

**MITIGATING DISTRUST:
TRAUMA AND REDEVELOPMENT IN EASTWICK,
PHILADELPHIA**

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Geography

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ABSTRACT

Eastwick, the low-lying, southwestern-most neighborhood of Philadelphia is currently undergoing a new urban renewal plan that has the opportunity to not only rebuild parts of the neighborhood, but also rebuild fractured relationships between the community and the city planners. The previous redevelopment of the 1950s left traumatic, intergenerational scars from the broken promises, displacement and demolition of both the physical space and social bonds of the community. This study will look into the intersections of physical land limitations, community activism, historical trauma and neoliberal real estate systems present in Eastwick and how they affect the redevelopment process. The physical, social, political and historical contexts of the current redevelopment have all converged on Eastwick and created unforeseen roadblocks to the process. Responsibly developing land such as the neighborhood of Eastwick will require a balance of socially and economically beneficial plans while at the same time avoiding an exacerbation of current flood risks. The participatory process of the current feasibility study is complicated by a tremendous level of activism in the area. Distrust of planners and the questionable authenticity of the participatory process has led to protests, conspiracy and animosity from activist groups. Participant observation, a focus group and semi-structured interviews with activists and planners were used to help understand how Eastwick residents are expressing their right to the city through trauma-fueled activism. Understanding activists' deep connection to their community and their history is a crucial component to restore trust and foster the creation of an environmentally, socially and economically just redevelopment. It is also necessary for planners to look reflexively at the values they promote in the process and understand systematic disadvantages

experienced by the community. While the planners have been working diligently to gather data and work with the activists to create the plan, they have not been able to ease tensions enough to begin finding common ground. Although the outcome of the current planning is forthcoming, the proceedings in Eastwick can be used to inform other spaces of development on how to move away from systems that depend on uneven development.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The largest remaining patches of open land in Philadelphia are being redeveloped for the second time by the city with hopes that it does not end in a dramatic failure as it did 50 years ago. Eastwick is an area of grand transformation both of its conversion from marshy to more inhabitable land, and later, the destruction and re-creation of its built environment. Before the area was settled, a fresh-water marsh covered a large portion of current-day South Philadelphia. The size of the marsh has shrunk by 90% and the remainder is now designated as the John Heinz Wildlife Refuge (Albert, Salas, & Williams, 2006, p. vii). The area experienced many floods, especially before it was filled in the 1950s in preparation for development. Two landfill sites, both unregulated toxic dumping grounds for at least a portion of their operation, sit on waterways of the north and west sides of the neighborhood. A majority of Eastwick is in the 100-year floodplain, which threatens to inundate these sites with water and exacerbate the leachate of toxic substances into the environment. The transformation of Eastwick was spurred by the largest redevelopment project in US history. Major changes both in both the built environment and racial demographics drastically changed the character of the area in the 1960s and 1970s (Cahn, 2014; McKee, 2001; Interface Studios, 2017).

This low-lying patch of land, Eastwick, is the southwestern-most neighborhood of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (See figure 1). It is bordered by the Philadelphia International Airport, the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge and the

Schuylkill River. Eastwick has a population of about 10,000, with the greatest density in the northernmost neighborhood (Cedar Lake Ventures Inc., 2015).

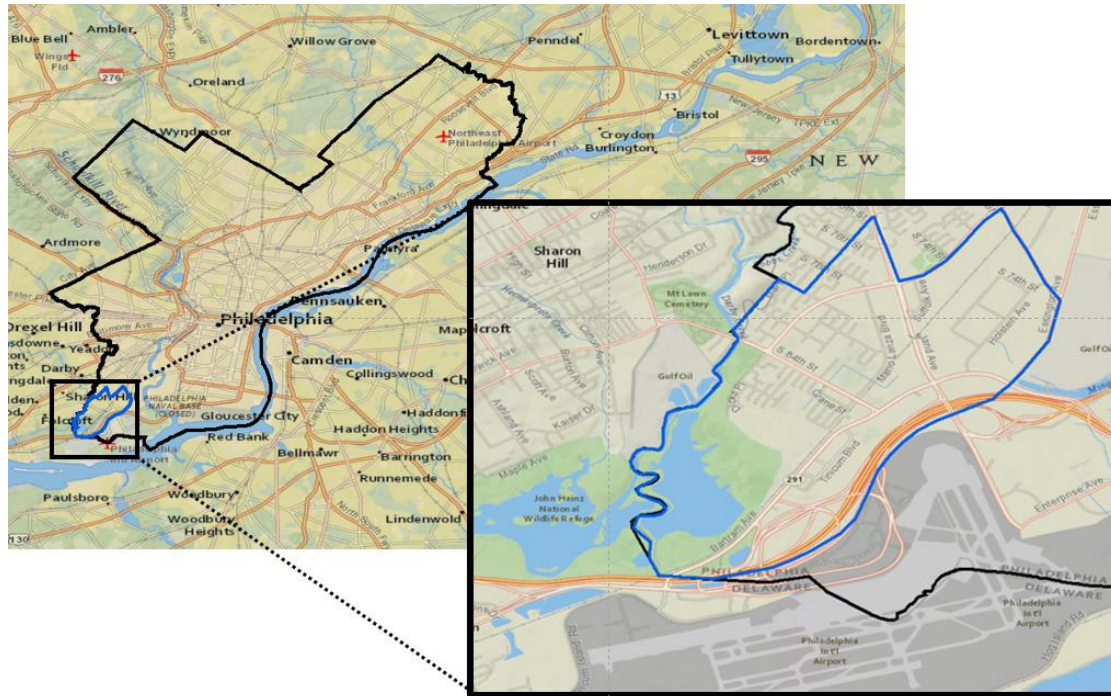


Figure 1: The location of Eastwick within Philadelphia using ESRI base maps.

The focus of this study is Lower Eastwick, a low-density, flood prone section of land and the focus of the current redevelopment. The population here is about 2500, 80% of which is African-American. The median annual household income is about \$55,000 (annual household income for the City of Philadelphia is \$33,000, for comparison) and the area is 67% renters (Interface Studios, 2017), although the activists interviewed for this study are generally homeowners. This area, to outsiders, is a maze of empty cul-de-sacs, strangely wide and often confusing streets, with

several areas of open space- some green and wild and others clearly un-policed short-dumping sites.

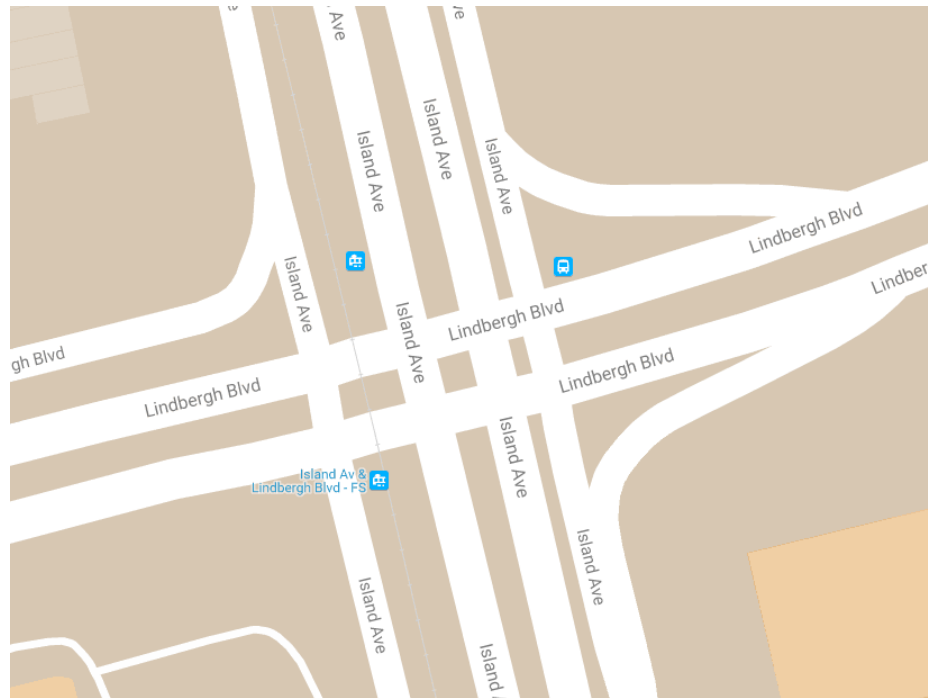


Figure 2: An example of the wide, trolley line-crossing roads and front streets in Eastwick. Note the four separate roads, eleven lanes total at bottom of this image, all named Island Avenue (Google, 2017).

Eastwick's rich and complicated history has fostered the development of a remarkably high amount of activism. In the affected area of about 2500 residents, community meetings draw upwards of 150 participants. Several groups represent Eastwick, each with their own lens of how to best correct the issues of the past and move the neighborhood forward. Observing this community and speaking with many of the activists has shown how deeply attached they are to the space, whether they

have been living there for 10 or 80 years. Learning the history, one newer resident told me, forced her to become an activist. She inherited the past and felt compelled to protect the area from future transgressions by those without the neighborhood's interests at heart.

This study will show how the history of the land and people live on through the engagement of activists in the current planning process. I aim to show how the trauma they have lived or inherited affects the planning process and the ways in which planners must engage residents in order to progress beyond the planning stage and foster a meaningful partnership. I will answer the questions: How does trauma-borne activism affect the redevelopment process? What are the ways in which Eastwick is accepting of or resisting roll-out neoliberalism applicable to the redevelopment process? How can this process be improved and in what ways can planners shift into an alternative system to foster a right to the city?

