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## One Riverside: Why CCRA Has Not Joined the "Underground Parking" Appeal

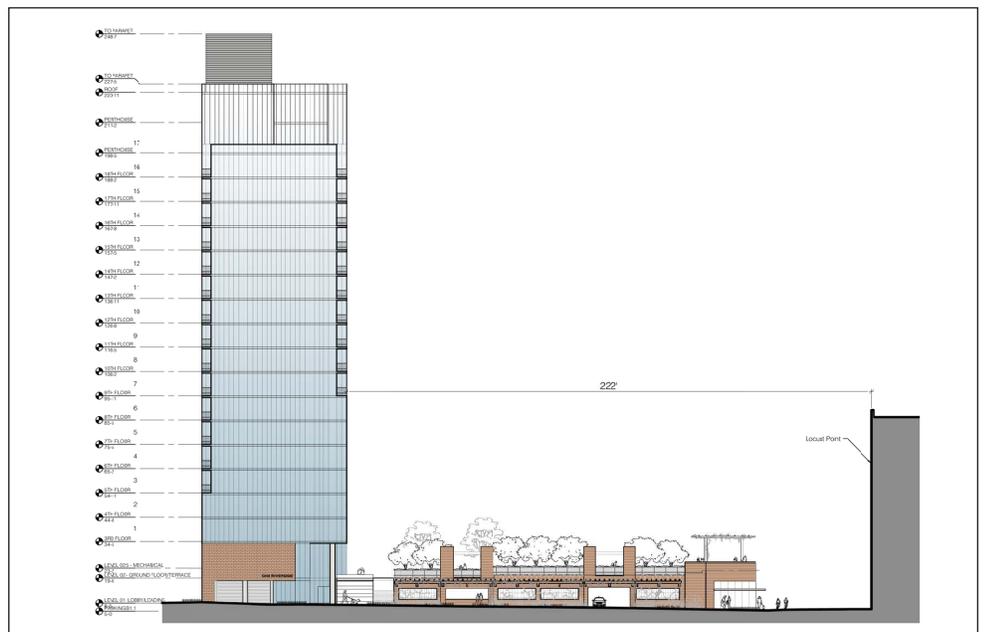
By Jeffrey Braff, CCRA President

As reported in our November 15 weekly eNewsletter, a recent development in the One Riverside 21-story high-rise proposed for 25<sup>th</sup> and Locust Streets is a near neighbor's appeal of the project's Zoning Permit issued by the Department of Licenses and Inspections. Following a well-attended Community Meeting held on August 13, the CCRA board voted to oppose the project as inconsistent, in several ways, with our Neighborhood Plan, and because of concerns regarding its impact on the adjacent Community Garden, parking, traffic congestion, noise, and safety. Nevertheless, after careful deliberation,

we decided not to join the appeal because a victory in the appeal would likely result in virtually the same building, but with 29 fewer parking spaces.

The confound presented by this project is that it has been designed to be built "by right," i.e., without the need for variances from the Zoning Board or any special approvals. Furthermore, neither CCRA's zoning counsel, nor its zoning committee, have identified any viable legal theories to stop this project and, though openly solicited, no such theories have been presented to the Association. Accordingly,

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One Riverside, viewed from 25th St. Upper level of parking is visible in low-rise structure to right of tower.

our negotiating power is limited to appealing to the developer's interest in favorable community relations, his public image, and his desire to build something he can truly be proud of. Toward that end, a CCRA Task Force has met several times with the developer's team to address a number of design issues (including the effect that glass sheathing might have on the Garden, the massing of the tower immediately adjacent to the Garden (we have suggested a setback from the plinth at the south side), and the impact of the raised podium and the three 25<sup>th</sup> Street curb cuts on the 25<sup>th</sup> Street pedestrian experience), and to come up with a development agreement that: (a) addresses such construction issues as work hours, sound control, dust control, parking, laydown space, and measures to protect the Garden and those gardening; (b) imposes appropriate controls on the proposed café; and (c) ensures ongoing maintenance of the project's extensive landscaping.

The basis of the so-called "underground parking appeal" is that, while the Zoning Code provides for a 100% Gross Floor Area bonus for underground accessory parking (amounting in this case to almost 28,000 gross square feet), only the lower of the two levels of parking at One Riverside is really underground; the second of the two levels is located above grade, at the same level as the proposed lobby and café. Accordingly, the appeal contends that One Riverside is not entitled to the underground parking bonus, and the project must be reduced by some 28,000 gross square feet (almost 15 percent of the proposed total of 167,000 gross square feet).

Asked to clarify its interpretation of underground parking and One Riverside's entitlement to the bonus, L&I has pointed to §14-202(5) of the Zoning Code, titled Average Ground Level, which provides in part: "When a lot is located within a 100-year floodplain, any point located one foot above the regulatory flood level shall be considered to be at the average level of the lot." It is undisputed that the One Riverside lot lies within the 100-year floodplain. Using the reference point of one foot above the flood level (which at that location is 12.93 feet), L&I concluded that both floors of parking are "underground," thereby reaffirming One Riverside's entitlement to the bonus.

After discussions with the appellant and his attorney, CCRA decided not to join the

appeal. Do we think the appeal is frivolous? Absolutely not. The case presents a genuine issue of statutory interpretation. A strong argument can be made that the L&I flood level interpretation contradicts the purpose of the underground parking bonus which is to provide a substantial incentive for the placement of parking where it will not be seen. So why not join the appeal?

Under the present Zoning Code, a developer of residential housing in an RMX-3 district need only provide parking spaces for 30% of the units. One Riverside, with its proposed 147 units, is only required to have 45 parking spaces. However, the project's plans call for 81 parking spaces, 36 more than required by the Code. More importantly, 52 of those spaces, seven more than required, are in the lower level of the parking area, which is underground by everyone's definition. Accordingly, the developer could moot the appeal, and retain the 28,000 gross square foot bonus, simply by eliminating all 29 parking spaces presently planned for the second level.

Anyone who attended the August 13 Community Meeting can attest to the fact that parking was a **major** issue for many individuals who spoke out against this project. Aside from the loss of the 76 monthly spots on the lot upon which One Riverside is to be built, there was considerable concern expressed that 81 parking spots are not nearly enough for 147 residential units. In this context, CCRA concluded that there was little likelihood of an upside to this appeal. While it is within the realm of possibility that a victory and the loss of the 29 second floor parking spaces could persuade the developer that the project is no longer economically feasible, we determined that it was far more likely that a victory would not stop the project. Rather, the developer would move forward anyway, resulting in virtually the same building, but with 29 fewer parking spaces. Indeed, for all of the foregoing reasons, CCRA attempted to persuade the appellant to drop the appeal. We were unsuccessful.

*Editor's Note: An appeal hearing was held before the Zoning Board of Adjustment on November 20. As of the time this article went to the printer, the ZBA had not yet rendered a decision. As for CCRA's negotiations with the developer, with the appeal pending, the developer has placed them on hold.*

## Dog Contest in Schuylkill River Park

On Saturday, October 19, dog owners lined up in Schuylkill River Park to show their dogs and answer an eco-friendly question at Philly Water's Best Friend Spokesdog contest, sponsored by the Philadelphia Water Department and organized by Partnership for the Delaware Estuary. The first-prize winners of the dog contest were Josie Fineberg and her dog, Josie. The purpose of the contest was to encourage dog owners to keep Philadelphia water clean by proper pet-waste disposal.



Dog contest competitors



Contest winners Josie Fineberg and dog, Josie

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# President’s Report: A Long Day at the Planning Commission and Next Editor



*Jeffrey L. Braff, CCRA President*

On the morning of November 18, under the subject heading “First and foremost, let there be parking . . . .,” former Zoning Committee co-Chair Tim Kerner, who is currently splitting his time

between Philadelphia and Brazil, sent CCRA an email regarding a proposed legislative change to the Zoning Code that was to be addressed the following day at the Planning Commission’s regular monthly meeting. More specifically, among the Commission’s published agenda of 20 different action items was No. 9(b), under the heading Administration – Sponsored Amendments to the Zoning Code: “Zoning Bill No. 130804 making substantive adjustments to provisions of the Zoning Code.”

Having spent four years as a member of the Zoning Code Commission (which was instrumental in writing the new Zoning Code which went into effect in August of 2012), during which he provided regular reports to the CCRA Board, Tim has a keen interest in any proposed changes to the new Code. So this nondescript entry on the Commission’s agenda caused Tim to find Bill 130804 and parse its contents. Buried among 14 pages of proposed changes, Tim found one that would eliminate the requirement that the building of an aboveground accessory parking garage (i.e., a garage that is part of a building whose primary purpose is something other than parking) requires special exception approval, and providing instead that such garages would be allowed by right, so long as the garage provides no more than 200 percent of the minimum number of required spaces.

Without going into a detailed explanation of what is required to obtain “special exception approval,” suffice it to say that it makes it more difficult to build an aboveground garage, and far more difficult than if the garage can be built “by right” (the latter of which essentially precludes neighborhood input). And the mitigating proviso of 200 percent of the minimum number of required parking spaces would apply only to very large garages.

The elimination of the special exception provision in Bill 130804 is not consistent with CCRA’s Neighborhood Plan. Aboveground parking garages are lifeless and

generally ugly. Our Plan strongly encourages underground parking, and it provides that accessory parking garages should only be aboveground if they are wrapped with actively inhabited building areas so that the garage is not apparent from the street.

So CCRA sprang into action. I boned up on the issue and cleared my calendar for the next day so that I could testify, and Executive Director Steve Huntington lined up two other civic associations, Logan Square Neighbors and Society Hill to do the same. We all met at 1515 Arch Street on November 19 and cooled our heels for the long day ahead.

