



Friends of Race Street Pier

March 13, 2012

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A. Race Street Connector Update

In February, the DRWC hosted a public meeting to discuss plans for the second phase of the Race Street Connector project. A few Peers attended the meeting. The second phase of the project will focus on making improvements to the north side of Race Street and will calm traffic and improve conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians.

More information about this phase of the project is available on PlanPhilly:

<http://planphilly.com/eyesonthestreet/2012/02/29/race-street-connector-phase-2-more-technical-less-arty/>

B. Update from DRWC

Keeya Branson-Davis spoke with the Peers about the DRWC's plans for programming the pier during the spring and summer months. Some initial ideas that the DRWC has explored include Art in the Open, Lawn Chair Drive-Ins, fitness on the pier, "Small Fry" events for kids, salsa lessons, jazz on the pier, and First Fridays.

The DRWC is considering programming the pier from noon-9pm on weekends throughout the spring and summer. Keeya asked the Peers for feedback regarding the programming proposal. The Peers reached a consensus that in regards to programming there should be a happy medium. The group would love to see programming but maybe not with the intensity of noon-9pm all weekend long. The Peers submit the following thoughts, comments, suggestions:

Defining the Park:

- It is important to define the park – is it a passive place or a destination park? The Peers feel that it is very important to maintain the neighborhood aspect of the park.
- The Peers recognize the importance of attracting people to the pier and using the pier to build excitement about future waterfront efforts. But, the group feels that it is important to maintain a balance between active and passive uses on the pier. Many people come to the pier seeking a quiet space to just enjoy the water, the view, and hang out.

- Some Peers felt that nearly 10 hours of programming on Saturdays and Sundays (noon-9pm) could be too intensive and very challenging to book so many hours of high quality entertainment.

Alternative Approaches to Programming:

- The group felt that choosing one day or one weekend per month (i.e. first weekends) to really highlight the pier might be a good approach to more active programming. This could create the ‘hook’ that brings new audiences to the pier throughout the summer. The pier would benefit from designated active programming treatments during the first weekend of each month but then, during the rest of the month, the pier remains a passive, more neighborhood-focused place. Because the DRWC and the Friends are planning on hosting a series of First Friday events the First Fridays could serve as a great kick-off to a weekend of fun on the pier.
- The group felt that if the DRWC established consistency in programming initiatives (i.e. that Philadelphian’s could expect events on the pier during a defined weekend) you might attract more crowds for a monthly event and also be able to support higher quality programming.
- The Peers feel that it is important that people heading to the pier know what to expect. Because so many people seek the pier out as a quiet, reflective place they might be disappointed to arrive to festival atmosphere every weekend.
- If the DRWC is committed to 10 hours of programming on the pier, perhaps the daytime activities are more passive and quiet and that during the evening hours (i.e. 6pm-9pm) there is more room for more active, louder programming such as music and performance.
- If the DRWC goes the all-day programming route, perhaps the activities could be contained to certain sections of the pier so that people seeking quiet places would still be able to enjoy the pier in a more passive way.

Specific Programming Ideas:

Think outside of the box -

- Utilize Public Art – the Pier could be a great place to incorporate high quality temporary public exhibits that will bring people to the pier, allow people to interact with the pier, but also allow for more passive enjoyment of the pier. Creating art-driven events, where the pier becomes the best place to view a dynamic installation, could be a really positive way of highlighting the pier without compromising its character. The city is ripe with potential partners in this area – Fringe, Office of Arts Culture Creative Economy. Also, great media tie-in with GPTMC focusing on the theme, “From Philadelphia with Art.”
- Invite XPN’s Kids Corner to the pier: <http://kidscorner.org/>
- Chess
- Night Market-type event. Invite gourmet food carts to line up along Delaware Ave and/or along Race Street and then utilize the pier as a picnicking spot.
- Photography Day on the pier. Partner with local arts organizations such as the Philadelphia Photo Arts Center in Northern Liberties. The results from the Photography Day could be shared on the Peers Facebook, Twitter, and Flickr pages.
- Involve Shutterbooth Philly – <http://shutterbooth.com/philadelphia/> Traveling photo-booth.
- Tie in with other events, businesses, etc.
 - The pier offers a great viewing station for the River Sharks Fireworks.
 - Duck Boats every hour. Kids love the Duck Boats and the launch provides hours (maybe minutes!) of entertainment.

- Work with Old City restaurants to encourage them to prepare and pack a Race Street Pier Picnic. Wedge and Fig (<http://wedgeandfig.com/>). Fork, etc. (<http://www.forkrestaurant.com/forketc.htm>) prepare small lunches that would be perfect to enjoy on the pier. This will get more local businesses involved with and supportive of the pier and might help more people think about creating their own activity on the pier.

The DRWC has indicated that, depending on the extent of the programming, a restroom facility may be temporarily installed. Details to follow.