Chapter two of this study will look into the physical geography of Eastwick and explore the risks associated with flooding, Superfund proximity and increased impervious surface cover. Then, these risks are extended into development feasibility for the area including structural investment and flood protection landscaping. Eastwick has the greatest risk in Philadelphia for flooding due to increasing severe hydrometeorological events and sea level rise. The Superfund sites in Eastwick are at risk for water inundation from storms, but not necessarily from sea level rise. Water inundation and subsequent leachate of toxins from Superfund sites has caused mental anguish in the affected homes both from the perceived health risks and the loss of property value. Future risks from landfill leachate is compounded by environmental apathy from the current Trump administration, which rescinded an executive order

calling for increased attention to water inundation at Superfund sites (Executive Order No. 13,783, 2017). The increased risks and costs associated with building in a flood-prone area creates a challenge that may deter investors from building housing, light industrial or other construction in Eastwick.

Chapter three will place Eastwick's activism into theoretical frameworks to show their deep connection to and interaction with the land through the lenses of participatory planning, resistance and acceptance of neoliberal real estate practices, redevelopment-associated trauma and conspiracy. I find that the activists of Eastwick are asserting their right to plan their space by participation, protest, coalition building and education (Harvey, 2008). Their power is limited by the need to protect their status under the hegemony of market-led urban solutions and avoid economic punishments, which are built into neoliberal systems for non-complying spaces (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck & Tickell, 2002). Trauma, both experienced and inherited, has altered the relationship between the community and their government. During this planning process, planners have been careful to understand how historical transgressions including displacement and disenfranchisement have created an air of mistrust that they must mitigate.

Chapter four will dive into the history of Eastwick in order to provide context for historical issues with flooding, disinvestment and disenfranchisement. In addition, it will show the origins of the activism which has been pushing back against the city's transgressions for decades. Finally, it will describe the current state of activism and give context for the new redevelopment efforts by the city of Philadelphia, the Lower Eastwick Public Land Strategy (LEPLS). This history is crucial to understanding how the past shaped the social and physical geography of Eastwick and the anger and

urgency behind current activism. Fears of displacement and disinvestment are founded in a long history of Eastwick being overlooked and ignored on the city, state and federal levels, which lead to several instances of disenfranchisement and traumatic flooding due to overt neglect of taxpaying citizens of Philadelphia.

Chapter five outlines the methods which were used and the data which was collected for the analysis. I used methods that allowed me to understand the current attitudes of activists and planners involved in the LEPLS as best as possible. First, I observed Eastwickians at city hall, public meetings about the LEPLS, community leaders as they addressed the mayor, and a gathering in support of a political candidate. This allowed me to see how the activists interact with power-holders, with each other and the ways in which they are participating in planning and asserting their rights to plan their spaces. Next, semi-structured interviews with sixteen activists provided in-depth explorations into the driving forces, desired outcomes for the LEPLS and perceptions towards power-holders and fellow activists. I found that the activists have a strong connection with Eastwick's history, no matter how long they have lived it. The trauma experienced in the past lives on through the activists and is presented as both their determination to have a meaningful partnership with the planners and as severe mistrust of the power-holders and the process. The results and analysis of the collected data is presented in chapter six and chapter seven discusses these results and concludes the study with implications and future research.

This research provides a context of Eastwick's tumultuous past and shows how prior transgressions are felt and feared by the current citizens through their inheritance of the land's history. With the history in mind, this study shows how the community's deep connection to the land and distrust of governing bodies has fostered a remarkable

amount of activism that alters the dynamic of planner-citizen partnerships. Eastwick has been in a constant battle against the disenfranchisement that comes with top-down redevelopment. Throughout history, the social fabric of Eastwick experienced losses to- and victories against redevelopment authorities, and activists' current battle is to have meaningful participation in the newest redevelopment plans.

Chapter 2

AN OVERVIEW OF FLOODING RISKS IN PHILADELPHIA

2.1 Introduction

An understanding of the perceived risks of flooding in Eastwick is important to connect the historical trauma, current activism and the role of conspiracy theories in the LEPLS. A quantitative, climatological understanding of the flood risks is important to understand the non-political, physical limitations to what can be feasibility developed in Eastwick. The intense activism in Eastwick acts as a barrier to developers who are interested in building on the land (Interview 10/20/2017). However, before a developer has the opportunity to submit a proposal for the area, they must first decide if Eastwick's at-risk lands are an economically feasible location for investment. Many community members interviewed for this research expressed a fear of flooding as their primary concern for development and the future of their neighborhood. The fear of toxic leachate from nearby Superfund sites intensifies the anxiety of flooding. The intersection of the fear of flooding and of toxic exposure go hand-in-hand when severe hydrometeorological events occur and threaten to spread toxins from adjacent Superfund sites. Many local residents recall decades of illegal dumping of chemicals, materials and medical waste into these sites.

2.2 Flood Risks

The Eastwick community maintains a sense of fear around traumatic floods from both lived and inherited narratives. The following physical proof of flood risk is intended to supplement the narrative of the intersections of risk in Eastwick. The intention is not to justify negative emotions associated with a perceived risk of flooding; these fears are real with or without scientific proof. However, most of the

activists of Eastwick are well aware of the land's geographical and hydrological predisposition as an at-risk area for future flooding due to severe storms and sea-level rise. Despite efforts by the EPA to contain and remediate the Superfund sites, the risk of toxin release remains because the sites are not fully remediated. As climate change increases the likelihood and intensity of storm events, Eastwick's risk for disaster-level hydrometeorological events increases. Future development must address these issues and consider the increased cost and risk of developing in a floodplain.

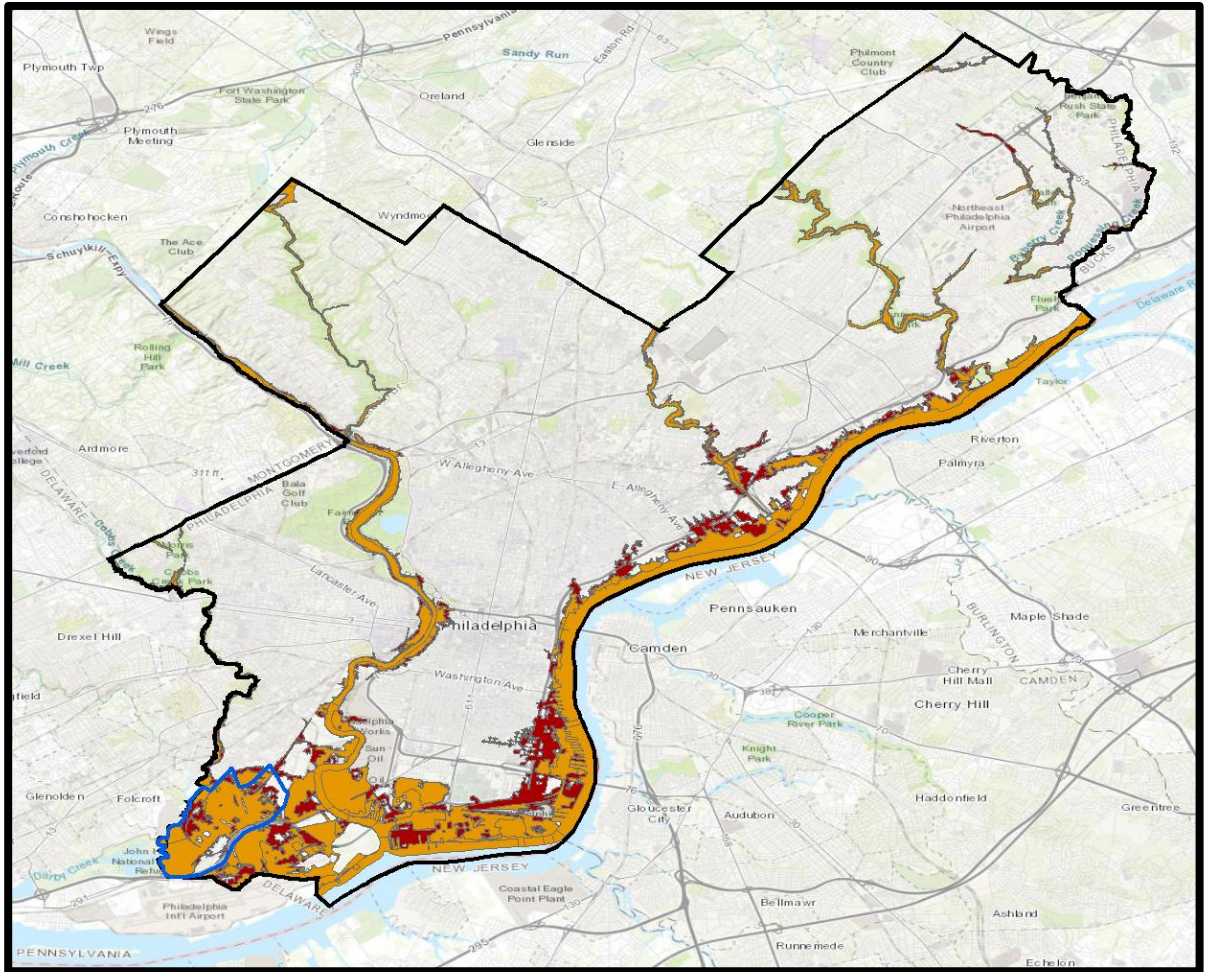


Figure 3: 100-year (yellow) and 500-year (red) floodplain in Philadelphia (City of Philadelphia, 2007). Eastwick is the southwestern-most neighborhood of Philadelphia, outlined in blue, most of which is in the 100-year floodplain.