After going through the eight agenda items that preceded Bill 130804, the Commission’s Staff summarized the Bill and recommended that it be approved for enactment. It now was our chance to be heard. I can’t say that we were brilliant in our respective oratories. But following several questions from Chairman Alan Greenberger, the Commission voted to recommend the passage of Bill 130804, with the exception of the provision regarding aboveground parking garages, which they wanted to consider further. Victory?

Two weeks later, on December 2, we received word from the Commission that, after deliberating further, it decided that the special exception provision for aboveground parking garages should be retained, and that Bill 130804 would be amended to reflect this. Likely victory!

Item No. 15 on the Commission’s agenda was Zoning Bill No. 130656, which would amend the Zoning Code by revising sign controls, particularly billboards. This is not the legislation that “brought us to the dance,” but it is legislation that the Association, at the urging of Scenic Philadelphia, had started to get smart about. Indeed, just a week before, at our November meeting, the Board voted to oppose this Bill and to communicate that opposition to City Council. Chief among our objections was the fact that the Bill grants amnesty to billboards that are illegal, as well as those that do not conform to existing regulations. Hence, we decided to stick around to hear the presentation of Commission Staff regarding this Bill.

Although the Staff recommended a few changes to the Bill that we viewed as favorable (relating to replacement ratios and special effect embellishments), on the

*Continued on page 25*

# Bike Share is Coming to Philadelphia!

By Susan Dannenberg, Policy Fellow, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia

Beginning in the autumn of 2014 Philadelphia will join other leading cities, including Washington, Boston, Chicago, New York, Denver, Toronto, Montreal, London and Paris, in deploying a bike sharing system that will provide convenient, on-demand access to bicycles for short-distance trips. Bike sharing will be an affordable, healthy, safe, environmentally sustainable addition to Philadelphia's transportation options. In April 2013, Mayor Nutter announced his commitment to bring bike share to Philadelphia by the end of 2014. Following this announcement, the City of Philadelphia has partnered with a consulting team to produce a strategic business plan and is in the process of hiring a company to bring bike share to Philly.

## What is bike share?

Bike sharing is the newest, healthiest, and probably most fun form of public transportation. In Philadelphia, a system of 150 to 200 bike share stations and 1,000 to 2,000 bikes will serve an area that stretches from the Delaware River into West Philadelphia, from the Navy Yard through Center City to North Philadelphia beyond Temple University's main campus. Bike share users can access a bike at any one of the stations and return it to any other station with either a credit card or a membership card or key. Make one-way trips by bike, without worry; hop on and bike to the train, to work, to school, to the store and not worry about returning the bike to where you started.

## How does it work?

Check out the bicycles from any one of the bike share stations, which will be located throughout the City from Temple to the Navy Yard, the Delaware River to West

Philadelphia. Each station will have a kiosk for payment and multiple docking spaces for securely parking, or docking, bike share bikes. Riders can use either a credit card or a member card to check out the bike from the station's dock and then park it at any station. Docking the bike at a station automatically checks it in. Pricing has not been established

yet, but fares will be affordable and will be designed to encourage many short trips vs. one long ride. Stations will be located at popular destinations throughout the service area; users will never be far from a secure place to pick up or drop off a bicycle.

## Who will use it?

Bike share will be available to help connect residents, commuters, and visitors to many of Philadelphia's businesses, institutions, and attractions. It can also provide a healthy transportation alternative to a diverse group of City residents. When complete, the system is projected to generate nearly two million trips per year. Bike share bicycles are easy to ride and designed to fit everyone with a simple seat adjustment. Bicycles will have sturdy, step-through frames, and front and rear lights. These safety features will allow bike share to be available for trips 24 hours a day.

## Who pays for it?

Bike sharing will be funded through a combination of sources. While the City has committed \$3 million dollars to start



the system, the system will be completed with a combination of state, federal, and private funds. It is expected that, as in many other cities, user fees, advertising revenues, and sponsorship will cover the costs of operating the system once it is up and running.

## Will helmets be required?

Like many other cities, our system will not have an official helmet policy, i.e., helmets will not be required. Bike sharing has proven to be relatively safe. Nationally, there already have been some 10 million bike share trips, and there have not been any deaths or even major injuries. This probably is due to the fact that the large, heavy, three-speed bikes do not go very fast. In addition, the bikes put riders in an upright position, and have lights on the front and back that are automatically powered as riders pedal, both of which make bike share riders more visible.

## Save time, save money, be healthy, use bike share!

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# Happy Hour: Where Is Your Favorite?

Bonnie Eisenfeld

Happy hour is the new early bird special, appealing to all ages. Many local bars offer discounted drinks and small plates, a pleasant substitute for or prelude to dinner, usually available from 5 until 7 p.m. on weekdays, although some have extended hours. Whether you are alone or with friends, happy hour is a fun way to enjoy

yourself and possibly have an impromptu conversation with some congenial people. A friend and I have been researching local happy hours for a couple of years, and I will share with you what we learned.

What makes a perfect happy hour? First, the bar must offer a selection of good

wines, beers, and cocktails, as well as appetizers or small plates at discounted prices. A free batch of popcorn or a tiny *amuse bouche* does not qualify. Second, you want to have an attentive, courteous, efficient, and personable bartender who remembers your drink and food orders and maybe contributes a bit of amiable

chit-chat. And third, the music should not be excessively loud, so you can have a lively conversation with friends or new acquaintances. Many other elements contribute to the overall ambiance, including attractive décor, clean and convenient facilities, and a diverse, convivial, and interesting mix of people. One of our favorite amenities is handbag hooks under the bar.

Even limiting ourselves to the CCRA neighborhood, I haven't the space to mention all the happy hours we have tried. Some came and went, some were inconsistent, and some were not so hot. So here are some highlights about the ones we liked best. At **Seafood Unlimited**, 270 S. 20<sup>th</sup> Street, the Isaiah Zagar mosaic-tile mural behind the bar is a never-ending delight to the eyes, the bar is lit in ocean colors, the atmosphere is cozy and sociable, and there is a large selection of discounted wines, cocktails, local beers, and appetizers. **Marathon**

**on the Square**, at 19<sup>th</sup> & Spruce, offers a rotating daily happy-hour special menu Monday through Saturday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., and additionally on Wednesday through Saturday from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. **Friday Saturday Sunday's Tank Bar** on the second floor, at 21<sup>st</sup> and Latimer, offers specialty cocktails and bar snacks, and has the added visual attraction of a tropical fish tank.

Hotel bars are a bit trendy and less cozy. Our favorites are **The Palm**, Hyatt at the Bellevue, Broad and Walnut Streets; **10 Arts** at the Ritz-Carlton, Broad and Chestnut; and **La Croix** at The Rittenhouse, 210 Rittenhouse Square. Other noteworthy happy hours, which may or may not offer discounts, are **Urban Enoteca** at the Latham Hotel, 17<sup>th</sup> & Walnut (the venue of a recent CCRA Mix & Mingle event); **A. Kitchen**, and the recently opened oyster bar calling itself **A. Bar**, around the corner from each other at 18<sup>th</sup> & Walnut; and **Tria**, 18<sup>th</sup> & Sansom.



Judy and David Einhorn, owners of Seafood Unlimited, at the bar in front of the mosaic-tile mural by award-winning artist Isaiah Zagar.

Please write to me and tell me about your favorite happy hours: c/o centercity@centercityresidents.org with "Happy Hour" in the subject line.

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# Introducing the PFS Theater at the Roxy

By Rebecca Cain, Philadelphia Film Society Development Director

The Philadelphia Film Society, presenter of the 11-day film festival in October, will finally commence regular operation of the Roxy Theater (2023 Sansom Street) this month. It has been a long and complicated process, but the two-screen digital and 35mm-capable theater will soon open for business.

In October 2012, PFS was approached by Roxy building owner John Ciccone to assume operations of the Roxy. Executive Director J. Andrew Greenblatt jumped at the opportunity to give PFS a new home and build a hub for independent and world cinema in Center City. By January the Roxy was ours to begin refurbishing and updating the projection systems. The film industry has switched to distributing movies in a digital format, no longer sending a hundred pounds of film to every theater. New films are delivered on palm-sized hard drives that are uploaded to a computer in the booth and projected onto the screen. The new format is great for substantially reducing shipping costs and controlling the number of times a film is screened, but terrible for the hundreds of art-house theaters around the country that have to find \$100,000 per screen to upgrade their equipment. PFS got to work planning, raising funds, and telling our story.

Early on in the evaluation of the building, we discovered issues that required attention. Repairs were made, but like every project, the more we improved, the more we found that needed improvement. Our initial objectives were to be ADA accessible, have both digital and 35mm screening capabilities, and offer a clean and safe environment. Months passed as one delay led to another, and before long, we had gutted the entire building, including the concrete floors. Our friends at the Department of Licenses and Inspections must have thought we were crazy, but their patience and guidance have been invaluable to the Roxy. After submitting change after change, we were finally approved, and the race to open began.

PFS scrambled to find the funding necessary to complete the work and pay for the equipment. Longtime member Louis Bluver honored PFS by making a \$100,000 contribution, which kicked off a tremendous outpouring of support. We utilized Kickstarter, an online crowdsourcing site, and raised over \$47,000 in 28 days. PFS Board members went to work too. Among others, Peter Dachowski, retired CEO of CertainTeed and Saint-Gobain,



*New seats and more await you at the refurbished Roxy.*

secured more than 100 sheets of drywall, miles of insulation, and state-of-the-art acoustical panels for the theater. And Linda Yaffe spread the word of the Roxy's revival to her neighborhood, facilitating the purchase of seats and memberships. (For \$1,500 you can name a seat at the Roxy.)

