities

- Both municipalities have passed zoning and subdivision and land development ordinance regulations to ensure the public has access to the riverfront
- Both municipalities are home to parcels of land perfectly situated for the development of trailhead facilities to offer restrooms, parking and rest areas to trail users
- Both municipalities encourage redevelopment of their underutilized industrial lands through cooperative planning and analysis and supporting zoning and subdivision and land development ordinance regulations
- Both municipalities have studied aspects of the riverfront importance before, after and during community request to do so; i.e. train station studies, parking studies, open space planning, revitalization plans, etc.
- Each train station in the Study Area has been reviewed for the potential to upgrade existing shelters, ticketing buildings and parking

- Each municipality has a populace uniformly concerned for the future of the riverfront and committed to providing input for its improvement
- Each municipality is experiencing residential development pressure in the Study Area suggesting new residents will increase the demand for public services, recreation, shopping and entertainment
- Each municipality has acknowledged a greater need to connect their residents to the history of the riverfront
- Each municipality has a track record of attracting and retaining substantial business interest in the riverfront; recruiting and securing grant funds for community improvement projects; and, for implementing projects meant to improve the quality of life for their residents



Goal 1: Improve Access to Our Riverfront

The following recommendations identify new street patterns and traffic calming, sidewalk improvements, street crossings, and parking scenarios.



Land Use Recommendations

Objective 1.1: Establish the Plymouth Falls Boat Launch

Located at the high point of Conshohocken's riverfront, this boat launch consists of two floating docks and a portage path between them. Kayakers and canoeists can choose to put into the river above or below the rapids between docks. Small landing areas of grass allow river users to stage their boats, meet to discuss trips and catch their breath. Signage celebrates the history of the riverfront, informs paddlers of river's features and directs them to safe landings in either direction.

ACTION PLAN: acquisition of property or easements to establish access, in absence of Washington Avenue extension, design and secure approvals for boat ramps and docks, establish landing areas, install ramps and docks. Grants are available.

Objective 1.2: Extend Oak Street

Establish a new extension of Oak Street, from its terminus at Stoddard Avenue, in Conshohocken, to cross the Schuylkill River Trail and the existing rail lines. Both vehicular and pedestrian access to the lands along the river, as well as the train station—which continues to be studied for redesign—will be improved.

ACTION PLAN: secure approvals and crossing agreements from Schuylkill River Heritage Area and SEPTA. Design, engineer and install Oak Street extension with sidewalks, rail crossing safety, lighting, and trail and street directional signage.

Objective 1.3: Establish Oak Street River Link

From the new terminus of Oak Street, on the southwest side of the rail lines, to the river's edge a pedestrian link will improve access to the river. An ADA-compliant trail with simple signage will guide users to and from the river.

ACTION PLAN: acquisition of a trail easement, development of access trail to the river, install signage. Grants are available.

Objective 1.4: Establish Conshohocken Train Station River Link

Under Fayette Street Bridge there exists underutilized property, south of the rail lines and sheltered from the weather, with potential for unfettered access to the river. A river access link will be established from the edge of Washington Street to the river's edge. An ADA compliant trail with simple signage will guide users to and from the river.

ACTION PLAN: acquire trail easement, development of access trail to the river, install signage. Grants are available.

Objective 1.5: Create the Two Boroughs Bridge

Suspended under Fayette Street Bridge, a new pedestrian bridge will link Conshohocken Borough with West Conshohocken Borough. A unique and exciting experience will begin from ground level ramp entrances, on either side of the Schuylkill River, and carry pedestrians to their destination free of road side stress.

ACTION PLAN: conduct engineering feasibility study for suspended bridge, design, engineer and secure approvals for bridge, construct bridge, secure access or trail easement to ramp approach if appropriate. Grants may be available.



View of Two Borough Bridge (suspended from Fayette Street Bridge)

Objective 1.6: Establish bridge sheltered play area and tot lot

For use by residents, visitors and passengers with children, a play area will exist under the shelter of the Fayette Street Bridge with both common playground equipment as well as sculptural forms for unstructured play.

ACTION PLAN: secure use agreements, design, engineer, and construct area.

Objective 1.7: Extend Washington Street

From the rail line terminus of Lee Street Loop, Washington Street should begin its journey westward. A distance less than 500 feet remains to connect it to double lane portions of itself. Access to existing and proposed residential and non-residential uses would be greatly improved as would the experience of walking in through the flats of the community's riverfront.

ACTION PLAN: acquisition of private property, design; engineering, and construction of cartway, sidewalks, signage and enhancements.

Design Standards Recommendations

Objective 1.8: Introduce streetscape enhancements along Oak Street

To enhance the appeal of an extended Oak Street additional trees should be placed, where possible, along the east side of Oak Street.

ACTION PLAN: design, engineer, and install new sidewalks and curb landing

Objective 1.9: Install sidewalks along Harry Street

From Elm Street to Washington Street, new sidewalks should be installed for safe and secure access to the Stoddard Avenue and Washington Street rail crossing.

ACTION PLAN: design, engineer, and install new sidewalks curb landing

Objective 1.10: Introduce streetscape enhancements along Washington Street

To enhance the appeal of an existing and proposed extended Washington Street, trees, landscaping and lighting should adorn the rail line side of Washington Street with sidewalks, trees, lighting and benches improving the opposite side.

ACTION PLAN: secure agreements with rail; design, engineer, and install enhancements.

Goal 2: Connect Our Trails

The following recommendations establish connections between existing trails, upgrade trail facilities and amenities and unify wayfinding and safety standards throughout the riverfront study area.

Land Use Recommendations

Objective 2.1: Establish the Schuylkill Riverfront Park and Walking Path

Routinely called the “Walking Path” this trail is meant to be used for leisurely walks and enjoyment of the river and adjacent land uses and amenities. It has been hoped, according to previous plans and regulatory decisions of Whitemarsh and Conshohocken, that this path would not be used for intensive bicycling or vigorous exercise. It will be for those enjoying a slower pace along the river.

Guaranteed by the ordinances and development agreements of each municipality, the path should be placed not higher from the river than 100 feet from the river’s edge. Existing business owners and developers have attempted to comply, but without uniform design or promotion. With a new Riverfront Park proposed, the path will be incorporated exciting new park features and become a major link between areas of recreation, art, music, food, trains, and business.

ACTION PLAN: coordinate with existing landowners; establish use agreements or easements; plan, design and bid. Some grant funds available.

Objective 2.2: Establish the Lee Street Loop

The Lee Street Loop will be a new walking, running and bicycling loop to connect Schuylkill River Trail users with main street Conshohocken and provide a new connection to the Cross County Trail. When complete, it will be a nearly 3-mile loop. The route taken uses a gentler slope and will even allow a greater number of commuters to walk or bicycle to each train station.

From a point of beginning, in Whitemarsh Township, the “Lee Street Loop” will travel north, from the Schuylkill River Trail, along Lee Street, to Spring Mill Avenue, heading west across Fayette Street to West 1st Avenue, to the end of the street, then south along a new switchback ramp to Colwell Lane. Users can then continue the loop by travelling east on the Schuylkill River Trail.

ACTION PLAN: painted bike lanes, street crossings, signage, switchback ramp

Objective 2.3: Install primary and secondary trailheads

A trailhead is simply a dedicated location for beginning one’s trail journey. It should include parking as well as stationary and portable maps of the trail. If the trail is heavily used, restrooms, rest areas and other park amenities are also recommended. A well-designed trailhead promotes the trail experience as well as the community’s other important assets.

Conshohocken and Whitemarsh residents and visitors have access to one of the most heavily used trail systems in the region (of the four trail systems along the river, in Conshohocken and Whitemarsh, the Schuylkill River Trail has nearly 1,600 daily users). Yet no specific trailhead exists for any portion of the system.

Primary Trailheads

Three primary trailheads are recommended for the study area. They are considered primary because they offer parking for large volume trail use, a variety of mapping & signage, restrooms, and rest areas. While they are located specifically to balance the study area, they also service segments of external trail systems suspected to have few if any trailhead amenities.

The Trailhead at Spring Mill

This trailhead would be located at the terminus of Center Street in the village of Spring Mill. With careful design, this trailhead could be celebrated as an exemplary trailhead with parking, restrooms, a rest area and playground for a very large population of users. Additionally, it is immediately adjacent the Schuylkill River Trail and would require no road crossing by pedestrians or cyclists.

ACTION PLAN: acquisition of private property required, development of trailhead. Grant funds are available

The Trailhead at Colwell Road (aka Colwell Lane)

For improved use of the Cross County Trail and the Schuylkill River Trail this trailhead would offer parking, restrooms and a pedestrian bridge over the Plymouth Creek.

ACTION PLAN: acquisition of private property, development of trailhead. Grant funds are available

Monument to Industry

Cherry Street begins at the edge of the Schuylkill River. This location offers the opportunity to install trailhead visitor drop off and a rest area for The Walking Path. It is also an ideal location for an artistic monument celebrating the riverfront history and especially its users. On street parking is available.

ACTION PLAN: design, engineer, and grade for new vehicle turnaround and placement of monument.

Secondary Trailheads

Three secondary trailheads are recommended to offer simple staging of cars or bicycles along the Schuylkill River Trail and to access the PECO right of way between Sherry Lake and Spring Mill County Park.

Quaker Quick Trail

Located at the Quaker Chemical offices, at the intersection of Sandy Street and East Elm Street, this trailhead could offer improved landscaping and simple signage at a new entrance of the trail. No parking would be allowed, just simple pedestrian use.

ACTION PLAN: acquisition of trail easement, with potential for conservation easement, installation of safety bollards, and signage.

Elm Street Square

Using the existing parking lot of the Elm Street Square office building, located at 375 East Elm Street (with additional access via Cherry Street and Popular Street), this trailhead could offer a landscaped entrance with simple signage as well as lighting and an emergency call center. Current trail planning suggests access to major trails should not be limited to street intersections, but also where pedestrians tend to pause and gather for wayfinding.

ACTION PLAN: acquisition of trail easement, use agreement, design and construction of trail opening and park bench area, signage, lighting and call box. Grants are available.

PECO Park and Walk

With an entrance immediately across the Hector Street-Spring Mill parking lot, dedicated pervious parking will be available to users of the Schuylkill River Trail or the proposed boardwalk through the PECO right-of-way to Spring Mill County Park, especially during business hours (currently posted as unavailable for park and trail users) in the Spring Mill parking lot.

ACTION PLAN: acquisition of acreage or access and use agreement, development of trailhead parking, establish street crossing and signage. Grants are available.

Objective 2.4: Design and install the boardwalk at Spring Mill Park

A boardwalk, beginning at the entrance of the Spring Mill parking lot on Hector Street, will work its way south through wetlands and woodlands to the proposed trailhead at Spring Mill. It will descend almost 800 feet from its beginning with users enjoying nature viewing opportunities and an overlook station with interpretive signage for the existing habitat. The boardwalk design will meet ADA standards to ensure individuals who are differently-abled can enjoy the habitat as well. Materials to be used will meet the most current green and sustainable design specifications.

ACTION PLAN: secure trail or access and use easements or agreements from Montgomery County as well as PECO, design and install boardwalk. Grants are available.

Design Standards Recommendations

Objective 2.5: Improve safety features: crossings, lighting and emergency stations

For improved visibility and physical safety of trail users, each street crossing for the Schuylkill River Trail, the Walking Path and in specific locations of the Lee Street Loop should be improved to consistent design standards throughout the Study Area. New lighting along the Schuylkill River Trail and in key locations for the Cross County Trail and Spring Mill County Park and proposed Lee Street Loop will improve safety and unify design features of the trail system in the Study Area. Emergency Stations will offer non-cellular device contact with local police, fire and emergency services.

ACTION PLAN: conduct a study of emergency station placement, design, engineer, and bid street crossing, permitting included. Some grant funds available.

Objective 2.6: Improve trailside landscaping

The Schuylkill River Trail and the Cross County Trail will have thousands of trail users and visitors per month for the foreseeable few years. To offer a more pleasant experience through the Study Area, and potentially offer residents and trail users the opportunity to adopt-a-mile, the trailside will be designed and landscaped using a variety of low maintenance native plant species and select ornamental plants meant to offer seasonal color. Additionally, plant selections will address safety concerns for plant height and visibility.

ACTION PLAN: conduct plant study of existing trail systems, prepare base map, schematic design and construction planning of landscaping of trail segments.

Goal 3: Make Our Riverfront a Destination

The following recommendations encourage each municipality to work closely with each other and the business community to create a more vibrant riverfront.

Land Use Recommendations

Objective 3.1: Establish Canal History Center and Park

At the western boundary of the Study Area and along the river, a linear water park, in the design of a typical industrial-era canal, will offer seasonal passive and active recreation, with ample areas to sit and enjoy spring and summer remote control boating and youth fishing events followed by wintertime ice skating and festivals. A Canal History Center will offer static, video and graphic celebration of the riverfront's historical usage, sheltered gathering areas for tours, and public restrooms. Two additional pavilions will sit by the water's edge available for picnics and gatherings.

ACTION PLAN: acquisition of private property, design, and engineering of park elements including access road with tree-lined parking. Grant funds are available.



The canal restoration, Canal History Museum, and Pavilions provide a link to the historic riverfront and important recreation opportunities

Objective 3.2: Establish Oak Street Athletic Fields

Active recreation uses located between the river and rail lines, and at the terminus of Oak Street, could include two regulation soccer fields, or multi-use fields, end to end, and two tennis courts, depending on demand analysis. Solar panel covered parking will shade vehicles and generate energy to offset evening lighting. The Schuylkill River Walking Path will be accessible via the newly created Oak Street River Link and offer river's edge walks and riverbank fishing.

ACTION PLAN: acquisition of private property, design and engineering of parking, ball fields and paths. Conduct recreation demand analysis. Grant funds are available.



The Oak Street Athletic Fields meet active recreation needs and provide space for special events and festivals

Objective 3.3: Create Two Boroughs Bridge

Suspended under the Fayette Street Bridge a pedestrian bridge will link the boroughs of Conshohocken and West Conshohocken. Within artistic-sculptural design, pedestrians will move freely between ADA-accessible ramps and approaches, and enjoy long vistas of the river upstream and downstream.

ACTION PLAN: complete engineering feasibility study, establish joint municipal agreements with state agencies, and secure financial support. Establish authority and special area districts such as Transit Revitalization Investment Districts and secure support funding.



Objective 3.4: Create Ash Street “upper level” elevated plaza

Restaurants and boutique retail will look out over the river from elevated over-parking plazas. Special events and outside dining will enjoy seasonal art displays and music with select plantings and seating helping to define use areas. The Schuylkill River Park Walking Path will approach and pass the plazas with opportunities to engage these shared spaces via ADA-accessible ramps.

ACTION PLAN: acquisition of expanded use and trail easements, shared management agreements, design and engineering, establish Business Improvement District. Revisions to municipal ordinances may be required.



Ash Street Elevated Plaza overlooking existing parking. This creates space for restaurants above the flood plain.

Objective 3.5: Install Ash Street cantilevered overlook

At the river’s edge terminus of Ash Street, and within view of Spring Mill Avenue, a platform style overlook will cantilever above the river offering long distance views of the river and spectator enjoyment of boating and potential water events.

ACTION PLAN: feasibility studies required, engineering, and cost analyses; funding strategies needed.

Objective 3.6: Create Millennium Meadow

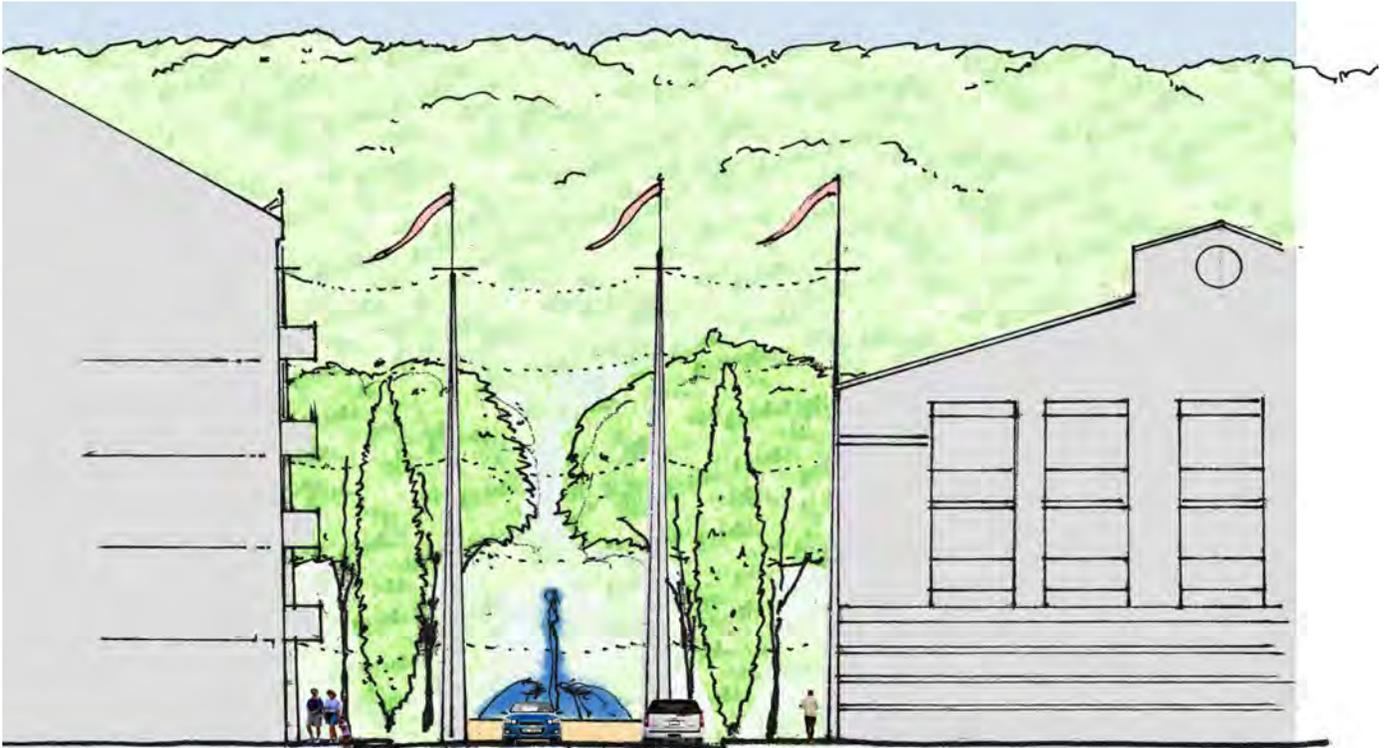
Tucked behind the existing Millennium offices, open field and meadow river viewing will be available to users of the Walking Path with a dual use circular ramp offering pedestrians access to an elevated plaza or kayakers access to the river. Vehicular Turnaround/Drop-off will be located at the river’s terminus of Poplar Street.

ACTION PLAN: use and trail easements, design and engineering of plaza and river ramp, design and engineering of vehicular turnaround. Establishment of Business Improvement District with shared use, management, and financing agreements.

Objective 3.7: Install Poplar Street Riverfront banners and fountain

At the river's terminus of Poplar Street, and within view of Spring Mill Avenue, vertical flags and banners will blow in the river valley wind attracting residents and visitors to the river. A fountain within the vehicular turnaround will offer acoustic and visual relief from a busy workday or a meeting destination for friends.

ACTION PLAN: engineering and cost analysis; possible use of municipal fees-in-lieu-of.



