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Stroller Strides for Center City Moms

By Carolyn Kaufmann



Todd Kaufmann

Center City moms participating in Stroller Strides exercise on Schuylkill Banks as their babies supervise.

Many new mothers yearn to work out but are stymied by lack of time or lack of a babysitter — or both. In our neighborhood, there's a solution to the problem. If you see women in gym clothes pushing strollers while performing exercise routines along the banks of the Schuylkill River, these women are participating in Stroller Strides. Stroller Strides gives participants the opportunity to exercise, spend time with their babies and socialize with other moms while enjoying the outdoors four days a week on the Schuylkill River Banks.

Stroller Strides is the nation's largest fitness program for new moms. It is a total body workout that moms can do with their babies. It includes power walking and intervals

of body toning using exercise tubing and a stroller. Taught by nationally certified instructors, it's a great workout for any level of exerciser. The class can be modified and tailored for all fitness levels, ranging from women who are six weeks postpartum to marathon runners. In 60 minutes participants get a total body workout that improves their cardiovascular endurance, strength and flexibility. The classes are equally beneficial for babies because the instructors weave songs throughout the class and incorporate activities to make it fun.

A healthy and active postpartum lifestyle has many benefits. According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOM),

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exercise creates a positive mental state of mind, lowers stress, reduces risk of heart disease, boosts energy, increases flexibility, helps control weight and decreases the risk of diabetes and certain types of cancer.

According to Jen Ritter, the mother of an 18-month-old, "Stroller Strides is motivation to get out, burn calories, lose that intolerable baby weight and meet people also in the throes of mommyhood. Planning exercise without my 18-month-old attached is extremely difficult. When I am finished with the workout I feel like I have gotten my exercise, my social time and one-on-one with my son all in the hour." Having the program on the Schuylkill Banks is an added attraction. Ritter says, "The views of the city are great and with all of the planting going on and the river, you get a piece of tranquility in an urban setting."

As evidenced by the unbelievable number of strollers one sees on weather-friendly days, more and more young families are deciding to raise children in Center City. "It's a great opportunity to add some variety into my weekly workouts while being with my child and socializing with other moms," says Lauren Gallagher, mother of a 6-month-old child.



The Stroller Stride instructor leads the moms through different exercises at different stops on the Schuylkill Trail.

The classes are geared towards those who are antepartum and postpartum and those with children in strollers (typically up to 4-years of age). New moms who want to get right back into shape should discuss starting an exercise program with their doctors. The American Council on Exercise and the ACOM state that mothers can resume their pre-pregnancy exercise regimen as soon as it's medically and physically safe. For some women it may be within days of delivery.

Classes are held 9:30 a.m. Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday on the Schuylkill River Trail starting at the 25th and Locust entrance to the trail. In addition to the classes, Stroller Strides offers weekly playgroups and monthly moms' night out events, giving the women an opportunity to socialize and further relationships. For more information on Stroller Strides visit www.strollerstrides.net/philadelphia.

Terrestrial and Extra-Terrestrial: Artist on the Square

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

An artist needs inspiration. Jerome Schwartz has been inspired by the color and forms he sees in nature, from the panoramic windows of his high-rise apartment near Rittenhouse Square, the beach near his home on Cape Cod and the mountains of New Mexico. When you look at one of Jerome's sunsets or seascapes, you are looking at an abstraction of reality. At present, Jerome is working on a painting in his Black Pond series, named for a place on Cape Cod.

About five years ago, after Jerome had painted many landscapes and seascapes, he suddenly became inspired to do a new kind of painting... a spacescape. On the Web, he saw photographs of outer space taken through the Hubble telescope and decided to use them as inspiration for his new work. The result is a series of dramatic paintings of nebulae, galaxies and starburst clusters. These paintings are colorful, other-worldly reminders that we are not the center of the universe. In 2009, they

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Jerome Schwartz's painting, "Truchas Peak," was inspired by the mountains of New Mexico.

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President’s Report



Jeffrey L. Braff, CCRA President

In my first President’s Report, I outlined seven goals for CCRA that I hoped to accomplish during my two-year term. One of these goals was to enhance CCRA’s visibility with the hope that doing so would pay dividends in recruiting new members and corporate sponsors which, in turn, would help place the Association in a position of financial stability.

One means of enhancing CCRA’s visibility is through the delivery of public programs and activities. And this route has the added virtue of supporting our mission: the preservation, enhancement and celebration of urban living. In this fiscal year, our programs/activities have included:

- September 11: Hands Around The Square commemoration
- October 23: House Tour
- October 25: General membership meeting to hear presentation from developer regarding change in plans for 2021 Chestnut Street (YWCA annex)
- November 3: Panel discussion regarding proposed state laws affecting voting rights and electoral votes
- February 12: Chili Challenge/Community Supper
- March 27: Meeting with City Council President Darrell Clarke and Councilman Kenya Johnson
- April 17: Babette Josephs/Brian Sims debate
- April 18: School Daze: Choosing the right elementary school for your Center City child (panel discussion)
- May 9–10: Herb booth at Rittenhouse Square Flower Market
- May 16: Annual Meeting: Real estate tax changes (panel discussion)

Another way of enhancing CCRA’s visibility is by publicizing the many things that CCRA does. This includes not only the programs and activities identified above but also more mundane and everyday activities, such as monitoring neighborhood development projects and renovations for consistency with the zoning code and the CCRA Neighborhood Plan; financing sidewalk and gingko berry cleanups after weekly trash collections; administrative and financial support of the Schuylkill River Park Community Garden and advising the City of our views on issues of particular importance to our neighborhood (including through our leadership role on The Crosstown Coalition of area civic groups).

We are improving our promotional efforts, but we certainly can use your help. Tell your friends and neighbors about CCRA, direct them to our website, www.centercityresidents.org and encourage them to join (which is easily accomplished on line). And please display prominently the CCRA door sticker, which we hope to begin distributing by the time you read this, to those who have contributed to our Spring neighborhood beautification appeal. Displaying the sticker not only raises the Association’s visibility, but it constitutes a public endorsement that is bound to persuade others that being a member of CCRA is the right thing to do. Thanks.

Jeffrey L. Braff,
 President

were exhibited at a solo show at Twenty-Two Gallery under the title of “Landscape: Terrestrial and Extra-Terrestrial.”

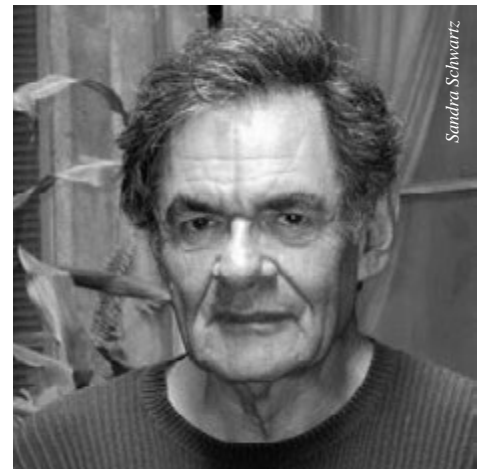
Originally from New York City, Jerome and his wife, Sandra, a concert pianist, have been living in their apartment for 15 years. They both take yoga and frequently go to concerts at Curtis and the Kimmel Center. Sandra is an excellent cook, inspired by their years living in France.

Jerome was previously a professor of French language and literature at the University of Pittsburgh and has written a book on Rabelais. His studio has been on the annual Open Studio Tour held every fall in Center City. Other Philadelphia galleries have exhibited his

artwork, including The Philadelphia Sketch Club, The Plastic Club and The Sporting Club at the Bellevue. In addition, his paintings are held in private collections in Philadelphia, New York, Washington DC, Massachusetts, New Mexico and California and have been exhibited in galleries in Manhattan, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Massachusetts.

Jerome holds a Ph.D. from Columbia University and received his art training in Philadelphia from the Fleisher Art Memorial and the Woodmere Art Museum, starting in 2000.

Jerome Schwartz’s studio is open to visitors by appointment. You can see more of his work at www.jeromeschwartzart.com,



Jerome Schwartz was a French literature and language professor before becoming a painter of landscapes, seascapes and spacescapes.

and you can contact him at Jerome.Schwartz146@gmail.com.

Pedal Power for Philadelphia: New Attitudes about Transportation

By Leslie Young

I moved to Center City in January 2001, just after finishing college. I don’t own a car, and I probably haven’t driven more than a dozen times in the past 11 years. I take the train to visit my parents in the suburbs and friends in New York. I take the train to the airport and to weddings in Maine (okay, that also involves a bus and a privately rented, professionally driven Town car in addition to two trains). I regularly take the subway to work and to Citizens Bank Park. I’ve even taken the subway to the DMV to renew the driver’s license I never use. When I’m not on mass transit, I’m on two legs or two wheels. And, apparently, I’m not alone.

According to *Transportation and the New Generation*—a report issued in early April by the Frontier Group and U.S. Public Interest Research Group Education Fund—the average annual number of vehicle miles driven in the United States by young people (defined as 16 to 34-year-olds) dropped 23 percent from 2001 to 2009. You may be saying, that’s because young people don’t go anywhere anymore—they just sit around texting, playing videogames and staring at Facebook, but the report cites evidence to the contrary. According to the National Household Travel Survey, 16-to 34-year-olds in 2009 walked to destinations 16 percent more frequently, took 24 percent more bike trips, and traveled 40 percent more miles on public transit than 16 to 34-year-olds living in 2001.

The report posits several reasons for the shift: higher gas prices, new licensing laws and improvements in alternative transportation technology and infrastructure, as well as general changes in young people’s values and preferences. This is all great news for Philadelphia. With its walkable downtown, decent public transportation system and steadily improving bicycle infrastructure, Philadelphia matches up well with the transportation needs and attitudes of the new generation. That is not to say these attributes don’t appeal to or benefit people of any age (I am in my last year of “young person” status), but the ability to attract and

retain a young population is a sure sign of a healthy city.