November 15-17, the Roxy hosted the Philadelphia International Children's Film Festival presented by PNC Arts Alive. It was a great treat to have enthusiastic school-children as the first official audience. Our brief operation was a success, and fueled our sprint to get operating full-time.

Ultimately the fate of the Roxy is in the hands of the people of Philadelphia. Aided by the experience of John Ciccone and his army of tradespeople, we have built it to the best of our ability. Now all that is needed is your patronage! Ticket prices range from \$8.00 to \$12.00, with discounts for students, seniors, and members (who receive the largest discounts). Annual memberships can be purchased at the Roxy, or by visiting our website, [www.filmadelphia.org](http://www.filmadelphia.org).

In the coming months, you are invited to share with us what you would like to see on the screen at the Roxy. *Filmadelphia at the Roxy*, a series of films made in or by Pennsylvania filmmakers, begins December 17. This series is made possible by a grant from the Knight Foundation. *The Virginia and Harvey Kimmel Children's Screening Series*, reduced-price

movies for young audiences, will kick off Saturday mornings in the coming month.

As we reflect back on the past year, we are thankful for the talents of staff and generous support from the community. We look ahead to 2014 as a year full of promise for the Philadelphia Film Society. We heartily invite you to join us on our mission to share the love of cinema with Philadelphia. We can't wait to see you at the movies! Please contact Rebecca Cain ([rcain@filmadelphia.org](mailto:rcain@filmadelphia.org)) to find out more about making a donation, or the many naming opportunities at the Roxy.

*The Philadelphia Film Society is a member-supported non-profit arts organization committed to bringing the best in world and independent cinema to Philadelphia. With over 800 members, PFS has been presenting the Philadelphia Film Festival for 22 years. Year-round programming includes our monthly "Passport to World Cinema" series at the Gershman Y at Broad & Pine Sts. "Passport" screenings are followed by a brief talk led by individual(s) involved in the production of the film, or a professor knowledgeable about the subject or origin of the film. Admission to Passport screenings is free for members and \$5.00 for non-members. Members also attend sneak-preview screenings throughout the year, enjoy discounts or all-access badges to our Philadelphia Film Festival in October, and free tickets and discounts to the newly opened Roxy Theater.*

# The City, Then and Now: the Léger Exhibit at PMA

by Virginia K. Nalencz

The city has its moments and this is one of them, with Millennials and Boomers and entrepreneurs swelling the population, reversing the post-WWII surge to the suburbs. Another city moment occurred around 1919, the year when Fernand Léger painted his monumental “The City,” centerpiece of the exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, “Léger: Modern Art and the Metropolis.” The Great War was over. Léger and other pioneers of Modernism were ready to seek a newer world. The show at PMA, which runs through January 5, focuses on the city in the decade following Léger’s painting of that name.

How might an artist turn aside from the old world, corrupt and warlike as it was? One answer given by the Modernists was to strip away allusions to former times. Away with the revival styles in architecture, away with ornament that recalled the past, from the ancients through the perceived failure of faith in the Middle Ages and of Reason in the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, all of it culminating in the destruction wrought by WWI. Modernists celebrated the essence of the future, the machine, and its natural habitat, the city.

Léger’s “City” is heroic in scale, more than seven feet high and almost ten feet wide, the size of a mural or a movie screen. Lampposts, street signs, factory funnels, transmission towers, billboards, stairways, scaffolding, pedestrians—elements of urban life crowd the picture plane, jostling and exciting the viewer’s sensibilities just as if on a live city street. There is almost no depth, except for what is hinted in the tilting of planes; the laborious progress to one-point perspective has been tossed overboard with the rest of the detritus of art history. “The City” is in your face. The bright color and sharp contours give the painting a jubilant air.

Artists of the 1920s painted urban gathering places, especially places of amusement: skating rinks and movie palaces and circuses. (Léger’s set designs and costumes for the ballet “The Skating Rink” are a highlight of the exhibit.) The idea of urban space as a source of intellectual and artistic ferment is commonplace today, e.g., in Richard Florida’s theories of the Creative Class, a category that includes the professions, which make cities attractive to others in a multiplier effect of density. At the same time, a counter-narrative of urban pathology has persisted over the

course of the last century. In this version, the city is cold and isolating; ominously, the human figures in Léger’s “City” are faceless.

Billboards, confident in their colors and shapes, are among the elements in Léger’s city paintings. Does the bombardment of advertising make city-dwellers feel alienated? Not in the view of 1919, when advertising was welcomed as a new art form. Postdoctoral curatorial fellow Anna Valley, who organized the exhibit, says that Paris, like other European and American cities, was slathered with advertising in the decade after WWI—every blank surface was covered.

The poet Apollinaire, a close friend of many artists of the time, called advertising “the poetry of the modern world.” A robust example from the show is “Razor” (1924) by American expatriate Gerald Murphy, its big bright red title “character” accompanied by a bold fountain pen and a jaunty box of matches. The “creatives” of *Mad Men* might envy the straightforward glee with which these are presented: *these products will make you happy*, the painting seems to say.

Léger’s own advertisements, like his other works of this period, celebrate the beauty of the machine. In the film *Ballet Mécanique*, produced by Léger in 1923-24 in collaboration with the American Dudley Murphy, machines come to life. Objects move and multiply like dancers in a Busby Berkeley musical (an infinite loop of allusion because dancers in a Busby Berkeley chorus line become mechanisms, like their descendants the Rockettes, each Rockette replaceable by the next, the apotheosis of the mechanical). The figure of Charlie Chaplin bookends the film’s display of animated objects. Wire whisks whirl, wine bottles dance, and train pistons pound relentlessly. Léger celebrates the motions of the machine and of the beloved “Charlot,” whom Léger applauds for using his body like a machine, inventing a new kind of acting.

By the next decade, the meaning of mechanism has changed, becoming charged with menace. In a famous sequence from the 1936 film *Modern Times*, the Little Tramp, dressed in workers’ overalls, is caught in the machinery of an assembly line, dragging his body across immense gears to save his own life. The image of Chaplin trapped by machinery conducts the viewer into the

21<sup>st</sup> century, as does a startling prediction made by the polymath-artist El Lissitzky, represented in the exhibit by his Cubist painting which is also a sculpture. In a Dadaist publication in 1923, El Lissitzky called for the “transcendence” of the printed book into an immaterial form, which he called “the Electro-Library.”

The vision of the Electro-Library has come true, along with our possession of ever-more-micro devices; we’ve got the whole world in our hands. Or not, say artists and critics who debate whether we are trading human qualities for the frictionless ease of a totally wired world. Does the ability to construct one’s own environment in a niche of narrowcasting and social media empower us to see a wider world, or does it entrap us in solipsism? “Modern Art and the Metropolis” poses the question of whether the self-constructed city within is, in fact, a city at all.



The City, 1919, Fernand Léger, French, 1881 – 1955, Oil on canvas, 7 feet 7 inches x 9 feet 9 1/2 inches (231.1 x 298.4 cm), Philadelphia Museum of Art, A. E. Gallatin Collection, 1952, © Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris



Design from *Décors de Théâtre*, 1930, Alexandra Exter, Russian (born Ukraine), 1882 - 1949, Pochoir print, 20 1/2 x 13 inches (52.1 x 33 cm), Framed: 29 1/2 x 23 1/2 x 1 1/4 inches (74.9 x 59.7 x 3.2 cm), Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

# Center City Artist Exhibits Wallpaper and Textiles at *ExperienceDesign!*

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

Gigi Louise Lawrence presented her new wallpaper and textile designs at Kellijane, a luxury linen and design boutique, at 1721 Spruce Street, on Wednesday, October 16, as part of *ExperienceDesign!*, Design Philadelphia's Ninth Annual Festival, the signature event of the Center for Architecture. Ms. Lawrence, encouraged by her late husband, John Lawrence, a Philadelphia clothier, has recently begun to develop wallpaper and textile designs based on forms extracted, scaled-down, and repeated from her large-scale still life paintings. She thinks of "the home as an inhabited still life." Wallpaper and textiles create "an environment that both reflects and influences the nature and quality of the interactions that take place within the home."

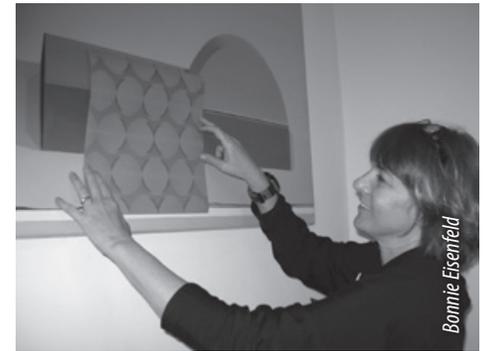
Her paintings emphasize form, color, and position of objects in "a spacious, monochromatic, and horizontal setting, allowing them to be seen without obstruction." Living in big open spaces—Ocracoke Island, North Carolina, and the Sonoran Desert in Arizona—"where sky and weather were dominant visual forces in horizontal



Gigi Lawrence Painting

landscapes" has influenced her painting, as well as the "sensuous characteristics of swimming pools with clean edges, smooth materials, and a single dominant color."

Ms. Lawrence, now a Center City resident, holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts



Gigi Lawrence with painting and fabric

in Philadelphia, and has studied art at the Maryland Institute College of Art and Mount Holyoke College. In Great Barrington, MA, she studied with the landscape painter Margot Trout.