The banners, lights, and fountains at the terminus of Poplar Street link with the residential neighborhoods



Objective 3.8: Install Boathouse suspended boardwalk

The Schuylkill River Walking Path will float above the ramps and docks of the existing Conshohocken Boathouse and offer pedestrians special views of team practice and potential boat races.

ACTION PLAN: engineering and cost analyses needed. Limited grant funds may be available.

Objective 3.9: *Install Monument to Industry*

Located at the river terminus of Cherry Street, *the Monument to Industry* celebrates, through its artistic design and informational signage, the history of the riverfront's industrial past. The height of the monument will capture the awe of visitors, offer a significant visual aid to wayfinding along the Walking Path and from far up the length of Cherry Street, and double as secondary trailhead with vehicular turnaround and drop-off, and sculptural seating options. To ensure enjoyment by visitors of all ages, an exciting kinetic video screen could capture the movements of visitors and Walking Path users.

ACTION PLAN: design, engineer, and grade for new vehicle turnaround and placement of monument.

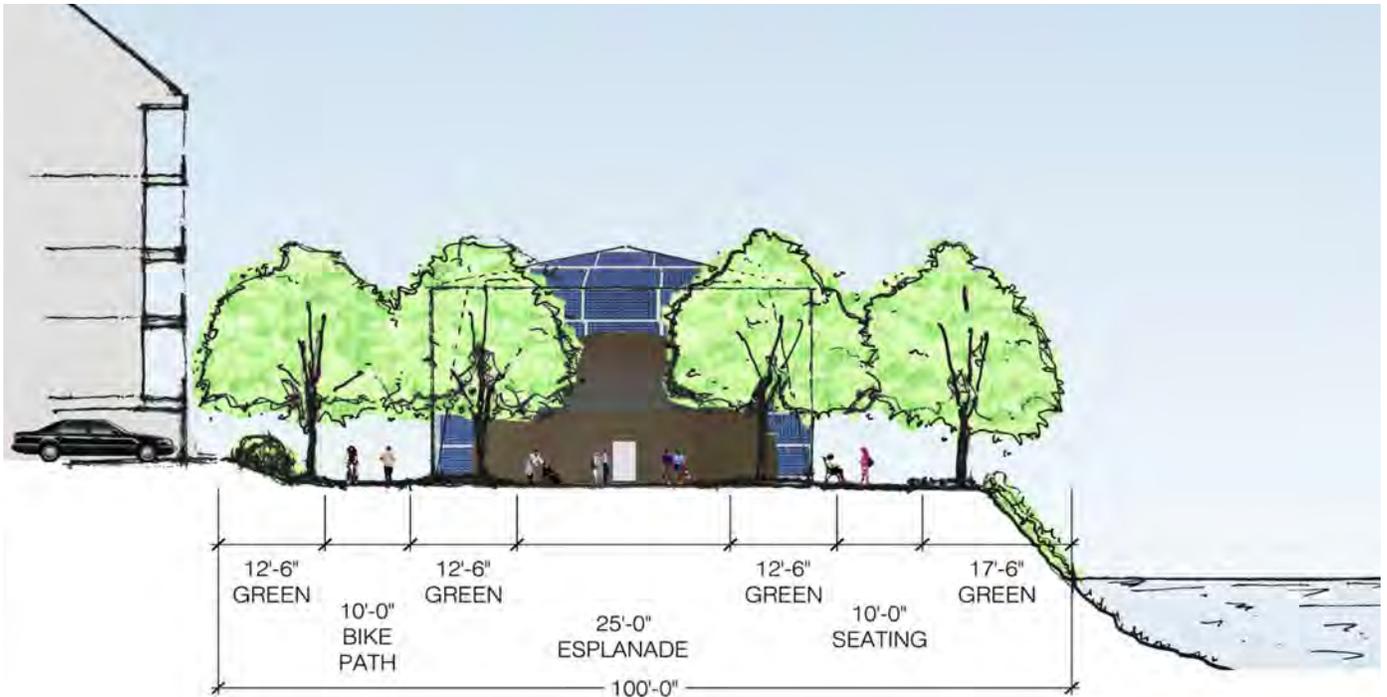


The Monument to Industry is an interactive video display that creates an important focal point at the terminus of the River Allée

Objective 3.10: Create Schuylkill River Allée

Reminiscent of the great parks of the world, an allée of Sycamore trees will be created along the edge of the Schuylkill River. From Cherry Street, heading toward Spring Mill, Walking Path users will stroll along a pathway 2,000 feet in length and 30 feet wide, enjoying views of the river, shade from the Sycamores, and rows of seasonal art and farmers market stands. At the eastern end of the allée sits a performing arts band shell with stage front space for spectators.

ACTION PLAN: acquisition of trail easements, design and planting of allée, user agreements between municipalities, farmers market, and artist community.



The River Allée includes a wide esplanade that will function as a space for craft fairs, farmers markets, municipal festivals, etc.

Objective 3.11: Install band shell

A band shell for performing arts, such as small musical bands, storytellers, and poets will sit at the eastern end of an allée of Sycamore trees. Stage front space will accommodate spectator lawn chairs and picnic blankets.

ACTION PLAN: amend trail buffer use agreements or acquire easements, design, and install band shell. Some grant funds available.

Objective 13.2: Establish Washington Street soccer field

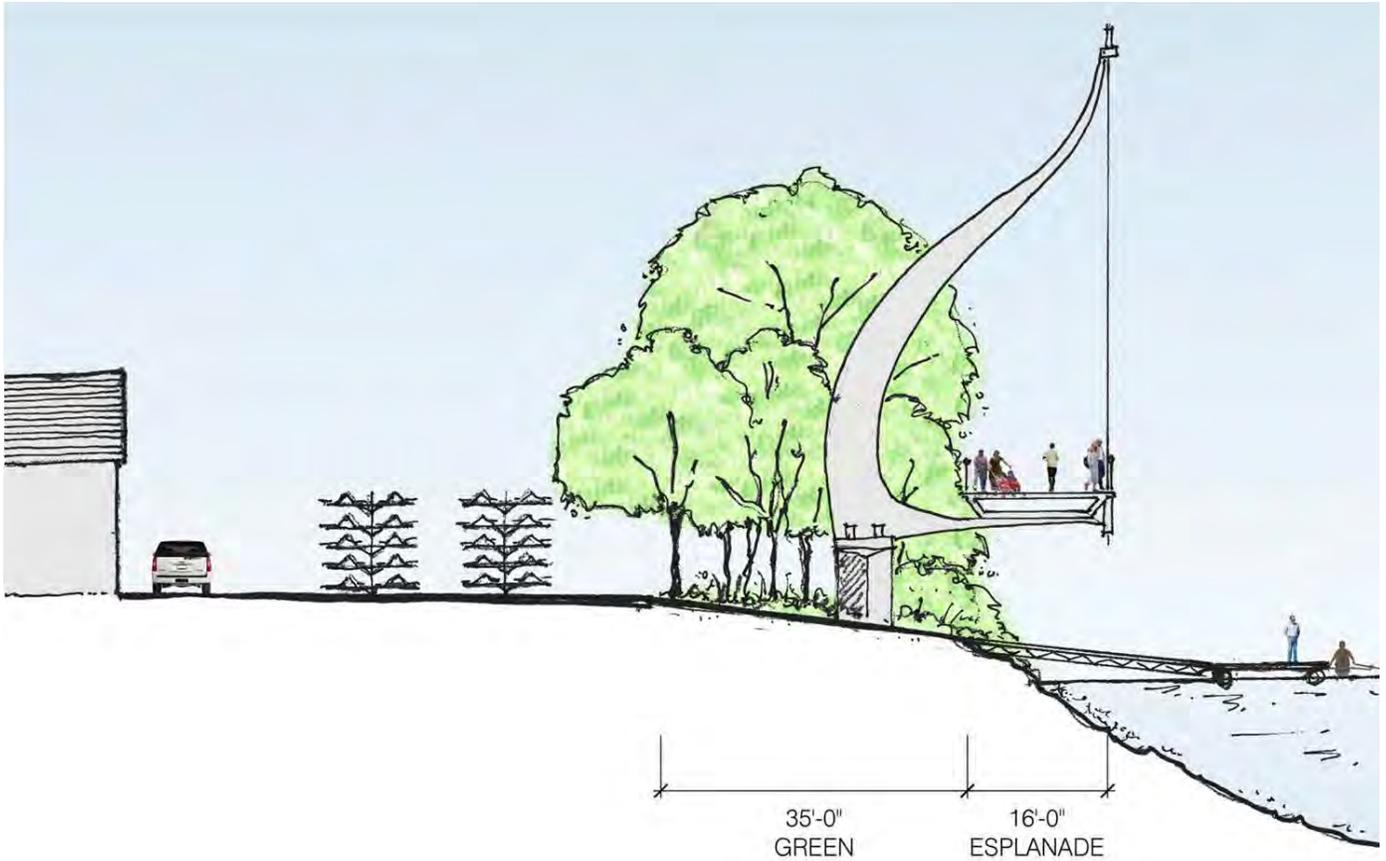
A multi-use athletic field primarily used for soccer will sit adjacent the allée of Sycamore trees, and between Washington Street and the Schuylkill River. Access and parking from Washington Street will be after-hours gated or by paid parking.

ACTION PLAN: acquire and subdivide existing private property or negotiate alternative development plan for existing undeveloped acreage. Grant funds available.

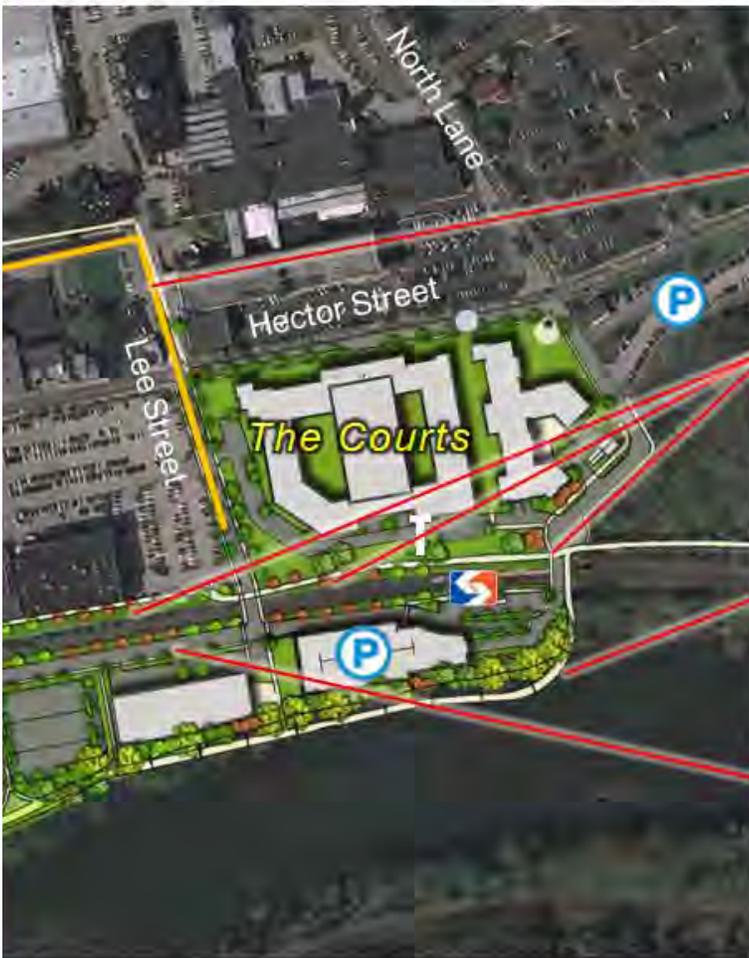
Objective 3.13: *Install suspended walking path at Rowing Center*

The Hines Rowing Center has a long tradition of accessing the Schuylkill River for team and individual boating practice. The members of the boathouse additionally are regarded as great stewards of the river. To ensure their continued unimpeded focus on their sport and to offer views of their well-maintained riverbank, the Walking Path will lift off the ground and carry pedestrians over the river's edge by way of a suspended boardwalk.

ACTION PLAN: negotiate use or trail agreements, design, engineer, and build suspended boardwalk Walking Path.



The riverfront Esplanade is suspended over the boat clubs to avoid conflicts with the valuable rowing boats



Lee Street Loop (Lee St. Section)

*Pedestrian Trail,
Signage to Conshohocken*

Schuylkill River Trail Improvements

*Landscape Beautification,
Street Crossing, Signage*

Suspended Walking Path

*Cantilevered-contemporary design, Steel
& Cable Construction, Lighting*

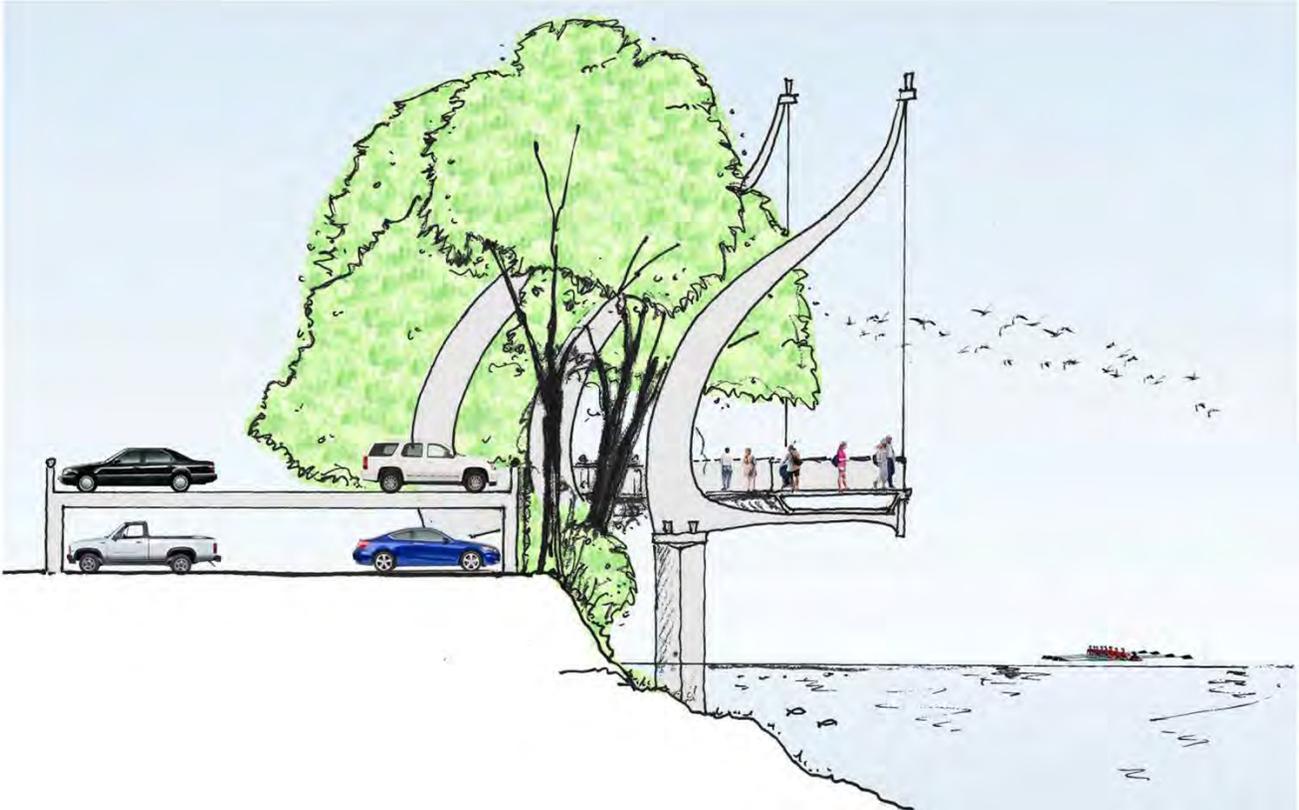
Washington Street Extension

*Streetscape Beautification, Extension
Two Lane, Signage , Sidewalks, RE-
Development of Existing Structures*

Objective 3.14: *Install suspended walking path to Spring Mill Station*

From the rowing center suspended boardwalk to the very end of Station Avenue, as it meets the Schuylkill River, pedestrians will walk atop the river itself and enjoy spectacular views of the bend in the river. This portion of the path will serve as yet another option for accessing or leaving the Spring Mill Station.

ACTION PLAN: negotiate use agreements with private property owners and SEPTA who lack the river frontage for a more land-based path, design, and engineer suspended boardwalk Walking Path.

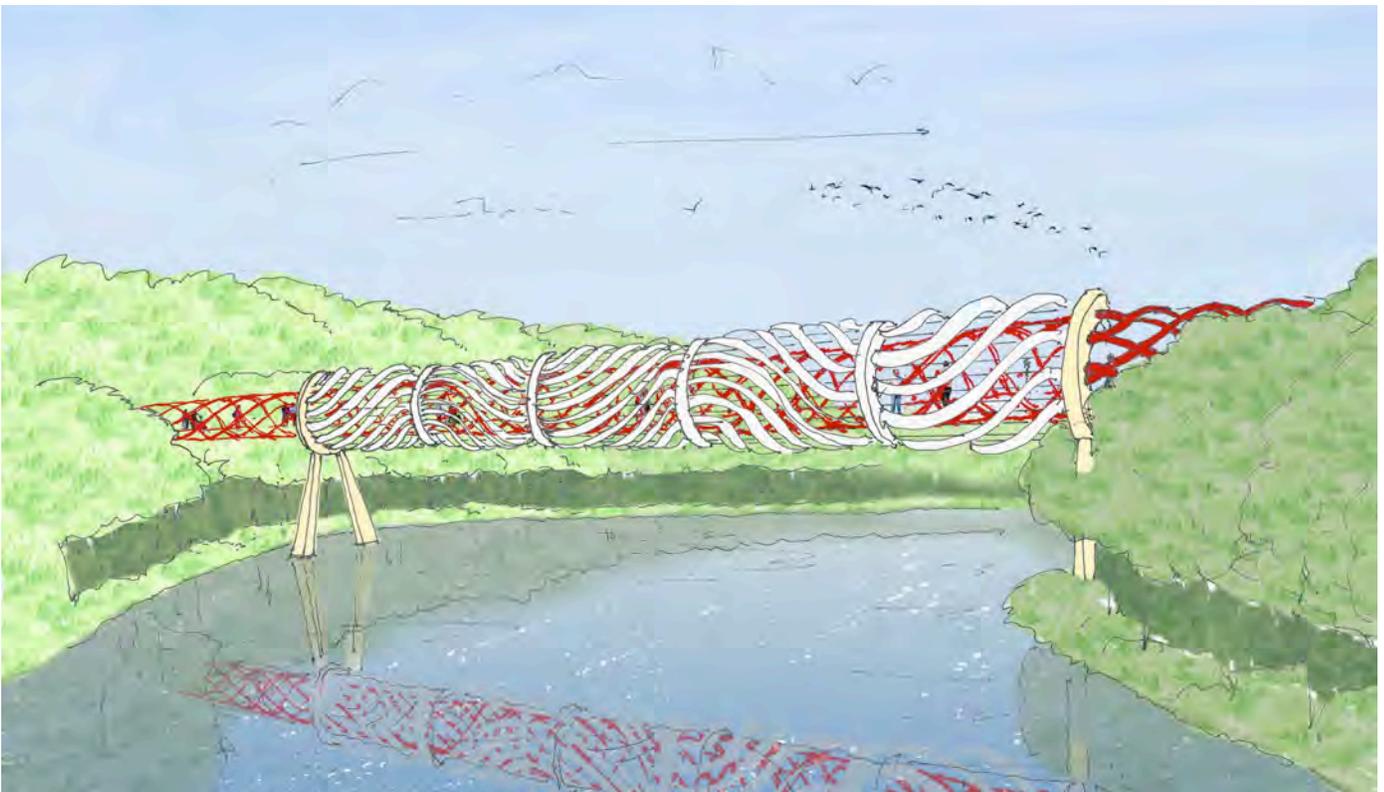


Suspending the Esplanade over river allows for a continuous link where there is insufficient room between the parking garage and the river