Throughout the City of Philadelphia, the Eastwick area has the greatest risk for flooding both from slow water inundation via sea level rise and fast inundation from severe hydrometeorological events (see figure 3). Flooding becomes disastrous when its natural process is interrupted by the built environment and interacts negatively with social processes (Cammerer, Thieken, & Verburg, 2013, p. 1244). Flooding risk for a

city is its intersection of the potential human, land and economic tolls resulting from water inundation. Land use change, climate change, unresolved Superfund cleanups and social inequalities all intersect to create vulnerable flood areas in Philadelphia.

2.3 Climate Change

Climate science predicts that increasing global temperatures will cause sea level rise and more severe hydrometeorological events in the future (Riebeek, 2005). A combination of high water levels (due to a storm or sea level change) and the higher wind speeds of future storms creates an even greater risk of flooding due to storm surge. Storm surges are often the most dangerous part of a hurricane with the ability to cause great tolls on human life and property damage (NOAA, 2017). Sites managed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) such as Superfunds and brownfields are at risk of spreading their contamination during quick or slow water inundation. Storm water or sea level rise can spread contaminants or compromise the containment measures already put in place. This is a real threat to contaminated sites on floodplains. Threats to the physical and social environment include quick water inundation following storms, hurricanes or snowmelt, and slow water rise due to climate change. The increasing frequency and severity of floods is especially dangerous for low-lying or coastal cities, such as Philadelphia. It affects how citizens, planners and governments shape and interact with their spaces. Many areas, especially those adjacent to major water bodies or waterways, flood every year (see figure 4). Damaged homes are often rebuilt and homes continue to be constructed in floodplains (Breslin, 2017).

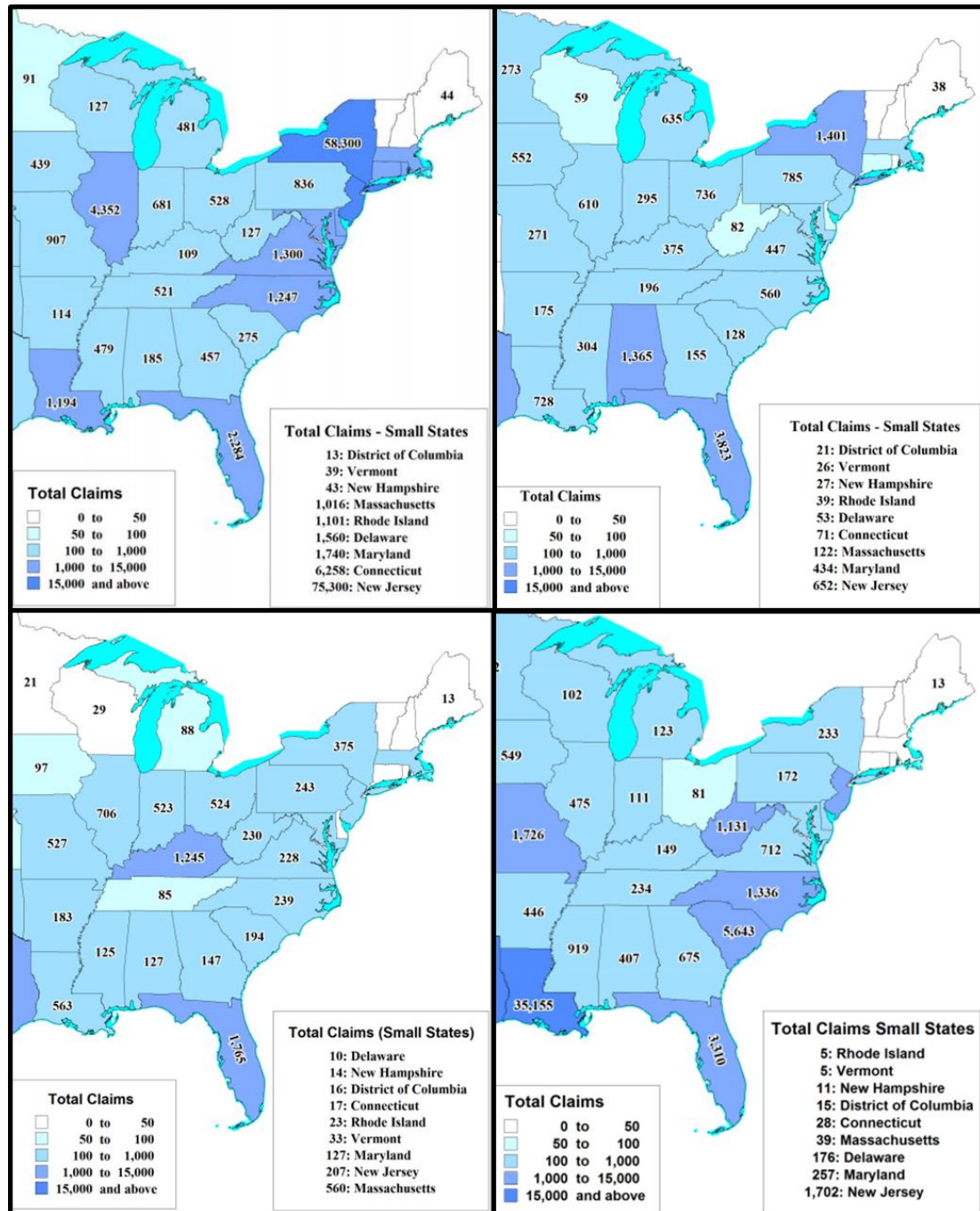


Figure 4: National Flood Insurance Program, Total Number of Claims: October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013; October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014; October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015; October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016, respectively (FEMA, 2017).

Flood insurance helps to mitigate costs of a flooding event, but these flood prone communities must mitigate, adapt, or relocate in order to avoid unaffordable increases in insurance rates and increasing threats of disastrous flooding. People living in these dangerous areas are often marginalized, especially by race or class and face further disinvestment and disenfranchisement, which increases the likelihood that they may encounter more severe impacts due to local flooding (Maantay & Maroko, 2009).

2.4 Flooding of Contaminated Land

There are over one thousand Superfund sites on the National Priority List (EPA, 2017) and about a half-million brownfield sites in the US (EPA, 2017a). Superfund sites are the US's most contaminated plots of land, often the result of spills or industrial seepage which enters the ground and/or groundwater. The contaminants pose a risk to humans such as heavy metal poisoning, carcinogenic chemical exposure or contact with toxic landfill leachate (EPA, 2017b). Brownfields are less toxic sites or sites with perceived toxicity (EPA, 2017a). Both types are managed by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA assists in containing and/or remediating these sites by various methods such as removing the contaminated earth, inserting liners under the contaminated earth or using additives to change the composition of the contaminants. The EPA's Superfund program used the focus of President Obama's Executive Order 13653, which covers the need of increased attention where climate change risks and Superfund sites intersect, to raise awareness of potential impacts on these sites (EPA, 2017c). The awareness campaign stresses the importance of monitoring of Superfund sites, such as in Eastwick, in the 100- and 500-year floodplain and within areas affected by one foot of sea level rise. Executive Order 13653 was rescinded by President Trump in Early 2017 (Executive Order No. 13,783,

2017), removing the urgency of federal monitoring of these hazards. Amidst large proposed budget cuts to the EPA and executive disinterest in environmental stewardship by the Trump administration, the remediation of these sites could be halted or extended beyond the already lengthy process (King, 2017; Klayman, 2017). The EPA's Superfund climate change adaptation initiatives may also see disinvestment. This has the potential to create very dangerous situations in future flood scenarios.

Flooding of contaminated land is a risk to humans, animals and the surrounding ecosystems if the encroaching water carries contaminants away from the site or out of its containment structures. Heavy rainfall can damage a Superfund containment structure, like the American Cyanamid Superfund site in New Jersey after Hurricane Irene. The containment structures were severely damaged although the EPA reports that there was not a significant release of the site's many dangerous contaminants (EPA, 2016). After Hurricane Sandy in 2012, there was evidence of runoff from Superfund sites in New York and New Jersey, states which have 45 Superfund sites within a half-mile of "coastal areas vulnerable to storm surge" (Barry, Searcey, & Carreyrou, 2012). Other sites have had disastrous repercussions from being unprepared such as the Bunker Hill Superfund site in Idaho, which has had two major flood-related releases of lead, totaling nearly 1.5 million pounds of the toxic metal into a popular tourist lake (Christian, 2016). Identifying at-risk Superfunds and brownfields are crucial to avoiding disastrous flood events like these, especially amongst predictions that severe hydrometeorological events will increase in the future.

The Eastwick area has two Superfund-designated former landfills, the Folcroft and Clearview Landfill, located on or near the 100-year floodplain (see figure 5).

Toxic chemical, medical and industrial wastes were disposed and buried in these sites. In the 1980s, there was evidence of waste leaching into the environment (Reid, 1984). Hurricane Floyd in 1999 resulted in major flooding of Eastwick, but after the waters receded, many of the basements of homes near the Clearview Landfill were inundated with landfill leachate. Local residents were distressed over the impacts on their health and the value of their homes. The city and EPA were slow to address the problem and offered very few solutions or promises to the affected citizens (A field of Weeds, 1989). Groundwater flow patterns confirm what residents knew long ago: that there is leachate flow from the Clearview landfill into the nearby environment (Tetra Tech NUS, Inc., 2011).