*ExperienceDesign!* showcased more than 100 exhibitions, workshops, tours, lectures, and open studios to celebrate the many dimensions of design. Other events in our neighborhood included a cooking demonstration and tasting with Joe Poon at the Art Alliance on 18<sup>th</sup> Street, and a jewelry demonstration with champagne at Lagos, on Walnut Street.



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# CCRA Pays Attention to Families and Education

By Judy Heller, Vice President for Education and Family Programs

Notice anything different in the city the last several years? CCRA sure has. As empty-nesters flock into town from far-reaching suburbs, the traditional exodus of families with young children to suburban neighborhoods has slowed down. The Rittenhouse Goat and the Fitler Square Bear overflow with toddlers and parents. Strollers are everywhere. New preschools can't open fast enough to meet the demand, while existing preschools are filled to capacity.

What we are noticing has been highlighted by recent studies. There's a new generation of parents who value city living and want to raise their children here. The big nut to crack is how to obtain a quality education for their children. The available educational options offer an overwhelming and confusing maze for parents. Add to the mix the Philadelphia School district fiscal crisis, and it's not surprising that help is needed. CCRA's initial objective was to provide programs relevant to the educational and social needs of young families in our community.

In April 2012, CCRA sponsored a panel discussion at the Ethical Society on what to look for in an elementary school. Brief presentations by three panelists and a vibrant question-and-answer session got rave reviews. Parents and panelists mingled afterwards.

As a logical extension of the School Panel program, CCRA invited Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA) and South of South Neighborhood Association (SOSNA) to co-sponsor an Elementary School Fair, which was held in October 2012, at the Ethical Society. The School Fair showcased public, independent, charter, and parochial schools located within the boundaries of the three civic associations. Representatives from the Philadelphia School District, the Center City District, Philadelphia School Partnership, and other educational advocacy programs were also available to answer questions. Parents packed the room eager for information in a one-stop shopping format.

Impressed by the success of the School Fair, which he attended, Councilman Kenyatta Johnson requested that CCRA and SOSNA moderate a Town Hall Meeting with the then newly appointed superintendent of the Philadelphia School District, Dr. William Hite, Jr. The Town Hall Meeting was held



(L to R) Robin Kohles, Drew Murray, Supt. Dr. William Hite, Jr., Judy Heller, and Councilman Kenyatta Johnson at Sept. School Fair.

in December 2012 at Tenth Presbyterian Church. It couldn't have been timelier. The District's financial crisis was now in full force, with school closings and budget cuts due to be announced the following day. The auditorium was packed with parents, grandparents, educators, students, and concerned community members all engaged in lively, respectful discussions with Dr. Hite. Dr. Hite offered hope but was realistic about the challenges that faced the District.

In September 2013, CCRA, LSNA, and SOSNA jointly sponsored their Second Annual School Fair. The Franklin Institute donated the large space in which the Fair was held, which allowed us to showcase more schools, and Penn Medicine was our financial sponsor. Dr. Hite made a brief presentation detailing his commitment to obtain more money for the School District. He applauded parents' volunteer and financial involvements in their schools, but emphasized that this was not a long-term solution and that government needed to invest in our students. After his talk, Dr. Hite mingled with families for almost an hour. The Franklin Institute has already pledged to host the School Fair in 2014.

As a result of the success of these programs, and to demonstrate its commitment to families with young children, CCRA created a new Executive Committee position: Vice President for Education and Family Programs. In addition, an Education and Family Programs Committee was formally convened in September 2013, with a two-fold mission: (1) address educational issues and social needs for families of young children through relevant programming; and

(2) provide a sense of community for this segment of CCRA's population.

Our committee has both Board and non-Board members. It is intergenerational and represents the best of what Center City has to offer. Some might see this as a changing of the guard. I prefer to see it as one of the things that drew me to the city in the first place—the vibrancy that occurs when different generations work together to create a stronger community. We are full of ideas, among them these upcoming programs we hope are of interest.

In February 2014, there will be a Meet and Greet for families with young children. It will be a kick-back afternoon event for neighbors to meet in a relaxed setting. Entertainment will be provided for the kids. The date will be February 1 or February 8.

In April 2014, we are bringing back our panel program on How to Pick an Elementary School for your Center City Child. As before, this program will feature brief presentations by educational specialists, followed by an extended question-and-answer session. Tentative dates are April 2 or April 23.

A while back, a past CCRA president, attributing his remarks to a guru on the West Coast, told me that being involved in the growth of your community helps you create the community you want to live in. Often people don't take the time to consider that if something is missing in one's neighborhood, one has the power to work towards creating it. That's what the Education and Family Programs Committee is all about. Have ideas? Want to volunteer? We'd love to hear from you.

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# Philadelphia Futures: Doing What It Takes for Low-Income Students To Be First in Their Family to Attend College

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

In a high school in a low-income neighborhood somewhere in the Philadelphia School District, a teacher or counselor recognizes a student's promise and potential and recommends that student to be a participant in a Philadelphia Futures program. A door of opportunity has just opened for that student. Sponsor-A-Scholar (SAS), a flagship program of Philadelphia Futures, a non-profit located at Broad and Locust Streets, provides valuable and effective support services and resources to low-income students with college potential, known in the program as "Scholars," who would be the first in their families to attend college. The organization matches the Scholar with a mentor and sponsor, and provides individualized and group academic enrichment and college guidance throughout the four years of high school, doing whatever it takes to enable the Scholars to get into college. Once in college, the organization provides financial, social, emotional, and other support to help them graduate.

Starting with ninth graders, the staff at Philadelphia Futures, headed by Joan C. Mazzotti, Executive Director, organizes and provides after-school and summer classes, SAT preparation, enrichment experiences, individualized college counseling, campus visits, career counseling, and more to each Scholar. Volunteer mentors are trained and matched with Scholars and remain with them throughout high school, meeting with them at the Philadelphia Futures office for one-on-one sessions, motivating them, encouraging them, and helping them find the resources they need. Sponsors each donate \$7,500, spread over four years, for college expenses. Philadelphia Futures has established partnerships with several Pennsylvania colleges who support SAS Scholars financially and academically. Scholars are expected to participate in Philadelphia Futures activities and to work hard on the assignments from their regular school and from Philadelphia Futures classes.

In June of each year, Philadelphia Futures holds a special ceremony to honor the high school and college graduates for that year. For the high school graduates and



Philadelphia Futures Graduation Celebration was held on June 6, 2013, at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. 55 high school graduates are shown in the photo. Another 50 students received their college degrees, a record-setting number.

their families, graduating from high school and being accepted into college is a major life milestone. For the college graduates and their families, this moment marks an achievement they might have only dreamed of.

Participants in Philadelphia Futures programs come from a variety of ethnic groups, including African-Americans, Latino-Americans, and Asian-Americans. In some cases, their families speak a different language at home, and these Scholars are translators for their parents. Urban young men and women of color living in poverty are most at risk for many social and economic problems. Young men in particular face enormous peer pressure to get involved in harmful activities. To combat these pressures, Philadelphia Futures developed the Young Men's Initiative, a series of activities specifically for boys, including building leadership skills and personal responsibility, exposure to positive male role models and career opportunities, and participation in a positive peer group of college-bound young men through the Leadership Roundtable monthly meetings.

Philadelphia Futures publishes and distributes more than 40,000 copies of the *Step Up to College Guide*. The organization's Office of College Retention

and Success provides counseling, financial support, and guidance to Scholars enrolled in college. Recently, the College Connection Program and the Outreach Futures Services were added. College Connection offers individualized guidance to high-achieving students in Philadelphia's public, public charter, and parochial schools starting in 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Outreach Futures works with community partners to offer customized programming, workshops, and resources to Philadelphia high school students and their families.

Well-known educator Marcienne Mattleman founded Philadelphia Futures in 1989. In 2011, White-Williams Scholars, another non-profit with similar objectives that was founded in 1800, merged with the organization. Since the first Sponsor-A-Scholar class was recruited in 1990, more than 1,000 scholars have completed the high school portion, and almost 100% have attended college.

The Philadelphia community supports Philadelphia Futures work through mentoring and sponsoring Scholars, financial donations, other volunteering, and providing summer jobs and internships. To learn more about Philadelphia Futures and how you can help, please go to <http://www.philadelphiafutures.org/>

# CCRA Merchant Member Discount Program Means Discounts for You

Ever have one of those days when you feel like a klutz? Like when you grab your eyeglasses but somehow knock over your sweetheart's picture, breaking the frame (dang, sweetie's birthday is this week and you still haven't gotten a gift or planned that special evening). In the process, your eyeglasses hit the floor so now the stem is broken. Moving on, there's a hole in the sole of those shoes you bought only a month ago. Then your favorite shirt, a true magnet for the opposite sex, is spotted with puppy tinkle which reminds you that Fido's leash broke, but you can't go on line to find a pet store because, drat, the computer's still on the fritz, and geez, as you shut the apartment door to start the old carpe diem, the knob falls off in your hand.

Not to worry. CCRA is there. These problems, and many others, will disappear when you flash your current CCRA membership card and your personal ID to

make purchases, *at a discount*, in one of the locally owned stores in the CCRA Merchant Member Discount Program, created by Board member Phil McMunigal, and Executive Director Steve Huntington.