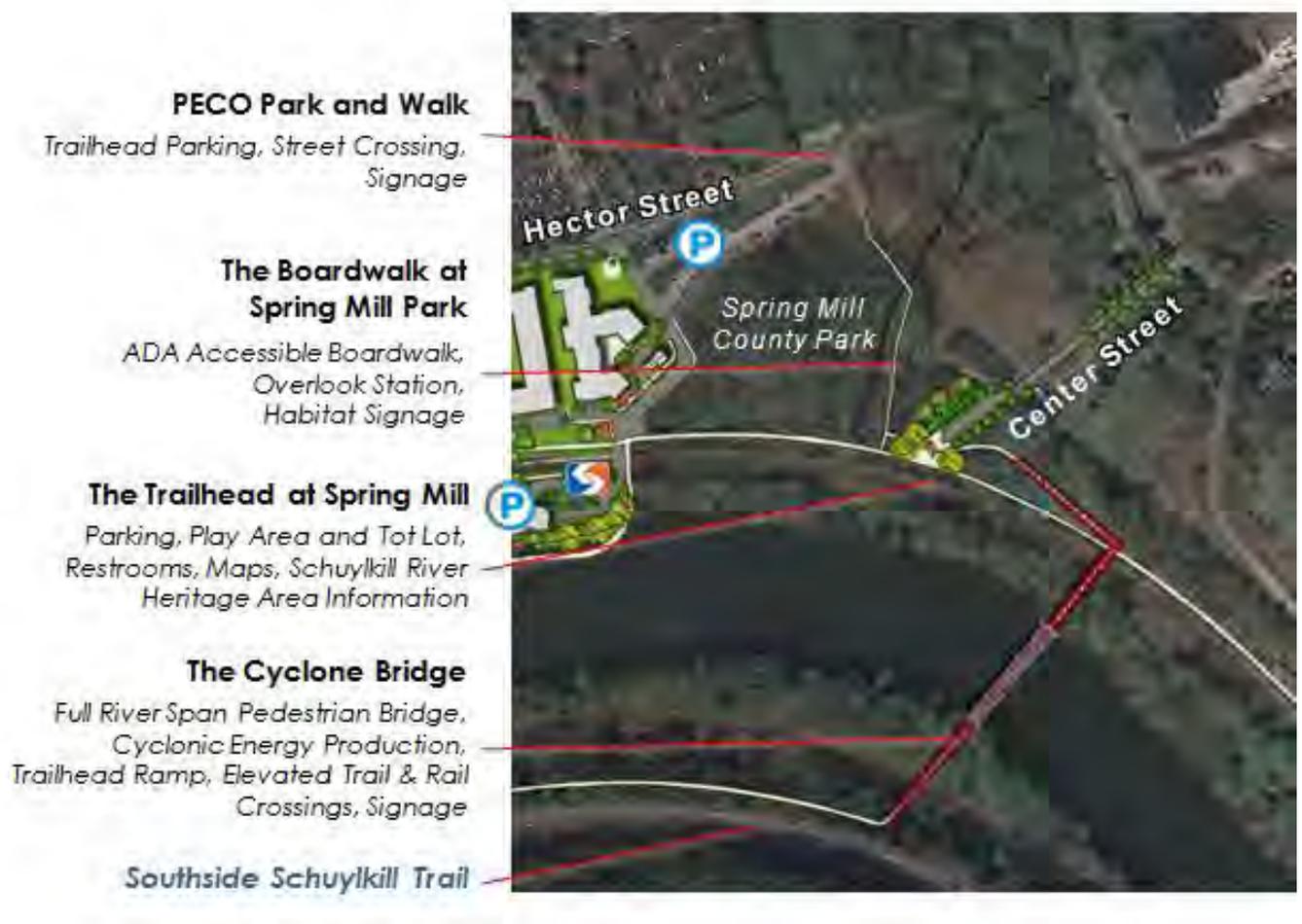
Objective 3.15: Install The Cyclone Bridge with Turbines

From upstream and downstream, from the hills of Conshohocken and Whitemarsh and from West Conshohocken Borough and from Route 76, a river-spanning pedestrian bridge will spin its wind turbines in the winds of the river valley. Cylindrical in shape, the bridge will carry pedestrians from either side of the Schuylkill River, at a location lacking cross-river connections, to walking trails and trailheads. At the proposed Trailhead at Spring Mill, an ADA-accessible ramp will gradually bring bridge visitors to the elevated views of the river. Cyclonic wind turbines will generate electricity and match the movement of the river. Pedestrians will arrive at the banks of Lower Merion Township and West Conshohocken's trail system with simple at grade ADA-accessible ramping.

ACTION PLAN: feasibility analyses, coordination with state and local municipalities and agencies, partnership with utility company.



The Cyclone Bridge is a unique feature designed to create an exciting focal point and destination at the bend of the Schuylkill River



Design Standards Recommendations

Objective 3.16: Install directional signage and emergency information

At various locations throughout the community and especially throughout the riverfront area, additional directional signage is needed. As a destination riverfront, the main features or seasonal events and celebrations should be highlighted.

ACTION PLAN: uniform and coordinated design, engineering, permitting and placement. Some funding exists.

Objective 3.17: Establish seasonal lighting package for pedestrian bridges

In the fashion of metropolitan bridges and for the continued enjoyment of the unique features of the proposed pedestrian bridges, lighting packages should be changed from season to season and for special celebrations.

ACTION PLAN: feasibility analyses; possible municipal partnership

Objective 3.18: Establish a Business Improvement District (BID)

Businesses within a defined area of the riverfront, on both sides of the river, could help to fund improvement projects to meet the Goals of the Riverfront Plan. West Conshohocken Borough will have much to gain from the changes to the other side of the water meant to make the riverfront a destination. As such, West Conshohocken, Conshohocken, and Whitemarsh businesses would agree to an assessed levy to support making the capital improvements, trail and path installation, streetscape enhancements, and maintenance of the Schuylkill River Park. Local BIDs include Ardmore, King of Prussia and Abington Township.

ACTION PLAN: form a multi-municipal task force to study the formation of a BID, form non-profit organization and establish annual funding.

Objective 3.19: Establish a Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID)

Legislative support, funding and tax relief exists for planning and implementing transit-oriented development. Here, transit agencies participate in public-private partnerships to introduce capital projects and make infrastructure improvements equally beneficial to the agency and municipality. Local TRIDs have been prepared for Lower Merion Township and Ambler Borough.

ACTION PLAN: form a multi-municipal task force to determine viability of a TRID, complete the required study needed to define TRID boundary and rationale, form management entity to oversee implementation and establish financial strategies for making improvements.

Objective 3.20: Establish Modified Riverfront Overlay District

To provide for a uniform set of development outcomes along the riverfront area in Conshohocken and Whitemarsh, zoning and subdivision and land development ordinance language could be overlaid with one additional Schuylkill River Park district. Proposed development in this district will take comfort in relief from disharmony potentially caused by different adjacent standards.

This modified overlay district could support adjustments to incentives offered to building density and massing in one municipality and inconsistent language in the other. Each existing district would receive acknowledgement of residential uses within districts and standardize the submission of proposals, especially requirements for lot area per dwelling unit.

ACTION PLAN: planning commission review of existing zoning ordinance language regarding residential density, bonuses, and inconsistency or lack thereof

Goal 4: Meet Our Recreation & Open Space Needs

Previously stated recommendations for The Riverfront Plan which incorporate outdoor recreation and open space preservation are enhanced here directly.

Objective 4.1: Prepare a Joint Municipal Park and Recreation Needs Analysis

Whitemarsh Township and Conshohocken Borough residents share the riverfront experience and additionally share their broader community recreation amenities. With the addition of nearly 1,000 residents to the riverfront area, the available parks and recreation facilities should be studied for their ability to meet the needs of the entire community.

ACTION PLAN: joint planning agreement or grant agreement. Grants available

Goal 5: Provide Opportunities for Economic Development

To expand on recommendations meant to establish the riverfront as a ‘Destination,’ Whitemarsh and Conshohocken should provide opportunities for public and private partnerships, encourage compatible economic development strategies and jointly market the events and activities scheduled for the riverfront.

Objective 5.1: Create a riverfront events and activities marketing coordinator position

For larger gatherings, concerts, seasonal festivals, tournaments and outdoor competitions, such as dog shows, a full-time position of employment should be created and the cost jointly shared by Whitemarsh and Conshohocken to promote and coordinate these events.

ACTION PLAN: conduct analysis of similar retail district and conference center coordinator positions; establish municipal cost agreement

Objective 5.2: Establish small vendor rules and procedures

For the temporary installation of farmer’s markets, arts and crafts stations, and food trucks, both municipalities should agree to standards of business behavior for the riverfront.

ACTION PLAN: prepare municipal agreement and rules and procedures

Goal 6: Incorporate Sustainable Design Initiatives

Improvements to the riverfront should be recognized as leading examples in sustainable design. Simple techniques such as porous pavement, green roofs, renewable energy, habitat restoration and materials recycling should become standard. Creative use of green practices should be encouraged and celebrated.

Objective 6.1: Create incentive program for use of green practices

Approvals of green projects should be given special circumstance reviews.

ACTION PLAN: analyze: riparian rights, ecology and programs; amend ordinances



Implementing the recommendations of The Riverfront Plan will be the shared responsibility of the officials, residents, and businesses of Whitemarsh Township and Conshohocken Borough. Each recommendation is designed to be approached individually or as part of a larger package for analysis, design, and funding.

The following Action Plan and Cost Estimate tables identify the estimate of municipal involvement, the possible partnerships or agencies involved, and the most current estimate of funds needed to realize each recommendation.

Recognizing the riverfront to be largely under the supervision of private landowners, estimates of cost to acquire land in fee simple or to acquire the right to use the land, as in a trail easement or access easement, to accomplish a goal or achieve a recommendation, are not included. Those costs are born out of fair negotiation between willing buyer and willing seller.

The full *Estimate of Costs* is located in *Appendix VI*.

Each of the recommendations may require funds not already dedicated in either municipality's operating budget. Beyond the use of municipal dollars derived from special bond referendum, fees and developer concessions, the primary source of funding for establishing public use areas and improvements, is other public dollars. County and State grant and loan programs exist for analyzing, planning, acquiring, developing and now even maintaining public spaces. Secondary sources of funds include private foundation monies and contributions from private donors, benefactors and non-profit and civic groups.

Funding sources change from year to year: in some cases available funds have decreased and in others the variety of funds is more interesting. For example, the Commonwealth now has separate funding for trail maintenance and equipment.

A list of the *Primary Sources of Funds* can be found in *Appendix VII*.

ACTION PLAN

	OWNERSHIP		ACQUISITION		ANALYSIS	FUNDING SOURCES	
	Private	Public	Fee Simple	Ease-ment		Public	Private
Goal 1: Improve Access to Our Riverfront							
Objective 1.1: Establish the Plymouth Falls Boat Launch	●		●			●	●
Objective 1.2: Extend Oak Street		●	●			●	
Objective 1.3: Establish Oak Street River Link	●			●		●	
Objective 1.4: Establish Conshohocken Train Station River Link	●			●		●	
Objective 1.5: Create the Two Boroughs Bridge		●		●		●	
Objective 1.6: Establish Bridge Sheltered Play Area and Tot Lot	●			●		●	
Objective 1.7: Extend Washington Street	●		●			●	
Objective 1.8: Introduce streetscape enhancements along Oak Street		●				●	
Objective 1.9: Install sidewalks along Harry Street		●				●	
Objective 1.10: Introduce streetscape enhancements along Washington St		●				●	
Goal 2: Connect Our Trails							
Objective 2.1: Establish the Schuylkill Riverfront Park and Walking Path	●			●		●	●
Objective 2.2: Establish the Lee Street Loop		●				●	
Objective 2.3: Install primary and secondary trailheads							
• Trailhead at Spring Mill	●		●			●	●
• Trailhead at Colwell Road	●		●			●	●
• The Monument to Industry		●				●	●
• Quaker Quick Trail	●			●		●	●
• Elm Street Square	●			●		●	●
• PECO Park and Walk		●		●		●	●
Objective 2.4: Design and install the boardwalk at Spring Mill Park		●		●		●	●
Objective 2.5: Improve safety features: crossings, lighting and emergency stations		●				●	
Objective 2.6: Improve trailside landscaping		●		●		●	●
Goal 3: Make Our Riverfront a Destination							
Objective 3.1: Establish Canal History Center and Park	●		●			●	●
Objective 3.2: Establish Oak Street Athletic Park	●		●			●	●
Objective 3.3: Create Two Boroughs Bridge		●		●		●	

	OWNERSHIP		ACQUISITION		ANALYSIS	FUNDING SOURCES	
	Private	Public	Fee Simple	Ease-ment		Public	Private
Objective 3.4: Create Ash Street "Upper Level" Elevated Plaza	●			●		●	●
Objective 3.5: Install Ash Street Cantilevered Overlook		●				●	●
Objective 3.6: Create Millennium Meadow	●		●			●	●
Objective 3.7: Install Poplar Street Riverfront banners and fountain		●				●	●
Objective 3.8: Install Boathouse suspended boardwalk/esplanade		●				●	
Objective 3.9: Install Monument to Industry		●				●	●
Objective 3.10: Create Schuylkill River Allée	●	●				●	
Objective 3.11: Install band shell	●	●				●	●
Objective 3.12: Establish Washington Street Athletic Park	●		●			●	●
Objective 3.13: Install suspended walking path at boathouse	●			●		●	
Objective 3.14: Install suspended walking path to Spring Mill Station	●			●		●	
Objective 3.15: Install the Cyclone Bridge with Turbines	●	●		●		●	●
Objective 3.16: Install directional signage and emergency information	●	●			●	●	
Objective 3.17: Establish seasonal lighting package for pedestrian bridges		●				●	
Objective 3.18: Establish a Business Improvement District (BID)		●			●	●	
Objective 3.19: Establish a Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID)		●			●	●	
Objective 3.20: Establish a Modified Riverfront Overlay District		●			●	●	
Goal 4: Meet Our Recreation & Open Space Needs							
Objective 4.1: Prepare a Joint Municipal Park and Recreation Needs Analysis					●	●	
Goal 5: Provide Opportunities for Economic Development							
Objective 5.1: Create a Riverfront Events and Activities Marketing Coordinator position					●	●	
Objective 5.2: Establish small vendor rules and procedures					●	●	
Goal 6: Incorporate Sustainable Design Initiatives							
Objective 6.1: Create incentive program for use of green practices					●	●	

Action Plan: First Two Years

		ACTIONS NEEDED		RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	
		Analysis/ Outreach	Grants	County/ Non-profit	Twp/ Boro
Goal 1: Improve Access to Our Riverfront					
Objective 1.1:	Establish the Plymouth Falls Boat Launch	Owner outreach	Year 2	County & Non-profit	Boro
Objective 1.2:	Extend Oak Street	Engineering	Year 1		Boro
Objective 1.3:	Establish Oak Street River Link	Owner outreach	Year 1		Boro
Objective 1.4:	Establish Conshohocken Train Station River Link	Owner outreach	Year 3+		Boro
Objective 1.5:	Create the Two Boroughs Bridge	Engineering	Year 3+		Boro
Objective 1.6:	Establish bridge sheltered play area and tot lot	Engineering	Year 3+		Boro
Objective 1.7:	Extend Washington Street	Traffic/ Engineering	Year 1		Twp
Objective 1.8:	Introduce streetscape enhancements along Oak Street		Year 3+		Boro
Objective 1.9:	Install sidewalks along Harry Street		Year 1		Boro
Objective 1.10:	Introduce streetscape enhancements along Washington Street		Year 1		Twp & Boro
Goal 2: Connect Our Trails					
Objective 2.1:	Establish the Schuylkill Riverfront Park and Walking Path	Owner outreach	Year 1+	County & Non-profit	Twp & Boro
Objective 2.2:	Establish the Lee Street Loop		Year 1		Twp & Boro
Objective 2.3:	Install primary and secondary trailheads				
	• Trailhead at Spring Mill	Owner outreach	Year 2	County	Twp
	• Trailhead at Colwell Road	Owner outreach	Year 2	County	Boro
	• The Monument to Industry		Year 1		Twp
	• Quaker Quick Trail	Owner outreach	Year 1	Non-profit	Twp
	• Elm Street Square	Owner outreach	Year 1	Non-profit	Boro
	• PECO Park and Walk	Owner outreach	Year 2	Non-profit	Twp
Objective 2.4:	Design and install the boardwalk at Spring Mill Park	Habitat	Year 3+	County	Twp
Objective 2.5:	Improve safety features: crossings, lighting and emergency stations	Traffic/ Engineering	Year 1	County & Non-profit	Twp & Boro
Objective 2.6:	Improve Trailside Landscaping		Year 3+	County & Non-profit	Twp & Boro

		ACTIONS NEEDED		RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	
		Analysis/ Outreach	Grants	County/ Non-profit	Twp/ Boro
Goal 3: Make Our Riverfront a Destination					
Objective 3.1:	Establish Canal History Center and Park	Owner outreach	Year 3+	County & Non-profit	Boro
Objective 3.2:	Establish Oak Street Athletic Park	Owner outreach	Year 3+	County	Boro
Objective 3.3:	Create Two Boroughs Bridge	Engineering	Year 3+		Boro
Objective 3.4:	Create Ash Street "Upper Level" Elevated Plaza	Owner outreach	Year 3+		Boro
Objective 3.5:	Install Ash Street Cantilevered Overlook	Engineering	Year 3+		Boro
Objective 3.6:	Create Millennium Meadow	Owner outreach	Year 2		Boro
Objective 3.7:	Install Poplar Street riverfront banners and fountain		Year 1		Boro
Objective 3.8:	Install boathouse suspended boardwalk/esplanade	Owner outreach	Year 3+		Boro
Objective 3.9:	Install Monument to Industry		Year 3+		Twp
Objective 3.10:	Create Schuylkill River Allee	Owner outreach	Year 1		Twp
Objective 3.11:	Install band shell		Year 3+		Twp
Objective 3.12:	Establish Washington Street Athletic Park	Owner outreach	Year 3+		Twp
Objective 3.13:	Install suspended walking path at Boathouse	Owner outreach	Year 3+		Twp
Objective 3.14:	Install suspended walking path to Spring Mill Station	Owner outreach	Year 3+		Twp
Objective 3.15:	Install the Cyclone Bridge with Turbines	Engineering	Year 3+	County & Non-profit	Twp
Objective 3.16:	Install directional signage and emergency information	Planning	Year 1		Twp & Boro
Objective 3.17:	Establish seasonal lighting package for pedestrian bridges	Lighting designer	Year 3+		Twp & Boro
Objective 3.18:	Establish a Business Improvement District	Planning	Year 1		Twp & Boro
Objective 3.19:	Establish a Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID)	Planning	Year 3+		Twp & Boro
Objective 3.20:	Establish a Modified Riverfront Overlay District	Planning	Year 1		Twp & Boro

		ACTIONS NEEDED		RESPONSIBLE PARTY(IES)	
		Analysis/ Outreach	Grants	County/ Non-profit	Twp/ Boro
Goal 4: Meet Our Recreation & Open Space Needs					
Objective 4.1:	Prepare a Joint Municipal Park and Recreation Needs Analysis	Planning & Rec	Year 1		Twp & Boro
Goal 5: Provide opportunities for economic development					
Objective 5.1:	Create a Riverfront Events and Activities Marketing Coordinator position	Economic Study	Year 3+	County & Non-profit	Twp & Boro
Objective 5.2:	Establish small vendor rules and procedures		Year 3+	Non-profit	Twp & Boro
Goal 6: Incorporate Sustainable Design Initiatives					
Objective 6.1:	Create incentive program for use of green practices	Planning	Year 3+	County	Twp & Boro



I. Public Participation

- Steering Committee Questionnaire
- Steering Committee Meetings
- Stakeholder Questionnaire
- Planning Commission Minutes

II. Review of Previous Plans

III. Zoning

IV. Existing Conditions: Photo Tours

V. Best Practices: Riverfront Planning

VI. Estimate of Costs

VII. Primary Sources of Funds

VIII. Whitemarsh Resolution

I. Public Participation

Riverfront Plan Steering Committee Questionnaire

Summary

The Steering Committee for the Riverfront Plan should consider the enclosed questions in their initial gathering and thereafter for their ultimate contribution to the success of the document.

