



October 19, 2013

Councilman Mark Squilla
City Hall, Room 332
Philadelphia, PA 19107

re: Bill 130636 – North Delaware Avenue Neighborhood Control Area (/NCA) and Parking Controls

Dear Councilman Squilla:

The Central Delaware Advocacy Group (CDAG), a coalition of 20 civic and non-profit organizations committed to implementation of the Master Plan for the Central Delaware, wishes to express its concern regarding the policy implications of Bill 130636.

Based on press reports, it appears the Bill's purpose is to eliminate the requirement for a pending development project to obtain zoning variances. CDAG recognizes the importance of facilitating appropriate development, pursuant to the Master Plan, in the Central Delaware Waterfront area. CDAG also appreciates Council's integral role in mapping zoning districts across the city.

Yet CDAG is concerned that this Bill has been introduced, while a zoning variance appeal of the above-referenced development project is already in process, for the purpose of circumventing or mooted the appeal process. CDAG feels this course of action could set a dangerous precedent, enabling zoning applicants to undermine or neutralize communities by working around the normal variance process, that is central to the integrity of the zoning code.

CDAG also is concerned about the potential for a resurgence of the serious crime and nuisance problems that plagued the North Delaware Avenue corridor in the 1980s and 1990s. The /NCA was key to getting those problems under control, and it appears there would be nothing to stop the resurgence of those same problems, if the /NCA's eastern boundary were pulled back from the waterfront, to Front Street. More generally, CDAG does not feel it is appropriate to repeal large swaths of the /NCA, along with the entire Code subsection on Delaware River Waterfront parking controls, to address issues related to a single development project.

For these reasons, CDAG requests that the Bill be withdrawn or held indefinitely. We welcome the opportunity to discuss the /NCA and waterfront parking controls as they impact the Central Delaware Waterfront as a whole, and to work with you and your staff to craft solutions to any existing problems.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Ruben
Chair, CDAG



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