Address that klutzo feeling with dance classes at *Koresh Dance Company* - there's ballet, jazz, and hip hop, 2002 Rittenhouse Square Street. For those broken eyeglasses, try *EyeCandyVision*, Optometrists and Opticians, 218 South 20<sup>th</sup> Street. Need a new picture frame? Try *Giant Steps* Picture Framing and Art Gallery, 229 South 20<sup>th</sup>. The hole in that shoe will disappear at *Dom's Shoe Repair*; 203 South 20<sup>th</sup> Street. No shirt stain is a match for *Rim's Dry Cleaners & Tailors*, 2203 South Street. Computer complications are cured at *Computer Troubleshooters*, Computer/phone sales and service, 108 South 20<sup>th</sup> Street. Pet supplies are a short walk away at *Rittenhouse Pet Supply*, 135 South 20<sup>th</sup>

Street. For that doorknob repair, talk to Ken's crew at *Rittenhouse Hardware*, corner of 20<sup>th</sup> and Pine. What to get the sweetheart on her special day? That's why they made *Hello World*, 257 South 20<sup>th</sup>, offering jewelry, accessories, details for the home, and lots of nifty baby goods. Then celebrate your accomplishments with a visit to *Di Bruno Bros.*, 1730 Chestnut Street.

And it gets better. While you are shopping, you can keep up with neighborhood news, because the CCRA signs identifying participating Merchant Members will also display current community information. Enjoy!

*Editor's Note: Complete information about the Merchant Member Discount Program can be found on the home page of the CCRA website ([www.centercityresidents.org](http://www.centercityresidents.org)) under "Merchant Discounts."*

## Merchant Member Discount Participants and Their Discount Programs

Photos by Donna Strug

### Computer Troubleshooters

Computer/phone sales and service  
108 South 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
215-825-2101  
[www.pc-troubleshooters.com](http://www.pc-troubleshooters.com)



- Discount Program – 15% to CCRA members but may not be combined with other sales or discount programs.
- Hours: Mon-Fri 9am - 7pm; Sat 11am - 4pm.

### Dom's Shoe Repair

All leather tasks including orthopedics and handbags  
203 South 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
215-972-0098  
[domshoe@hotmail.com](mailto:domshoe@hotmail.com)  
[www.domsshoe.com](http://www.domsshoe.com)



- Discount Program – 10% to CCRA members but may not be combined with other sales or discount programs.
- Hours: Mon – Fri 7:30am - 5:30 pm; Sat 9am - 5pm.

### EyeCandyVision

Optometrists and Opticians  
218 South 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
215-568-3937  
[EyeCandyVision.com](http://EyeCandyVision.com)



- Discount Program – 20% to CCRA members but may not be combined with other sales, discounts or insurance programs.
- Hours: Closed Monday;  
Tues – Fri 10:30 am - 6:30 pm;  
Sat 10:30 am - 4pm.

### Giant Steps

Picture Framing and Art Gallery  
229 South 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
215-563-1885  
[info@giantsteps.com](mailto:info@giantsteps.com)  
[www.GiantStepsPhilly.com](http://www.GiantStepsPhilly.com)



- Discount Program – 15% to CCRA members but may not be combined with other sales or discount programs.
- Hours: Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 10:30am - 6:00pm;  
Wed 10:30 am - 8:00 pm; Sat 10am - 5pm.

### ***Hello World***

Jewelry, accessories, home and baby goods.

257 South 20th Street

215-545-5207

[www.shophelloworld.com](http://www.shophelloworld.com)

- Discount Program – 10% to CCRA members but may not be combined with other sales or discount programs.
- Hours: Mon – Fri 11am - 7pm; Sat & Sun 11am - 5pm.



### ***Rittenhouse Hardware***

20<sup>th</sup> and Pine Streets (2001 Pine)

215-735-6311

[rittenhousehardware@gmail.com](mailto:rittenhousehardware@gmail.com)

- Discount Program – 5% to CCRA members but may not be combined with other sales or discount programs.
- Hours: Mon – Fri 8am - 7 pm; Sat 9am - 6pm; Sun 10am - 3pm.



### ***Koresh Dance Company***

Dance facility and dance company with studios and instruction available to the public.

2002 Rittenhouse Square Street

267-687-1769

[www.koreshdance.org](http://www.koreshdance.org)

- Discount Program – First adult class is free!
- Hours: Call or go online.



### ***Rittenhouse Pet Supply***

135 South 20th Street

215-569-2555

[www.rittenhousepet.com](http://www.rittenhousepet.com)

[info@rittenhousepet.com](mailto:info@rittenhousepet.com)

- Discount Program – 10% off all non-food items but may not be combined with other sales or discount programs.
- Hours- Mon – Fri 10am - 7 pm; Sat 10am - 6pm; Sun 11am - 6pm.



### ***Rim's Dry Cleaners & Tailors***

2203 South Street

215-546-1889

- Discount Program – 10% to CCRA members for first-time customers but may not be combined with other sales or discount programs.
- Hours: Mon – Sat 7am - 6pm.



### ***Di Bruno Bros.***

1730 Chestnut Street

215-665-9220

[www.dibruno.com](http://www.dibruno.com)

- Discount Program – 10% off all purchases, including catering, at any Di Bruno Bros. location.
- Hours: Mon – Fri 9am - 8:30pm; Sat 9am - 8pm; Sun 9am - 7pm.



## **MANNA Pie-Tasting in Rittenhouse Square**

On October 18, MANNA sponsored Fall in Love with Pie, a free pie-tasting event in Rittenhouse Square. Volunteers handed out free samples of apple, pumpkin, pecan, and sweet potato pie, and their signature “US Airways Sky Pie,” homemade cheesecake drizzled with caramel and chocolate and topped with walnuts. MANNA prepares and delivers nutritious meals to people with life-threatening illnesses like cancer and HIV/AIDS. For more information, please visit their website: [www.manna.org](http://www.manna.org)



MANNA volunteers at Fall in Love with Pie

Bonnie Eisenfeld

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# CCRA's 55th House Tour vs. Philadelphia EAGLES

By Jeffrey Braff, CCRA President

Choosing a date for the Annual House Tour, an important fundraiser for CCRA, is not child's play. The Tour Steering Committee's preference has always been a Sunday afternoon in October, one that would not fall on Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Columbus Day weekend, or Halloween. And there are several advantages to nailing down a specific date sooner, rather than later (e.g., getting commitments from homeowners, sponsors, marketing, setting personal schedules of scores of volunteers). Nevertheless, for as long as I can remember, the Committee has waited until late April to choose the date. Why? Because that is when the "Iggles" schedule is released, and we have wanted to avoid a head-to-head conflict with our beloved Birds.

When the Eagles are projected to be playoff contenders, it can be expected that they will have at least one Sunday night or Monday night game in October, if not a bye week. But the pundits' pre-season projections for this year's team were 6 and 10 or, at best, 7 and 9. Hardly prime-time entertainment. Hence, it was not at all surprising that each of the four October Eagles games was scheduled for a Sunday at 1:00 p.m. That left us with the following bad choices: October 6 at NY Giants; October 13 (Columbus Day weekend) at Tampa Bay; October 20, Dallas at home; and October 27, NY Giants at home.

Decisions, decisions. What would you do? Well, after considerable hemming and hawing, the Committee ultimately decided to go with October 20, figuring that by the sixth game of the season, the novelty of new coach Chip Kelly would have worn off and, with the Birds at no better than 2 and 4, and dim prospects for the balance of the season, Philadelphia would already be in a "wait until the 2014 draft" mentality, thereby minimizing the potential adverse impact on the Tour's attendance.

So what happened? On October 6 against the Giants, quarterback Michael Vick gets injured and backup Nick Foles leads the team to victory. On October 13, with Vick still injured, Foles starts, leads the Eagles to victory, and is named NFC Offensive Player of the Week. The Eagles' bandwagon



Mother-daughter House Tour Co-Chairs Kathleen and Kate Federico inside unit at 10 Rittenhouse.

is overloaded. October 20, the carefully chosen date of CCRA's 55<sup>th</sup> House Tour, now features a 1:00 p.m. battle for first place, at the Linc, between the Eagles and the hated Dallas Cowboys. Would anyone show up for the House Tour? The answer turned out to be a resounding "Yes." And there can be no doubt that the 650 or so Tourgoers had a far better time than those who suffered through the Eagles 17-3 drubbing by the Cowboys.

The House Tour could not happen without our generous neighbors who "donated" their homes for the afternoon. Thanks to:

- Bhavisha Patel
- Betsy Alexander and Burnell Yowl
- Maggie Mund and Gordon Henderson
- Marty Zeldin and Karen Rosner
- Salvatore D'Angelo
- Brian and Marina Johnston
- Andrea Hemmann and Mark Gallini
- Bart Blatstein
- Madeline Sherry and Frank Devine

- Florence Marcus
- 10 Rittenhouse Square

Thanks also to our 2013: Sponsors, Robin Apartments, Inc. and Clemens Construction Company, Inc.; Tour Book subscribers; Restaurant Discount Program Partners (Friday Saturday Sunday, Square 1682, El Rey, D'Angelo's Ristorante Italiano, Twenty Manning Grill, The Prime Rib, and Urban Enoteca); and our Pre-Tour Ticket Sellers: Rittenhouse Hardware, Jomici Apothecary, and Pure Florist Design.

And finally, thanks to all of the tour-day volunteers (including hosts, hostesses, and ticket-sellers), and to Tour Co-Chairs Kathleen Federico and Kate Federico, and their top lieutenants: Maggie Mund, Ruth Segal, Jean England Brubaker, George Brodie, Sherrie Rubin, Steve Huntington, and Patty Mauro.