Questions for the Steering Committee Guided by the RFP:

1. What is the working 'Mission' of the Steering Committee?
2. What is your vision of a vibrant riverfront?
3. What are the simple expectations of each member?
4. What Information Would You Like to Present or Us to Present?
5. Existing Studies and Background
 - a. Are we missing anything
 - b. What are the missing elements of the Riverfront Open Space Plan?
 - c. What are the challenges of the Riverfront Overlay Development District?
6. In-fill and Redevelopment Opportunities
 - a. What are the missing land uses?
 - b. What are the challenging/uncreative land uses?
 - c. What kind of transit-oriented land development components are positive and which are not so positive?
7. Trails
 - a. What are the best components of the existing trail system?
 - b. What are the missing elements of the trail system?
 - c. What are creative pieces to add?

Questions to consider when thinking about the Schuylkill River and reviewing *The Riverfront Plan*

- Can you see the space from a distance? Is its interior visible from the outside?
- Is there a good connection between the space and the adjacent buildings, or is it surrounded by blank walls? Do occupants of adjacent buildings use the space?
- Can people easily walk to the place? For example, do they have to dart between moving cars to get to the place?
- Do sidewalks lead to and from the adjacent areas?
- Does the space function for people with special needs?
- Do the roads and paths through the space take people where they actually want to go?
- Can people use a variety of transportation options – bus train, car, bicycle, etc. – to reach the place?
- Are transit stops conveniently located next to destinations such as libraries, post offices, park entrances, etc.?
- Does the place make a good first impression?
- Are there more women than men?
- Are there enough places to sit? Are seats conveniently located? Do people have is a choice of places to sit, either in the sun or shade?
- Are spaces are clean and free of litter? Who is responsible for maintenance? What do they do? When?

- Does the area feel safe? Is there a security presence? If so, what do these people do? When are they on duty?
- Are people taking pictures? Are there many photo opportunities available?
- Do vehicles dominate pedestrian use of the space, or prevent them from easily getting to the space?
- Are people using the space or is it empty?
- Is it used by people of different ages?
- Are people in groups?
- How many different types of activities are occurring – people walking, eating, playing baseball, chess, relaxing, reading?
- Which parts of the space are used and which are not?
- Are there choices of things to do?
- Is there a management presence, or can you identify anyone is in charge of the space?
- Is this a place where you would choose to meet your friends? Are others meeting friends here or running into them?
- Are people in groups? Are they talking with one another?
- Do people seem to know each other by face or by name?
- Do people bring their friends and relatives to see the place or do they point to one of its features with pride?
- Are people smiling? Do people make eye contact with each other?
- Do people use the place regularly and by choice?
- Does a mix of ages and ethnic groups that generally reflect the community at large?
- Do people tend to pick up litter when they see it?

Meeting: **The Riverfront Plan, Steering Committee Meeting #1**

When: **Tuesday, July 7, 2015 (10:30 AM)**

Where: Whitemarsh Township Building, 616 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA 19444

Attendees: Kent Baird, Paul Vernon, Amy Mayer, Charlie Guttenplan, Scott France, Andrew Van Leuven, Tom Blomstrom, Rick Mellor, David Bertram, Robert Thomas, Doug Maisey

Next Meeting: **Tuesday, August 11, 2015 (10:30 AM)**

Minutes of this Meeting

I. Introduction

- a. Sign-In and Introductions—attendees signed in and introduced themselves and the organizations they represent. For the purpose of ensuring efficient communication Charlie Guttenplan will act as the Client representative and Kent Baird will act as the Consultant representative.
- b. The Riverfront Plan—for the benefit of the Steering Committee, Mr. Baird presented attendees with a Power Point presentation depicting the brief over view of the project with expansion on the Consultant Scope of Work, Draft Study Area Boundaries, and tasks achieved to date. Later portions of the presentation included Questionnaire style slides and Best Examples slides gleaned from existing national riverfront and waterfront redevelopment efforts; including steps to take and photos of improved riverfronts
 - i. Paul Vernon-recommended the Study Boundary Area be amended to include parcels found in Conshohocken and specifically north of Elm Street, West of Fayette Street and bound at north by a line including First Street running westerly to lands adjacent Colwell Lane. The Committee accepted the amendment and the Consultant agreed next steps mapping would include the amendment.

II. Steering Committee

- a. The Committee confirmed the need for, requirement of and sequence of meetings with one amendment thus far: the next meeting will not be held here again in July but rather Tuesday, August, 11, 2015, at 10:30AM, with invitations.
- b. During the presentation, Committee members were invited to review a Questionnaire handout and participate in a round table discussion:
 - i. Bob Thomas promoted the plan should ultimately offer “continuously interesting” activity and fill in gaps of activity along the riverfront and while some floodplain areas have raised habitable/used space in residential and office buildings we should think creatively how to create interactions;
 - ii. Paul Vernon raised an excellent point that the Best Examples presented celebrate the successes of other riverfronts and we are in the initial stages of ‘repair’ and offered, “How to Repair the Riverfront” as a unifying thought. The group agreed;

- iii. Scott France asked that the plan acknowledge the contribution business has made to the [stabilization and current functionality] riverfront. Others remarked that the business community had really pioneered the cleanup of struggling properties;
- iv. David Bertram asked that the plan seek ways to encourage positive interactions between businesses along the riverfront and existing neighborhoods and longtime residents who might not have felt included or informed of the change.
- v. Tom Blomstrom asked that the plan highlight the successes of past planning documents, what's been done to date as means of showcasing the collaboration of past project; he further hoped for photographs from other riverfront projects which have successfully brought visitors down to the water; the group immediately saw the parallels and past challenges of installing pedestrian trails: before and after photos work extremely well. Charlie Guttenplan suggested infill development scenarios and options fit that desire well. David Bertram quickly recognized the Spring Mill Bike Shop, the Brewery and the Farmer's Market as possible success stories integrating business, parking, people and activity. Bob Thomas remembered the owner of a local Betzwood development hailing the installation of a trail behind the community to be a success because it encouraged new tenants.
- vi. Paul Vernon reminded attendees of previous plan recommendations included signage to draw trail users from the riverfront back into the Borough main street shopping and cultural districts. Bob Thomas and Paul felt naming trails would help encourage exploration and adventure; ie. "The Business Loop."

III. Action Items

- 1. Study Area Boundary—amend the boundary to include the area described by Paul Vernon
- 2. Steering Committee to offer list of Stakeholders with Charlie Guttenplan taking the lead compiling the list.
- 3. Consultant and Steering Committee to finalize the goals of the plan, thus far discussed roughly as
 - i. Improve Access to the Riverfront
 - ii. Connect Our Trails
 - iii. "Bridge Our Riverfront Business Success to Our Riverfront Community"

IV. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM

Meeting: **The Riverfront Plan, Steering Committee Meeting #2**

When: **Tuesday, September 29, 2015 (10:30 AM-12:00 Noon)**

Where: Whitemarsh Township Building, 616 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA 19444

Attendees: Suzanne Ryan, Carter van Dyke, Scott France, Charlie Guttenplan, Terry Ferris, Tom Blomstrom, David Bertram, Robert (Bob) Thomas, Harry Murray, Doug Maisey, Kent Baird, Fran Hanney

Next Meeting: TBD

Minutes of this Meeting

I. Introduction

- a. Sign-In and Introductions—attendees signed in and (re) introduced themselves and the organizations they represent. New attendees included Suzanne Ryan, from PECO and Fran Hanney, from PennDOT. Again, for the purpose of ensuring efficient communication Charlie Guttenplan will act as the Client representative and Kent Baird will act as the Consultant representative.
- b. The Riverfront Plan & Initial Assessment—for the benefit of the Steering Committee, Mr. Baird presented attendees with a Power Point presentation depicting the brief over-view of the project with expanded information for the initial assessment of the riverfront conditions and relevant information previously recorded for the community and that of recent contributing stakeholders. Information from previous plans and studies included:
 - i. Conshohocken and Whitemarsh both would like a passive recreation trail, for leisurely use and with trail signage suggesting as much, along the actual river
 - ii. A civic gathering space, artwork, and new concessions along the waterfront are desired;
 - iii. New signage for visiting back and forth to the river, including the Borough’s historic and cultural resources, are greatly desired;
 - iv. Improvements to existing parking and clarification of shared parking is much needed;
 - v. Installation and improvement of safety and emergency response elements are critically important.
 - vi. Improvements to Spring Mill County Park are desired;
 - vii. Boat launches staged at various locations, including revised usage of the Borough’s Riverwalk at Millennium ramp, are hoped for;
 - viii. Potential license agreements and trail improvements in the PECO utility easement could present Township residents with non-road access to the trail system.

II. Steering Committee

- a. During the presentation, Committee members were asked to contribute their input for the current goals of the riverfront plan as well as to create objectives for the goals. Members were offered first

the chance to write down their objectives and thoughts on paper; then share either verbally or in writing those objectives and thoughts. The following is a representation of what was shared:

- i. Terry Ferris felt the riverfront is seriously lacking in events, activities and venues for young families, amongst others. A few ideas she felt worked in communities she's visited and that she and her family and friends have discussed included: a music band shell (such as in Norristown), an ice cream parlor and picnic area, a play area for kids and parents (possibly at Spring Mill), a bed & breakfast option in the vicinity of the river, a museum (with or without a café, but preferably with a café), a playhouse or [performing arts] theater, and a quiet area with artwork (possibly reminiscent of Lee Tire and other historic sites) and for peaceful reflection. Bob Thomas and Terry shared compassionate thoughts for the history being lost as new development chooses not to include artistic or land planning features or elements from the past.
- ii. David Bertram echoed the thoughts of Ferris and Thomas and offered a hope for a large space, flexible in its usage, for events such as weddings, beer and food fests, and possibly picnicking after work hours and weekends.
- iii. Charlie Guttenplan presented his concerns from a "planner's perspective" and included concerns and hopes for improved rail road crossings for vehicles and pedestrians; the creation of an identity for the riverfront, similar to Riverwalk in San Antonio; reevaluation of the street pattern/flow of traffic; repurposing of the trail system to provide relief and/or separation of bicyclists and pedestrians (possibly with signage or trail markings or other); and especially establishment of a trailhead, including Spring Mill Park as a possible destination for one; and finally the need to hold onto/incorporate the cultural and historical materials and artefacts of area.
- iv. Douglas Maisey offered objectives for creating safer crossings at railroad tracks, including visual cues to get across tracks safely such as light, texture, layering of street and trail hard-scaping, and consistent types of paving. He noted the plan should highlight nodes and gateways to act as directional guides and that a loop could be created for the trail system. Baird was pleased to hear the comment and offered the loop could include extension of 1st Avenue toward the Cross County Trail, thus creating a loop from that juncture, down to and across the SRT, up Lee Street and back across Spring Mill Avenue to 1st Avenue with minimal grade stress to the pedestrian. Maisey additionally offered that food trucks, programmed events and even an ice skating rink help to keep Philadelphia not only a 24 hour destination but a seasonal destination.
- v. Tom Blomstrom looked for the plan to include what the public space/experience connectors might be and suggested a unified system of kiosks might be a simple approach. He also felt landmarks, both physical and visual, would help to ground residents and visitors to the riverfront as a place with an identity. He shared his enjoyment as a visitor to Baltimore with its staging areas educating and orienting visitors. He especially noted that Whitemarsh Township's park system is known for its usage by a regional population and not just local residents and remarked that any opportunity to locate parks and recreation facilities along the river would be welcome. He and Bob Thomas noted that inclusion of

regional users of parks helps to provide better, longer lasting parks and to recruit different and larger grants.

- vi. Harry Murray offered objectives which would preserve natural areas within the riverfront study area and that with the disappearance of some of the industrial uses, nature has returned and flourished. These areas could meet the desire of creating a peaceful place to rest, relax or enjoy wildlife viewing. In his experience with the area, parking seemed a dominate issue. It was his assessment that parking lots, parking garages and shared parking each had happened in a reactionary way, leaving some areas strained and others without adequate parking. A discussion including Suzanne Ryan, Fran Hanney, Harry and Bob correctly identified the need for parking but further need to identify the different design solutions nationally. Hanney felt an objective ought to include designing parking to meet the needs of visitors and residents differently from business.
- vii. Fran Hanney shared his hopes for objectives which would highlight the need to educate the public and landowners on the importance of an integrated riverfront; a connected street and trail system; a clarified parking system. He also asked for objectives which would foster small business such as ice cream parlors, canoe and bike rentals. Objectives for funding improvements to the riverfront should identify the public-private partnerships but also engage citizen participation and volunteer groups such as “Friends of..” Finally the Plan should recommend ways of maintaining momentum for the improvements to the sense of community and interaction with the riverfront; starting with small projects and celebrating milestones. Bob Thomas supported Hanney’s thoughts and offered management of the improved space or activities could be years of involvement such as that of the Philadelphia parks system and partnerships.
- viii. Scott France felt a sound plan should include objectives for creating a gathering place. The idea or reason for being and the feasibility should include opportunities for multi-level activities. He recalled Pittston has a big picnic on the bridge of their town each year. He especially identified Conshohocken as a destination for the long stretches of the Schuylkill River Trail and sincerely hoped for rest stops, trailheads or other rest areas.
- ix. Suzanne Ryan offered her thoughts for making Spring Mill County Park an actual destination in and of itself inclusive of play areas for families with children. She also felt the Fayette Street Bridge area would make for a good destination spot and felt the community already identified with the area below the bridge. She felt it important to include objectives for partnering with the riverfront businesses and one or more of the boathouses for offering expanded activities such as pop-up-beer gardens, outdoor patio-style eating, or even a large outdoor Yoga event such as she has witnessed nearby in King of Prussia. She urged the plan to help make the riverfront more family friendly.
- x. Carter van Dyke offered the suggestion that the plan include another or substitute goal of “Make the Riverfront a Destination.” He additionally hoped the community would accept objectives to complete street and trail gaps including Washington Street; places that currently prevent the creation of a loop or alternative path for trails. He further remarked that the achievement of the riverfront’s goals will need commitment to creative and innovative thinking such as happened elsewhere in the world and could include objectives

for multiple levels of activity, elevated walking paths, pedestrian extensions to the Fayette Street Bridge and unique branding of the riverfront's destination elements. When complete, the walking path along the river will truly be a linear park and interactive space for families and visitors tying them to the river for generations.

- xi. Bob Thomas felt it important to establish objectives which would ensure the experience through the riverfront area, and the community, will be continuously interesting. Whether these objectives include focal points with seating, food venues and activities or links to the cultural and historic offerings of the borough and township, any visitor to the riverfront or its trails should experience something interesting all the way through (sometimes even creating double entrances to buildings along riverfronts creates visual links to the community). He additionally felt it important to consider both train stations as the destinations they once were, either by their architecture or their offerings.

III. Action Items

- a. Objectives—a written compilation of the goals and objectives will be shared with the Steering Committee for further discussion.

IV. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM

MEETING: **The Riverfront Plan, Steering Committee Meeting #3**

WHEN: **Tuesday, February 16, 2016** (10:00 AM-12:00 Noon)

WHERE: Whitemarsh Township Building, 616 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA 19444

ATTENDEES: Suzanne Ryan, Fran Hanney, Carter van Dyke, Scott France, Charlie Guttenplan, Terry Ferris, Tom Blomstrom, Rick Mellor, Robert (Bob) Thomas, Paul Vernon, Doug Maisey, Kent Baird, and guest Steve Nelson (P.E.C)

NEXT MEETING: **Tuesday, March 22, 2016**

Minutes of this Meeting

I. Introduction

- a. Sign-In and Agenda—attendees signed in, were shared an amended agenda and again, for the purpose of ensuring efficient communication Charlie Guttenplan will act as the Client representative and Kent Baird will act as the Consultant representative.
- b. The Riverfront Plan & Recommendations—for the benefit of the Steering Committee, each committee member received a memorandum of project status including a summary of recommendations of the draft plan. Mr. Baird presented attendees with a Power Point presentation revisiting the project as well as expanded information for the summary recommendations as well as discussion points to introduce the following additional goals to the plan:
 - a. Goal 4—Meet Recreation & Open Space Needs
 - b. Goal 5—Provide for Economic Development
 - c. Goal 6—Incorporate Sustainable Design

II. Steering Committee

- a. During the presentation, Committee members were asked to contribute their input for the draft recommendations, presented graphics and additional discussion points. The following is a representation of what was shared:
 - i. Access to the river was presented in various ways with the most talked about recommendations including two pedestrian bridges: the first to connect pedestrians between West Conshohocken and Conshohocken boroughs via a pedestrian bridge suspended beneath Fayette Street Bridge and the second to connect Schuylkill River Trail users with West Bank Schuylkill River Trail users via a full river span pedestrian bridge designed with cyclonic wind turbines to generate energy from the river valley winds. Comments were favorable for the introduction of each bridge with requests for more design information to address safety, lighting and obstructed or unobstructed views.
 - ii. Plaza spaces to be introduced along the river’s edge were additionally well talked about with requests for additional design connectivity between Harry Street and land uses to be introduced behind the existing parking garage and Marriott hotel as well as pedestrian connectivity from Ash, Poplar and Cherry streets. Emergency vehicle access, introduced

in pending plans, were talked about and were talked about for greater attention in future designs and recommendations; ie. 401 Washington Street.

- iii. Recreation areas recommended were well received by the Committee with members hoping for revision of designs to account for more multi-use open space. Additional requests included introducing recommendations for recreation needs and analyses.
- iv. SEPTA train stations were discussed as topics in need of further detail regarding future plans for improvements. Each station has received a great deal of concept planning by SEPTA but the Committee felt their goals and ultimate changes to their stations would play a critical role in the layout of improvements along the river.
- v. Trails were discussed throughout the presentation and the Committee was grateful their concerns for safety, aesthetics, connection and convenience were being addressed.
- vi. The additional Goals were presented for the Plan and Committee members felt strongly they would be of benefit to the overall strength of the recommendations and the Plan's longevity.