Along these lines, there may be more good news for Philadelphia. A recent update from the Census Bureau estimates that the city’s population is up 10,465, or 0.7 percent, from the official census count taken two years ago. The data indicate that the population increase from April 2010 to July 2011 was largely due to an increase in births. While it will be a few years before these new Philadelphians are biking around Fairmount Park, city planners would do well to be thinking about their transportation needs now.



Biking and alternate transportation options may be key to Philadelphia’s future.

PDAC: Citizens' Connection to the 9th Police District

By Kevin Dunleavy

For the past year on behalf of CCRA I have been attending the 9th Police District Advisory Council meetings held on the last Tuesday of every month at the district headquarters at 401 North 21st Street. Representatives of various groups attend, including CCRA, Fairmount Civic Association and Logan Square Neighborhood Association. Also represented are the District Attorney's Office, Project Home, a Community Relations report, a Human Relations report and a representative for the owners of bars, area restaurants and nightclubs (BARN).

The PDAC meetings offer a good way for represented groups to exchange information, receive reports directly from the district on noticeable patterns in crime and other significant events and to talk with Captain MacDonald in order to convey concerns raised by residents. In attending these meetings, helpful tips, websites and information have been shared:

To combat home invasion:

- Residents should remember to secure all windows and doors (even when you are home).
- Residents are encouraged to confer with the security personnel in their respective buildings to ensure that adequate measures are being taken to prevent unauthorized entries into their buildings and to request identification before letting strangers into the building.
- Police personnel from the 9th District have significant experience in advising on security detail. Captain MacDonald has offered to have his officers visit buildings and perform a site assessment of their security and give recommendations on improvement. Interested parties are advised to contact the 9th District and set up an appointment for an officer to visit their building free

of charge. Also, the Department of Homeland Security offers these services as well for a fee.

To combat property theft:

- Purses should never be unattended or open. A favorite target for thieves is a purse sitting on or hanging from a chair while the owner is eating or distracted. The thieves will take credit cards and begin using them before the owner is even aware that they are gone.
- Never leave a phone sitting on a table, bar or counter. Thieves are snatching them and running away before you even realize what happened. Caution should also be used while talking on the phone while walking; phones are being grabbed from victims' hands.
- Never leave any valuables in a vehicle. Laptops, GPS and purses are the most frequently stolen items from vehicles in the 9th District.

To combat bicycle theft these four basic rules will reduce the chance that a bicycle will be stolen:

- Never leave a bicycle outside overnight — the lock means nothing to a bike thief.
- Never leave an unlocked bike unattended.
- Never leave a bicycle in a common hallway of an apartment building; Use a short heavy chain with a short heavy lock.

To find out more about crimes nearby:

- The following site lists major crimes that have occurred in the 9th District: <http://philapolice9th.weebly.com/>. The site typically runs one month behind the current date. Interested persons can

download crime reports from this site for free. For residents interested in more about the prevalence of specific types of crimes in the district, there are monthly meetings open to the public; more information is available at 215-686-3089.

- Additionally, a site called "ReadyNotifyPA" helps officials send emergency text alerts and other important notifications to residents. Residents can decide how to be notified (cell phone, pager, BlackBerry, PDA and/or e-mail account) and the categories of specific alerts and/or information. These alerts are free but normal text messaging rates apply. To sign up, visit: <https://phila.alertpa.org/index.php>.

To assist the District:

- If an incident or crime occurs, file a report with the 9th District for tracking and insurance and so the district can contact affected persons later. For example, recently in the district, several stolen bicycles were recovered; confirming who the owners of those bikes are becomes much easier if a report has been filed.
- If there is a surveillance camera at a residence or business, it should be registered with the 9th District. If an incident occurs, it can assist the district greatly in identifying and apprehending perpetrators.

To recognize officers:

- Officers of the Month are honored at PDAC meetings for their bravery and for going beyond the call of duty. Recommendations for officers to be acknowledged should be sent to the CCRA office with the name of the officer and the reason why she or he should be acknowledged.

Central District Plan Public Meeting - Kimmel Center, June 20, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

The Central District Plan, which includes CCRA's neighborhood, is one of 18 district plans that will guide Philadelphia's physical development. It will make recommendations for zoning changes, city-owned land and facilities and public investments.

The district plans are a part of Philadelphia2035, the city's comprehensive plan. The Citywide Vision, completed in June 2011, set forth broad citywide policies and goals. The district plans apply the Citywide Vision locally and can be found at www.phila2035.org

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For Ballet X, TLC at the Wilma

By Christine Carlson

Most little girls who dream of being ballerinas soon realize that posing en pointe is torture on the toes and abandon their tutus, satin shoes and reveries.

But Center City's Christine Cox never gave up. Her passion for ballet inspired her to endure endless hours at the barre, developing the poise and muscles necessary to be a ballerina while attending Philadelphia's High School for the Performing Arts. Cox started dancing professionally with BalletMet in Columbus, Ohio, before moving to New York to work with Ballet Hispanico. She eventually returned to Philadelphia to dance for the Pennsylvania Ballet, where she danced for 13 years.

As a dancer, Cox spent much of her time being told what to do—how and when and where to move—and she wanted to have more control of the artistic process, to express herself in a way that broke through traditional ballet boundaries. So in 2005, while still at the Pennsylvania Ballet, Cox and fellow dancer Matthew Neenan formed BalletX. In 2006 Cox retired from the Pennsylvania Ballet to focus on the company.

BalletX is described as “an intensely innovative and adventurous company that produces sophisticated, striking choreography, expanding the vocabulary of classical dance for all audiences.” And it's true. To see one of their performances is to experience ballet that goes beyond being beautiful and exerts raw passion and flowing athleticism that is truly mesmerizing. Cox loved being involved with the company, but she and her life partner, Tommy Miller, decided to start a family. When their son, Warren, was born, she realized that being a mother was what she wanted most in life. “I stopped dancing when he was born. I didn't know that would be my decision but I realized I had my fill of time on the stage and my show was at home with my boy.” However, Cox remained active for two years behind the scenes handling grants and computer work.

Both Warren and the BalletX have flourished under Christine's care. Warren is now 3 years old and has had the opportunity to see the backstage world. When he's not in preschool, he accompanies his mother when she rehearses and teaches. “He likes to pretend he's a teacher,” Cox says. And



David C. Lawrence

Christine Cox was a Pennsylvania Ballet dancer before co-founding Ballet X, which is now the resident company of the Wilma Theater.

he has the opportunity to do so quite often. Cox also teaches ballet at the University of the Arts and works with the children who participate in the Pennsylvania Ballet's annual Nutcracker.

With the support of the William Penn Foundation, BalletX is now the resident dance company of the Wilma Theater, a major step for Cox and the dancers. “The Wilma is incredibly supportive,” says Cox. “Having a home makes a huge difference. We can now craft our season without worrying about performance space. The audience also feels more comfortable investing in us.” The company is gaining international recognition and has performed all over the world. This year they were invited to participate in the prestigious Vail International Dance Festival and at the Joyce Theater in New York City.

BalletX is also involved in outreach to our area public schools. They have given demonstration workshops at the Albert M. Greenfield School and conducted a residency at the Andrew Jackson School.

Now, Cox says, “I feel like I'm living in a dream.” And in many ways, she is. But as any working mom knows, having “the best of both worlds” comes with its own set of



Bill Hebert

Christine Cox brings Warren, her 3-year-old son, to Ballet X rehearsals.

challenges. “I love being a working Mom, and I love having a ballet company,” she says. “At this point I see myself working for a long time to build this company up and making sure it can sustain itself in the future.”

What We Talk About When We Talk About Schools

By Virginia K. Nalencz

How do you choose a school for your child? Public, private, charter—which is best? Is there a “best” kind of school, and/or a “best” for a particular child? These were some of the questions that framed the “School Daze” discussion sponsored by the CCRA on the evening of April 18 at the Ethical Society on Rittenhouse Square.

The audience, the three panelists and the moderator, CCRA board member Judy Heller, looked at school choice for elementary schools from multiple perspectives. Panelist Luise Muskowitz, chair of the outreach committee at the Albert M. Greenfield School’s Home and School Association, suggested the essential questions that parents need to ask during the “shopping for a school” period. Panelist Miriam Hill, a reporter at *The Philadelphia Inquirer* who blogs on this topic at “Raising Philadelphia,” spoke of the varying expectations of parents approaching Philadelphia public schools. With a 4-year-old son to consider, she recalled being impressed on hearing that a neighborhood public school has a violin teacher, when she had initially waded into the search fearing that the school might not have books. Panelist Martha Benoff, a certified school psychologist, noted that not every child needs to take a battery of tests to explore aptitude and learning style. “Although I speak as one who gives these tests when necessary,” she said, “children in general are remarkably adaptable. Too much anxiety can immobilize us all.”

The panelists spoke of the importance of visiting the school to get a sense of its particular flavor (“Hang around the



Audience members at the CCRA sponsored “School Daze” discussion listened attentively to the three panelists.

schoolyard at 3:10, pick-up time”), of the relative significance of test scores and of transparency about the results (public schools must publish the scores while private schools may choose whether to publish or not). Muskowitz walked the audience through the process of applying to a school outside one’s catchment area through the Voluntary Transfer Program.

A question from the audience about the optimal age to start school led to a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of a child being “old” or “young” for his grade; the question arises mostly with boys, the panelists noted.

Panelists and audience members traded ideas about learning styles, class size and the role of location. Said Benoff, “You don’t want a school that’s too hard to get to or you may drive everyone crazy trying not to be late every day.”