*Editor's Note: Based upon the 2013 experience, the House Tour Steering Committee has decided not to wait for next year's Eagles schedule and has already chosen the 2014 date: Sunday, October 19. Please join us!*

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## Community OutReach Partnership

CommuniCare gave me the chance to set up a computer for Ms. J., who is 82 and blind. She was excited by her new toy and I was inspired – I hope that I'm still eager to take on something new when I'm 82! ~ Sharon

## Trinity Center for Urban Life

Trinity Center is a beating art-heart. I love it for bringing our neighborhood a world of artistic variety, expression and inspiration. ~ Sue

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215-732-2515



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trinityat22nd.org

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# Friends Select School Celebrates New School Year and Building Renovations

By Sarah Schmidt, Friends Select School

On Monday, September 9, Friends Select School students, faculty, staff, board of trustees, local leaders, and community members gathered in the school's FalconDome Gymnasium to commemorate the first official day of the 2013-2014 school year. The opening celebration also marked the completion of Phase One of multi-year capital projects, which transforms and updates the central area of the building to feature a new stairway and renovated space to the school's lower level.

"The opening day was a celebration on multiple levels," said Rose Hagan, head of school. "Not only are students and faculty happily back at school but we celebrated the grand opening of a new stairway that enhances access to all three levels of our campus." Upper school student government president Cass LeJeune '14 ceremoniously cut a ribbon to officially open the stairway.

Fourth graders, eighth graders, and seniors, representing student leadership of the

lower, middle, and upper schools, then ascended the stairs into the gymnasium where they joined cheering classmates.

The new stairway is part of a larger plan that will create more welcoming and attractive areas for students to gather, while integrating the campus and educational program. In addition to the new stairway, Phase One funded construction on new lighting and carpeting; contemporary, glass-paneled railings; a bridge walkway to the Race Street exit, and benches; and a communal meeting area and office space.

The project was designed by Atkin Olshin Schade Architects and constructed by Wolfe Scott Associates, Inc. Fundraising for Phase Two of the project is underway and will focus on a new fitness and aquatics center, performing arts workshop, locker rooms, visiting team rooms, and meeting and conference rooms in the lower level.



Connor Augustine '14

Upper school student government president and senior Cass LeJeune cuts ceremonial ribbon to open the new stairway.

*Friends Select School is a coed, college preparatory, Quaker day school serving 550 students in grades pre-k through 12. Friends Select believes that education can be fascinating. The school, which traces its roots to 1689, is located on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. For more information, please visit friends-select.org*

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# A Special Gift for CCRA Members

By *The Christmas Village*

As you know, the Christmas season is already here, and what better way to spend your holidays than at The Christmas Village in Philadelphia, presented by NRG Residential Solutions? The Christmas Village is an outdoor holiday market at LOVE Park (JFK Boulevard between 15th and 16th Streets). Built and modeled after the traditional Christmas Markets in Germany, the event brings old European Christmas charm to the United States.

This year, as a special gift to the Center City Residents' Association, The Christmas Village has partnered with three of our previous years' most popular vendors to provide discounts to CCRA members, valid on weekdays (Monday through Friday), upon presenting a current CCRA membership card. Discounts will include \$1 off the mug at the **Hot Beverage booth**, bratwurst & drink for \$5 instead of \$8 at the **German Grill**, and \$1 off **Uebel & Sachs** European-style frosted nuts. Delicious, right?

For the first time since its inception in 2008 (when we were located at City Hall plaza), The Christmas Village will be extended until New Year's Day. From Thanksgiving all the way until January 1, vendors in more than 60 wooden booths, along with two big tents, will be offering a wide range of international holiday gifts, ornaments, jewelry, and high-quality arts and crafts, as well as unique European food and drinks.

Keep in mind The Christmas Village Fundraiser Weekend. Beginning December



*A scene from last year's version of The Christmas Village.*

21, choirs from all around Philadelphia will perform on The Christmas Village event stage to raise money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation charity. For over 30 years, Make-A-Wish has made wishes come true for children with life-threatening diseases. There also will be a "Wish Wall." Visitors will be able to purchase a hanger at the information booth. They can write a wish on their hanger, which will be hung afterwards on the Wish Wall. This was a huge success last year, and we hope to raise even more funds this year so we can help make even more kids' wishes come true. The Wish Wall is located next to the information booth.

Finally, on Saturday, December 21, The Christmas Village will distribute balloons

to children to participate in a big balloon release. The balloons represent keeping dreams alive, and will be set free at 3 p.m. You will not want to miss this amazing spectacle!

For more information about The Christmas Village, please go to our website at [www.philachristmas.com](http://www.philachristmas.com). There you can also sign up for the free newsletter and be the first to hear about our attractive raffles, event updates, fun facts, and exclusive content. And if you are a social networker, please like us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/christmasvillage.philadelphia](http://www.facebook.com/christmasvillage.philadelphia)). Also, The Christmas Village can be found on Twitter (@philachristmas).

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## South x Schuylkill: Not a Movie Title

By *Michael Schade and Steve Huntington*

Although CCRA's southern boundary is the north side of South Street, the Association has long recognized that the impact of nearby development does not stop at our borders. South x Schuylkill is a joint Task Force, formed in September 2009, to ensure that, in the rapidly developing area east of the South Street Bridge, the developer/community dialogue occurs early on so as to avoid the *agita* that arises when neighborhoods are not consulted until the planning process is well underway. The Task Force, which has met more than 30 times, is staffed by volunteers from CCRA, South of South Neighborhood

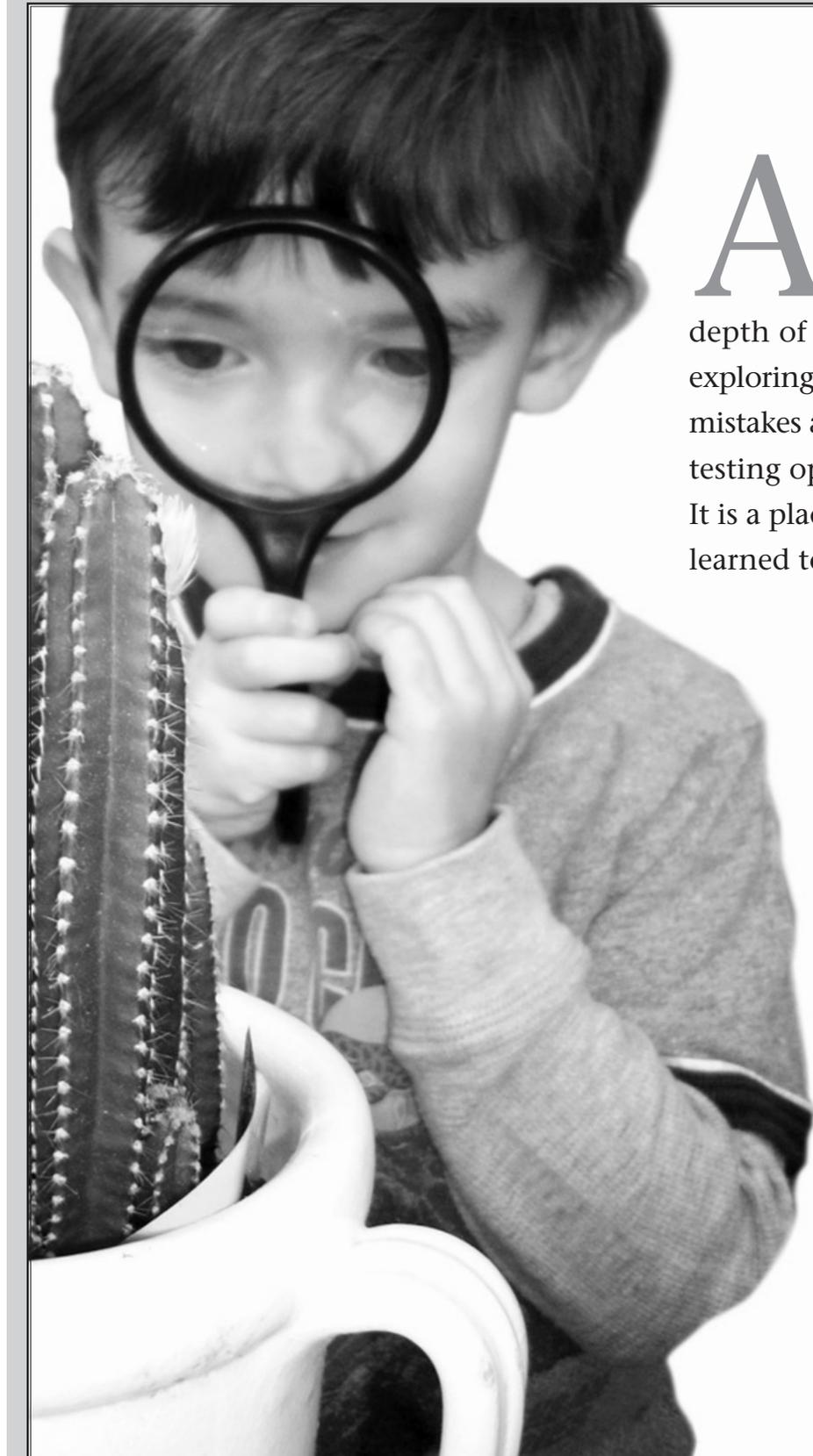
Association, South Street West Business Association, and South of South Community Development Corporation.

The elephant in the room is the proposed Children's Hospital multi-building office campus, bounded on the west by Schuylkill Avenue, on the East by the railroad tracks, and by South Street on the north. When completed, the project's office towers will house 1,500 office workers in a number of hi-rises, with the combined square footage of the Comcast Center. Over the past four years, Task Force representatives have met

more than ten times with CHOP personnel, but have also regularly visited with other major area landowners, including Toll Brothers, PECO, and Veolia Energy.