III. Action Items

- a. Review and address comments from Steering Committee members

IV. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM

MEETING: The Riverfront Plan, Steering Committee Meeting #4
WHEN: Tuesday, March 22, 2016 (10:00 AM-12:00 Noon)
WHERE: Whitemarsh Township Building, 616 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA 19444
ATTENDEES: Fran Hanney, Charlie Guttenplan, Terry Ferris, Tom Blomstrom, Rick Mellor, Robert (Bob) Thomas, Kent Baird, Byron Comati, Todd Poole, Holly Mager (for Scott France) and Dave Bertram
NEXT MEETING: Joint Planning Mtg TBD

Minutes of this Meeting

I. Introduction

- a. Sign-In—attendees signed in, and again, for the purpose of ensuring efficient communication Charlie Guttenplan will act as the Client representative and Kent Baird will act as the Consultant representative.
- b. The Riverfront Plan & Feedback—for the benefit of the Steering Committee, a brief revisit of the presentation made to Conshohocken Borough Council was shared. Feedback for the strategic planning of the Conshohocken Borough Train Station was received, especially relative Oak Street and adjacent lands. A possible emergency boat ramp under the Bridge was also discussed.

II. Presentation of Next Steps Possibilities

- a. Consultant team member, Todd Poole, of 4Ward Planning, Inc., shared a Power Point presentation of possible next steps for The Riverfront Plan; including a recommendation to study the possible maintenance, expense and revenue resulting from the Plan’s implementation. Similar studies were presented as example suggesting this kind of urbanized/ex-urban park system would generate substantial revenue and small business growth. In concert with the Committee’s recommendations, Poole suggested a joint municipal approach to the management of the park system developed. Beyond maintenance of the various elements of the Plan, such coordination would streamline promotion of events, rentals and vendors.

III. Next Steps

- a. A joint meeting of both municipalities’ planning commissions is hoped for.

Adjourn—The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM

Riverfront Plan Stakeholder Letter & Questionnaire

[Address]

Re: Your Much Needed Input for The Riverfront Plan

[Dear Mr. B.:’

On behalf of Conshohocken Borough and Whitemarsh Township, we invite you to participate in the next phase of Schuylkill Riverfront improvements. As a business owner, resident or local official you have had or continue to play an important role in the revitalization of a once industrialized then neglected river’s edge. Your efforts and commitment are greatly appreciated. To continue the trend of revitalization, Conshohocken and Whitemarsh have teamed with Carter van Dyke Associates and Campbell Thomas & Company to illustrate improvements which when implemented will enhance the riverfront experience for all. Together we’d like your input for the preparation of a report titled: *The Riverfront Plan*.

The Riverfront Plan seeks to consolidate the goals and objectives, recommendations and action steps, and especially the aspirations of dozens of reports and public surveys regarding life along the river in Conshohocken and Whitemarsh. Thus far, these reports and surveys, and recent Riverfront Plan Steering Committee members, agree the following goals will guide the next phase of improvements:

1. Improve Access to the Riverfront
2. Connect the Trails
3. Bridge Our Riverfront Business Success to Our Riverfront Community

With the above in mind, we invite you to attend a meeting to help us understand the land use issues, design challenges, or next steps needed to achieve the next phase of improvements. Please RSVP by: August 28, 2015.

Meeting: Wednesday, September 16, 2015 @ 10:30 AM

Whitemarsh Township Building, 616 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA 19444

Additionally, we’ve included a questionnaire to capture some of your personal or organizational history. Feel free to bring the answers along with you or contact me directly by phone (215) 345-5053 or by email kent@cvda.com.

Sincerely,
Kent A. Baird
Community & Conservation Planner

The Riverfront Plan

Introductory Questions for Stakeholders

1. What history do you, or your organization or group, have with the redevelopment of the previously industrialized areas of the riverfront?
2. What history do you, or your organization or group, have with development of the Schuylkill Riverfront Trail or Cross County Trail?
3. What benefit do you feel public transportation brings to your business or organization; ie. do you or your employees take advantage of the existing train or bus stations?
4. What plans, reports or studies have you contributed to in the past for the analysis of the riverfront's revitalization opportunities?
5. What are your primary concerns for shared use of the riverfront, by way of a riverwalk, boating access, etc.?
6. What land uses or amenities, if any, would you introduce to make the interaction between the public and the business space more interesting:
 - a. Land use—active recreation areas, sports arena, retail, commercial entertainment, museum/art gallery or other (s)?
 - b. Amenities—outdoor cafe-like seating and lunch areas, food festival/event/small concert venues or other (s)?
7. If it could be demonstrated that improvements to the riverfront will enhance the value of your property would you support municipal or joint financing of these improvements; for example would you support a government issued bond, the use of government awarded grants, or possibly recruitment of private foundation monies?

Meeting: **The Riverfront Plan, Stakeholder Meeting #1**

When: **Wednesday, September 16, 2015 (10:30AM-12:00PM)**

Where: Whitemarsh Township Building, 616 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA 19444

Attendees: Rick Mellor, Charlie Guttenplan, Christopher Lane, Terry Ferris, Tim Fenchel, Peter Cornog, Deb Shreero, Brian Rosenthal, Scott Miller, Carter van Dyke, Kent Baird

Minutes of this Meeting

- I. Sign-In and Introductions—attendees signed in and introduced themselves and the relationship they or their organizations have with the riverfront. Similar to the Steering Committee and the Plan at large, further communication should be sent to Charlie Guttenplan, at Whitemarsh Township, or the consultant team representative, Kent Baird.
- II. The Riverfront Plan—for the benefit of attending Stakeholders, Mr. Baird presented attendees with a Power Point presentation depicting the overview of the project Scope of Work, Study Area and expanded Early Assessment, Best Examples and Stakeholder Questionnaire information.
- III. Stakeholder Questionnaire—invited and attending Stakeholders were asked to consider the following seven (7) questions:
 1. *What history do you, or your organization or group, have with the redevelopment of the previously industrialized areas of the riverfront?*
 2. *What history do you, or your organization or group, have with development of the Schuylkill Riverfront Trail or Cross County Trail?*
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 7. *If it could be demonstrated that improvements to the riverfront will enhance the value of your property would you support municipal or joint financing of these improvements; for example would you support a government issued bond, the use of government awarded grants, or possibly recruitment of private foundation monies?*

- IV. Using the seven questions of the Stakeholder Questionnaire as a backdrop, attendees presented their thoughts, concerns and recommendations for the Riverfront Plan and the future of its potential Action Plan items:
- i. Brian Rosenthal, Chairman of Whitemarsh Township’s Parks and Recreation Board, and former commissioner of Lower Merion Township, presented his Board’s responses: Question #5 – safety, inclusion, community harmony, maintenance, parking, traffic Question #6 – a. Public areas for concerts, movies, celebrations; walking paths; arts and culture; historical monument; retail; restaurants – outdoor dining, b. Festivals; outside public areas close to water; boardwalks; raised “overlook” areas; vendors; and Question #7 – yes.....community asset enhancing economic value and quality of life, and requested the Plan [when implemented] not “ increase the tax burden to Whitemarsh & Conshohocken. He further remarked that the Township’s parks are very well maintained, well funded and a real attraction-draw for visitors and residents and parks along the river would be key. He and Carter van Dyke conceded to the notion any new parks along the river would take real passion and commitment on the part of business and municipal officials to create a sustainable riverfront park management plan.
 - ii. Peter Cornog, former Whitemarsh Township Supervisor and Chairman of Whitemarsh Township’s Planning Commission shared his long involvement with the township’s riverfront aspirations, his love for cycling and previous participation in the public-private partnership for the Hills at Whitemarsh, an active adult community. He also shared concerns for the business community’s willingness or unwillingness to participate in public access initiatives along the riverfront. For the Riverfront Plan he hoped for recommendations which lead to increased collaboration with Conshohocken, new parks to make up for Whitemarsh’s park deficit, a band stand, artwork (with images shared of historically and culturally significant steel structures in Pittsburgh) and sculptures and more areas to enjoy views of the river, including more park benches. He additionally shared newspaper clippings reminding attendees and the consultant team of the dramatic flooding experienced by businesses and residents over the years.
 - iii. Tim Fenchel, of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area, shared both his organization’s support and his personal observations for the Plan and the area of the Schuylkill being studied. First, it is the collected fact that the improvements to the trails and parks along the Schuylkill result in economic improvement for the towns and communities that receive them. Secondly, and with shared sentiment by Mr. Baird, the Schuylkill River Trail is seriously lacking in access, destinations and bathrooms [within the Study Area]. He has received phone calls from frustrated visitors to the Conshohocken/Whitemarsh portion of the trail looking for bathrooms and parking. Both Fenchel and Baird discussed openly the importance, and past support for, a new trailhead parking and bathroom facility at Spring Mill Park-outparcel currently owned by a private materials recycler. Tim additionally thought the Spring Mill area would make for an excellent public boat launch.
 - iv. Terry Ferris, a life-long resident of the area, and a member of the Parks and Recreation Board for Whitemarsh Township, was deeply concerned for the potential to improve safety and emergency facilities along the riverfront. She, and with other attendees’ support, called for additional lighting along the Schuylkill River Trail. Additionally, she shared with the group

her pleasant experiences with communities that infused their trail/greenways and waterfronts with museums and bed & breakfasts. In all, she hoped for a positive end result to the Riverfront Plan and that's its recommendations lead to increased enjoyment of the river.

- v. Rick Mellor, Whitemarsh Township Manager, reminded attendees the riverfront once was not a draw for much more than industry and business and today it is much more. The train stations are an exceptional resource for residents and visitors and so too is the actual river. While change may have brought frustration and issues of adjustment it also opened the door for the opportunity to discuss new activities. As an important component of the Riverfront Plan and going forward with any implementation projects, educating the public is important: establishing a base of understanding for the needs of emergency personnel and safety and creating the proper message for putting together new blends of mixed-land-uses. He and Terry Ferris discussed the current status, and some of the challenges, the emergency personnel has with using the Hines Rowing Center Boat Ramp.
- vi. Deb Shreero, attending member of the Whitemarsh Township Environmental Advisory Board, thanked the Township, the Borough and the consultant team, for offering the attendees a chance to contribute to the Plan. She also thanked Peter Cornog for the creation of the EAB while he served as Township Supervisor. It has had a lasting impact on the township's development and resident participation. First and foremost, Deb presented to the attendees her board's concerns for flooding along the riverfront. She has access to both historical flooding and stormwater management information and first anecdotal information. For many years the township has had concerns for the stormwater travelling toward the riverfront. She additionally noted that it takes quite a long time for flood waters from the river to recede. As an active member of the rowing center she could speak directly to the boats at the center being flooded and completely covered in mud, on occasion more than once per year. She offered two hopes that the plan or the municipalities would be careful to address a new Stormwater Management Plan as well as help create signage or rules for the increase in litter associated with increase in use of the riverfront. She celebrated Lois Trench-Hines rowing center rules of not using plastic water bottles which can easily pollute the river and additionally ruin the aesthetic of the natural resource.
- vii. Christopher Lane, attending on behalf of the Whitemarsh Township Open Space Committee, presented both his committee and personal thoughts for the riverfront. The open space committee makes recommendations to and communicates with the township supervisors and other boards on matters of purchasing, preserving and stewarding open space within the township. At different times funding has been available from the township for the acquisition of land or conservation easements from private landowners. As a local resident Chris was especially thankful of the plan's inclusion of Spring Mill Station. As a rider of the train from that station he can remember several times it being closed due to flooding. He also presented real world experience of the parking struggles at the Station. He noted by 8AM, the SEPTA parking was full, which forced riders to park their cars at the local fire department, commercial parking lots and then near private homes.
- viii. Scott Miller, a principal of Miller-Purdy Architects, presented his firm's input for the Riverfront Plan. First, his firm chose specifically to locate their offices near the Conshohocken-Whitemarsh riverfront and its two train stations because it spoke to their corporate mission of promoting new urbanism, sound land use development, smart growth strategies and transit oriented development. His firm especially loved how many modes of

transportation were just outside their door and how close the actual river was to their office. As a contributing architect to such projects as Riverwalk he spoke directly to the challenges of parking and the early decisions of developers to remediate industrial sites and to coordinate shared parking. He suggested parking permits for tenants had been a partial but meaningful relief for his firm and other tenants in his office building. Brian Rosenthal and Charlie Guttenplan offered to Scott and the attendees the benefit of ordinance language that required developers to ‘set aside’ parking in portions of proposed development projects.

- V. Adjourn-a Round-table discussion included concerns for the impact of future development and hopes the Plan would address next steps and implementation of good ideas.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30PM.

Meeting: **The Riverfront Plan, Stakeholder Meeting #2**

When: **Thursday, September 17, 2015 (10:30AM-12:00PM)**

Where: Conshohocken Borough Hall, 400 Fayette Street, Suite 200, Conshohocken, PA 19428

Attendees: Lois Trench-Hines, Mike English, Donna Heller, Kevin Tierney, Richard Manfredi, Amy Mayer, Charlie Guttenplan, Carter van Dyke, Kent Baird, Robert Thomas

Minutes of this Meeting

- I. Sign-In and Introductions—attendees signed in and introduced themselves and the relationship they or their organizations have with the riverfront. Similar to the Steering Committee and the Plan at large, further communication should be sent to Charlie Guttenplan, at Whitemarsh Township, or the consultant team representative, Kent Baird.
- II. The Riverfront Plan—for the benefit of attending Stakeholders, Mr. Baird presented attendees with a Power Point presentation depicting the overview of the project Scope of Work, Study Area and expanded Early Assessment, Best Examples and Stakeholder Questionnaire information.
- III. Stakeholder Questionnaire—invited and attending Stakeholders were asked to consider the following seven (7) questions:
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 7. *If it could be demonstrated that improvements to the riverfront will enhance the value of your property would you support municipal or joint financing of these improvements; for example would you support a government issued bond, the use of government awarded grants, or possibly recruitment of private foundation monies?*

- IV. Using the seven questions of the Stakeholder Questionnaire as a backdrop, attendees presented their thoughts, concerns and recommendations for the Riverfront Plan and the future of its potential Action Plan items:
- a. Lois Trench-Hines, a long time resident of the Conshohocken community, and representative of the Hines Rowing Center, presented her organization's input and her personal thoughts for achieving the goals of the Riverfront Plan. First, she believes the Conshohocken community is an excellent one to raise a family and for others to visit. Relative to the rowing center and its connection to the Riverfront Plan, Lois noted that at any given time the center had three (3) universities, five (5) high schools and one (1) non-profit organization using the rowing center for rowing education and training. For that reason she hoped the recommendations and implementation of the Riverfront Plan would be mindful of both the users of the rowing center as well as the equipment and boats. She was not opposed to public engagement of the riverfront, after all the public is an excellent source of support for rowing in general, but rather wanted to ensure protection and safety of the individuals and expensive equipment. She noted the general public will be invited to use a yet to be built gazebo, on the rowing center property, for enjoying views of the river. The center also allows Whitemarsh Township emergency personnel to use the boat launch for accessing the river. She reminds everyone the center took special care to direct, by way of restrictions with the township, any future trail along the riverfront away from the area in-between the center and the launch. Her long term boat launch goals are to introduce a new ramp at the Hines Center for wake-less boats; which are expensive and require her center to plan carefully. Lois went on to note that parking for the community has always been a challenge. She felt new or infill development should consider the parking an important issue and supported opportunities to include Spring Mill Park as a possible future trailhead parking area to ease the stress caused by overburdened parking. Consultant Bob Thomas, of Campbell Thomas offered continued support for creative solutions for the Hines Center riverfront trail compatibility. He personally had experience visiting the riverfront upstream and downstream of each boat launch along the riverfront and remarked they had their own unique set of challenges and safety concerns to be carefully planned.
 - b. Kevin Tierney, local resident and owner of the Spring Mill Farmers Market, spoke on behalf of himself and Ben Bergman, co-owner of the Market. Kevin has not only initiated community events but posts to a blog, "More than the Curve" which routinely promotes local businesses and community activities. Kevin was especially aware of the community's parking problems and the loss of potential business due to poor signage and incentives for visitors and commuters to stay. The Farmers Market, at Lee and Hector street, picked its location because of the opportunity to provide restrooms to its vendors. Otherwise he and Ben found it challenging to utilize space along the river. He personally has coordinated food events and discussions for hosting "Pop-Up Beer Gardens," noting that food events, such as beer gardens, have proven not to detract from local business but actually encourage participants to frequent local restaurants and shops as a result of attending the Garden (he cited the Philadelphia South Street event which bolstered business significantly). He envisions using the tops of parking garages, especially Tower 3, with spectacular views and ample under-utilized after hours parking, for food events and pop beer gardens. The "Sky Garden" as he called it, will be the first test of elevating activities above the empty parking lots of the riverfront. On the subject of parking he further hoped better signage would coordinate where public areas are, such as the dog-park, or where the rowing center in Conshohocken is accessible to the public or not accessible.
 - c. Mike English, West Conshohocken Borough Manager, presented his municipality's excitement for possible destination-design and events that might be introduced to the riverfront of Conshohocken and Whitemarsh. He discussed some of the development plans in discussion for buildings and land along West Conshohocken's riverfront. Mike reminded the attendees West Conshohocken's local fire department maintains river flood rise levels by simply marking the pillars of the bridge. Both

the painted markers and the staining of the muddy flood water help to remind residents how high the river actually floods. Mike initiated a discussion for the safety and design of the Fayette Street Bridge, which his community's residents would like use for attending or visiting the riverfront. On one level, West Conshohocken routinely updates Pa Dept. of Transportation the snowplowing failures which create blocked or iced-over pedestrian routes across the bridge. He hoped for design changes to the bridge which would make it more pedestrian friendly and engaging. Carter van Dyke, Baird, Guttenplan, and others had previously discussed modifying the pedestrian bridge or creating a new design and were pleased to hear support from the community regarding safety especially. Other bridges were noted such as Philadelphia, and New Hope and Lambertville boroughs which improved their bridges and subsequently improved their economic outlook.

- d. Donna Heller, Director of Parks and Recreation for Lower Merion Township, presented some of her community's support for the Riverfront Plan. She felt the presentation was especially positive and did not position just the bad or challenging aspects of the shared riverfront of Conshohocken and Whitemarsh. She felt the graphics and depiction of contrasts between success and opportunities yet to be realized were right in line with the message the Plan should send to readers and future participants. Lower Merion Township has had experience with one or two of the developers who made changes to the riverfront and spoke of good communication leading to better outcomes. She recalled various meetings which lead to public-private partnerships with positive public press. Her experience was that clear expectations and collaboration was important for the future of the riverfront.

V. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM.

Steering Committee Questionnaire



Carter van Dyke Associates

40 Garden Alley
Doylestown, Pennsylvania
18901-4325

Voice: 215 345 5053
Fax: 215 345 4324
Web: www.CVDA.com

Riverfront Plan-Steering Committee Questionnaire

Summary

The Steering Committee for the Riverfront Plan should consider the enclosed questions in their initial gathering and thereafter for their ultimate contribution to the success of the document.

Questions for the Steering Committee Guided by the RFP:

1. What is the working 'Mission' of the Steering Committee?
2. What is your vision of a vibrant riverfront?
3. What are the simple expectations of each member?
4. What Information Would You Like to Present or Us to Present?
5. Existing Studies and Background
 - a. Are we missing anything
 - b. What are the missing elements of the Riverfront Open Space Plan?
 - c. What are the challenges of the Riverfront Overlay Development District?
6. In-fill and Redevelopment Opportunities
 - a. What are the missing land uses?
 - b. What are the challenging/uncreative land uses?
 - c. What kind of transit-oriented land development components are positive and which are not so positive?
7. Trails
 - a. What are the best components of the existing trail system?
 - b. What are the missing elements of the trail system?
 - c. What are creative pieces to add?