A final question from the audience was, “How do I learn more about elementary schools in the city?” When the panelists paused, CCRA board member Robin Kohles, an organizer of the event, spoke from the audience, urging those who seek more information to join CCRA in order to be alerted about an upcoming event, a school forum planned for the fall.

Finding the Right Fit: Choosing a School in a City with Good Options

By Luise Moskowitz, Chair, Outreach Committee, Albert M. Greenfield School Home & School Association

The process of choosing an elementary school that is the right fit for your child and your family can seem like a daunting task, especially when Center City is filled with so many options. Public or private? Charter or parochial? K-4 or K-8 or K-12? Close to home or out of the neighborhood?

Fortunately, good sources of information are available to help inform your search,

no matter what sort of school environment you are looking for.

Nothing compares to actually being inside a school and seeing how it works and feels firsthand. Most of the schools in Center City offer open houses, especially in the fall. Call the school in early September — it’s your best bet to get the correct dates on your calendar. Many schools also offer

tours, often through their Home & School Associations (HSAs) or Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs).

In addition to scheduled tours and recruiting events, there are other ways to get a feel for a school and see what the community is like when everyone is not “on company behavior.”

Visit the school at dismissal time.

Watch the way kids, parents and teachers interact at the end of the day. You can get a good sense of who the school serves and what the community is like by just being observant.

Attend school community events.

Concerts, fairs, drama performances, even graduations are wonderful opportunities to see a school in action.

Attend a PTA or HSA meeting.

Many schools will also allow visitors to listen in on a community HSA or PTA meeting. This is a great way to see the inner workings of the school you are considering and the interaction among involved parents.

Join a school-based playgroup.

Several schools in Center City, such as Bache Martin and, soon, Greenfield, have playgroups for parents and toddlers in their buildings during the week — a good opportunity to get to know the school while building your own network of neighborhood families.

Join a Friends Group.

Some area schools, such as Chester Arthur, have active friends groups, community-based organizations made up of interested neighbors who volunteer, raise funds and help chart a course for the school's future

—whether or not their children attend. When you visit a school, there are also some useful questions to ask yourself as you decide if a school is right for your family.

Can you see yourself at the school?

Though the needs of your child are at the top of your priority list, it's important to remember that the school you choose will be your community too.

How involved do you want to be?

Being involved at one school can mean serving water ice at the school fair, while at another it can mean hiring staff and deciding on institutional policy. If you want to be a presence in your child's educational landscape, make sure parental roles are clear at the school and that you can be as involved as you want to be.

Does the principal's vision excite you?

This question is not about specific curricula or new playground equipment, it's about how those things are part of the vision the principal has for his or her school. Do you feel energized when you hear the principal speak?

How do community members treat one another?

When you visit a school, notice the way the adults as well as children in the building



David C. Lawrence

Luise Moskowitz offered parents attending "School Daze" ideas on how to select a public, private or charter school for their child.

interact. See if the way people in the building treat each other is what you'd like your child to see every day.

Can you get there?

Nuts and bolts really are as important as big pedagogical questions. If you are looking at a school far from your home, do you have a solid commuting plan in mind? Be honest — recurring tardiness and absence are noted on a child's record, and can have an impact on future educational options.

Wherever your decisions eventually take you, we can all be proud of the fact that Center City has good choices for us to make!

Penn Medicine at Rittenhouse Update

By Joseph Cooney, Assistant Executive Hospital Director-Support Services, Penn Medicine at Rittenhouse

The Penn Medicine at Rittenhouse campus is pleased to announce the opening of the Good Shepherd Penn Partners Therapy & Fitness outpatient therapy and rehabilitation site, located on the first floor of the main hospital building at 1800 Lombard Street. Penn Therapy & Fitness at Rittenhouse features state-of-the-art equipment that meets the unique needs of patients requiring sports, orthopedic or neuro rehabilitation. The team of physical, occupational and speech therapists from Good Shepherd Penn Partners offers an innovative approach to patient care. For patients receiving inpatient care, Penn Therapy & Fitness at Rittenhouse allows for a seamless transition from long-term acute care to inpatient rehabilitation to outpatient therapy—all on the Penn Medicine at Rittenhouse campus. In April, the site received the first Ekso bionic exoskeleton in the Philadelphia region and sixth in the country. Ekso, a lightweight

robot, allows patients with lower extremity paralysis or weakness to stand and walk as part of a patient's rehabilitation strategy.

Construction has also begun on the remaining section of the first floor to accommodate the arrival of the Penn Medicine Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation physician practice, which will be moving from their current location at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania in early July. This group will offer a full range of rehab services, including the Penn Spine Center team headed by Christopher Plataras, M.D. In addition to the outpatient rehabilitation services offered at the main hospital, the Tuttleman Center at 1840 South Street continues to offer Primary Care services with evening and weekend appointments available along with a full range of radiology services and a Travel Medicine office.

The exterior of the hospital will also be receiving attention as we are currently ramping up for a façade restoration project that will last until early fall. Since last year, the Support Services team has coordinated the planting of 25 new trees on the campus, adding to the greenery of the Lombard Street entrance, which underwent a complete revision last year. Additional security cameras have been added to the perimeter of the hospital building to enhance campus security. These cameras are registered with the Philadelphia Police Department in the event video footage of the surrounding streets is needed. Parking for community residents has been enhanced with the addition of permit parking in the 500 block of South 20th Street. Residents who are interested in discounted parking at one of these locations or in the garage at 1700 South Street should contact the parking manager at 215-985-2277.

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Friends of Schuylkill River Park: Markward Improvements in the Works

By Derek Freres

In 2006, the Friends of Schuylkill River Park worked with Salt Design Studio to solicit community opinions on Schuylkill River Park and to develop a unified master plan that would frame the full scope and scale of required improvements to the park. One of the most important areas in need of renovation, identified through these discussions, is the courtyard outside of the Markward Recreation Center. The surface is poorly graded; water pools and clogs drains. The tables are not usable; they are missing seats and tops and the existing structures are rather wobbly. The area is not maximally designed functionally or aesthetically to be the recreation space needed by our community. Recent projects have occupied the Friends of Schuylkill River Park, such as replacing the playground equipment, renovating the ball field, caring for the park's urban forest and improving the 25th and Delancey entrance. With these successes behind us, the Friends of Schuylkill River Park has turned attention to the Markward Courtyard.

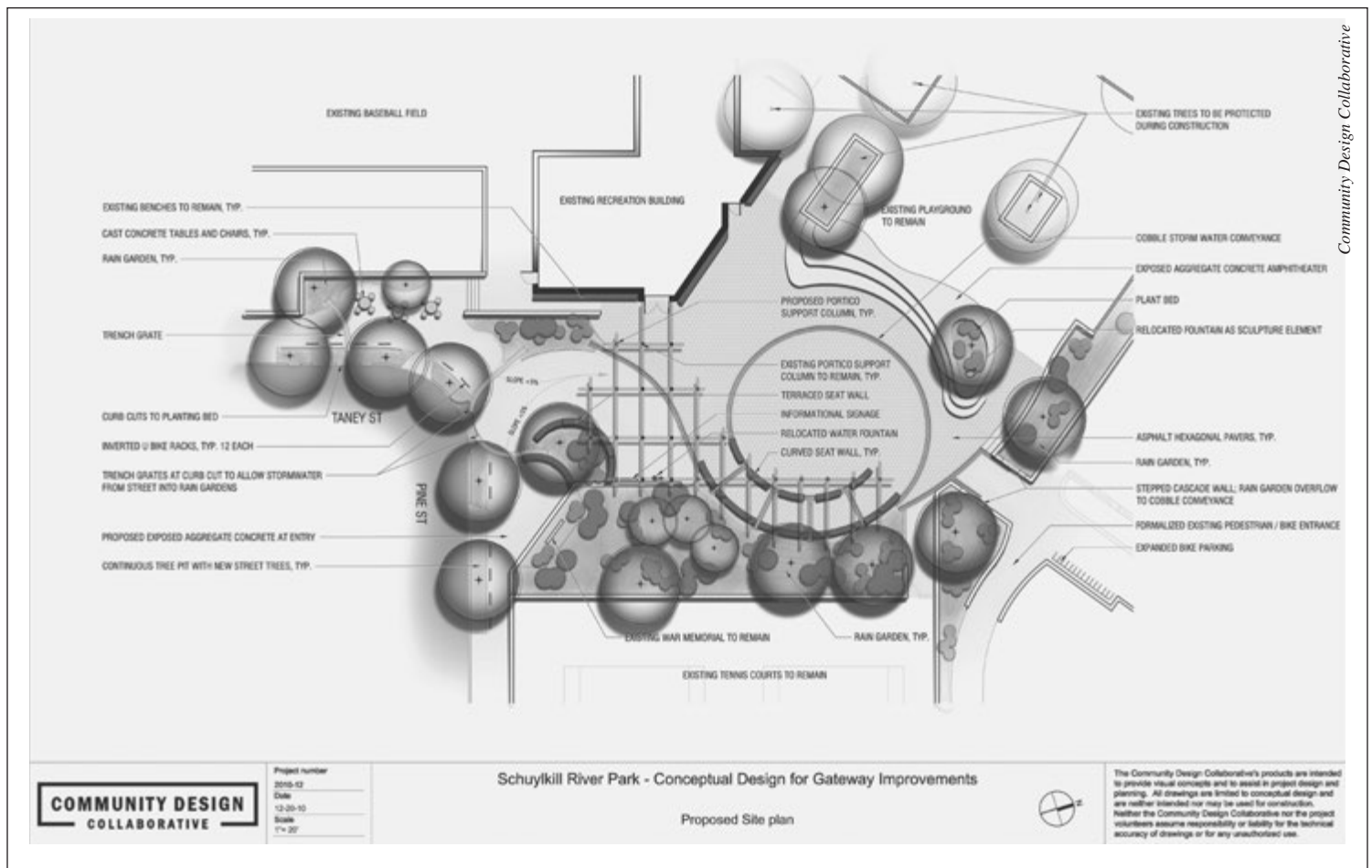
In 2010, a community-led design process managed by the Community Design

Collaborative and supported by a \$20,000 grant from them solicited the opinion of many community and city stakeholders on their visions for the courtyard, including representatives from the neighborhood, local schools, the Markward Recreation Center, Schuylkill Pocket Veterans, the Philadelphia Water Department, Parks and Recreation, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and others. This process led to the formation of a conceptual plan for the courtyard renovation, including a featured green infrastructure component that leverages the courtyard to manage and infiltrate the first inch of rainwater coming from the playground area and diverting public right of way water into this system from the street. This green infrastructure helps prevent rain from entering Philadelphia's combined sewer outflow and keeps sewage out of our rivers.