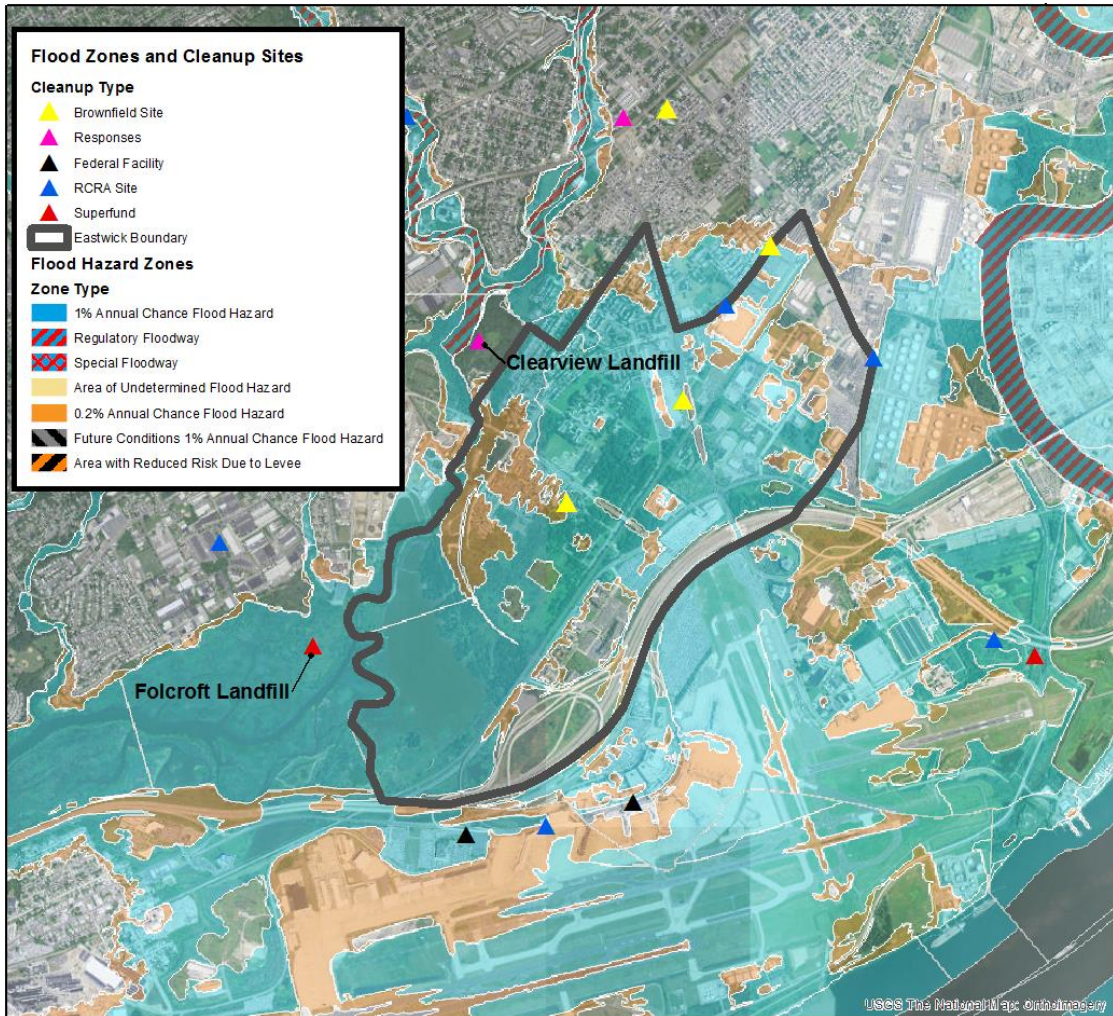


Figure 5: Eastwick and the intersection of the 100-year floodplain (1% annual chance) 500-year floodplain (0.2% Annual Chance) and the locations of EPA Cleanup sites, landfills of focus labeled (FEMA, 2013; EPA, 2016b; Azavea, Inc, 2014).

In the past twenty-five years, there have been several hydrometeorological events in Philadelphia that have caused severe damage and losses of life (Javier, Smith, Baeck, & Villarini, 2010). The city's low-lying southwest area has the greatest risk for flooding. Contaminated land within the floodplain increases the danger of

spreading toxic substances where Superfund or brownfield sites may be unprepared to handle slow or fast water inundation. Philadelphia's aging sewer system is often unable to handle heavy rainfall and many areas flood quickly. Clogged and broken pipes increase the chance that the system will be overwhelmed, which causes basement flooding and sewage backup for residents (City of Philadelphia, n.d.).

2.5 Impervious Surface Cover

Eastwick is bordered on the southwest by the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge. Much of Eastwick's urban environment was previously part of a fresh-water marsh, which is now less than ten percent of its original size (Albert, Salas, & Williams, 2006, p. vii). The marsh has been altered greatly and, according to sea level rise predictions, will be the first area of Philadelphia to submerge. In some areas of the Darby Creek watershed, where the marsh is located, the impervious surfaces are over fifty percent (Darby Creek Valley Association, 2002, p. 43). One important compounding factor to the propensity of an area to flood is their current and projected impervious surface cover. Eastwick activists understand the flooding implications of these land use changes and incorporate it into their approval or disapproval of proposed development. In their 2011 victory against the Korman Corporation, which had development rights for much of Eastwick at the time, and their plan to build apartments and a large parking lot, they cited that the increased risk of flooding due to the runoff from the impervious surfaces as one of the reasons to prevent the development. Future construction must take into account the effects of increasing the impervious surface cover and the pushback from activists who would oppose what they see as flood-exacerbating development.

Along with dangers of increased impervious surfaces, the cost of building in a floodplain is also a barrier to development. Therefore, development in Eastwick is a double-edged sword whereas the citizens of Eastwick and the city of Philadelphia may benefit socially and economically from development, it may also put the area in greater danger of flood disasters by increasing impervious surface cover (Tripathi, Sengupta, Patra, Chang, & Won Jung, 2014). The balance then, is to find a way to responsibly develop the area while respecting the both the residents and the physical limitations of the land.

Sea level rise due to climate change is forecasted to affect much of southwest Philadelphia between the Schuylkill River and Darby Creek (NOAA, 2017). Beginning at one foot of sea level rise, Philadelphia will begin to lose a portion of land near Fort Mifflin. This will also create areas which are more likely to flood because of their elevation although they are not directly adjacent to a water body. At two feet of sea level change, a large area which is disconnected from the water becomes inundated with water.

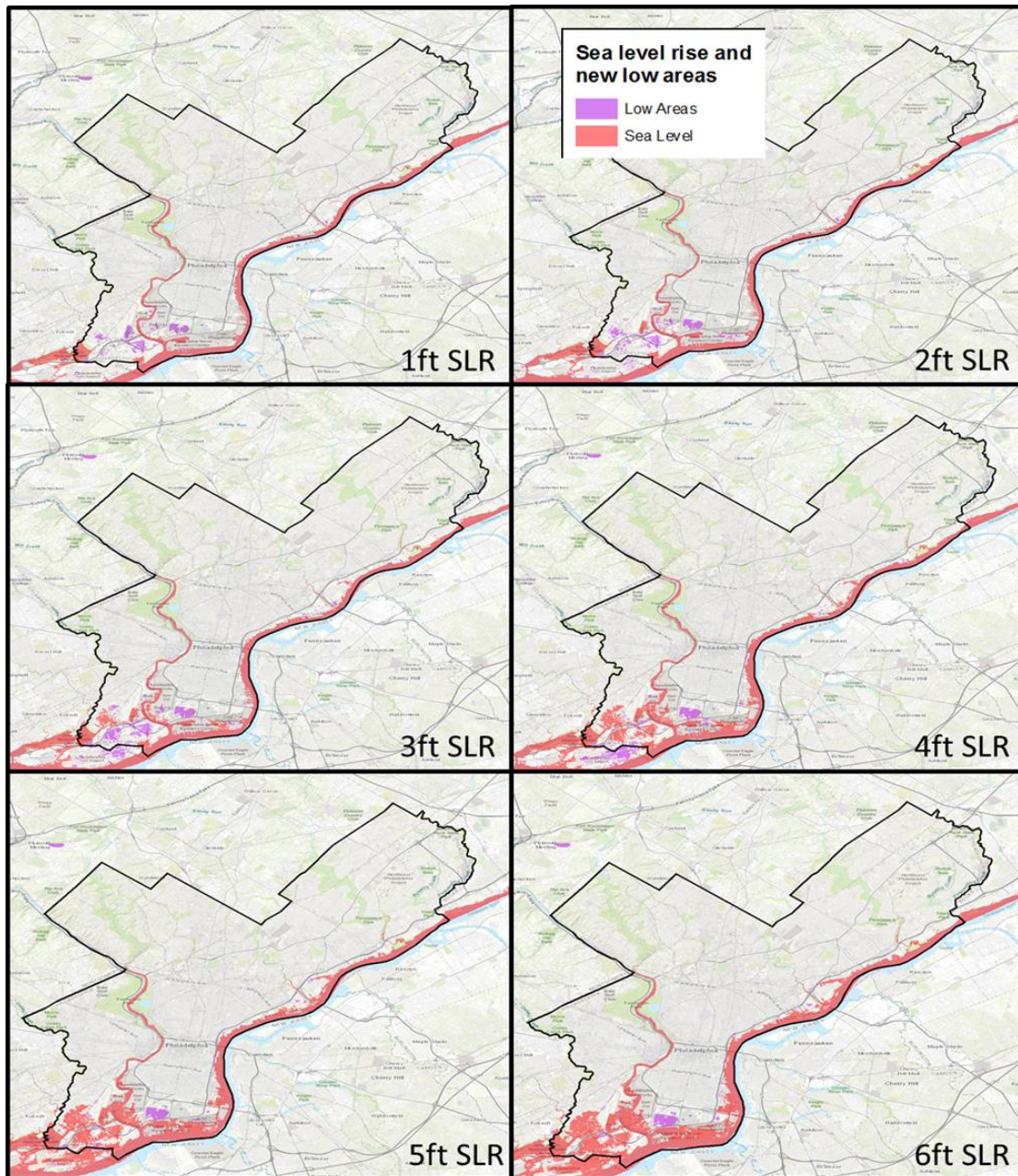


Figure 6: Sea level rise and emerging low area predictions by NOAA for one through six feet of sea level rise in Philadelphia (NOAA, 2017)