Programming Examples:

Examples of programming for public places in other cities:

- <http://www.thehighline.org/events/public-programs>
- <http://www.hudsonriverpark.org/explore.html>
- <http://www.bryantpark.org/things-to-do/grounds.html>

Public Art:

- <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/29/arts/design/video-mapping-artists-use-light-as-a-medium.html> (projections)
- <http://klip.tv/> (projections)
- NYC, Waterfalls Project: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_City_Waterfalls
- Philly, Light Drift Installation: <http://muralarts.org/explore/projects/light-drift-0>

C. Website Update

Technically Philly Plans to have the Friends of Race Street Pier landing page ready at the end of March. We will keep the group in the loop.

D. Race Street Shears

Tammy Leigh DeMent, Philadelphia Green / Pennsylvania Horticulture Society, has spoken with the pier's maintenance contractor, All Seasons, and the contractors are excited for the Peers to help with weeding. Two active Peers, Elizabeth Weaver and Jon Nye, have expressed interest in helping organize a group focused on gardening. Tammy Leigh will reach out to these members to begin to formalize the group.

Andrew Ross, our resident wordsmith, proposes calling the group the Race Street Shears! The Shears will meet for the first time on Tuesday, April 10 at 6pm on the Pier. All are welcome! After weeding for about an hour, the group will hold the monthly Race Street Peers meeting to begin planning the Friends-sponsored First Friday events.

E. Getting Involved

The goal of the group is to bring the neighborhood voice to the pier. The friends group is newly developing and a core group of about 10 people have been actively involved and have formed into a Steering Committee with a handful of subcommittees – programming, communications, and clean-up.

The DRWC is committed to working with the Friends group in order to ensure that the community gets

involved with making the park their own from day one and making sure that the park remains an asset for the neighborhood.

How to get involved:

- Join a committee and help organize this newly developing group
- Help to spread the word to your friends, neighbors, networks, etc. about events and about the fact that the park is open for business.
- Attend events and help out at events
- The Steering Committee meets on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at the offices of the DRWC at 121 N. Columbus Boulevard, 6:30pm -- everyone is welcome to attend.

Mission Statement:

The Friends of Race Street Pier (The Peers) is a volunteer-driven group working to foster stewardship and innovative neighborhood based programming for the Race Street Pier. The group also seeks to encourage use of the park and promote a sense of community on the waterfront.

The Race Street Pier is one of the first waterfront projects implemented by the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation, marking the beginning of the revitalization of the Central Delaware riverfront. The Race Street Peers will advocate for future waterfront development with a similar sense of place that is achieved on the Race Street Pier and for responsible development emphasizing the guidelines set forth in the riverfront master plan and civic vision.

Programming Committee:

The programming committee focuses on identifying potential activities/events for the pier. This past summer, the committee proposed a First Friday event and worked with the DRWC to find bands to play. The committee also organized a two month-long Saturday Yoga class on the pier. If you have some great ideas for events and activities that would be perfect for the pier, the programming committee wants to hear your ideas!

Keeya from DRWC reports that there is opportunity for guided tours as part of programming to help visitors better understand the history and construction of the site.

To get more involved with this committee contact:

Bryan Van Lenten: bvanlenten@kseng.com

Andrew Svekla: asvekla@dvrpc.org

Communications Committee:

The committee is working hard to get the word out about the pier and about events happening on the pier. In the coming months, the group will be working with Technically Philly to develop a logo and web presence, and of course continue to work with Old City Civic Association to keep the park on everyone's destination list. Currently, the best places to learn more about the pier are through the [Facebook Page](#), Twitter (@friendsofRSP), and through the [DRWC website](#). If you are interested in marketing, blogging, design, etc. the communications committee would love your input! Contact:

Christine Webb: christine.c.webb@gmail.com

Liz Naskret: liz.naskret@gmail.com

Bridget Keegan: bkeegan@design.upenn.edu

Site Committee:

The DRWC staff welcomes community members to participate in monitoring and maintaining the pier. PHS is working with a contractor to maintain the landscaping on the pier and PHS is interested in working with neighbors that are looking to get their hands dirty and help with maintaining the planting beds.

If you are interested in helping contact:

Tammy Leigh DeMent: tdement@Pennhort.org

F. Next Meeting

The Steering Committee meets monthly and anyone interested is welcome to attend. The group meets on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at the offices of the DRWC at 121 N. Columbus Blvd.

The Next Steering Committee meeting is Tuesday April, 10th. As a kick-off to spring, the Steering Committee will meet at 6pm at the Pier and learn about weeding and maintaining the planting beds. The group will then head inside for their regularly scheduled meeting at 7pm.

Agenda:

Begin preparing for the Friends of Race Street Pier sponsored First Fridays on the Race Street Pier. The Friends of Race Street Pier received a grant from PHS to support Park After Dark Events. The Friends will host two First Fridays. Mark your calendars for July 6th and September 7th. We are looking for event ideas as well as for more people to get involved in planning!