The lengthy report and images produced by the Community Design Collaborative process, the large bulk of which are available at www.fsrp.org, were presented last spring to City Council President Anna

Verna, the district council representative for the area encompassed by the Markward Recreation Center. The Council President was strongly supportive of the project and allocated \$150,000 from her capital project budget to start the renovation process, which is estimated at a total of \$1 million to complete in full. The funding continues with strong support from the current district Councilman, Kenyatta Johnson. The Philadelphia Water Department has also signed on to the project as a strong partner in funding and conceptualization. Their work to reduce rainwater intrusion into the combined sewer system melds well with the scope and purpose of the courtyard renovation.

Once the renovation is complete, rain water will be managed, visitors will have comfortable places to rest, an expanded trellis with misting system will cool children on hot days, rain gardens will beautify the space and a flat surface will provide lots of safe play areas. We still have some distance to travel on this project, but it is a start toward making a better park for us all.





KLEIN'S KORNER

Wanted: Playgrounds for Center City

By Jared Klein

As the weather turns warmer, one aspect of Center City living I enjoy the most is wandering its neighborhoods. The vibrancy of city living is truly on display in the spring when Philadelphia's many urban parks and squares are filled and people are out and about.

Recently, however, I noticed one item that Center City is missing: playgrounds. I came to this realization during the visit of my 4-year-old nephew, Evan, when he wanted to enjoy some time at the playground. And so off we went to Seger Park, at 11th and Lombard for some fun. Seger is a fantastic playground for toddlers and grade-schoolers. It has well-maintained surfaces and a great atmosphere. What it lacks is proximity to Center City. I was exhausted after walking to and from the park, and after some thought I realized that Center City does not offer a closer option. That is a facet of CCRA's territory that needs to change.

When I really examined my playground options, I discovered that CCRA's territory contains only two playgrounds—the lovely Markward playground attached to Schuylkill River Park, and the Greenfield School playground, which is closed to the general public during regular school hours. Simply put, one public playground is insufficient to meet the needs of Center City's growing community of young families. Many young families are

forced to do what I did with Evan—walk as much as a mile to Seger or Coxe Parks or pack the family into the car for a trip to Palumbo Park or Franklin Square. Neither option is conducive to an easy spring outing with young children.

As always, I have a suggestion to improve the situation. To me, the most obvious solution is to make part of Rittenhouse Square into a children's play space. As anyone who frequents the Square can already see, the area around the goat statue already serves as a gathering spot for young families. Why not take a portion of the grassy area at that end of the Square and make it a small playground? A swing, monkey bars, even a slide, could be easily installed at minimal cost.

Now I realize that any suggestion, no matter how minor, that would change the character of Rittenhouse Square will be met with some resistance. I humbly suggest that making the Square more inviting and fun for young families—Center City's fastest growing demographic—can only help the long-term viability of the Square and will likely lead to an increase in funding and support for Square maintenance. Most importantly, adding a playground will give Center City's many children a safe and fun place to play on a nice spring day.



Markward playground is the only fully public play area for children in the CCRA neighborhood.



Greenfield School's outdoor play equipment cannot be used by the public during regular school hours.

Making Music with a Diddley Bow, Washboard and Washtub

By Fran Levi



Patrick J. Rodgers

Ed Stokes plays the washtub bass at the "Call-and-Response Story Time" performance at this year's Rosenbach Museum & Library's Sendak in Spring weekend. Dwaune Latimer, an audience member, is sitting at the washboard. On the right is storyteller Irma Gardner-Hammond.



JT SMITH Copyright 2012 Nubian

Ed Stokes plays the one stringed diddley bow that he made with an Altoids tin and plays with a medicine bottle.

Multi-instrumentalist Papa Ed Stokes has made it his musical mission to keep alive the indigenous music of the Mississippi Delta by making and playing the instruments of his West African ancestors. When Stokes arrives at a performance venue (as he did at the Rosenbach Museum & Library's *Sendak in Spring* interactive storytelling performances on March 24th and 25th), he brings an unusual assortment of instruments. His diddley bow is a real attention getter. Looking like a guitar that has lost most of its strings, the diddley bow is a one string instrument that Stokes made using an Altoids tin and is played with a medicine bottle. "Did you know that the slide guitar style came from the diddley bow?" he asks his audience. Next he picks up his washboard, a household item forgotten by many but used years and years ago to wash clothes. Although replaced by the clothes washer washboards are still played by jug, zydeco and skiffle musicians. Using what appear to be little whisk brooms, Stokes demonstrates how to play the washboard by

brushing the brooms over the board. With one foot placed on a steel washtub, Stokes plays his washtub bass, another instrument popular in the South with traditional black string and jug band musicians. Using string, a mop handle, bolts and other items found in the home, this instrument is easy to construct and play.

"In the summer of 1984, I began to study Capoeira Angola, an Afro-Brazilian martial art that was camouflaged as a dance in the presence of the oppressors. The berimbau is the main instrument used for this," Stokes recalls. Fascinated by the instrument he made a berimbau, a single-string musical bow, played by slaves in the Portuguese colony of Brazil and still used today by Brazilian and jazz musicians. The more he researched, the more he learned about the instruments played by the old-time African American musicians in the South. He started making the instruments that they played and soon realized that as these musicians died off, their

tradition of making music from everyday household items would, too. Stokes was determined not to let this happen.

He decided to bring these instruments to the attention of people of all ages, from preschoolers to senior citizens. To carry on his mission he says, "I try in my music and lectures to keep my ancestors' tradition alive and to show how music came from west and other parts of Africa. I tell them that this music became what is now known as black string band music, jug band music, blues, jazz, etc. Everyone is very receptive; music heals and brings everyone together." So if you ever have the opportunity to see Papa Ed Stokes perform, be sure and attend. You will hear great sounds coming from the most interesting instruments, everything from a mouth bow said to be oldest instrument played by man to a diddley bow, the first stringed instrument of Muddy Waters and other Delta Blues men.



Courtesy of Independence Charter School

Independence Charter School Community Forum - April 17th

On April 17, 2012, Independence Charter School hosted a Community Forum— *World Class Philadelphia 2026 Getting from Here to There*. Panelist were (from left to right) **Stacey Cruise** (Chief Executive Officer of American Paradigm Schools), **Richard Brandt** (Director of the Iacocca Institute, Lehigh University), **Wilfred Muskens** (Deputy Secretary for International Business Development, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania), **Josh Sevin** (Deputy Director of the Economy League), **Terry Gillen** (Office of the Mayor, City of Philadelphia), and City Councilman **James Kenney**. The panelists discussed what is needed in education, business growth and infrastructure to make Philadelphia a world-class city.



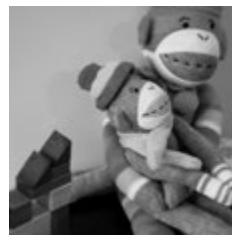
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Taiwanese Pianist's Prize Winning Career Launched in Philadelphia

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

Imagine two shy young Taiwanese high school girls arriving in Center City Philadelphia to live in a high-rise apartment, study music, improve their English, attend high school and handle their household and finances. Ching-Yun Hu, 14, and her sister Han-Yun Hu, 16, came to the U.S. from Taipei, Taiwan to study music, and did just that in 1996. Since she was 5, Ching-Yun wanted to become a concert pianist, and she had the talent to make it happen. She won a Chopin competition at 12, and at 13 she debuted with the Poland Capella Cracoriensis Chamber Orchestra when it toured Asia as part of a cultural exchange program.

Ching-Yun's ambition was to attend The Juilliard School, and her mother, a schoolteacher, supported this goal. She traveled with her two daughters to Philadelphia and stayed with them for a month to help them settle into their apartment in Academy House. Ching-Yun attended high school in the Rittenhouse Square area during the week and on Saturdays she studied at The Juilliard School. She left for New York at 5:30 a.m. and did not arrive back in Philadelphia until 9:30 p.m.

When the two sisters rented their apartment they were surprised to find they would have two loving American "adoptive" parents. The owners of the apartment were a childless couple who took the sisters under their wings and invited them to dinner and to Longwood Gardens, helped them with their banking, took them to the post office and picked them up at school when they were sick.

In 1998, Ching-Yun, 16, won the Silver Medal at the Taipei International Piano Competition. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees at The Juilliard School and a Musical Artist Diploma from the Cleveland Institute of Music where she studied with Sergei Babayan, a world-renowned concert pianist.