The Task Force's approach has been shaped by *Schuylkill: A Vision for the South Street Bridge Area, 2010 – 2050*, a 170-page study commissioned from University of Pennsylvania City Planning studio graduate students, and their faculty supervisors, who included CCRA member Gabriela Cesarino. The studio members

*Continued on page 23*



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convened two public meetings; analyzed existing demographic, physical, and economic conditions; and performed design studies of key parcels. Their report provided the background for the Task Force's objectives to promote:

- *A mix of uses that create enduring, vibrant places where pedestrian activity can thrive.*
- *Connections to Schuylkill River Park and other areas of the City that promote pedestrian and public transportation.*
- *Preservation as a foundation for neighborhood identity.*

Recognizing the role of politics and government in the planning process, the Task Force has hosted two stakeholder's meetings convening local politicians, city officials, and major land owners. To ensure that the group remains on the appropriate radar screens, in October of 2011, the group delivered the first of five quarterly *South x Schuylkill Reports*, newsletters printed in color with sophisticated graphics.

On a more granular level, the group worked for a year on the Toll Brothers townhouse/condo project at 2400 South Street, persuading Toll to introduce ground-floor retail and, with the aid of Planning Commission Director Alan Greenberger, convincing Toll that townhouses, not parking slots, should face Bainbridge Street: two changes that ensure the safety of eyes on the street. The CVS store at 22<sup>nd</sup> and South was a build-by-right project (i.e., the owner did not need any special permit to build), and CVS's off-the-shelf plans were more suitable for the suburbs than our neighborhood. Even so, the Task Force squeezed some lemonade out of CVS' design lemon by persuading CVS to install a pocket park on Kater Street and to redesign its trash facility.

More recently, Task Force conversations with City agencies and Councilman Kenyatta Johnson's office were instrumental in the installation of new traffic calming signage along Schuylkill Avenue. And, in the past year, the group has lobbied PECO and City officials to have the overhead electrical lines placed underground as part of the impending

development at 23<sup>rd</sup> and Gray's Ferry Avenue and elsewhere in our neighborhoods.

Key Task Force participants from CCRA are the current chair, CCRA past President Kristin Davidson; former CCRA Board member Mike Schade, who is the newsletter editor and who was instrumental in the Toll Bros. negotiations; former CCRA Vice President Fred Murphy, who spearheaded the negotiations for underground utility wires; Ed Bronstein and CCRA Board member Guy Aiman, both key players in the Toll Bros. negotiations; and Steve Huntington, CCRA Executive Director, who acted as the Task Force chair at the time of its inception, and led the negotiations with CVS. But the group's success also arises from the hard work of our neighbors to the south, such as Jim Campbell, Gus Scheerbaum, Betty Seymour, Wendy Steesy, and the indefatigable Charlie Williams.

The Task Force meets approximately every four or five weeks, at 8 am. If you are interested in joining, please send an email to [snh@centercityresidents.org](mailto:snh@centercityresidents.org), with "South x Schuylkill" in the subject line.

## Toll Brothers - What Happened at 2400 South Street?

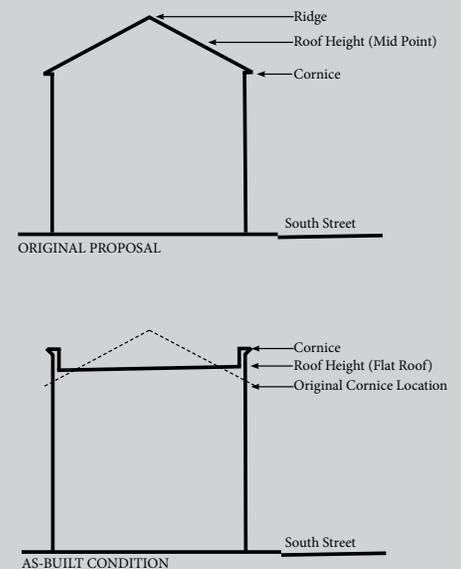
Surprised at the height of the Toll Brothers townhomes on the 2400 block of South Street, which present a five-story streetscape in contrast to the two- and three-story homes lining the 2500 and 2300 blocks of South Street? Also surprised were the volunteers of South of South Neighborhood Association (SOSNA) and the South x Schuylkill joint CCRA/SOSNA Task Force who negotiated the project's design.

The drawings presented to the Zoning Board depicted a sloped roof slanting down towards a cornice line above the fourth floor windows – a four-story streetscape. Such a street scape is higher than most residential construction in the area, but Toll was within its rights because the zoning, created for the community's earlier industrial activities, had no height limits. Even so, the originally proposed four-story façade did not have the sunlight impact presented by the townhomes we see on the street today.

But wait. The current homes appear to rise five stories not four stories. That was the

surprise. After obtaining Zoning Board approval, Toll went back to Licences and Inspections with a redesign seeking to substitute a flat roof for the original sloped roof. In the redesign, Toll increased the top of the cornice line to a height equal to half the difference between the heights of the cornice line on the sloped roof and the ridge line of the sloped roof. Consequently, while the street face was heightened by approximately ten feet, the building height was not seen as increased by the regulations, which calculate the original design height as the median point between the cornice and peak of the sloped roof. In support of its application, Toll obtained signatures from some near neighbors who may not have understood the design consequences of the proposed changes. Per the Code, this revision could be granted administratively without Zoning Board involvement. Hence, the changed plans did not come to the attention of CCRA or SOSNA which, along with the rest of the community, first became aware of the change when the increased height cornices were being constructed.

Toll followed proper city procedures. However, in the wake of this irksome experience, SOSNA, CCRA, and others have requested that the Philadelphia City Planning Commission reconsider the review process for revisions to projects that have undergone significant negotiations with the neighborhoods.



# CCRA Past President



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2413 Spruce	1134 Waverly
2133 Green	417 S 26th
2030 Pemberton	1632 Bainbridge
2529 Naudain	506 Pine
624 Kenilworth	426 S Taney
1420 Locust	925 S 2nd
2330 Pine	2202 Lombard
304 Cypress	709 S 18th
1919 Chestnut	2609 Aspen
336 S 24th	2108 Catharine
2232 St Albans	502 S 25th
210 Queen	2220 Lombard
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## TENTH FAMILY CHRISTMAS

Tuesday, December 24  
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# CCRA Neighborhood Winter Events

## Fitler Square Holiday Tree Lighting and Menorah Lighting

2300 block of Pine St.

Sunday, Dec. 15.

5:00 p.m. The Philadelphia School A Capella Choir will perform.

5:30 p.m. Santa arrives with treats for kids. Cookies, hot cocoa, and hot cider will be served.

[www.fitlersquare.org/events\\_holiday.html](http://www.fitlersquare.org/events_holiday.html)

## Comcast Holiday Spectacular

Comcast Center, 17<sup>th</sup> and JFK Blvd.

Thursday Nov. 28 to

Wednesday, Jan. 1

15-minute shows, daily at the top of each hour  
8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

## Free at the Kimmel Center

Broad and Spruce Streets

*Creative Music Program, Winter Concert,*

Saturday, Dec. 21, 1:30 p.m.

*Sittin' In,* Wednesdays, Jan. 8,

Feb. 12, March 12 at 8:00 p.m.

*All Aboard the Jazz Train,*

Saturday, March 8 at 11:00 a.m.

[www.kimmelcenter.org/events/?org=355](http://www.kimmelcenter.org/events/?org=355)

## Wanamaker Organ Concerts

Monday to Saturday, 12 noon

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Wed. and Fri., 7:00 p.m.

Free Admission

[wanamakerorgan.com/events.php#daily](http://wanamakerorgan.com/events.php#daily)

## Christmas Village

Love Park, 1500 Arch St.

Thursday, Nov. 28 to Wednesday, Jan. 1

Tree Lighting Ceremony daily at 5 p.m.

starting Wednesday, Dec. 4

Open Sunday to Thursday, 11:00 a.m. to  
7:00 p.m. and Friday and Saturday, 11:00  
to 8:00 p.m.

Free admission

[www.philachristmas.com/28-0-about.html](http://www.philachristmas.com/28-0-about.html)

## Macy's Center City

### Holiday Light Show and Dickens

### Christmas Village

13<sup>th</sup> and Market Sts.

Friday, Nov. 29 through Wednesday, Jan. 1

Light show is presented every other hour  
starting at 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

Free admission

[www.wanamakerorgan.com/xmas.php](http://www.wanamakerorgan.com/xmas.php)

## CCRA Mix & Mingle

Wednesday, Jan. 29, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Craiger Drake Designs

1701 Walnut St., 5th Floor

Register by Jan. 27

*See back page*

## Trinity Center for Urban Life

2212 Spruce St.

Children's Concert Series

*A Musical Wonderland,*

Saturday, Feb. 1, 1:30 p.m.

*Sleeping Beauty* performed by Pages to

Pirouettes, Saturday, Feb. 22, 2013, 11 a.m.

*Music Speaks to Everyone,*

Saturday, March 8, 1:30 p.m.

Ice cream social after each performance.

[www.trinitycentercity.org/](http://www.trinitycentercity.org/)

## Free Library, Philadelphia City Institute

1905 Locust Street

All Around This World/Music from the  
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Thursday, March 6, 2014 at 10:30 a.m.