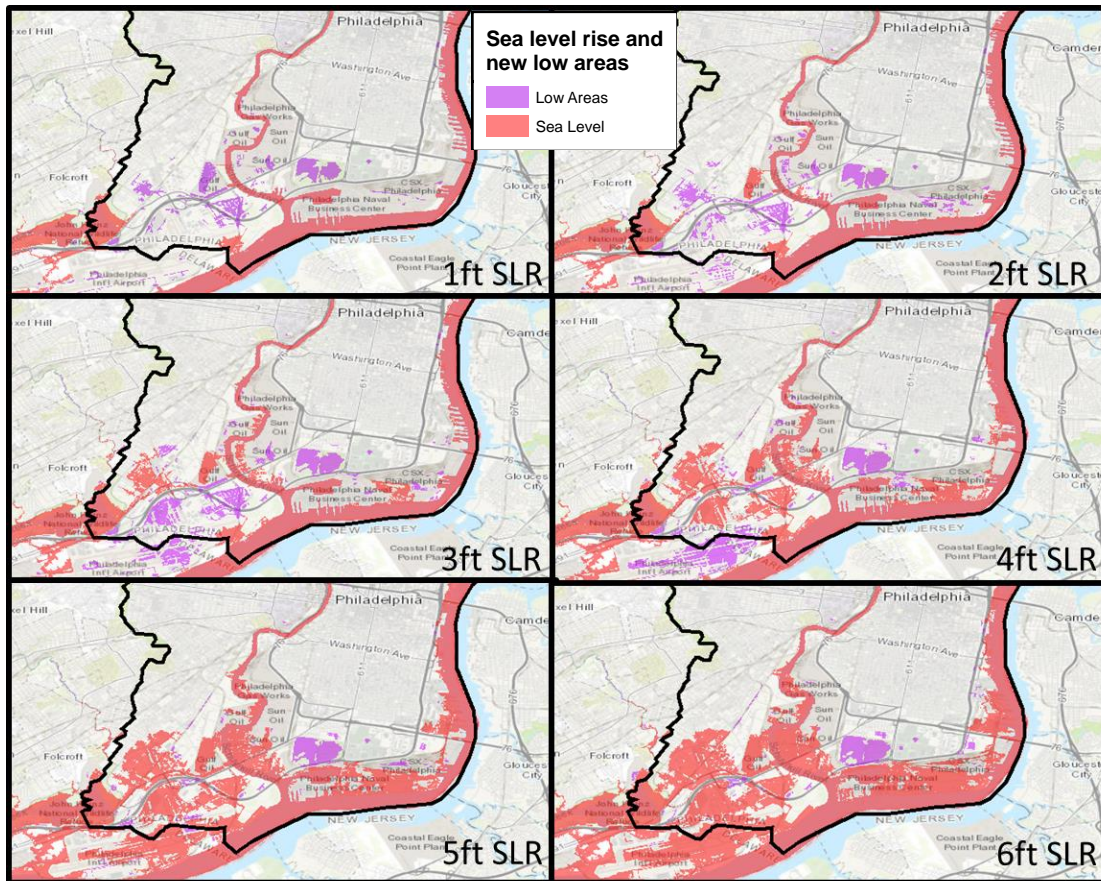


Figure 7: Sea level rise and emerging low area predictions by NOAA for one through six feet of sea level rise in Southwest Philadelphia (NOAA, 2017)

Sea level rise will impact Philadelphia and specifically Southwest Philadelphia. The new coastline identifies areas that will experience slow water inundation as the new coastline encroaches onto the land. The new low-lying areas identified in figure 6 and 7 show areas that will be near or at the new sea level, but are not adjacent to a water body. These areas will be more likely to flood during times of heavy rain.

2.6 Impacts to the LEPLS

The current redevelopment strategy is a feasibility study which will result in a recommendation for what types of development can be reasonably accepted for the study areas, most of which are in the floodplain and sea-level rise affected areas (see figure 8).

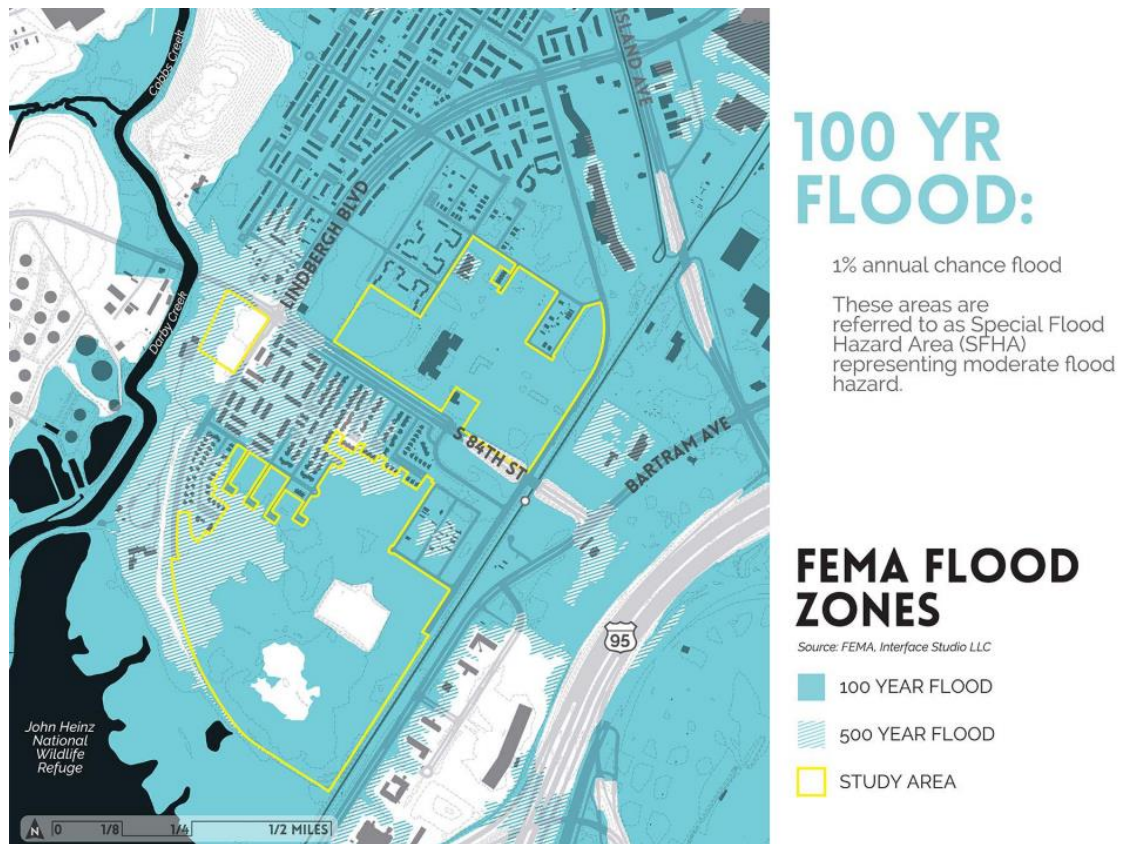


Figure 8: The 100- and 500-year floodplain and the areas designated for the current redevelopment study. Graphic by Interface Studio (2017).

A call for proposals will begin after the feasibility study is completed. The suggestions for each parcel of land are constrained by their intersection with the

floodplain, proximity to landfills and identified needs of the community. Senior housing, for example, is an identified need of the community, but it cannot legally be built on a floodplain. The added expense to building on a floodplain, which includes most of the lands in the study, will impact what can be feasibly built. Whether it is housing, retail or light industrial, there will be added costs to building and insuring new construction in Eastwick. Interface Studios, in their September 27, 2017 public presentation, expressed concerns about market feasibility for new construction in flood-prone areas due to many recent and damaging hurricane events. The 2017 hurricane season, specifically for US island territories, the Gulf Coast and Mid-Atlantic States (hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Jose, etc.) created a heightened awareness of costly damage from hurricanes and brought into question the accuracy of the 100-year floodplain (Schwartz, Glanz, & Lehren, 2017; Kimmelman, 2017). Potential construction of light industrial or housing would be costly because of the need to build above sea level and maintain foundations in an area with a high-water table (Interface Studios, 2017).

Some local activist groups are opposed to any construction and would like to see the largest parcel added to the Wildlife Refuge. However, planners discourage that option as well because Eastwick's redevelopment is expected to economically benefit the city. The community was presented with the idea of "flood infrastructure landscapes" for the most flood-prone areas (Interface Studios, 2017). Flood infrastructure landscapes were presented as park-type public areas which can be walking trails and recreation space in dry times and flood-mitigating greenspace during wet times. Many attendees of the meetings were receptive to the idea, but the size of the potential area was not agreed upon.

2.7 Conclusion

The 100-year floodplain in Eastwick intersects with two Superfund sites, which creates an additional threat to an already complicated flood risk. Government, planners, developers and citizens must consider these risks alongside the social and economic needs following the feasibility study. The flood risk is well known to those interested in Eastwick. The fear of flooding and toxic leachate contributes to the lived and inherited traumas of the residents which present themselves as distrust and activism in the community. However, the risks to investors due to the flooding problems may prevent desired development, no matter what the community and planners decide would be best. The people of Eastwick are at risk of being forced to accept undesirable land uses or development due to the lack of investors willing to build in the area. This has the potential to add onto the residents' frustrations with government and the planning process, along with exacerbating the traumas associated with any kind of redevelopment.