In 2008, Ching-Yun won top prizes in the Arthur Rubinstein International Master Competition in Tel Aviv. Israeli critics said she had a "superstar quality" and was "full of flair." Subsequently, she toured seven cities in Israel and performed with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. Ching-Yun has won dozens of awards and prizes at international competitions, performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra, at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York and at the Kennedy



Marzik/Han Shun Wang

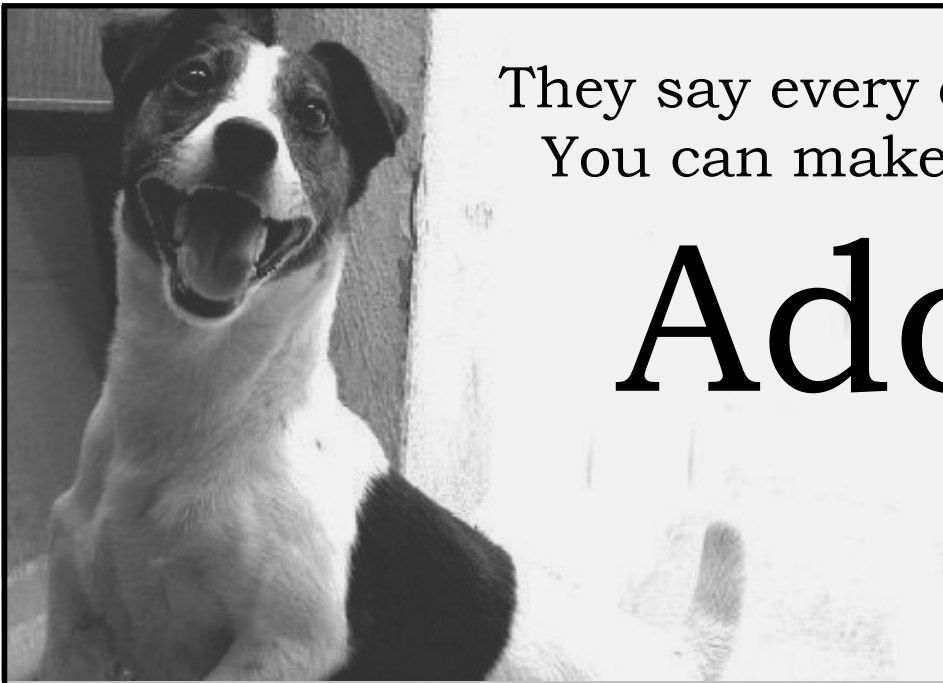
Ching-Yun Hue arrived in Philadelphia from Taipei when she was 16 years old to study music.

Center in D.C., soloed in European, Asian and African capitals and toured with world-class orchestras. After living in different cities and playing in worldwide competitions for many years, Ching-Yun has returned to Philadelphia.

Ching-Yun is the organizer and artistic director of the November 2012 Yun-Hsiang International Music Festival, a three-week event held in Taipei. She says, "The central idea of the Festival is to promote classical music as well as to provide world-class training opportunities to young Taiwanese musicians." Ching-Yun has invited accomplished artists from around the world to participate as faculty. The Festival is supported by the Evergreen Symphony Orchestra of Taipei, which will perform with the artists as well as accompany young participants during the final competition. Ching-Yun will perform and will later release a recording of her live performance, her third CD.

Grateful to people who have helped her throughout her career, Ching-Yun knows how important contacts can be to young, aspiring performers, and she wants to give those young people the same chance she had. Ching-Yun explains, "Musicians connect like dots; people you meet know other people all over the world. You never know when someone will give you an opportunity; it could be five years later or the next day."

Ching-Yun is currently preparing for her upcoming worldwide concerts. By the end of spring she will have performed in Germany, the U.S., Brazil, Taiwan and China with 10 more concerts planned by the end of 2012. In early 2013 she is performing in Philadelphia. For information about the Yun-Hsiang International Music Festival, visit www.yunhsiang.org, and for more information about Ching-Yun Hu, her concerts and recordings visit www.chingyunhu.com.



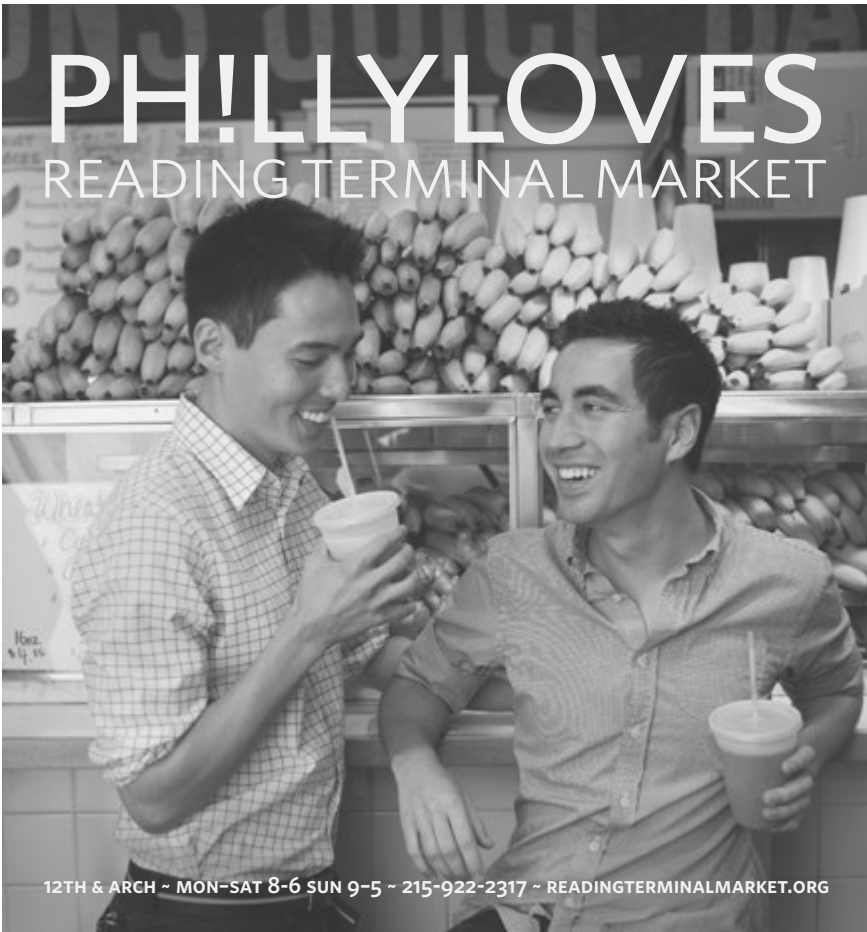
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Sprucing up Schuylkill Banks

By Danielle Gray, Communications Manager, Schuylkill River Development Corporation

The winter and spring months were very active on Schuylkill Banks. Several inches of mud from the fall floods were removed from the promenade beds near Chestnut Street, which now have nice new shrubs, grasses and mulch. This successful flood restoration project was done in partnership with All Seasons landscaping and the Parks & Recreation Department.

Work on several Schuylkill Banks projects is currently underway, including the Schuylkill River Parks Connector Bridge over the CSX tracks near Locust Street, a September 11th memorial near Chestnut Street and pedestrian/bicycle enhancements to the Walnut Street Bridge. Please use caution around the work sites, and thank you for your patience while these improvement projects are underway.

Schuylkill River Development Corporation (SRDC) would like to thank the hundreds of volunteers who helped get Schuylkill Banks in top shape this spring, including our fantastic Philly Spring Clean-Up crew and groups from the University of Pennsylvania, St. Joseph's University and Amtrak. These hardworking teams painted, landscaped, picked up trash, worked on erosion control measures and generally made Schuylkill Banks a more pleasant place to be. We greatly appreciate their efforts!

Warm winter and spring weather led to a serious spike in graffiti on Schuylkill Banks. We need every trail user to be proactive — call 911 from your cell phone immediately if you see acts of vandalism happening on the trail. SRDC staff uses hundreds of man-hours

and dozens of gallons of paint and solvents to remove graffiti quickly, but it is a drain on resources and morale. Thanks for helping us keep the Banks clean and safe.

Volunteers are needed throughout the Schuylkill Banks programming season (May through October) and also for some maintenance. If you are excited about what we do and want to help and/or help others understand our projects and programs, don't hesitate to get in touch today. For more information about volunteering at Schuylkill Banks, contact Josh Nims at josh.nims@srdc.net or 215-222-6030 x106, or visit www.schuylkillbanks.org/get-involved/volunteer.



Volunteers painted, landscaped, collected trash and worked on erosion control on Schuylkill Banks.

In-Person: Darrell Clarke and Kenyatta Johnson

City Council President Darrell Clarke, who represents the 5th District, and Councilman Kenyatta Johnson, who represents the 2nd District, attended a community forum on March 27th co-sponsored by CCRA, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Rittenhouse Square Community Coalition and South of South Neighborhood Association. The councilmen addressed a standing-room-only crowd. First they responded to questions posed by the

sponsoring civic groups and then to questions asked by members of the audience.

Sponsoring groups asked the councilmen the following questions:

Zoning (re-mapping): How neighborhoods are re-mapped will pave the road for their development for the next half-century if not more. How will your office(s) work with the Philadelphia City Planning Commission

area planners and the communities to ensure a fair, equitable remapping process in which everyone has input?

The councilmen said they would work with the communities. Councilman Johnson called for immediate neighbors to have great input. This raised a concern from an audience member that it would give relatively more input to renters, who are likely to be more transient than homeowners. *Continue on page 18*

Pension Funding: The City Pension Plan is about 50 percent underfunded. Can the pension deficit be paid down out of income flow or must an asset of the city be sold? If so, what asset?

Both councilmen stressed revenue enhancement. Council President Clarke stated that the city needs to think out of the box in order to raise revenue. He suggested that consideration be given to selling assets such as the Philadelphia Gas Works and the garage under Love Park and further explore “tasteful” advertising on city properties.