## Curtis Institute of Music

Free concerts by students, graduates, Curtis  
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Click on events calendar

## Rosenbach Museum and Library

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Reading Groups, Hands-On Tours,  
and Presentations

For details on dates and times, please go to  
<https://www.rosenbach.org/learn/programs>

## Celebration of Center City Living

Wednesday, March 13, 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Academy of Vocal Arts

*See back page*

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## President's Report: A Long Day at the Planning Commission and Next Editor

*(continued from page 3)*

amnesty issue, to our surprise and dismay, the Staff recommended the maintenance of "no pending enforcement action" as a condition for legalization of billboards. What does this mean? The Bill has an effective date of August 9, 2014. Pursuant to the Staff's recommendation (and the Bill itself), billboards erected prior to September 26, 2013 will be deemed to be legal provided that, as of August 9, 2014, there is no judicial order requiring removal of the sign, and the sign is not subject to a pending enforcement action that may result in its removal. This might make some sense if the City was actively prosecuting illegal and non-conforming signs. However, as pointed out in our November 22 eNewsletter, notwithstanding what Scenic Philadelphia estimates to be hundreds of illegal and non-conforming billboards presently in existence, since 2006 the City

has instituted no (as in ZERO) enforcement actions. And even if there had been a regular enforcement program in place, why impose a cut-off date for the bringing of enforcement actions against these law breakers?

On this issue I was emphatic and brilliant, leading one of the Commissioners to comment "He's right," while others nodded with approval. Consistent with the foregoing, the Commission voted unanimously to reject this aspect of the Staff's recommendation, taking the position that billboards illegal under the existing Code should not be legalized by this Bill. Victory?

Not so quick. The position taken by the Planning Commission is not at all binding on City Council. CCRA and other civics have been meeting with individual council members regarding this Bill and, frankly, our

position on the amnesty provision has, thus far, received little traction. More recently we have been asking, at a minimum, that the Bill, which is presently scheduled for a vote on December 12, be placed on hold to allow further community input. Please read the weekly eNewsletter for updates regarding this issue and let Council know how you feel. To this point we think that council members have been hearing solely from the billboard industry.

\* \* \*

Before closing, I would like to announce that we have a new Editor of this publication: Nancy Colman. While I take primary responsibility for this edition, Nancy, who has extensive professional editing experience and characterizes herself as a "grammar nerd," will honcho the March issue and, hopefully, many others. Let us wish her the best of luck.

# Zoning Committee Report

Brian Johnston and Kevin Dunleavy, Co-Chairs  
May, June, and July 2013

## 210-220 South 25th Street (RMX-3)

Application is for the erection of a 22 story, multi-family residential/mixed use building with 147 residential units, with retail/commercial use, 83 underground parking spaces, 2 loading spaces and 74 bicycle parking spaces with accessory fitness center, business center, game room and lounge, all as permitted in the RMX-3 zoning classification.

**Project / Application subject to Civic Design Review**  
**CDR Review Scheduled for 9/3/13**

---

## 269 South Van Pelt Street

(RSA-5)

**Not Opposed**

ZBA# 21050, Hearing Date: TBD

Application for the erection of a third floor addition and deck to an existing two story attached single family dwelling. Size and location as shown on submitted plan. Historical Commission approval required.

14-701-1

Front Set Back

Required: 8'-0" feet

Proposed: 1'-6" sf

---

## 300 South Broad Street (SWC of Spruce Street)

**Not Opposed w/ Provisos**

(CMX-4 / CTR Center City Overlay)

ZBA# 21042, Hearing Date: 9/24 @

9:30am. Application for the erection of four (4) non-illuminated flat wall signs (signs R-S3, R-S4, I-S1; I-S2) and three (3) window signs (R-S1, R-S2 & R-S5) and for the legalization of four (4) non-illuminated flat wall signs (ES1, ES2, ES3 & ES-4). For use as signs accessory to a previously approved assembly and entertainment use and eat-in restaurant in the same building as other previously approved uses. Size and location as shown on submitted plan.

14-904-1

Maximum Total Sign Area: 794 sf

Proposed: 1,233 sf (Spruce Street)

Maximum Area Per Sign: 100 sf

Proposed: 212 sf (Sign I-S1)

Maximum Area Per Sign: 100 sf

Proposed: 574 sf (Sign I-S2)

## 1716 Chestnut Street (CMX-5 / CTR 14-502(2)(d) Control) **Not Opposed w/ Provisos**

ZBA# 21023, Hearing Date: 8/28 @ 2pm.

Application for a sit-down restaurant with incidental take-out (seating is for customers primarily for on premise consumption) incidental with take-out food on first and second floor in the same building with four (4) apartments above (from 3rd thru 5th floors).

14-502-2 (Table) The proposed use, preparation and serving of food for sit-down restaurant, requires special exception to zoning board of adjustment.

---

## 2316 Delancey Place

(RM-1 Residential District Overlay)

**Not opposed**

Demolition of existing 4th story roof deck and partial demolition of 3rd story monitor and 4th story front portion. Erection of a 4th story addition above the existing 3rd story with roof deck and erection of one story rear two-car garage additions with roof deck. Use as a single family dwelling with two off-street rear parking garage.

Refusals:

(1) Minimum open area - Required: 30% (577.5 square feet); Proposed: 4% (71 square feet)

(2) Rear Yard Minimum Area – Required: 144 square feet; Proposed: None

(3) Rear Yard Minimum Depth (9feet or 20% of lot depth) – Required: 19.25 feet; Proposed: None

(4) Building Max. Height – Allowed: 38 feet; Proposed: 46.75 feet.

---

## 1533 Chestnut Street

(CMX-5 Commercial District)

**Not opposed w/ Provisos**

Application for a sit-down/takeout restaurant on 1st floor with existing six (6) apartments as previously approved in an existing structure.

Referral:

(1) The proposed use requires a special exception approval in Chestnut/Walnut Street Area.

## 2016 Delancey Street (RM-1)

**Not Opposed**

Application for the construction of a one story addition over an existing first floor, and a one story addition at the first floor with a rooftop deck (size and location as shown in the application) as part of an existing attached single family dwelling.

14-305(6) Open Area of Lot

Required: 30%; 720 sf

Existing: 16%; 393 sf

Proposed: 10%; 231 sf

---

## 1915-23 Pine Street

**Not Opposed**

(RSA-5/CTR Parking / Loading

Requirements 14-502(2)(d))

Application for the additions to an existing attached structure on north and east elevation (not to exceed a height of 38'-0") for the principle use as a single family dwelling, to include the creation of one (1) off-street parking space in a private residential garage located in the existing structure. Size and location as shown on submitted plan. No signs on this application.

14-803(1)(c)(.2)(.b) The proposed off-street parking space is not accessed by a rear street, rear driveway, or rear alley, and is prohibited.

---

## 2014 Pine Street

(RM-1 / CTR Residential Parking

Control Area 14-502(2))

**Not Opposed w/ Proviso**

Application for relocation of lot line to create two (2) lots from one (1) OPA account as follows: Lot 1: For the removal of an existing 2nd story portion of an existing four (4) story structure for a four (4) Family Dwelling. Lot 2: For the removal of existing 2nd story portion in the rear, for removal and replacement of interior 3rd floor joists (roof to remain) for use as a single family dwelling with one (1) accessory interior parking space. Size and location as shown in the application.

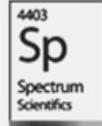
(continued on next page)

**2014 Pine Street (continued)**

14-803(1)(C)(.1) Lot 2: The proposed use, off-street parking, is not permitted in this zoning district.

14-602(3)(a)(1) Lot 1: Required lot area for four family dwelling (RM-1) is 1440 sf and only 1051 sf is provided.

14-701-2	Required	Proposed
Lot Width (Lot 2)	16'	15'-11"
Lot Area (Lot 1)	1440 sf	1051.7 sf
Lot Area (Lot 2)	1440 sf	608.3 sf
Open Area (Lot 1)(RM-1)	30% / 315.5 sf	9.67% / 101.7 sf
Open Area (Lot 2)(RSA-5)	30% / 182.49 sf (above first 12')	15.18% / 96.3 sf (above first 12')
Rear Yard Depth (Lot 1)(RM-1)	13.14'	6'-7 1/4"
Rear Yard Depth (Lot 2)(RSA-5)	9.00' (above first 12')	6'-7 1/4" (above first 12')
Rear Yard Area (Lot 1)(RM-1)	144 sf	104 sf



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### **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

**Wednesday, January 29, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.**  
**CCRA Mix & Mingle at Craiger Drake Designs**

**Wednesday, March 13, 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.**  
**Celebration of Center City Living at Academy of Vocal Arts**

**Sunday, October 19, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.**  
**56th Center City House Tour**

### **CCRA's Second Mix & Mingle: Jewelry, Wine, and Hors D'oeuvres For Project Home**

#### **Wednesday, January 29, 5:30 – 7:30**

Jewelry designer/manufacturer Craiger Drake invites CCRA members and their friends to a private pre-Valentine's Day cocktail and hors d'oeuvres reception, Wednesday, January 29 from 5:30-7:30 pm at his exquisite Rittenhouse Square showroom of fine jewelry, 1701 Walnut Street, 5th Floor. The event is \$20 per guest, with all proceeds going to support Project HOME, along with 5% of all profits from jewelry sold that evening. Space is limited and we must have a final headcount by Monday, January 27, so go online at [www.centercityresidents.org](http://www.centercityresidents.org) to make a credit card payment or call the office at 215-546-6719.

### **Save the Date: Celebration of Center City Living!**

#### **Wednesday, March 13, 5:30 – 8:00 at AVA**

Come celebrate the joys of Center City living with your friends and neighbors, and help raise some money for CCRA. This year's event will be held at the beautiful and recently renovated Academy of Vocal Arts, 1920 Spruce Street, on Wednesday, March 13. There will be drinks, hors d'oeuvres, lively music, and fine conversation, as well as a silent auction and a few live auction items. Mark your calendars.