Questions to consider when thinking about the Schuylkill River and reviewing *The Riverfront Plan*

- Can you see the space from a distance? Is its interior visible from the outside?
- Is there a good connection between the space and the adjacent buildings, or is it surrounded by blank walls? Do occupants of adjacent buildings use the space?
- Can people easily walk to the place? For example, do they have to dart between moving cars to get to the place?
- Do sidewalks lead to and from the adjacent areas?
- Does the space function for people with special needs?
- Do the roads and paths through the space take people where they actually want to go?

- Can people use a variety of transportation options – bus train, car, bicycle, etc. – to reach the place?
- Are transit stops conveniently located next to destinations such as libraries, post offices, park entrances, etc.?
- Does the place make a good first impression?
- Are there more women than men?
- Are there enough places to sit? Are seats conveniently located? Do people have a choice of places to sit, either in the sun or shade?
- Are spaces clean and free of litter? Who is responsible for maintenance? What do they do? When?
- Does the area feel safe? Is there a security presence? If so, what do these people do? When are they on duty?
- Are people taking pictures? Are there many photo opportunities available?
- Do vehicles dominate pedestrian use of the space, or prevent them from easily getting to the space?
- Are people using the space or is it empty?
- Is it used by people of different ages?
- Are people in groups?
- How many different types of activities are occurring people walking, eating, playing baseball, chess, relaxing, reading?
- Which parts of the space are used and which are not?
- Are there choices of things to do?
- Is there a management presence, or can you identify anyone in charge of the space?
- Is this a place where you would choose to meet your friends? Are others meeting friends here or running into them?
- Are people in groups? Are they talking with one another?
- Do people seem to know each other by face or by name?
- Do people bring their friends and relatives to see the place or do they point to one of its features with pride?
- Are people smiling? Do people make eye contact with each other?
- Do people use the place regularly and by choice?
- Does a mix of ages and ethnic groups that generally reflect the community at large?
- Do people tend to pick up litter when they see it?

Stakeholder Questionnaire



Carter van Dyke Associates

40 Garden Alley
 Doylestown, Pennsylvania
 18901-4325

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Re: Your Much Needed Input for The Riverfront Plan

Dear Mr. [Redacted]

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Sincerely,

Kent A. Baird
 Community & Conservation Planner

The Riverfront Plan

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II. Review of Previous Plans

Summary: the following documents were reviewed for their relevance to The Riverfront Plan, a joint study of the shared riverfront of Whitemarsh Township and Conshohocken Borough, in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Each municipality has, over the years, analyzed various aspects of its community use and enjoyment of the Schuylkill River.

Whitemarsh Township

Whitemarsh Township Open Space Plan 1996 (per Audit 2006 Open Space Plan)

Whitemarsh Township Comprehensive Plan 2003

- **Economic Development and Commerce Objective #2:** Establish a dialogue with the Borough of Conshohocken concerning the riverfront industrial area and its redevelopment
- **Economic Development and Commerce Objective #3:** Encourage the redevelopment of vacant industrial sites with development that is compatible with surrounding uses
- **Transportation Objective #1:** Coordinate with SEPTA and the County to improve the existing transit service
- **Transportation Objective #3:** Work to implement the Montgomery County/DVRPC Bicycle Mobility Program
- **Transportation Objective #4:** Implement the pedestrian trails and sidewalk connections detailed in Chapters 8 and 10 (of the 2006 Open Space Plan)
- **Natural and Historic Resources Objective #6:** Revise the parking standards in the Zoning Ordinance to promote shared parking and parking held in reserve to limit impervious surface coverage in parking lots
- **Open Space and Recreation Objective # 1(3):** Develop a passive recreational facility on the Schuylkill River at the county's Spring Mill Park
- **Open Space and Recreation Objective #3:** Ensure all major residential developments have convenient and safe access to open space areas
- **Open Space and Recreation Objective #6:** Promote linked greenways through the use of riparian corridors, woodlands and designated open space areas
- **Open Space and Recreation Objective # 8 & 9:** Pursue funding strategies to increase the townships open space fund & Adopt the Mandatory Land Dedication or Fee-in-Lieu... to ensure that new parkland is created or existing recreation need receive funding as part of the land development process
- **Housing Objective #4:** Allow a variety of housing types, such as multifamily, townhouse, and live/work units in the riverfront development area

2006 Roadway Analysis & Transportation CIP

Improvements: Install North Lane and Hector Street East Bound right-turn lane, through lanes and modify traffic signal at intersection.

Whitemarsh Township Open Space Plan 2006

- **Township-Wide Policy 1(5):** Pursue any and all zoning changes that will promote the retention of open space;
- **Township-Wide Policy 2:** Provide a comprehensive network of on- and off-street trails throughout the Township linking residents to recreational, commercial and natural resources;
- **Township-Wide Policy 2(2):** Wherever and whenever the opportunity arises, establish feeder trails to link residents to the Township's major trails;
- **Township-Wide Policy 6:** Put in place the appropriate capital and financing infrastructure to support the Township's long-term open space plans;
- **Riverfront Open Space District Priority Action (1):** Approve the Schuylkill Redevelopment District intended to control future development along the river;
- **Riverfront Open Space District Priority Action (3):** In cooperation with Montgomery County, pursue acquisition of the scrap yard property that links the two parts of the County-owned Spring Mill Park;
- **Riverfront Open Space District Priority Action (4):** Create a natural buffer, with a walking trail or promenade, along the river between Conshohocken Borough and Spring Mill Park;
- **Riverfront Open Space District Priority Action (5):** Create access for non-motorized boats in the Spring Mill Park vicinity of the river;
- **Riverfront Open Space District Priority Action (6):** Pursue opportunities as they arise to preserve and restore the natural ecology of the riverfront.

Whitemarsh Township Parks and Recreation Plan 2007

- **Goal 1: Site Specific Recommendation #7:** Partner with Montgomery County to master plan and improve Spring Mill Park-This would also include developing a strategy to acquire adjacent 200 Center Street parcel (scrap yard) for parking and access area;
- **Goal 1: Special Use Facilities #1:** Create a high-quality facility for the Community Arts Center;
- **Goal 1: Special Use Facilities #2:** Develop a soccer complex;
- **Goal 1: Special Use Facilities #4:** Develop facilities for current and emerging user needs;
- **Goal 1: Special Use Facilities #5:** Enhance access to the Schuylkill River;
- **Goal 1: Protection of Natural Areas:** Provide trails and greenways to connect natural area, community destinations, and parks and provide for long distance recreation activities;
- **Goal 2: Objective 5–Recreation Opportunities:** Create facilities such as pathways, indoor recreation, the riverfront and scenic natural areas to entice people to participate.

Whitemarsh Township Greenway Plan 2007

- **General:** work with adjacent township to connect the greenway, trails and sidewalks;
- **Land Protection/Property Acquisition:**
 - Adopt an Official Map;
 - Obtain conservation easements;
 - Pursue grant funding;
- **Land Use Management:**
 - Prepare an annual budget for greenway and trail development, management, operation and maintenance;
 - Create a historic resource overlay zoning district to protect and preserve historic structures and resources;
 - Create a Transfer of Development Rights program;
- **Land Stewardship:**
 - Pursue grant funding from Department of Environmental Protection for stream bank restoration projects, including the establishment of riparian buffer areas, removal of invasive vegetation species, and tree planting along stream banks;
 - Perform streambank restoration projects along Township waterways;
 - Develop Township and County trails as recommended by the Township Trail Master Plan and the County;
- **Trail Recommendations:**
 - Pursue grant funding for the development of trail facilities, pathways, sidewalks, and bike lanes as recommended in the Township Open Space and Trails plans;
 - Create a recreational greenway along the Schuylkill River;
- **Miquon/Riverfront District Conservation and Recreation Greenway:**
 - Establish multi-use greenway through direct acquisition of conservation easements and land with environmental assessments conducted prior with specific properties taking priority—200 Center Street, East 33 Property, Ashford Farms and PECO transmission line.

Whitemarsh Township Pedestrian & Bicycle Network Plan 2009

Recommended network: provide a multi-use trail, bike lanes and sidewalk links from all neighborhoods in the Township to all schools, parks and recreational facilities, commercial areas, and other common destinations, with bicycle parking, transit carrying systems, and traffic, safety and way-finding signage and techniques.

2011 Riverfront Open Space Plan

● Trail Related:

- 1) Develop a multi-use trail along the river
- 2) Design the RDD trail for leisurely use (different from the Schuylkill River Trail)
- 3) Develop a focal point at Spring Mill
- 4) Create trail crossings of R6 tracks
- 5) Address safety issues

● Amenities:

- 1) Provide a restroom facility
- 2) Install River-Related Art
- 3) Consider the installation of a water screen
- 4) Install overlooks
- 5) Provide a civic gather space

● Water Use:

- 1) Install boat launches
- 2) Initiate water tours
- 3) Install fishing piers

● Public Safety:

- 1) Provide locations for water drafting for fire-fighting
- 2) Provide security lighting
- 3) Provide security-posts with emergency phones
- 4) Design for emergency vehicles

● Environmental Concern:

- 1) Alert potential developers of environmental concerns

● Circulation:

- 1) Extend Washington Street
- 2) Explore potential river crossing

● Signage:

- 1) Provide way-finding signage
- 2) Install interpretive stations/signage

● Landscaping:

- 1) Creation/restoration of riparian buffer landscaping
- 2) Restore habitat on 'East 33'
- 3) Provide beautification and landscape enhancements

● Service Uses:

- 1) Provide additional public parking
- 2) Provide opportunities for bike and/or boat facilities

Conshohocken Borough

Historic Resource Survey 1989

Conshohocken Revitalization Plan: *A Community at the Crossroads*, 2002

(priority given its update: “The Community Revisited” see below)

Parking Management Study 2004

Schuylkill Riverfront Linkages Study 2005/2015

- Signage and Wayfinding at [key] locations
- Railroad Crossings at Harry, Ash, and Cherry Streets
- Destination Amenities: dog park, boathouses, concessions, promenade, picnic areas, small plazas, lighting underneath Fayette Street Bridge

Park and Recreation Plan 2007

- **Goal:** Provide recreational open space amenities to meet the current and future needs of Borough as noted in the Open Space Plan and Comprehensive Plan—as the borough grows it is important to monitor current and future trends in recreation to ensure that the Borough is able to plan for and meet future recreational needs and ensure that the Borough continues to provide athletic fields, courts, dog runs, and other active recreation areas by planning new and expanding or upgrading existing park and recreational areas;
- **Goal:** Provide accessible parks to residents throughout the Borough—create safe, pedestrian-focused linkages to parks for accessibility, undertake urban greening activities throughout the Borough and provide sidewalk and trail access to recreation facilities and parks (Montgomery County Goal 15);
- **Goal:** Upgrade existing facilities and issue accessibility and accommodation to active recreation—design parks, playing fields and open spaces to be as accessible as possible for as many users as possible.
- **Goal:** Provide facilities that meet the Borough’s needs within the limited land available, as noted in the Montgomery County Open Space, Natural Features and Cultural Resources Plan—purchasing land, if possible, in growth areas for future use as a park.

Vision for the Conshohocken Train Station 2007/2009

Analysis, graphic design and cost projections for a new parking garage adjacent Outbound Station and to include 307 parking spaces with ground level coffee and retail at Stoddard Avenue and Elm Street.

One-Way Avenue Study 2010

Conshohocken Revitalization Plan: *The Community Revisited*, 2011

- **Economic Development**
 - Explore avenues for branding, marketing and celebrating the assets of Conshohocken

- Increase and diversify the Borough's retail supply
- Enhance the viability of the Borough's existing commercial entities through business assistance initiatives
- Ensure that Fayette Street remains a viable pedestrian-oriented commercial corridor with ample foot traffic
- Strengthen the identity of Conshohocken's downtown through aesthetic improvements
- **Housing and Neighborhood**
 - Make green and open space a priority, continue exploring opportunities to add green space and other types of communal open space throughout Conshohocken
 - Develop a master plan for the waterfront that protects this resource, particularly as the Borough continues to address future development of, and connections to and from, this unique asset
- **Transportation and Infrastructure Goals**
 - Improve connections and mobility options for all forms of travel throughout Conshohocken, for pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and drivers
 - Continue investigating ways in which to relieve congestion and improve parking supply
 - Evaluate and enhance the condition of neighborhood infrastructure with a long-term plan

Conshohocken Open Space Plan 2013

- **Develop a waterfront plan along the Schuylkill River**
- **Develop a Schuylkill River Greenway System along the Borough's riverfront**
 - Build the Schuylkill Riverbank Path
 - Build connections between the greenway/riverbank path and borough destinations
 - Restore the riparian buffer along the riverfront
 - Build a cultural and historic park along the Old Schuylkill Canal
- **Provide riverfront amenities for river recreational activities/integrate riverfront with river life**
 - Install Pedestrian Amenities Along the Riverfront
 - Build an Additional Public Access Boat Launch Along the Riverfront
 - Create Secured Boat Storage along the Schuylkill Riverfront
 - Develop a Boathouse along the Schuylkill Riverfront
- **Improve Access and Mobility Conditions for Bicyclists and Pedestrians Along the Matsonford Bridge**
 - Integrate the Matsonford Bridge with the riverfront and trail systems
 - Improve pathway conditions and amenities along the Matsonford Bridge
- **Study the Feasibility for Riverfront Access West of the Matsonford Bridge**
- **Support the Development of the Cross-Country Trail and Access Linkages**

- Review and comment on the county’s plans for developing the Cross-County Trail (CCT)
- Construct bicycle-compatible connections from the Cross-County Trail to adjacent neighborhoods and destinations
- Construct trail parking adjacent to Ardmore Tire Co.
- **Improve streetscapes and pedestrian conditions throughout the Borough**
 - Improve streetscapes in the vicinity of [key] parks
 - Repair and maintain the streetscaping elements along Hector Street
 - Incorporate street trees and neighborhood greening at various locations
 - Enhance Borough gateways
 - Implement traffic calming measures at various locations throughout the Borough
 - Install sidewalks (where missing) at various locations
- **Design and implement signage systems for waterfront wayfinding**
- **Develop a Natural Resource Protection Ordinance**
- **Investigate potential for strengthening historic preservation**
 - Encourage preservation of existing historic structures and properties within the Borough
 - Investigate the creation of a Historic Architectural Review Board
 - Create an oral history of the Borough
- **Initiate volunteer efforts within the Borough**
 - Initiate a Garden Club in the Borough
 - Form a “Friends of Conshohocken Borough”
- **Complete a Park and Recreation Needs Assessment—to determine the need for additional or improved facilities within the Borough**
- **Develop Site Master Plans for the Borough’s Parks—to identify, upgrade and formalize potential uses for the [key] parks.**
- **Encourage bicycling and walking through physical improvements and other techniques**
 - Install bicycle rack, benches, and other amenities in designated locations
 - Create incentives through zoning or other public and private financial techniques for supporting and encouraging bicycling and walking throughout the Borough
 - Plan and design a borough-wide pedestrian oriented directional signage and wayfinding system
 - Plan and create a borough-wide bicycle map
 - Develop additional pedestrian and parking access to the Schuylkill River
- **Link open space areas throughout the Borough—formalize a Walking Trail along the existing stormwater drainage basin to link 2nd Avenue Meadow and Haines and Salvati Memorial Park**

Conshohocken Borough Comprehensive Plan 2015

- **Goal:** Enhance public access to and along the Schuylkill river and provide opportunities to appreciate and preserve its unique natural resources and recreational amenities:
 - 10.1) Develop a master plan for the riverfront,
 - 10.2) Develop a Schuylkill River Greenway system,
 - 10.3) Provide riverfront amenities and recreational opportunities along the riverfront,
 - 10.4) Create easily accessible, public open spaces along the Schuylkill River,
 - 10.5) Partner with the Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area to have access to new funding and marketing opportunities,
- **Goal:** Provide recreational amenities and open space amenities that will meet the current and future needs of Borough residents and visitors:
 - 10.1) Develop Parks and Recreation Master Plan and needs assessment,
 - 10.2) Support bicycle-related improvements,
 - 10.3) Improve streetscape and pedestrian conditions throughout the Borough
 - 10.6) Ensure pedestrian connections between the riverfront, downtown and residential areas.
- **Goal:** Maintain and enhance high quality, cost effective community services to attract and retain a diverse population while ensuring long-term financial stability:
 - 11.1) Improve overall public safety and create a safe, comfortable and pedestrian-oriented community.
 - 11.4) Develop a 5-year Capital Improvement Program to prioritize and coordinate essential capital and infrastructure-related projects

5 Year Infrastructure Management Plan Map 2015

State and Local Roads paved, and other yearly improvements identified

Conshohocken Revitalization Alliance: “Conshy at the Crossroads” Facebook

Ongoing dialogue regarding improving the community III.

III. Zoning

Whitemarsh Township Zoning

Article XI: C Residential District (Neighborhood Preservation)

Location: between Elm St. and 10th St., above the railroad tracks

Intent: to retain scale and character of existing residential neighborhood

Permitted Uses: no mixed-use permitted except which may exist

Relationship to the Riverfront: separated by the railroad tracks

Article XXI: HVY Heavy Industrial District

Location: between the railroad tracks and the river

Intent: to provide for heavy industrial uses while minimizing traffic, noise, and pollution, and to provide for the rehabilitation of the site

Permitted Uses: heavy industrial

Relationship to the Riverfront: includes land for possible riverfront park

Article XX LIM Limited Industrial District

Location: from Spring Mill SEPTA Station to Harts Lane and between River Road and the river

Intent: to provide for light industrial uses with minimal traffic, noise and pollution, and to provide for rehabilitation of the site

Permitted Uses: light industrial, office, medical facility, residential (apartment & condominium)

Relationship to the Riverfront: includes land for possible redevelopment

Article XXXVII Riverfront Development Overlay District (RDD-1)

Location: between Hector Street and railroad tracks and the river

Intent: to provide mixed-use development and redevelopment supportive of a riverfront park

Permitted Uses: residential (multi-family), commercial (retail, office, restaurant, cultural center and museum, school, fitness center, theater, place of worship)

Relationship to the Riverfront: requires 100-150 ft of riverfront for park use

Article XXXVII Riverfront Development Overlay District (RDD-2)

Location: between Hector Street and the river

Intent: to provide mixed-use development and redevelopment supportive of a riverfront park

Permitted Uses: residential uses (single-family and continuing retirement)

Relationship to the Riverfront: limited riverfront access, separated by Rail

Conshohocken Borough Zoning

Specially Planned District 3 (SP-3)

Location: from river's center, bound by western municipal boundary and Fayette Street Bridge, to below the Cross County Trail and Schuylkill River Trail.