Police Efficiencies: At an earlier forum, Council President Clarke proposed (a) that armed uniformed police be relieved of non-strategic tasks, such as traffic control, and be replaced in those tasks by un-armed law enforcers, and (b) that camera surveillance be introduced in Rittenhouse Square and other public spaces and (c) that the police monitor those camera visuals from computers in patrol cars nearby. Would you elaborate on these ideas and tell us of the progress you have made?

These efforts have been stymied by union opposition.

Tax Increase: The mayor has called for a \$90 million real estate tax increase and suggested that the previous real estate tax increase, which we have paid for the last two years, become permanent. What thoughts do you have about the mayor’s proposed real estate tax increase in general and, in particular, about the mayor’s prior proposal regarding a tax on sugar drinks?

Both councilmen opposed changes to the real estate tax until the reassessment is completed. They also opposed the tax on sugary drinks.

Audience Members Asked Questions on Such Subjects As:

- The tax on trash collection in high rises – *Both councilmen were reluctant to deal with the veto by Mayor Nutter.*
- The removal of the 10-year tax abatement – *Both councilmen said that the abatement should remain in*

order to attract investment to blighted areas of the city.

- The litter in front of commercial properties in the Graduate Hospital area – *Councilman Johnson has a plan for working with commercial property owners.*
- Drag racing by motorcyclists on the Parkway – *Both councilmen were unaware of the problem and asked for specifics, which they were given.*
- Reforms to the Sheriff’s Office – *There appeared to be consensus that reform is needed.*
- Enforcement of traffic laws violated by bicycle riders – *They both agreed that such issues are extremely hard to solve.*
- Management of abandoned properties and increasing the rate of tax collection – *Both councilmen agreed that continued efforts must be made to supervise the management of abandoned properties and increasing tax collection.*

Recipe for a Home-cooked Meal: Buy It at Bacchus

Bonnie Eisenfeld

Bacchus Market, on the corner of 23rd and Spruce streets near Filtler Square, is named after the Roman god of the harvest, fertility, theatre arts, good humor and parties, images complementing the delicious food Bacchus Market cooks and sells. Tracey Wolfson, the owner, learned to cook at various restaurants before opening Bacchus Market in 1999. Tracey still cooks special dishes for the fun of it, but Bacchus now has a full-time staff of 10, including an executive chef and two to three other chefs plus numerous part-timers on the catering staff.

At Bacchus Market, open Tuesday through Sunday, morning through evening, you will find different fresh homemade food selections every day. Customers will not get bored. Tracey is inclined towards healthy eating, so the menu includes at least three daily vegetarian and vegan options, and people with other special food needs, such as those who follow a gluten-free diet, will also find appropriate dishes. And you can stop by for just a quick bite and beverage — coffee, cupcakes, gelato,



Bacchus Market is the neighborhood go-to place for good food to bring home for dinner or for a catered affair. Some of the staff that makes the market a success are: Back row, left to right: Ernesto Delora, Pete Mahoney and Mark Ellis. Front row, left to right: Holly Peterson, Tracey Wolfson (owner) and Kelly Soltis

ice cream and more. Online reviewers have raved about the panini, fresh salads and

cookies. Get there too late and they might be out of your favorite food. One reviewer

claims to have chosen her apartment for its proximity to Bacchus Market.

The weather, the season, ingredients on hand, remembered tastes or blue-sky ideas are sources of inspiration for the menu. For example, one day Tracey felt inspired to make chocolate-covered bacon, which turned out to be a big hit with customers. Tracey purchases ingredients from small local vendors. As much as possible she obtains locally grown

food, but of course products like coffee and off-season fruits and vegetables must be brought in from other climates.

The catering menu is extensive, particularly in the fish, grain and vegetable categories. Also offered are many choices of salads, pasta, chicken, turkey, beef, pork, sandwiches, soups, stews and hors d'oeuvres. Bacchus doesn't sell wine but catered events can include alcoholic beverages.

Some customers like to be surprised; others would prefer to know in advance what's cooking. Those who want the most up-to-day information can visit www.facebook.com/BacchusMarketCatering. Sample catering and holiday menus are listed on their website: www.bacchusmarket.com Phone 215-545-6656.

The House Detective: How Modernism Came to Delancey Place

By Pip Campbell

Delancey Street has long been thought of as special. The street winds its way from the Delaware River to the Schuylkill River, jumping a half block to the north or south every few blocks. According to folklore, the uppity residents of Delancey Street made sure the street veered so carriage drivers would choose Spruce or Pine or other more direct routes to where they were going. In reality, Delancey Street is comprised of many smaller streets that were developed at different times as the western area of the city became residential. This occurred around 1852, after a trolley line started running west on Chestnut Street to the Schuylkill and east along Walnut Street to the Delaware River.

The 2100 block of Delancey began as Walter Street, the result of late 1850s land development that moved east from the Schuylkill side of the city and preceded the later Civil War housing developments of the eastern blocks that lured people west from the east-of-Broad neighborhoods. Early building occurred long before land was at a premium. Properties in the middle of the north side of the 2100 block have deep lots extending all the way through to what today is Cypress Street. This design originally provided the owners with land for animals and food gardens; it now provides many houses with on-site parking. These middle row houses are distinguishable from newer houses and characteristic of earlier Philadelphia row house plans. Today they are termed split level but were labeled as mezzanine. In this plan, the first floor front has higher ceiling heights than the back, and each succeeding floor is staggered so that a half-flight of steps separates the front and back of the upper stories.

Architect George Daub remodeled 2123 Delancey Place in 1945. He made the entire first floor his office and the upper floors his

home, adding modernist features that make the house stand out from the rest of the group. The unusual modernist redesign was featured in articles in national publications, illustrating how older properties could be retrofitted for modern living. Daub significantly changed the façade of the 1850s Victorian. A granite front with modern windows was inserted on the first floor. The second floor was pushed out, creating a greenhouse window to bring in more light and provide, as the architect described, "interest in the room and to add enough natural humidity to the atmosphere to compensate for dryness in the winter months." This concept would be embraced today as part of the "green" movement. In the late 1960s, the property was sold to a psychiatrist, who also used the first floor as his office and lived on the upper floors. In 2006, when the property came on the market following the death of its owners, major

interior remodeling was undertaken to return the property to a single family home.

Throughout our neighborhood, many property designs seem at odds with neighboring properties. People have wondered how this Daub design was ever permitted. They believe that it ruins the visual continuity or the historic integrity of the block and speculate that the Historical Commission would never approve such a design today. However, the 2123 Delancey redesign occurred years before the Historical Commission or the Rittenhouse-Fitler district were created so there was no public body to approve or disapprove this design. In 2006 reviews, the Historical Commission recognized the architectural value and required the 1945 façade to remain unchanged. Good or bad, these startling modernist features are considered historic and have contributed to this block for 67 years.



In 1945 architect George Daub added modern features to 2123 Delancey Place which made the façade stand out from the other houses on the block.

Ten Gifts to the Street

By Dane Wells

You can do a lot of little things to make your street a little nicer. These little things are “gifts to the street” that will enhance your property and benefit your neighborhood. Most of these gifts do not cost a lot, but they do require a little effort. Below are 10 suggestions, some of which you already may be doing. If a neighbor gives one of these gifts to your street, remember to say thanks.



Dane Wells

Window boxes add a great deal of color and design to the street.

1. Welcome visitors with an inviting front door. If you're one of those blessed with a fine historic front door, make the most of it and keep it in top shape.
2. Add a light to illuminate your front door steps and sidewalk. It not only says welcome but it substantially helps security. Switch to an energy-saving bulb and keep the light on all night for best security, and encourage your neighbors to do the same.
3. Install window boxes and sidewalk planters to add a great deal of color and design to the street and are enjoyed by neighbors and visitors. If you don't have a green thumb, hire a firm to design, plant and install planters and boxes for you.
4. Hang seasonal and holiday decorations on your door to add color and tell your neighbors that you care.
5. Help keep streets clean on trash day by properly bagging and bundling trash and recyclables. City guidelines for trash can be found at www.philadelphiastreets.com/san-residential-overview.aspx. Don't put trash in boxes because they disintegrate in the rain. Consider putting smaller

trash bags into one large bag. If you do so, make sure the bag is tied. Don't put out any trash in an open container—it just blows down the street.

6. Sweep your sidewalk and steps. The more often you do it the easier it is, and it improves the appearance of your property. Once a month or so, clean as much curb debris as parked cars will allow. If a storm grate is nearby, clear that too.
7. Enroll in the city's no-handbills program. It helps to reduce the litter floating down the street. The Handbill Nondelivery List is at www.phila.gov/li/UpdDocs/No_handbills.pdf
8. Shovel your walks promptly when it snows. This is required by City Ordinances, but how it is done also says a lot about the homeowner. Shovel early and often, and take pride in the clear wide

path you make—the law requires 30 inches. Try partnering with a neighbor, so you only have to shovel half as much. If you can't do it yourself, ask around the neighborhood because someone can probably help. Try Craigslist if your neighbors aren't available.

9. Get to know your neighbors and look out for them. This isn't being snoopy. Neighbors might see things that you can't, and they can alert you if something doesn't seem normal. They can take in packages for you when you're away and/or help with simple tasks.
10. Support CCRA! CCRA is the association of neighbors who care. We don't just work on zoning issues, and we don't just fund the trash day clean ups or support the area schools and congregations. We have fun while making our neighborhood a great place to live, also.

CCRA Elects New Board Members

Steve Balin (3-year term) Balin was born and raised near Rittenhouse Square, where he resides with his wife Silen and their newborn daughter. He is a senior vice president of AMC Delancey Group Inc., a Philadelphia based real estate investment firm. He is also a member of the Urban Land Institute, the Apartment Association of Greater Philadelphia and The Friends of Rittenhouse Square. Balin is looking forward to becoming actively engaged in enhancing the quality of life in the city and

neighborhood in which he was raised and will be raising his children.