Future flood hazards and physical limitations to development must be taken into consideration as the LEPLS moves forward to their land use recommendations. These considerations will constrain their decisions for what can be reasonably built in Eastwick. It will be a challenge for residents and planners to agree on land use changes and then find investors whose interests, including acceptance of risk, are in line with the feasibility study's outcomes. The process of agreeing on desired outcomes of the LEPLS is also complicated by the social and political dynamics in participatory processes. The next chapter will analyze literatures relevant to participation, trauma and market-led redevelopments as it relates to the process of redevelopment.

Chapter 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: TRAUMA-INFORMED PLANNING CONSTRAINED BY NEOLIBERAL IDEALS

3.1 Introduction

This section will place Eastwick's redevelopment and activism within the literatures of participatory planning, neoliberal ideals, inherited trauma and community activism. The combination of these literatures will help to question if Eastwick has become a space of resistance to neoliberal real estate systems and consider how activism, trauma and conspiracy affect the relationship between planners/government and community. Understanding how Eastwick's tumultuous past led to current activism and how it challenges typical planning processes is necessary to determine how to best proceed to create meaningful partnerships and socially positive development.

The redevelopment of Eastwick was initiated in the 1950s and eventually stagnated in the 1970s which matched the boom and bust cycle of urbanization and redevelopment in US cities. The current redevelopment, therefore, is operating in a distinctly different real estate and economic system. Neoliberal ideals (Peck & Tickell, 2002) have since rolled-out and become the dominant discourse for these types of planning processes. In the following sections, I will show how Eastwick's activists are exerting their right to participate, the constraints of participation due to neoliberal trajectories, and the ways in which trauma influences the attitudes towards planners, the process, and their assertion of rights.

3.2 Participation

“If our urban world has been imagined and made then it can be re-imagined and re-made,” David Harvey wrote in “The Right to the City” (2003, p. 941). Harvey’s statement is both optimistic and obvious; what could be more democratic and just than a collective re-imagining of the urban world? However, this also creates many more questions: To whom does the urban world belong? What systematic constraints were present when it was made and how do they differ in the re-imagining? How can this be done *in situ* and is it really feasible? Currently, the re-imagining of Eastwick is being promoted as a participatory process where the citizens are given full partnership with the planners. However, urban development under neoliberalism tends to privilege private investors and market forces over the needs of the citizens (Harvey, 2003). The domination of economic growth needs in redevelopment plans places the needs of the powerful, who already have the ability to act on their right to the city (Marcuse, 2012) above the needs of current residents (MacLeod & Jones, 2011). In planning processes, governing bodies typically have the final say on land use decisions with or without public input. Urban development literature by geographers and planners looks at the right of citizens to shape their spaces, called the “right to the city.” Many see it as inalienable of the people who occupy a space, but *in situ*, the citizens are not necessarily the ones delegating the trajectory. Those who are demanding the right to the city are those who are excluded from the benefits while still being expected to include their labor and taxes (Marcuse, 2012). The expression of rights can come in the form of a participatory planning process, however, these mechanisms are controlled by planning entities.

Participatory planning processes, when properly executed, allows citizens to have a role in land use decisions and has the potential to protect them from unwanted

consequences of redevelopment. “Participation of the governed in their government is, in theory, the cornerstone of democracy-” Sherry Arnstein writes about citizen participation, “a revered idea that is vigorously applauded by virtually everyone” (1969, p. 216). However obvious this suggestion may be, it is not common for cities to place the needs of all its citizens above economic opportunities in redevelopment. Arnstein discusses the potential of participatory planning to be a form of placation rather than a partnership, this is still a risk in the current neoliberal system in which Eastwick is being redeveloped. Despite these flaws, participation remains the foundation of democratic processes. Sherry Arnstein’s “A Ladder of Citizen Participation” was published in 1969, but the power struggles and the control over minority or disempowered populations via redevelopment processes that she discusses remains relevant today. She writes that citizen participation is the way in which an underrepresented population may contribute, “...in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programs are operated, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parceled out” (Arnstein, 1969, p. 216). The Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority’s emphasis on public input is meant to assure citizens that their voices will be heard. However, the historical underrepresentation of the citizens in Eastwick’s previous redevelopment continues to echo today in current concerns of disenfranchisement.

Current participatory planning literatures echo Arnstein’s demand for meaningful, democratic participation of the citizens and further examines the importance of the planner-citizen relationship. Examining new governance and types of coalition-style advocacy on the behalf of citizens allows more citizens to be involved who may not otherwise be able to navigate through the political and technical

aspects of a redevelopment (Fischer, 2006). Areas undergoing urban planning need to be understood in terms of its attributes: social, political and environmental factors that will influence relationships and outcome feasibility (Mohebbi & Mohebbi, 2010). Current literatures place much more pressure on planners to ensure that social structures are not only preserved, but enhanced by the process (Mohebbi & Mohebbi, 2010; Porter, 2013).

A more democratic-style of participatory planning for redevelopment projects has gained popularity as planners and governments have been pressured to place greater value on local knowledge, input and public acceptance of plans (Turner A, 2014, p. 885). However, the level of implementation of local input varies greatly between projects and redevelopments often fail to incorporate ideas in a way that pleases community residents (Turner A, 2014, p. 888). Marcuse describes power holder's fear of an uprising by those deprived of their right to the city:

“The effort to channel that discontent has been a chief task for the lackeys of power, the manipulators of ideology, with the media, the schools, religious institutions, and a variety of business and civic organizations as their allies/targets.” (2012)

Channeling the discontent of the disenfranchised into a participatory process, like the current proceedings in Eastwick, demands a critical look into the potential tokenism of the process. A participatory process which is heavily organized and guided by non-residents risks only collecting data based on the values of the planners rather than the citizens. Media reporting and social media are helping citizens to investigate, communicate and organize around the processes which affect them. With a 24-hour news cycle and instant availability on social media, updates on the process are more easily accessed, tracked and criticized, allowing communities to understand who is involved and who is making the decisions. For participatory planning, this pulls back

the veil on the politics behind planning and allows citizens and other stakeholders to access a part of planning that was inaccessible or delayed in the past. Eastwick's activists stay well-informed about the politics of the city and they are quick to protest if decisions are made which affect them without their input. The media not only assists in keeping them connected, but it also acts as an outlet for them to publicly hold the city accountable.

The demand for meaningful participation by the members of Eastwick is an assertion of their rights as citizens. This demand is heightened by historical transgressions of redevelopment projects and fear of displacement. Meaningful participation in the planning of their community space is an extension of their social, human, and citizen rights. Occupants of a neighborhood are a part of a political community and inherit the history of the space (Turner, 1997, p. 9). This role as a community member is lived through both the histories of the community and how their rights are carried out (or suppressed) within processes like participatory planning. Traditionally marginalized people are participating more on the community scale, creating spaces of resistance within the planning process as they exercise their citizen rights (Ghose, 2005, p. 61).

For urban redevelopment plans, contributing parties and the media would agree that a participatory process is a good—and the right—thing to do. However, the partnership of grassroots organizations and governing actors is complicated by its setting within neoliberal economic systems which simultaneously contributes to the attrition of the welfare-state, inequitable development and social injustices (Ghose, 2005, p. 63; Weber, 2002). The mere presence of these community partnerships does not automatically create a democratic process. Citizens often lack the resources and

capacity to participate at the level they desire (Ghose, 2005, p. 64). A governing body may be open to a participatory process and advertise it as accessible, yet there are systematic and underlying inequities that prevent true partnerships where both power-holders and citizens produce and agree on the goals (Arnstein, 1969).

Eastwick's activists, without using the term explicitly, are expressing their right to the city through their resistance to exclusion from the redevelopment process. Local redevelopment should challenge "hegemonic liberal and neoliberal market logics," but often do not, Harvey writes in his 2008 revisit of *The Right to the City*. The right of citizens to reshape their city, he continues, is both precious and neglected (2008, p. 23). However, the rights of citizens are often trumped by the need to profit in the current system. The citizens of Eastwick fear this outcome, framed as worries over gentrification, and many have experienced displacement from the previous redevelopment. Harvey suggests that citizens come together and stage an uprising to demand control over the urban process (pp. 37-38). In practice, this control may present itself as participatory planning, but historically, it falls far short of the uprising Harvey suggests. Historically, the uprisings in Eastwick were more of a physical protest: human chains to block dump trucks and thousands of angry citizens overflowing public meetings. Today, however, the uprisings have taken a more gentle, partnership-oriented means of asserting their power in which the city is invited to the table with activists who are politically intelligent and informed. They use their education, political know-how and the media to work within their position under the hegemony of market-led development and push back against complete disenfranchisement. Asserting their rights as citizens of Eastwick becomes increasingly difficult as neoliberal policy experimentations increasingly guide the

trajectory of redevelopment to prioritize economic benefit for elites (Brenner & Theodore, 2002).

3.3 Neoliberalized Space

The historical shift to neoliberalism further complicates this process of balancing community input with economic gains (Logan & Swannstrom, 1990). The term “neoliberalism” came about, as I am using it here, in the 1980s and is used to describe economic restructuring that privatizes state initiatives (Glassman, 2009). It is an “update” of classical liberalism theories from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which says that the market will regulate itself and create “greater social prosperity” (Glassman, 2009, p. 497). The 2008 financial crisis challenged neoliberalism as the dominant social, political and economic governance (Peck, Theodore, & Brenner, 2009), but its resiliency was underestimated and it continues to have significant influence (Peck & Theodore, 2012). The influence of neoliberalism on this study is present, and I argue that it is in many ways still operating in it.