Intent: to provide for major business and heavy industrial and extend the residential character of adjacent districts

Permitted Uses: industrial, residential, office, recreation, hotel, retail, municipal, theater, fitness

Relationship to the Riverfront: immediate impact on river's edge design as well as potential blockage from parcels desirous of a view

Specially Planned District 2 (SP-2)

Location: from the river's center to Washington Street and bound by Fayette Street Bridge and the eastern municipal boundary

Intent: to provide for business and commerce

Permitted Uses: office, hotel/motel, recreation, parking, retail, municipal, banking, theater, fitness, non-drive-in restaurant

Relationship to the Riverfront: immediately located on the river's edge, with development potentially complicating access to the river

Specially Planned District 1 (SP-1)

Location: from above the railroad tracks to Elm Street and bound by Ash Street and then westerly to the Cross County Trail

Intent: to provide for business and commerce

Permitted Uses: office, hotel/motel, recreation, parking, retail, municipal, banking, theater, fitness, non-drive-in restaurant

Relationship to the Riverfront: from above the railroad tracks this district's land uses would be more concerned with a view of the river or riverfront design

Borough Residential 2 (BR-2)

Location: portions either side of Fayette Street, above Elm Street and bound east of Fayette Street by Spring Mill Avenue and the eastern municipal boundary and on the western side of Fayette Street by various parcels above First Avenue west to Colwell Lane

Intent: to promote and provide high density single-family and two-family residential and infill and new development

Permitted Uses: residential (single family attached, detached, semi- & two family detached and accessory uses)

Relationship to the Riverfront: these neighborhoods, existing above the railroad tracks would be considered for improvements to the view of the river

Limited Industrial (LI)

Location: above the railroad and bound to the west by Ash Street and then the eastern municipal boundary with portions captured by Elm Street and Hector Street

Intent: to provide for office, research & development, laboratory uses, high-tech and other clean, light industries as well as a variety of small-scale businesses

Permitted Uses: research, office, public/gov't utility building, warehouse, storage, lumberyard, printing, publishing

Relationship to the Riverfront: parcels in this district would seek a view of the river from above the railroad tracks

Borough Commercial (BC)

Location: running from south, at Elm Street, northly along and with parcels either side of Fayette Street

Intent: to encourage perpetuation of traditional main street commercial and neighborhood

Permitted Uses: offices, banking, retail, small sales, personal services, municipal, non-drive-in restaurants and cafeterias, studio space, clubs, residential, library, small bed and breakfast

Relationship to the Riverfront: this district provides the main street spine of access to the river; views of the river are critically important

IV. Existing Conditions: Photo Tours

Conshohocken Train Station



Spring Mill Train Station



Access to the River



Boat Launches



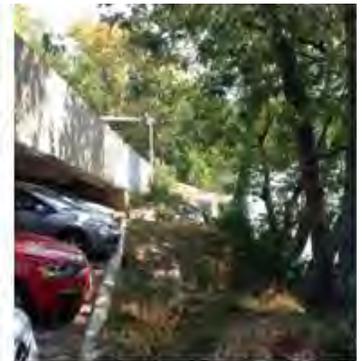
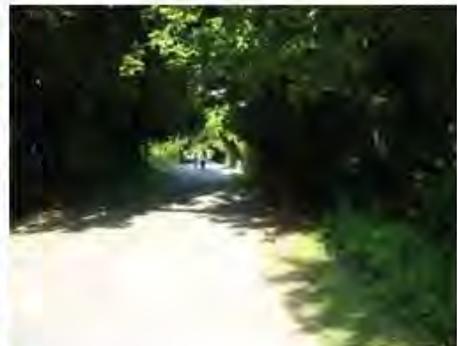
Destinations Along the River



Spring Mill County Park



Trails



Views of the Riverfront



V. Best Practices of Riverfront Planning

The following online principles of “waterfront” planning were shared with The Steering Committee to inspire them toward actionable goals and objectives.

*How to Transform a Waterfront*¹

1. Make public goals the primary objective
2. Create a shared community vision for the waterfront
3. Create multiple destinations: The Power of Ten (destinations)
4. Connect the destinations
5. Optimize public access
6. Ensure that new development fits within the community’s vision

*10 Qualities of a Great Waterfront Destination*²

1. Surrounding Buildings Enhance Public Space
2. Limits are Placed on Residential Development
3. Activities go on Round-the-Clock and Throughout the Year
4. Flexible Design Fosters Adaptability
5. Creative Amenities Boost Everyone’s Enjoyment
6. Access Made Easy by Boat, Bike and Foot
7. Local Identity is Showcased
8. The Water Itself Draws Attention
9. Iconic Buildings Serve a Variety of Functions
10. Good Management Maintains Community Vision

*9 Steps to Creating a Great Waterfront*³

1. Look First at the Public Space
2. Make Sure Public Goals are the Primary Objective
3. Build on Existing Assets & Context
4. Create a Shared Community Vision
5. Create Multiple-use Destinations by Tapping the Power of 10
6. Connect Destinations Along the Waterfront
7. Maximize Opportunities for Public Access
8. Balance Environmental Benefits with Human Needs
9. Start Small to Make Big Changes

Sources

¹ <http://www.pps.org/reference/turnwaterfrontaround/>

² <http://www.pps.org/reference/stepstocreatingagreatwaterfront/>

³ http://www.pps.org/reference/10_qualities_of_a_great_waterfront/



Memorandum

To: Kent Baird, Carter van Dyke Associates
From: Todd J. Poole *TP*
CC: Carter van Dyke
Date: May 2, 2016
Re: Whitemarsh-Conshohocken Township Riverfront Plan

This memorandum serves as 4ward Planning's recommendations report, pursuant to the Whitemarsh-Conshohocken Riverfront Plan.

Background

4ward Planning, working in support of Carter van Dyke Associates (CVDA) the lead planning consultant working on the Whitemarsh-Conshohocken Riverfront Plan, was provided with background materials, inclusive of aerial photographs, planning diagrams and draft segments of the riverfront planning report, as completed.

4ward Planning's charge is to provide high level guidance on the steps the township (Whitemarsh) and borough (Conshohocken) should jointly consider, as the final elements of the riverfront plan come into place. Specifically, and based on its experience working on a number germane public space projects, nationally, 4ward Planning identified the key questions the township and borough will need to address, moving forward, if the riverfront plan is to be sustainable well into the future.

These key questions are centered on operational structure and annual funding – issues common to most public space projects and their sponsors. These questions are summarized, below:

1. What value does the new investment along the riverfront have for the local area?
2. How will the project sponsors pay for its annual and long-term capital costs?
3. What entity or entities will manage the riverfront?
4. Should the project sponsors partner with outside organization or go it alone?

While the above are not intended to be an exhaustive list of questions to be answered, they are the most critical questions that need to be addressed, well in advance of the project moving into financing and construction phases.

Accordingly, 4ward Planning offers up the below recommendations which address the above key questions.

Recommendations for the Whitemarsh-Conshohocken Riverfront Plan

Recommendations

ESTIMATING THE “PROXIMITY” VALUE CREATED BY THE IMPROVEMENTS

What value do the waterfront improvements impart on adjacent and nearby real estate?

It is well documented that public realm improvements and, particularly, those that involve public space along a waterfront, contribute to real estate values on adjacent and nearby properties. Indeed, the “proximity” effect of such improvements can contribute as much as 40 percent of property’s market value, depending on the scale and aesthetic value of the waterfront improvements, and proximity to the subject real estate parcel.

The proposed improvements for the Riverfront Plan, once implemented, will create such value for existing and prospective development and will, ultimately, be captured through real property tax assessments, based on rental and real estate property sales transactions.

Consequently, it is recommended that Whitemarsh Township engage the services of a consultant to provide a preliminary estimate of the “proximity” values that the proposed Riverfront Plan improvements will likely create. The type of analysis which needs to be performed involves identifying the likely land-uses, locations, scale and prospective price points (sales prices and rental values), and then, using an appropriate algorithm, estimating the incremental value increases based on the foregoing variables.

The resultant benefit of performing such an analysis is to understand the Riverfront Plan’s contribution to local economic investment and the tax base.

DEVELOP A STRATEGY FOR FUNDING MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

How will you pay for the riverfront’s long-term maintenance and operating expenses?

Raising the needed upfront capital required to construct the riverfront improvements is one thing; coming up with the annual funding to underwrite the costs associated with operating and maintaining (O&M) the riverfront is an entirely different issue, altogether.

Where many organizations (public and non-profit) get into trouble is not planning in advance for identifying the source(s) of funding required for annual O&M and then realizing, after its been built, that local tax dollars are likely insufficient to underwrite the costs. Advance planning for annual O&M should begin in advance of finalizing the Riverfront Plan, in order to ensure that funding sources and methods are realistic, based on likely annual need.

It is recommended that Whitemarsh Township, with the help of an outside consultant, identify the likely annual O&M expenses, and the degree to which these expenses could vary, based on such variables as weather, vandalism, general use, and other factors. This exercise will be particularly useful when performing “what-if” analyses, in a later step.

Recommendations for the Whitemarsh-Conshohocken Riverfront Plan

Once estimated annual O&M expenses are identified (including the likely variance on these expense), the township and its consultant will begin to identify a range of revenue sources beyond local tax dollars, including programming, tax increment financing (TIF), and sponsorships. A pro forma will be developed during this step to allow for sensitivity (“what if”) analysis. In this way, the township will be in position to determine if the proposed capital improvement program can be adequately supported through various financial means, beyond general fund dollars.

IDENTIFY A MANAGEMENT ENTITY AND DEVELOP A MANAGEMENT PLAN

What entity shall be responsible for carrying out O&M for the riverfront?

This particular issue is of vital importance, not least of which because the Riverfront spans across two municipalities – Whitemarsh Township and Conshohocken Borough. It should also be recognized that the success of the riverfront, after improvements have been completed, can not be predicated on what each municipality contributes in isolation; to the contrary, the long-term success of the riverfront, particularly after improvements are made, will be as a result of the seamless management of it (that is, in the eye of the public, there is not section managed and maintained by the township or the borough).

It is also critical that the responsible entity have sufficient authority and the means to carry out its mission of operating and maintaining the riverfront area – this means that municipal boundaries will not impede the organization in the carrying out of its responsibilities and that both municipalities will recognize the designated entity as having the requisite authority to act on behalf of both municipalities, where the operation and maintenance of the riverfront is concerned.

It is recommended that, subsequent to developing a funding strategy for the riverfront (an exercise which should identify funds for administration activities), Whitemarsh Township, in collaboration with Conshohocken Borough, explore various types of management entities for the Riverfront (e.g., existing municipal department; newly created municipal department; creation of a non-profit; farming out the responsibility to a private entity (non-profit or for profit); etc. Having settled on a particular management entity, the next step the municipalities will want to take is to develop an initial management plan (recognizing that it will likely morph, once an entity assumes O&M responsibilities).

VI. Preliminary Estimate of Costs

Compiled By: CVDA & CTC

Date (s): March 17, 2016 and March 25, 2016

Description	Length (feet)	Width (feet)	Cost basis	Total quant.	Unit cost (\$)	Approx. Cost (\$)
Plymouth Creek Trailhead						453,650
General landscaping	500	20	sf	10,000	10	100,000
Lighting: parking area			ea	8	11,000	88,000
Porous paving parking area with ±45 spaces			sp	45	2,100	94,500
Pedestrian bridge	100	8'	ea	1	120,000	120,000
Restroom facilities			ea	1	20,000	20,000
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')	350		lf	4	5,000	17,500
Trees			ea	21	650	13,650
Plymouth Falls Boat Launch						592,650
100' diameter cul-de-sac			sf	7,900	8	63,200
Porous paving service drive	120	20	sf	2,400	6	14,400
Docks			ea	2	8,000	16,000
Gazebo			ea	1	75,000	75,000
General landscaping	350	50	sf	17,500	10	175,000
Lighting: service drive & cul-de-sac			ea	6	11,000	66,000
Lighting: pedestrian (1 fixture per 50')	400		ea	8	11,000	88,000
Restroom facilities			ea	1	20,000	20,000
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')	400		ea	4	5,000	20,000
Trees			ea	33	650	21,450
Walk with steel edging (from start of study area to canal)	400	16	sf	6,400	5.25	33,600
Plymouth Canal						832,700
Berm			ea	1	8,000	8,000
Canal, with ice skating capabilities			ea	1	125,000	125,000
General landscaping	700	15	sf	10,500	10	105,000
Fishing pier			ea	1	8,000	8,000

Description	Length (feet)	Width (feet)	Cost basis	Total quant.	Unit cost (\$)	Approx. Cost (\$)
Lighting: parking area			ea	8	11,000	88,000.00
Lighting: pedestrian (1 fixture per 50')	700		ea	14	11,000	154,000
Porous paving parking areas for ±40 cars and service drive			sp	40	2,100	84,000
Picnic pavilion			ea	2	30,000	60,000
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')	700		ea	7	5,000	35,000
Trees			ea	74	650	48,100
Walk with steel edging (from canal to athletic fields)	700	32	sf	22,400	5.25	117,600
Oak Street Athletic Fields						2,577,925
Athletic fields (150' x 300')			ea	2	370,000	740,000
General landscaping	1,000	15	sf	15,000	10	150,000
Lawn			sf	52,000	0.05	2,600
Lighting: pedestrian (1 fixture per 50')	1,300		ea	26	11,000	286,000
Porous paving parking area with ±120 spaces			sp	120	2,100	252,000
Riparian meadow	750	50	sf	37,500	0.35	13,125
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')	1,300		ea	13	5,000	65,000
Solar panels over parking area			sp	120	7,000	840,000
Tennis courts			ea	2	60,000	120,000
Walk with steel edging (from athletic fields to bridge)	1,300	16	sf	20,800	5.25	109,200
Oak Street Extension						83,000
Asphalt street with curb	150	40	sf	6,000	8	48,000
Concrete sidewalks	300	5	sf	1,500	10	15,000
Rail crossing			ls	1	15,000	15,000
Signage			ls	1	5,000	5,000
Two Boroughs Bridge						1,368,900
General landscaping	400	50	sf	20,000	10	200,000
Lighting: pedestrian (1 fixture per 50')	350		ea	7	11,000	77,000
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')	350		ea	4	5,000	17,500
Suspended pedestrian bridge	1,000		ea	1	1,000,000	1,000,000
Under bridge play area with tot lot	200	50	ea	1	45,000	45,000

Description	Length (feet)	Width (feet)	Cost basis	Total quant.	Unit cost (\$)	Approx. Cost (\$)
Walk with steel edging (under bridge, along play area)	350	16	sf	5,600	5.25	29,400
Ash Street Plaza						1,877,100
Canopies/dining tents: private property, by others			ea	6		—
Elevated, over parking plazas: private property, by others	180	80	sf	14,400		—
Elevator tower/cantilevered overlook			ls	1	750,000	750,000
General landscaping	1,650	20	sf	33,000	10	330,000
Lighting: pedestrian (1 fixture per 50')	1,650		ea	33	11,000	363,000
Ramp & stairs at plaza			ls	1	250,000	250,000
Trees			ea	70	650	45,500
Walk with steel edging (from bridge to ramp)	1,650	16	sf	26,400	5.25	138,600
Millennium Meadow						264,585
General landscaping	250	50	sf	12,500	10	125,000
Lawn	350	100	sf	35,000	0.05	1,750
Lighting: pedestrian (1 fixture per 50')	350		ea	7	11,000	77,000
Riparian meadow	350	70	sf	24,500	0.35	8,575
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')	390		ea	4	5,000	19,500
Walk with steel edging (from ramp to cul-de-sac)	390	16	sf	6,240	5.25	32,760
Poplar Street Cul-de-Sac						393,350
100' diameter cul-de-sac			sf	7,900	8	63,200
Fountain			ea	1	100,000	100,000
General landscaping	300	10	sf	3,000	10	30,000
Lighting: accent/focal point			ea	8	11,000	88,000
Flags/banner			ea	6	15,000	90,000
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')	300		ea	3	5,000	15,000
Trees			ea	11	650	7,150
Conshohocken Boathouse Esplanade						649,400
Concrete plank boat ramp	120	20	sf	2,400	15	36,000
Elevated esplanade	400	16	sf	6,400	50	320,000
General landscaping	600	30	sf	18,000	10	180,000

Description	Length (feet)	Width (feet)	Cost basis	Total quant.	Unit cost (\$)	Approx. Cost (\$)
Lighting: pedestrian (1 fixture per 50')	250		ea	5	11,000	55,000
Riparian meadow	700	30	sf	21,000	0.35	7,350
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')	250		ea	3	5,000	12,500
Trees			ea	27	650	17,550
Walk with steel edging (from Poplar St. to Cherry St.)	250	16	sf	4,000	5.25	21,000
Cherry Street Cul-de-Sac						318,400
100' diameter cul-de-sac			sf	7,900	8	63,200
Monument to Industry			ea	1	250,000	250,000
Trees			ea	8	650	5,200
Riverfront Allée						2,915,975
Porous paving bike path	1,650	10	sf	16,500	6.00	99,000
Azaleas			ea	1,660	150	249,000
Band shell with solar panels			ea	1	800,000	800,000
General landscaping	1,650	25	sf	41,250	10	412,500
Lighting: pedestrian (1 fixture per 50')	3,300		ea	66	11,000	726,000
Seating area with steel edging	100	100	sf	10,000	5.25	52,500
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')	1,650		ea	17	5,000	82,500
Trees			ea	120	800	96,000
Walk with steel edging (from cul-de-sac to band shell)	1,650	30	sf	49,500	5.25	259,875
Walk with steel edging (from cul-de-sac to band shell)	1,650	16	sf	26,400	5.25	138,600
Athletic Fields						1,568,900
Athletic fields	300	150	ea	3	350,000	1,050,000
General landscaping	300	30	sf	9,000	10	90,000
Lawn	1,200	200	sf	240,000	0.05	12,000
Lighting: parking area			ea	6	11,000	66,000
Porous paving parking area for ±93 cars			sp	93	2,100	195,300
Restroom facilities			ls	1	20,000	20,000
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')	1,800		ls	18	5,000	90,000
Trees			ea	57	800	45,600

Description	Length (feet)	Width (feet)	Cost basis	Total quant.	Unit cost (\$)	Approx. Cost (\$)
Launch-Rowing Center Esplanade						893,475
Elevated esplanade	400	16	sf	6,400	50	320,000
General landscaping	1,000	20	sf	20,000	10	200,000
Lawn	250	50	sf	12,500	0.05	625
Lighting: pedestrian (1 fixture per 50')	1,000		ea	20	11,000	220,000
Riparian meadow	100	60	sf	6,000	0.35	2,100
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')	1,000		ls	10	5,000	50,000
Trees			ea	71	650	46,150
Walk with steel edging (from band shell to elevated esplanade)	650	16	sf	10,400	5.25	54,600
SEPTA Park & Ride Area						1,423,600
Elevated esplanade	1,000	16	sf	16,000	50	800,000
General landscaping	900	30	sf	27,000	10	270,000
Green screen on parking structure	460	12	sf	5,520	15	82,800
Lawn	900	40	sf	36,000	0.05	1,800
Lighting: pedestrian (1 fixture per 50')	900		ea	18	11,000	198,000
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')	900		ls	9	5,000	45,000
Trees			ea	40	650	26,000
PECO Park & Walk						617,000
Boardwalk trail	800	8	sf	6,400	40	256,000
General landscaping	800	10	sf	8,000	10	80,000
Lighting: parking area			ea	4	11,000	44,000
Lighting: pedestrian (1 fixture per 50')	800		ea	16	11,000	176,000
Porous paving parking area for ±10 cars			sp	10	2,100	21,000
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')	800		ea	8	5,000	40,000
Trailhead at Spring Mill Park						490,150
Porous paving driveway with curbs	250	24	sf	6,000	8	48,000
Restroom facilities			ea	1	20,000	20,000
Concrete paving			sf	6,200	8	49,600
Lighting: parking area			ea	8	11,000	88,000
Lighting: pedestrian (1 fixture per 50')	350		ea	7	11,000	77,000

Description	Length (feet)	Width (feet)	Cost basis	Total quant.	Unit cost (\$)	Approx. Cost (\$)
Porous paving parking area for 30 cars			sp	30	2,100	63,000
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle per 100')			ls	1	5,000	5,000
Tot lot			ea	1	85	85,000
Trees			ea	71	650	46,150
Walk with steel edging	100	16	sf	1,600	5.25	8,400
Lee Street Loop						510,500
Elm Street/Colwell Lane Access			ls	1	500,000	500,000
Signage			ea	15	700	10,500
Quaker Quick Trail & Elm Street Square Trail Access						7,000
Bollards			ea	3	800	2,400
Easement-private property-separately determined					—	—
Site furniture (1 bench & 1 trash receptacle)	350		lf	1	2,500	2,500
Signage			ea	3	700	2,100
Cyclone Bridge						3,093,800
Bridge, with concrete supports and 5 x 25' wind vanes around bridge	900		ea	1	3,000,000	3,000,000
Bridge ramp	350		ea	1		—
Lighting: pedestrian (1 fixture per 50')	350		ea	7	11,000	77,000
Walk with steel edging	200	16	sf	3,200	5.25	16,800
Trail, SEPTA Corridor & Washington St Improvements						1,014,800
Crosswalks (across RR & Washington St)			ea	14	15,000	210,000
Clean-up area along railroad (20' on each side of tracks)	6,700	40	sf	268,000	2	536,000
Trees along railroad			ea	336	800	268,800
Bike Path on South Side of River						293,000
Porous paving bike trail on south side of river	8,000	6	sf	48,000	6.00	288,000
Signage			ls	1	5,000	5,000

Description	Length (feet)	Width (feet)	Cost basis	Total quant.	Unit cost (\$)	Approx. Cost (\$)
ESTIMATE CONSTRUCTION						22,239,860
Contingency (15%)						3,335,979
SUBTOTAL						25,575,839
Professional Fees (10%)						2,557,583.90
GRAND TOTAL						28,133,422.90

VII. Primary Sources of Funds

The following list of state and county sources of funding reveals current grant and loan programs for the year 2016. It lists these sources regardless if the origin of monies was the federal government. State and County governments often operate as fund managers or create grant or loan programs using federal dollars. As such these dollars have prescribed applications which should be reviewed.