Kim Jessum (3-year term) Jessum has been a resident of Center City since 2004 and has worked as an intellectual property attorney in Center City since 1998. She has been a member of the Corporate Leadership Committee of the Philadelphia Zoo, a Board member of the Philadelphia Bar Association, editor-in-chief of The Philadelphia Lawyer and a coach for Students Run Philly Style.

Jessum also enjoys running and biking along the Schuylkill River trails and has participated in many organized athletic events in the city.

Fred Murphy (3-year term) Murphy, a professor in Temple University's Fox School of Business, has been a resident of Center City for almost 30 years after living elsewhere around the country. He was an adviser to the Tax Reform Commission during the Street Administration and did an economic analysis of the Philadelphia

casinos for Casino Free Philadelphia (starting from the casinos' own numbers) that showed casinos take jobs from the city instead of adding them as advertised. Murphy makes good use of the new bike trail along the Schuylkill River and enjoys the vibrancy of Center City.

David Rose (3-year term) Rose lives off Rittenhouse Square with his wife Erica and his 18-month son, Nathaniel. He owns

and operates Bridge Club of Center City and is a Democratic Committee Person for Ward 8, Division 16. Rose is a founding member of the Philadelphia Democratic Progressive Caucus, serves on the steering committee for Philadelphia's Green Condo and Coop Initiative, and is president of the Philadelphia Bridge Foundation, a non-profit organization that promotes learning bridge in schools, colleges, retirement communities and senior centers.

Dawn Willis (3-year term) Willis is a long-time Center City resident who enjoys living with her two children along the Avenue of the Arts. She is committed to making Philadelphia a place where families will choose to stay and prosper. A part owner of a Center City boutique website development firm, Willis would like to increase CCRA's web presence and become involved in quality of life issues during her term on the Board.

Property Tax "Reform" Subject of CCRA Annual Meeting

By Fran Levi

CCRA held their 2012 Annual Meeting at the Academy of Vocal Arts Wednesday, May 16. Kate Federico, Annual Meeting Chair, welcomed the audience to the lovely venue. Wendy Weiss, CCRA Executive Vice President, introduced the five nominees for directors: Steve Balin, Kim Jessum, Fred Murphy, David Rose and Dawn Willis. CCRA members elected the slate to serve three-year terms.

Jeffrey L. Braff, CCRA President, thanked The Aria Condominium, Madison Parke Management and The Condo Shop, sponsors of the annual meeting, and Kate Federico for organizing the annual meeting and Maggie Mund, Events Committee Chair. He then reported on the past year's activities (see *President's Report*, page 3).

Before introducing the panel that would address the subject of property tax reform, Braff called the audience's attention to *A Primer on Philadelphia Real Estate Tax Issues*, prepared by Steve Huntington, CCRA Executive Director. Distributed to the attendees, it explained the current method for determining real estate taxes and the city's plan to implement the Actual Valuate Initiative program.

Chris Satullo, WHYY Vice President for News and Civic Dialogue, moderated the panel discussion. "Taxes are one of the most emotional subjects one can discuss," Satullo said before introducing Holly Otterbein, reporter for *It's Our Money*, a collaboration between WHYY/NewsWorks and the Daily News that oversees the city government; Lewis Rosman, Director of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Mayor and Brett Mandel, former candidate for City Controller. Both Rosman and Mandel are CCRA members and live in our neighborhood. Each

panelist spoke briefly before responding to written questions from the audience.

"Property taxes are completely screwed up in Philadelphia," Otterbein stated. "City council has to pass the mayor's plan for property tax reform before it can go forward...The closer we get to an election, the less the chance something will happen."

Rosman provided background on why the city is determined to have tax reform in place by the fall of 2012. "Virtually all properties in the city are under assessed — either highly or modestly." He explained that the mayor has worked on reforming the system for many years, and a professional was hired to establish accurate assessments so the old, confusing system could be abolished.

Mandel was adamant about his concerns. "If we do it wrong there could be complete chaos," he said. Mandel and believes that the implementation should be "revenue neutral." He told the audience, "The four tax increases in the Mayor's proposed legislation include making permanent the 'temporary' two-year real estate tax increase for the city from 2011, making permanent the one-year 'temporary' real estate tax increase for the schools from 2012, increasing real estate tax revenues for the schools by more than \$90 million for 2013 and another increase for the city and school district for 2014."

Because Rosman was the city's representative on the panel, the audience directed most of their questions to him. Satullo asked him to describe the city's "new method for reassessment." He replied that assessors would "be taking pictures of property, driving around neighborhoods, evaluating sales data, etc." Otterbein clarified this. "The city has a helicopter that is used so that assessors can

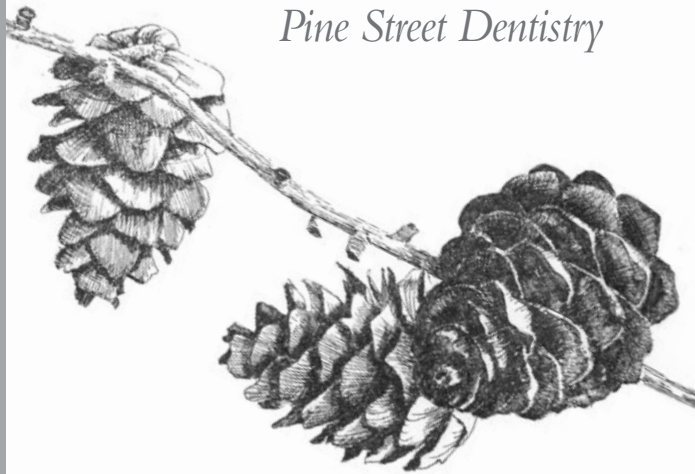
take aerial photos of properties, too." She believes it is very likely that city council will pass the mayor's proposed tax reform plan.

Satullo directed an audience member's question to Mandel. "What argument should I use to appeal my assessment?" Mandel answered that in theory the future appeal process should be transparent, but the property values will not be known until fall, after the reform plan is passed. Otterbein added that she spoke to a Pittsburgh resident, where reform has already occurred with some outrageous results, whose advice was to "hire an independent evaluator for the appeal."

Closing comments from the panel were provided by Rosman and Mandel. Rosman noted that "Philadelphia has the highest poverty rate of any large city in America." Mandel restated his concern that there could be "unforeseen consequences." He said, "The city should make the real estate tax fair and understandable first."



The Academy of Vocal Arts provided a lovely setting for CCRA's annual meeting on a not so lovely topic.



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CCRA Neighborhood Summer Events

Rosenbach Museum and Library

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Bloomsday

Join the Rosenbach Museum & Library for a free, all-day outdoor reading of James Joyce's *Ulysses*.
Thursday, June 16, 2011,
12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Exile Among Expats: James Joyce In Paris

A multimedia exhibition illustrates two entwined stories: Joyce during his Paris years and Paris during its Joyce years. Highlights include pages from the manuscript *Ulysses*, Man Ray's iconic photographic portrait of Joyce, selections from Ezra Pound's *Islands of Paris* report in *The Dial*, and a first edition of *Ulysses* smuggled out of Paris for Dr. Rosenbach in 1922.
On view February 23 to August 28, 2011.

All exhibitions are included in general admission. Please call 215-732-1600 or visit www.rosenbach.org for details.

Philadelphia City Institute (PCI)

1905 Locust Street
215-685-6621

Free Films at PCI

Upstairs, Downstairs

Part 1, Wednesday, June 6, 2:00 p.m.

Part 2, Wednesday, June 13, 2:00 p.m.

Part 3, Wednesday, June 20, 2:00 p.m.

Part 4, Wednesday, June 27, 2:00 p.m.

The Spoilers

Tuesday, July 3, 2:00 p.m.

Support Your Local Sheriff

Wednesday, July 11, 2:00 p.m.

Tin Star

Wednesday, July 18, 2:00 p.m.

The Jayhawkers!

Wednesday, July 25, 2:00 p.m.

Giant

Wednesday, August 1, 2:00 p.m.

The V.I.P.s

Wednesday, August 8, 2:00 p.m.

The Comedians

Wednesday, August 15, 2:00 p.m.

X, Y and Zee

Wednesday, August 22, 2:00 p.m.

These Old Broads

Wednesday, August 29, 2:00 p.m.

Children's Story Time Programs

Baby Lap Sit Story Time is designed for babies aged 6 to 23 months and their caregivers to share and enjoy stories, songs and rhyme with Ms. Karen. Babies can be registered for their very first library card. Caregivers may preview new books and DVDs.

Tuesday, June 5, 12, 19, 26, 10:15 a.m.

Toddler Story Time is designed for children aged 24 month to 48 months and their caregivers to participate in rhymes, stories and songs. Preview new books and DVDs and register your toddler for his or her very first library card.

Thursday, June 7, 14, 21, 28, 10:15 a.m.

Children's Summer Reading Program at PCI

Monday, June 18 to Friday, August 10

Summer Reading Events at PCI

Monday Evenings, June 18 to August 6,
6:00 p.m.

For more information on all children's programs call Ms. Karen at 215-685-6621.

Teen Summer Reading Program at PCI

For information, please call 215-685-6621.

Rittenhouse Square Fine Art Show

www.rittenhousesquareart.org

Friday, September 14, 11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 15, 11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, September 16, 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Schuylkill Banks Kayak Tours

Take a Professionally guided kayak tour of the Schuylkill River between Walnut Street Dock and Fairmount Water Works, including one-half hour of instruction by Hidden River Outfitters. All tours depart from the Walnut Street Dock. Prices include instruction, equipment rental and guided tour. Private tours for groups of 10 to 18 people can be arranged at the outfitter's convenience. To purchase tickets, call 215-222-6030 x103 or x100.