Within neoliberal systems which favor privatization of public lands, cities emphasize their economic competitiveness by introducing investment-attracting features like new technology, jobs and restructuring of the local governance that favors laissez-faire capitalist accumulation (Purcell, 2002, p. 101; Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck & Tickell, 2002). This is not necessarily conducive to protecting communities and incorporating their needs and values. Smaller-scale spaces (neighborhoods, localities) are the last spaces in which capital regulation can be forced upon, assuming the inflexibility of large-scale (globalized) systems. New policies within these spaces are an attempt to strengthen local economies by “political-economic elites” (Brenner & Theodore, 2002, p. v; Molotch, 1988; Logan &

Swanstrom, 1990). Eastwick, containing some of the largest tracts of empty space in Philadelphia, is ready to either become an accessory to the city of Philadelphia as a space of new capital accumulation or a space of resistance to those systems.

Eastwick's activists are protecting their community from continued disinvestment or displacement, while still understanding that some form of investment must come.

An increased focus on localities as a space of policy experiments can be veiled as a movement towards empowerment, however, whether the new regulations actually strengthen localities or make them more vulnerable to supra-local economic fluctuations is still in question. In Eastwick, like in the redevelopment in the 1950s, there is an emphasis on place-marketing to bring in investments. Its unique position as the "gateway to Philadelphia" and neighbor of the Philadelphia International Airport makes it a prime space for speculative ventures for capital gains. With the current participatory development, it remains to be seen if the emergent spaces will be ones that are truly beneficial to the existing community as promised or if the powerful stakeholders like the airport will use the space for their own opportunities, which may not be beneficial to the community.

So far, however, a common discourse of planners and activists surrounding this redevelopment has been one of a space of resistance to typical planning processes and outcomes. Some "moments of creation" in "actually existing neoliberalism" and "neoliberal localization" (Brenner & Theodore, 2002, pp. 17-19, 22-25) associated with roll-out neoliberalism are being actively avoided, spoken out against and eschewed by planners and government, particularly with physical land use decisions. One item in particular is the "highest and best use," typical for land use decisions, is being pushed back against by the Executive Director of the Philadelphia

Redevelopment Authority (PRA) who ensured citizens that the developments will be socially beneficial, even if it means that the city will delay selling the land.

The “innovation, learning, and openness” that neoliberalism is said to promote but not foster *in situ* (Peck & Tickell, 2002), is not necessarily reflective of the proceedings in Eastwick. The planning and implementation of the LEPLS is proceeding in ways that show an awareness of unique land history and the strength of the activism. Neoliberalism also has a tendency to “punish” noncomplying or unproductive spaces by further disinvestment. The benign neglect of Eastwick is also due to the former developer’s refusal to end their contract or plan new development with the community and the undesirable conditions of the land for construction.

However, there are many more cases in which Eastwick accepting neoliberalism as new forms of public and private ventures are rolled out. Public acceptance of the importance of economic expansion allows the agenda of the economic elite to become more important than just distribution of wealth (Logan & Swanstrom, 1990). The city and planners are offering paths of neoliberal developments and the citizens are accepting and willful participants that strengthen existing power structures and narratives of economic competitiveness. The steering committee of the LEPLS, a combination of government representatives, stakeholders and community members, functions as a space of “public-private partnerships and “networked” forms of governance”, forming a type of quango (quasi-autonomous non-governmental organization) which is government supported but not held accountable by any governance (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Public meetings for the LEPLS intentionally included interested developers who, despite the concerns of the citizens, were given the ability to directly influence the planning process. The citizens and

planners were generally in agreement that the area could benefit from introducing new technology, housing and other investments, which in turn would make it a greater asset for the city. Sentiments of Eastwick being “behind” the other neighborhoods of Philadelphia, as far as technology and urbanization are concerned, are resulting narratives of the economic competition that neoliberalism necessitates. Community spaces, both structures and green space, are included in the plans and considered feasible uses for some or much of the spaces slotted for redevelopment. However, these high-social impact, low-economic return land uses come with a condition: they are secondary to economic gains.

In many of the public meetings, the urban planners discussed the flooding infrastructure needs of the community as second to economic growth. Placing economic growth as the primary concern is a way of normalizing neoliberal tendencies (Peck & Tickell, 2002, p. 47). In Eastwick, growth was normalized throughout this process: no one was observed questioning why localized revenue was required as up-front payment to receive flood protection infrastructure or landscaping. Many activists included Eastwick becoming economically beneficial to the city as a desired outcome of the LEPLS.

Eastwick is, therefore an imperfect space of localized roll-out neoliberalism, balancing resistance *and* willful compliance with normalized systems of market-led development. The prolific and successful activism in Eastwick gives this space a chance to showcase how damaging redevelopment can be and how to reverse the consequences of disenfranchisement and neglect by allowing citizens to participate in the trajectory.

Neoliberal ideology is represented as a means to make an ideal free-market in which resources and investments are optimally dispersed. However, “neoliberal political practice has generated pervasive market failures, new forms of social polarization, and a dramatic intensification of uneven development at all spatial scales” (Brenner & Theodore, 2002, p. 5). The benefits of redevelopment are unevenly distributed, especially for minorities, who tend to receive the least amount of benefits (Mele, 2013). Neoliberal urban development further marginalizes minority populations when the new spaces are not of their design or desire or are completely inaccessible despite it being what they wanted. Redeveloped spaces become “cities within cities”- spaces which are adjacent yet inaccessible (Mele, 2013, p. 598). Interestingly, “City-within-a-City” was the slogan for Eastwick’s previous redevelopment (see figure 9), seemingly foreshadowing the selectively inaccessible city to come.

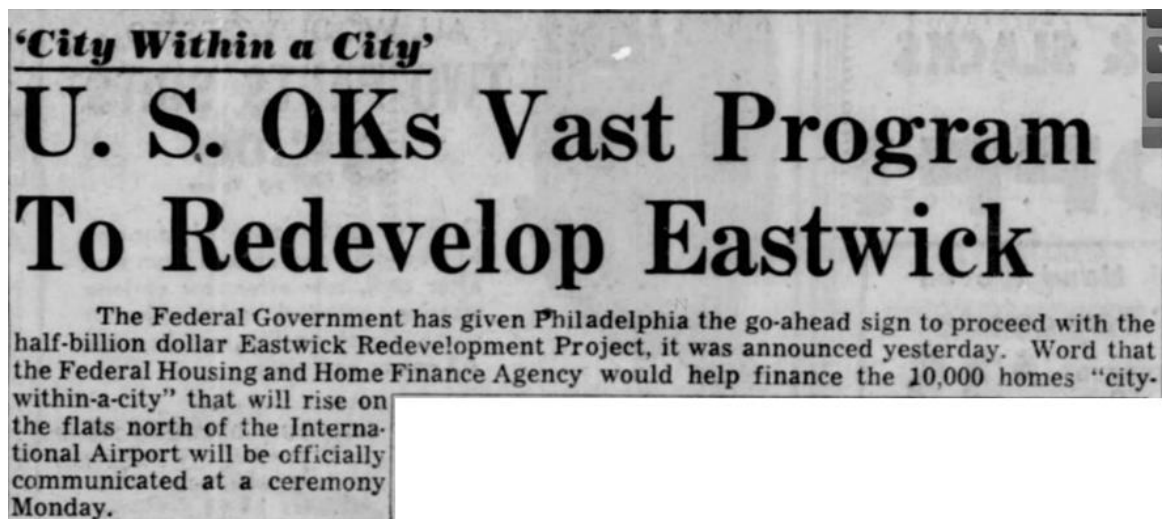


Figure 9: A 1957 newspaper clipping shows the use of “City-Within-a-City” to describe the redevelopment aspirations of an all-inclusive Eastwick—separate-but-within—Philadelphia (1957).

The advertisement of neoliberal redevelopment projects promotes greater safety, equity and diversity, yet in practice, tend to do the opposite (MacLeod, 2002). A “color-blind model of social progress” allows citizens and planners alike to deny both social progress and urban decline as a result of structural barriers which prevent racial minorities from advancing into better living conditions (Avila & Rose, 2009, p. 340). Intentionally avoiding the discussion of race within urban plans allows the agenda of the planners and the powerful to be accepted and implemented without difficulty.

Disenfranchisement of urban dwellers has continued to take control out of the hands of citizens despite increased popularity and scholarship of participatory methods (Purcell, 2002, p. 99). To speak out against progress is frowned upon and resistance to redevelopment is kept to a minimum by social pressures (Fullilove, 2016) and the domination of economy-first progress ideals (Logan & Swannstrom, 1990). The meaning of “progress”, no matter how it is sold to the public (economic improvements, more jobs, less crime etc.), is defined by the power-holders and upheld by the stigma associated with being anti-progress, “falling behind” or the fear of economic stagnation. Still today, the danger of standing in the way of neoliberal progress, as previously stated, can result in punishment by intensified disinvestment. Scaled down to the activist group or individual, the risk of punishment would be that they might lose their standing as community leaders if they resist to a point where they are labeled too “radical” to achieve progress (Rankin, 2012). This is apparent in Eastwick where the pervasive attitudes are that there is a time and place for trauma and protest, but for a group/individual or a planner to interfere with the process is an offense that may lead to exclusion.

This remains relevant to many discourses surrounding redevelopment projects, yet there is a growing number of activists and academics who recognize the importance of preserving the history and culture of neighborhoods, even if it means halting or re-thinking “progress.” Resistance to neoliberal urban policies is the hope that local economies do not become spaces of market-oriented accumulation for the elite. New ways of challenging the system such as the Right to the City movement are necessary to save socially important spaces and eventually mend or overhaul the broken system.