Analysis & Planning

- **Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI)**
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission provides grants for analysis, planning or design projects which improve the efficiency of the regional transportation system through better planning and design of communities and use of existing transportation systems and promotion of public transit, bicycle and pedestrian modes of transportation. It also supports improvements to designated Centers and protection of the environment through growth management and land preservation.
- **Regional Trails Program**
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) administers grant funds, from the William Penn Foundation, for the planning, design and construction of multi-use trails in Greater Philadelphia. Projects range from initial feasibility and planning studies to actual design and construction of trails and trail segments.
- **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) manages federal dollars to plan, design and construct on-road and off-road facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure project to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- **U.S. Economic Development Administration**
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) prepared “Investing in People and Places: Greater Philadelphia’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy” which includes projects which promote federal initiatives.
- **Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) Trails**
The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources currently offers matching grants for the planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation or maintenance of multi-use trails, including the purchase of equipment for construction and maintenance of the trails.
- **Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) Community Recreation and Conservation Planning**
The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources currently offers matching grants for the planning of parks, recreation facilities, critical habitat, open space, natural areas, greenways and river/watershed corridors.

Acquisitions of Land, Conservation Easement and Trail Easements

- **Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) Trails**
The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources currently offers matching grants for the planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation or maintenance of multi-use trails, including the purchase of equipment for construction and maintenance of the trails.
- **Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) Land Acquisition and Conservation**
The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources currently offers matching grants for the purchase and/or donation of land for park and recreation areas, greenways, critical habitat and/or open space.
- **MONTCO 2040: Implementation Grant Program**
To further the goals of its recently adopted Comprehensive Plan, Montgomery County provides matching grant funds to improve community walkability and community placemaking through acquisition and development of trails, trailheads, signage and wayfinding, event gathering spaces, bicycle facilities, public art installations, right of way enhancements, and sidewalks, amongst others.

Development of Parks and Recreation

- **Regional Trails Program**
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) administers grant funds, from the William Penn Foundation, for the planning, design and construction of multi-use trails in Greater Philadelphia. Projects range from initial feasibility and planning studies to actual design and construction of trails and trail segments.
- **Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) Trails**
The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources currently offers matching grants for the planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation or maintenance of multi-use trails, including the purchase of equipment for construction and maintenance of the trails.
- **Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) Park Rehabilitation and Development**
The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources currently offers matching grants for the rehabilitation and development of public parks, recreation facilities, greenways and river conservation projects.
- **MONTCO 2040: Implementation Grant Program**
To further the goals of its recently adopted Comprehensive Plan, Montgomery County provides matching grant funds to improve community walkability and community placemaking through acquisition and development of trails, trailheads, signage and wayfinding, event gathering spaces, bicycle facilities, public art installations, right of way enhancements, and sidewalks, amongst others.

Improvements to Public Space

- **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) manages federal dollars to plan, design and construct on-road and off-road facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming

techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure project to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)**

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) maintains a competitive grant program for projects which will demonstrably reduce air pollution emissions and help the region meet federal health based air quality standards. Project examples include pedestrian and bicycle projects, transit improvement programs, traffic congestion reduction and flow improvement projects, and funding of transportation demand management programs.

- **Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) Park Rehabilitation and Development**

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources currently offers matching grants for the planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation or maintenance of multi-use trails, including the purchase of equipment for construction and maintenance of the trails.

- **MONTCO 2040: Implementation Grant Program**

To further the goals of its recently adopted Comprehensive Plan, Montgomery County provides matching grant funds to improve community walkability and community placemaking through acquisition and development of trails, trailheads, signage and wayfinding, event gathering spaces, bicycle facilities, public art installations, right of way enhancements, and sidewalks, amongst others.

Management and Maintenance of Parks, Recreation and Trails

- **Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) Park Rehabilitation and Development**

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources currently offers matching grants for the planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation or maintenance of multi-use trails, including the purchase of equipment for construction and maintenance of the trails.

- **Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) Trails**

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources currently offers matching grants for the creation of collaborative initiatives to better develop and manage park and recreation facilities and to promote conservation.

- **Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) Peer and Circuit Rider Program**

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources currently offers matching grants for the creation of full time park, recreation or conservation professionals who are jointly funded by a formal partnership, commission or authority.

Signage and Wayfinding

- **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) manages federal dollars to plan, design and construct on-road and off-road facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure project to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- **Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) Various Categories**

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources currently offers various matching grants for the installation of signage and wayfinding systems.

- **MONTCO 2040: Implementation Grant Program**

To further the goals of its recently adopted Comprehensive Plan, Montgomery County provides matching grant funds to improve community walkability and community placemaking through acquisition and development of trails, trailheads, signage and wayfinding, event gathering spaces, bicycle facilities, public art installations, right of way enhancements, and sidewalks, amongst others.

VIII. Whitemarsh Planning Commission

MINUTES PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MAY 24, 2016

Attendees: Peter Cornog, James Hoban, Sherri Patchen, Vince Manuele, Scott Quitel, Charles L. Guttenplan, AICP, Director of Planning & Zoning, Amy Grossman (BOS Liaison), Jim Sullivan, Township Engineer, T&M Associates

1. Call to order: 7:00 PM by Chair Patchen
2. Announcements & Correspondence:
 - The Montgomery County Planning Commission review was received today for the Riverfront Plan.
3. Approval of Minutes:
 - Mr. Cornog moved to approve the meeting minutes from April 26, 2016, seconded by Mr. Hoban. Vote 5-0. Mr. Hoban moved to approve the meeting minutes from May 10, 2016, seconded by Ms. Patchen. 2-0-3 Mr. Cornog, Mr. Manuele and Mr. Quitel - abstain (not present at that meeting)
4. Zoning Hearing Board Appeals:
 - ZHB#2016-13 – 505A Germantown Pike Assoc, LP; 507 Germantown Pike Assoc, LP; Michael Nolen; 505 ½ & 507 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA; Setbacks & Road Frontage. This application was discussed with the Conditional Use application (CU#04-16 below). At the end of the discussion of both applications, Mr. Cornog made a motion to the Zoning Hearing Board to look favorably and approve the requests for the three variances; seconded by Mr. Manuele. Vote 5-0.
5. Subdivision & Land Development Applications: None
6. Conditional Use Applications:
 - CU#04-16 – 505A Germantown Pike Assoc, LP; 507 Germantown Pike Assoc, LP; Michael Nolen; 505 ½ & 507 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA; Townhome Use. Mike Peters, Esq. with Eastburn and Gray, PC, was present along with Estelle Eberhart, Erick Eberhardt & Mentus, Inc., Jack Barbary, Vice President of Real Estate Services, Inc. (Mr. Nolen's corporate entity) and Guy DiMartino, Traffic Planning and Design. At the January 12, 2016 meeting, the Planning Commission recommended in favor of extending the VC-1 District on the site; that Zoning Map Amendment was approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 11, 2016. Now the applicant would like to move forward with the development of the property. Mr. Peters went over the background of the property and showed existing and proposed plans. There are currently two office buildings on the site and one of the buildings has an apartment in it. The applicant is proposing 9 townhomes and 4 single-family detached homes on the site. There is adequate parking for each use with additional overflow parking for the townhouses. In order to do so, several variances are needed as well as conditional use approval for townhomes in the VC-1 District. Mr. Barbary discussed the elevations and how they would meet the Village Commercial requirements. Ms. Eberhardt discussed that the walking path will go from Westaway Drive to Germantown Pike and that it will be used by pedestrians only (inadvertently omitted from plan rendering). Public Comment: Harry and Susan McCullough, 4023 Westaway Drive; Linda Doll, Fairway Road; Bob Sague, Kottler Drive; Joe Meo, 4122 Jackson Drive; and Ed Flocco, Woodruff Road, all spoke. The public's comments and concerns, in general, were as follows: Sight distance exiting onto Westaway Drive and the public not adhering to the speed limit; the style of the new houses will take away from the neighborhood and devalue the existing properties; property currently has a lot of trees, how many will be removed and why put in excess parking; too much building, would like it the vegetation to stay as it is; traffic and overdevelopment changes the

character of the Township; and stop the density increase. Planning Commission Comments: Mr. Cornog stated he has seen at least 26 plans since 1999 and feels this is the best use of the land; saves open space; and is less intense and would like to see the project move forward with the three variances. Ms. Patchen agrees with Mr. Cornog's comments and due to the irregular shape and unique attributes of this parcel it does warrant the grant of the variances. Mr. Quitel states there are a lot of valid comments from the public, but this goes back to the people elected and Montgomery County; there is no ecological overlay in Whitemarsh Township; the problem is more systemic because that is what happens over the years and it's why our Township is not nearly as green and not as enjoyable as other towns not far away. (After motion made as above for the Zoning Hearing Board), Mr. Manuele moved to recommend approval of the Conditional Use application; seconded by Mr. Hoban. Vote 5-0.

- CU#03-16 – Bradford Tiffany, 429 S. Bethlehem Pike, Fort Washington, PA; Restaurant and Bakery Use. Joseph Kuhls, Esquire was present on behalf of the applicant; applicant was also present. The applicant is proposing a week-day restaurant, primarily take away food, with a limited menu of sandwiches, salads, cookies and cake. There will be limited cooking and baking on the premises. No table service (3 high tables with 3 chairs at each table will be available for patrons). There is no proposed construction or change to the exterior of the building. A letter dated May 19, 2016 from Mr. Guttenplan, states the use and parking meets zoning requirements. Hours of operation will be from 5:30am – 4:00pm Monday through Friday. Public Comment: Lorraine Moore, owner of Sage Spa, is concerned about trash and the disposal of certain things; parking; and large delivery trucks. Ms. Moore would like to make sure the people in the back are protected. Ms. Moore also stated that she and Mr. Tiffany had a lengthy discussion and think this can be worked out and be beneficial for both businesses. Greg Harth, confirmed that the applicant reached out to them; they continue to have sewer backup due to grease being poured down the drain (by past user); he stated the use is ideal and couldn't think of a better use for the location. Mr. Harth also stated that there is a surplus of parking adjacent to the businesses (he leases to) and could work something out with the tenant if necessary. Planning Commission Comments: Mr. Hoban stated that it would be helpful to coordinate deliveries in the early hours to take pressure off the Spa. Mr. Quitel recommended approving the Conditional Use application for the operation being requested; seconded by Mr. Manuele. Vote 5-0.

7. Old Business:

- Review of *Riverfront Plan* as an amendment to the Township's 2003 Comprehensive Plan; recommendation for adoption to be considered. Mr. Guttenplan briefly stated Kent Baird, consultant from Carter van Dyke Associates, presented the *Plan* at the May 10th joint Planning Commission meeting. The point of the meeting tonight is for the Township Planning Commission to consider making a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors on the adoption of this plan as an amendment to the Township's Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Baird, acting as consultant for Whitemarsh Township, shared an abbreviated Power Point presentation of the Riverfront Plan and its Goals, Existing Conditions Findings, Recommendations and Plan Graphics. Please see attached memorandum outlining the meeting. Public Comment: Joe Meo, 4122 Jackson Drive, spoke. His comment and ultimate request was that the plan include improved information regarding riparian rights. He asked if the consultant team had analyzed the impact of the current development on the riparian area or floodplain. Mr. Baird responded that it was not part of the scope of work due to the necessity of detail for that type of analysis and that it could be recommended as a next-step opportunity. After a short additional presentation by the consultant and additional discussion, Mr. Cornog made a motion recommending that the Board consider the *Plan* for adoption, noting that additional work is needed, but recognizing that the *Plan* will provide a guide for development in the riverfront area and also that the Township look further at ecological and riparian rights issues; seconded by Mr. Manuele. Vote 4-1 (Mr. Quitel opposed)

8. New Business: None



Carter van Dyke Associates

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 25, 2016

TO: Charlie L. Guttenplan, AICP, Director of Planning & Zoning/Zoning Officer, Whitemarsh Township

FROM: Kent A. Baird, Community & Conservation Planner, CVDA

PROJECT: The Riverfront Plan

RE: May 24th Planning Commission Meeting-Old Business: Review of Riverfront Plan

ATTENDED: Peter Cornog, James Hoban, Vincent Manuele, Sherri Patchen, Scott Quitel, Amy Grossman (Board of Supervisors Liaison), Charlie Guttenplan, Kent Baird and Jim Sullivan, Township Engineer

Summary

An abbreviated presentation of the Riverfront Plan was shared with the Whitemarsh Township Planning Commission during the Old Business portion of a regularly scheduled meeting. The Goals, Findings and Recommendations of the plan were reiterated for members of the board unable to attend previously scheduled presentations and workshops. A Questions and Answers style discussion followed the presentation and included public comment.

Minutes of Old Business

Mr. Baird, acting as consultant for Whitemarsh Township, shared an abbreviated Power Point presentation of the Riverfront Plan and its Goals, Existing Conditions Findings, Recommendations and Plan Graphics. Emphasis was placed on the review and acknowledgement of public participation and municipal adoption of previous plans and reports leading to this document and the creation of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee's six goals represent the culmination of decades of community input and committee expertise relative to the riverfront study area. The Existing Conditions Findings reveal the sheer volume of current and pending residents who will share the riverfront experience, the volume of visitors and passers-by who might see the riverfront as a regional destination and near term challenge of promoting public and private partnerships with a mostly privately owned riverfront edge.

Peter Cornog—Mr. Cornog reminded the board of the dated nature of the existing Township comprehensive plan, last adopted in 2003, and sought clarity for this plan's relevance and/or impact on any update to the comprehensive plan. Mr. Guttenplan remarked the Board of Supervisors were on the same page and were in the process of reviewing the previously adopted plan and pointed out other more recent amendments—the open space, pedestrian and greenway plans—as well as the park and recreation plan. The strength of the Riverfront Plan lies in the near term impact on the vision of shared riverfront and the preparation of a comprehensive plan which celebrates the importance of the river to the community.

James Hoban & Peter Cornog—a shared request of Mr. Hoban and Mr. Cornog was that of making improvements to the draft Riverfront Plan to enhance the Action Plan and any steps needed to achieve the objectives or recommendations.

Sherri Patchen—the Chairperson of the Commission requested further information in the plan to address which financial tools are available for achieving the objectives/recommendations. A discussion continued for which local examples might be identified, which might have used business improvement districts and business owner special assessments, business improvement districts and government sponsored feasibility studies. Mr. Baird and Mr. Guttenplan reminded the Board their request was perfectly in line with previous planning initiatives and that this ‘Vision’ style plan necessarily leads to further analysis and subject specific reports and analyses.

Scott Quitel—Mr. Quitel prefaced his questions and comments with a remark that the plan seemed to meet the goals and intentions of the committee and the public input. His greater concern was for the importance or emphasis the plan did or did not place on the existing ecology or restoration opportunities along the riverfront. He asked to what extent the committee or the consultant sought to include a history of the ecology, floodplain restoration areas or stormwater solutions designed in an ecologically sensitive manner. Mr. Baird first shared his personal background relative to natural resource preservation and the background of his firm’s principals to remind the Board there exists great passion for the natural environment on the consultant team. Mr. Baird then offered that initial discussions included forest restoration and floodplain habitat for areas that were not yet developed or did not yet have proposed development plans. Only two main sites seemed still in a blank slate status relative to possible restoration; one lies upstream of Fayette St. Bridge and the other adjacent the 401 Washington St. approved development. In the moment, the site upstream from the bridge was drawn to accommodate habitat as well as outdoor recreation, seen in the form of athletic fields with solar panel covered parking. The second site was drawn to remind the reader that the property could be developed but that there was potentially ample room for yet more outdoor recreation to accommodate some of the nearly 1,300 new residents moving to the riverfront and others lacking outdoor recreation amenities. He further reiterated that extensive discussions had been had relative to Spring Mill County Park and the hope to offer improved access for individuals of all abilities. Mr. Baird added that an improvement to the plan could identify an option to use either or both of the developable sites for habitat restoration. The Board was encouraged by that offer. Mr. Hoban remarked that the riverfront had been in active industrial use and then in underutilized condition for well over 100 years. He was encouraged by the discussion and worried that if the plan did not include the subject there was a chance current redevelopment of the riverfront would continue unguided by the plan’s recommendation.

Joe Mayo—public comment was received from township resident Joe Mayo. Joe had earlier in the full meeting remarked he had been a resident for 63 years. His comment and ultimate request was that the plan include improved information regarding riparian rights. He asked if the consultant team had analyzed the impact of the current development on the riparian area or floodplain. Mr. Baird responded that it was not part of the scope of work due to the necessity of detail for that type of analysis and that it could be recommended as a next-step opportunity. Board members, Cornog, Patchen and Manuele requested that expanded analysis of the riparian rights be recommended in the plan.

James Hoban and Sherri Patchen—separately and together Mr. Hoban and Ms. Patchen shared concerns for the timing of the Riverfront Plan and its adoption as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. Both worried for the negative impact of not adopting the vision of the riverfront which developers should address. Mr. Guttenplan confirmed that adoption was important both for establishing fair conversations with developers, and private property owners, as well as establishing the municipal role in achieving the recommendations; whether that be financial or administrative. He reminded the Board of the importance of grants and their need for community supported and adopted reports and plans. A discussion was had for the importance of grant timing and type.

Peter Cornog and Vincent Manuele—Mr. Cornog made a motion with second and additions provided by Mr. Manuele to recommend the Board of Supervisors adopt the Riverfront Plan with revisions to the plan expected in the categories of a) improved Action Plan, b) Next Steps Analyses for Ecological Issues, Riparian Rights, Park and Recreation Needs and Engineering and Economic Feasibility Studies. Attending members were in favor of the motion with the exception of Mr. Quitel who opposed the motion. The motion passed.