Basic Kayak Tours

Saturday, June 9, 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Thursday, June 14, 6:45 p.m.

Saturday, June 23, 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, June 30, 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, July 7, 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Thursday, July 12, 6:45 p.m.

Sunday, July 22, 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, July 28, 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
Sunday, August 5, 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
Saturday, August 11, 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, August 18, 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
Saturday, September 8, 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, September 22, 11:00 a.m.
and 1:00 p.m.
Saturday, September 29, 11:00 a.m.
and 1:00 p.m.

Moonlight Kayak Tours

Saturday, June 30, 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, August 11, 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 8, 8:00 p.m.

Schuylkill Banks Movie Nights

Enjoy six nights of excitement and laughs on Schuylkill Banks, with free movies every other Thursday by the Walnut Street Bridge! Bring your friends, blankets, and picnic baskets for a great time watching films under the stars. All movies start at dusk, approximately 8:20 p.m. Arrive early for free snacks and to enter a free raffle!

The Muppets, Thursday, June 14

King Kong, Thursday, June 28

Footloose, Thursday, July 12

O' Brother, Where Art Thou?

Thursday, July 26

The Incredibles, Thursday, August 9

Moneyball, Thursday, August 23

Visit www.schuylkillbanks.org or call 215-222-6030 x103 or x100 for information.

Eat Drink and Be Green

Friends of Schuylkill River Park will host the third annual Eat Drink and Be Green cocktail party and silent auction benefiting Schuylkill River Park. There will be music by Screaming Broccoli, bar donated by Moore Brothers and Yards Brewery and lounge by studio:christensen.

Saturday, June 9, 7:00 – 11:00 p.m. in Schuylkill River Park.

Visit www.eatdrinkandbegreen.org for details.

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2200 Spruce Street
215-732-2515

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Sunday, June 3, 3:00 p.m.

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Zoning Committee Report

Pat Mattern and Brian Johnston, Co-Chairs

February, March and April, 2012

2017-23 Chestnut Street (through to Ranstead Street (C-4). Application for the complete demolition of all structures on the lot and for the erection of a twelve (12) story structure for use as 110 dwellings on the second through 12th floors, vacant commercial space on the first floor and a school in the cellar breached into the cellar of 2025 Chestnut Street and for the creation of one (1) off-street loading space (12' x 40') and two (2) interior car share spaces. *Refusals: The proposed zoning and use are refused for the following: Required: Floor area ratio (lot area 9,889 sq. ft.) 49,445 sq. ft. - 500%, Proposed: 106,406 sq. ft. 1,076%; Required: Off-Street parking spaces (110 dwellings) 77, Proposed: 0. Not opposed.*

1605 Sansom Street through to Ionic Street (C-5). Application for the erection of a nine (9) story attached structure (maximum height NTE105 ft.. 3 inches) with partial cellar, first floor retail spaces as permitted in the district (use registration required prior to occupancy) for 122 dwelling units on floors two through

nine, cellar for mechanical's only. *Refusals: Use is refused for the following: Number of parking spaces Required: 61vs. Proposed: 0; Bicycle parking spaces Required: 41, Proposed: 0; Off-street loading spaces Required: 1, Proposed: 0. Zoning is refused for the following: Occupied area above 65 ft. Allowable: 75%, Proposed: 88.2%; Legally required windows distance Allowable: 25 ft., Proposed: 15 ft. (both floors 4 through 8 and the 9th floor). Tabled.*

1803-29 Lombard Street (R-10). Application for the relocation of lot lines to create (11) lots from (1) lot, erection of (11) four story attached structures with cellars, rear deck and roof deck, common access easement for off-street parking access to rear of structures, each for use as a single family dwelling. *Refusals/ Referral: This use, creation of a curb cut, requires a certificate from the ZBA. Height lots "F" & "G" Proposed: 47'-0", Required: 35'-0"; Height lots "A,B,C,D,E,H,I,J, & K" Proposed: 45'-0", Required: 35'-0"; Stories*

Proposed: Four, Required: Three; Open Area all lots: Proposed: 0%, Required: 30%; Rear yard area all lots Proposed: 0 sq. ft., Required: 144 sq. ft.; Rear yard depth all lots Proposed: 0 sq. ft., Required: 9'-0". Applicant to return to Zoning Committee 3/27/2012.

1801 Spruce Street (NWC 18th Street) (C-2). Application for a takeout restaurant with seating on the first floor with accessory storage in the cellar, for the erection of two (2) flat-wall accessory signs and one (1) double-faced internally illuminated projecting accessory sign and for the erection of roof top mechanical equipment all as part of an existing one (1) story structure with an existing ATM with accessory signs as previously approved. *Referral: The proposed use, takeout restaurant, requires a certificate from the ZBA. Fast Track. Not opposed.*

1701-1709 South Street (C2). Application to amend the previous application #362906,

Continue on page 27



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CAL #16306 Dated 1/10/12, for the erection of an attached four (4) story structure (maximum 42' high) to include rooftop decks (with 42" high railings) accessed by open stairways, decks (balconies) at the second story level and fourth story level (with 42" high railings) and exterior common walkways at the third and fourth story levels (balconies with 42" high railing) for use as a retail convenience store (no items as defined in 14-1605) and a single family dwelling on the first floor. Three (3) family dwellings on the second floor, three (3) family dwellings on the third floor and two (2) family dwellings on the fourth floor (total of 9 dwellings), size and location as shown on application. *Refusals: Open Area 20% required vs. 0% proposed; Rear Yard Depth 9' required vs. 0' proposed; Rear Yard Area 944 sq. ft. required vs. 0 sq. ft. proposed; Max. Building Height 35' allowable vs. 42' proposed; Max. No. Stories 3 allowable vs. 4 proposed; Off Street parking 9 spaces required vs. 0 spaces proposed.* **Not Opposed.**

2041 Locust Street (C-1). Application is for the partial demolition of the rear, erection of a two-story rear addition, one-story addition at the third floor level and a one story addition at the fourth floor level (size and location as shown in the application), as part of a single family dwelling. *Refusals: Open Area: 30 % (486 sq. ft.) required vs. 20 % (327 sq. ft.) proposed; Stories: 3 Stories allowed vs. 4 Stories proposed; Height: 35' allowed vs. 48'6" proposed.* **Not Opposed.**

1425 Locust Street (C-5). Application is a takeout restaurant with seating in space C2 in the same building with an existing 107 dwellings and uses as previously approved. *Referral: The proposed use, take-out restaurant, requires a certificate from the zoning board of adjustment.* **Fast Track. Not Opposed.**

1605 Sansom Street (C-5). Application for the erection of nine (9) story attached structure (maximum height NTE 99'-3") with partial cellar, first floor retail spaces as permitted in the district (use registration required prior to occupancy) for 122 dwelling units on floors two (2) through nine (9), with a loading dock, cellar for mechanical's and bicycle parking spaces. *Use Refusals: Parking Spaces: 61 required vs. 0 proposed.* **Not Opposed.**

1803-29 Lombard Street (R-10). (was continued) Application for the relocation of lot lines to create (11) lots from (1) lot, erection of (11) four story attached structures with cellars, rear deck and roof deck, common access easement for off street parking access to rear of structures, each for use as a single family dwelling, size and location as shown in application. *Refusals: Height (Lots F&G): 35' allowed vs. 47' proposed; Height (Lots A-E&H-K): 35' allowed vs. 45' proposed; Stories (all lots): three (3) Stories allowed vs. four (4) Stories proposed; Open Area (all lots): 30% required vs. 0% proposed. Rear Yard Area (all lots): 144 sq. ft. required vs. 0% proposed; Rear Yard Depth (all lots): 9' required vs. 0' proposed.* **Not Opposed.**

1516 Chestnut Street (C-5). Application for the erection of three (3) flat wall logo signs and for the erection of two (2) flat wall signs for use as eat-in and takeout restaurant on first floor in the same building with all other uses as previously approved. *Referral: The proposed use restaurant eat-in/take out requires certificate from the Zoning Board of Adjustment.* *Refusals:*

Proposed sign, shall not be erected 200' of Chestnut Street, Proposed sign is erected 15' within Chestnut Street and needs Art Commission approval. Area of Sign: 36 sq. ft., allowed 69.95 sq. ft. proposed. **Not Opposed with Provisos.**

1710 Walnut Street (C-5). Application for the erection of two (2) signs accessory to a retail shoe/boot and accessory store first floor. *Refusal: Projecting signs, Allowable 12" maximum, Proposed 48".* **Not Opposed.**

1807 Delancey Place (R-10-Res). Application for the proposed erection of a one (1) story addition (stair enclosure), and roof top deck with integral planters at the fourth (4th) floor roof elevation. This activity is part of an attached single family dwelling. This property is registered with the Philadelphia Historical Commission. *Refusals: Roof top deck and one story stair enclosure. Allowable: One (1) story addition at fifth floor elevation three (3) stories and 35'-0" Maximum; Proposed: five (5) stories and 59'-2 5/8".* **Not Opposed.**

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Going to the Candidates' Debate, the Flower Market, the School Forum and Tax Panel - CCRA Leads the Way



CCRA, South of South Neighborhood Association and Logan Square Neighborhood Association sponsored a debate on Tuesday, April 17, between State Representative Babette Josephs and Brian Sims, Democratic primary challenger.



Judy Heller (right) was the moderator of the School Daze discussion with panelists (left to right) Martha Benoff, Miriam Hill and Luise Muskowitz.



Property tax reform was discussed at CCRA's annual meeting with Chris Satullo (left) as the moderator. Holly Otterbein, Lewis Rosman and Brett Mandel were panelists.



Vivian and Neil Gutman and Fran Levi sold herbs at the CCRA table at the Rittenhouse Square Flower Market.