3.4 Redevelopment trauma

The loss of socially important spaces due to redevelopment can have a deleterious effect on the physical and mental wellbeing of citizens who lose the support of their social networks. Urban redevelopment projects aim to improve spaces, but lack of attention to the effects of uprooting or non-consensual restructuring of long-term or deeply attached citizens’ environment can cause anger and resentment towards planners and government. Eastwick’s redevelopment of the 1950s-1970s resulted in the displacement of thousands of people and subsequent widespread trauma from the experience. Many citizens still feel the trauma of Eastwick’s redevelopment: those who were displaced and never returned; those who were able to return, but to a very different Eastwick; the few who were able to stay, but lost the space as they knew it; and those who did not live through the redevelopment, but inherited the distrust and trauma after becoming a part of the community. The perpetuation of the Eastwick narrative of benign neglect and disenfranchisement allows the trauma to transfer to new generations and new neighbors, resulting in a common air of distrust towards so-

called progress. In the current redevelopment, this presents as deep suspicion of the tokenism of participatory processes.

The manner in which cities use zoning and policies to assign economic value to the built environment is inconsistent, biased and disconnected from social value (Weber, 2002). Blight designations, for example, have historically been used to treat land as a commodity and people as movable, further adding stress and stigma (Weber, 2002; Cahn, 2014). The reasons for Eastwick's blight designation in the 1950s included the lack of infrastructure, flooding and industrial dumping (Knapton, 2006), but, as many blight designations of the time, areas populated with African Americans were much more likely to be blighted (Cahn, 2014, p. 451). This disconnect threatens crucial social connections during redevelopments by justifying the alteration or removal of spaces in which locals have invested attachment. Current redevelopments continue to devalue social capital and put the physical and mental wellbeing of the residents at risk, funded by their own tax dollars.

Neoliberal urban redevelopment tends to favor the interests and protect the social wellbeing of the local elites and those in power (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). This leaves the rest vulnerable to the restructuring/destruction of their social ties and economic livelihoods. Crucial social ties may be lost by the unprotected population and the trauma experienced from these changes can be devastating, deadly¹ and intergenerational, especially when redevelopment includes the displacement of community members. The displacement can come from condemning neighborhoods

¹ Death by displacement is a common narrative of the activists in Eastwick who attribute a small, but nonetheless devastating number of deaths to the trauma experienced during the displacement of Eastwick members in the redevelopment of the 1950s.

and the inaccessibility of the rebuilt environment or from gentrification. Mindy Fullylove (M.D.) describes the severing of social ties to a geographic area as “root shock” (Fullilove, 2016). In her book, *Root Shock*, she points to urban renewal as the driver for many illnesses such as post-traumatic stress disorder, adjustment disorders, and “stress-related injuries” such as depression or heart attacks (p14). The sense of loss is even greater for the elderly who are displaced (Slater, 2012). Eastwick members can attest to these ills from their own experiences of displacement, which they attribute to many instances of degraded mental health and physical welling.

It would be unlikely that current Eastwick residents would experience this type of displacement again in the near future; an eminent domain takeover of any scale or an attempt to take the housing of current Eastwick members would be fraught with political upheaval and intense activist reaction. The planners and governing bodies interviewed do not believe that Eastwick is at risk for gentrification either. The gentrifying neighborhoods in Philadelphia are far removed from Southwest Philly, yet within the same city council jurisdiction. However, many of the activists interviewed feel as though they are at risk of becoming gentrified. Although it is not the most urgent concern, eventual gentrification is a perceived risk of community improvements and could trigger their trauma of community disintegration.

3.5 Conspiracy

Another result of Eastwick’s traumatic past is the rampant proliferation of conspiracy. There are stories of intentional violence by the city and deep-seated beliefs that the planning process is all a show and that the plans have already been made. Conspiracy is non-pathological; the belief does not make a person more or less mentally sound. A conspiracy is a belief that explains phenomena that was presumed

to be planned in secret and is malicious or unlawful in intent. The widespread nature of conspiracy and the everyday citizen who holds them to be true means that it cannot be dismissed as a mental health issue (Van Prooijen & Acker, 2015). “Conspiracy theories are a symptom of powerlessness” (Ali, 2014) and Eastwick’s narratives of historical disenfranchisement and other trauma have created a situation where the belief and proliferation are vast.

The two prevailing conspiracy theories observed in Eastwick are: (1) that the flooding of Eastwick during hurricane Floyd in 1999 was an intentional act by the government to protect a different neighborhood and (2) that the current Eastwick planning process is to placate the citizens and plans already exist for the area. The first was very widely believed amongst the interviewed activists and it was brought up without prompting or asking about those events. This leads me to believe that it is widely believed to be true and that it adds much weight to the narrative of trauma induced by neglect from the city. This heinous and destructive act to the neighborhood is denied and dismissed by the government as a fallacy. Some scholars believe that there is a tendency to accept conspiracy theories which are “proportional to the consequences of an event” (Swami, Voracek, Stiger, Tran, & Furnham, 2014). The trauma related to the accounts of the 1999 flood were emotional and very impactful on their motivation as activists.

The second conspiracy, that the LEPLS is a form of placation and not a meaningful participatory development, was not universally believed, but those who do ascribe to that story, believe it very passionately. Others believed that it was possible, but were unsure. No interviewed members of the community outright dismissed it as being untrue.

The uneven application of blight designations, slum clearing and eventual displacement of African Americans in urban development during the 1950s-1970s was not written into the plans, but was an intended outcome (Wagner, 2017; Weber, 2002). In Eastwick was about 60% white and 40% African American before the redevelopment of the 1950s then became predominately African American after (Interface Studios, 2017). This was not, however, the intention. After renewal, African American families were denied or delayed access to the new homes in an effort to control the amount and dispersion of non-white households (Goulden, 1963). In a situation where policies are covertly racist in language and overtly racist in implementation, removing the conversation about race is necessary to move it forward and deny conspiracy. Trauma experienced by displaced, African American Eastwick citizens who were promised first pick of new housing by Mayor Dilworth (Kohler, 1957) and later denied the opportunity to move in to the first housing, or any housing at all, is part of the Eastwick narrative (Anderson, 2005).

Conspiracies like these are a way to explain complex events which occur in the social space of disenfranchised populations in order to help them explain traumatic socially-impactful events (Hofstadter, 1964). Americans are particularly fixated on conspiracy, as one British American Studies scholar states, because they are “surrounded by plots to deprive them of their freedom” (Knight, 2002, p. 1). Traumatic events like the redevelopment experience in Eastwick, can give an individual a heightened sense of danger, resulting in increased efforts to protect themselves or their community. This sense of fear, as well as belief in a spiritual higher power (i.e.: religion), both prevalent in Eastwick, are predictors for belief in a conspiracy (Van Prooijen & Acker, 2015; Douglas, Sutton, Callan, Dawtry, & Harvey,

2016). Considering the sampled community members all identified as activists for the land and community, nearly all mentioned religious affiliations, and they all shared a deep connection to the land, it is likely that they would be predisposed to accept and perpetuate conspiracy theories which explain their very pressing and traumatic experiences or fears. There are also studied links between the level of perceived control over one's social environment and their likelihood that they will believe in conspiracy; a lack of control results in greater acceptance of conspiracy (Van Prooijen & Acker, 2015).

Many studies state that people who believe in conspiracy theories are less educated and tend to reject science like climate change (Swami, Voracek, Stiger, Tran, & Furnham, 2014). I will argue that this is simply not the case in Eastwick. The activists who were interviewed are environmentally and politically intelligent, accepting of science, statistics, climate change, and have a demonstrated ability to understand political processes, structures and current conditions. Eastwick activists have written about environmental issues with well-cited and scientifically sound reasoning and explanations (EFNC, 2012). Their political savviness frequently surpassed my own; their ability to navigate complex political power structures is tremendous. Their political presence in city hall meetings and arranged meetings with the mayor are a testament to both their political power and deep connection with the land. The activists' demands for a more transparent political system in Philadelphia are a positive effect of their belief in hidden political proceedings (Douglas, Sutton, Callan, Dawtry, & Harvey, 2016). Despite their demonstrated education and critical thinking skills, these conspiracies are still widely believed. It is important to note that what makes these two stories a conspiracy is that they are denied by the city, which

has been unable to provide sufficient evidence to prove them false. Several first-hand accounts of the flood event, for instance, were made by residents who have seen many floods and saw a distinct difference in the events of that day.

Despite the impossible task of explaining the unexplainable, these stories are held to be true by many Eastwick residents. These narratives are a part of the experienced and inherited traumas that fuel both their deep need to protect their spaces both physically and politically and their desire to responsibly plan the future of the space.

3.6 Conclusion

Trauma connects the activists of Eastwick through shared experiences of uprooting, disenfranchisement, government neglect and imminent dangers of their land and environment. The enthusiasm of the activists is great, but the division between activist groups holds them back (see discussion, chapter 7). In a participatory process where groups are constrained by neoliberal forms of localized improvements, their unity becomes more important. To come together and “recognize the arbitrary foundations of prevailing systems of exclusion as well as interests in common with those who are differently marginalized” (Rankin, 2012, p. 111) would certainly bolster their ability to assert their right to the city. Activists’ belief in the secret happenings and pre-determined future of their neighborhood creates urgency behind their desire to assert their rights as citizens. Conspiracy runs throughout the political history of the US and has only become more influential and prolific (Melley, 2002). Eastwick is no exception; their traumatic disenfranchisement of the past created heavy distrust and is a large part of what defines their current political culture.

Chapter 4

HISTORY

4.1 Introduction

A simple timeline of dates and events of Eastwick's tumultuous history would not be enough to contextualize their century-long battle with displacement, disinvestment and neglect by the city of Philadelphia. Eastwick's battle with urban renewal caused many drastic land and community changes. Urban renewal is "a host of programs and policies that wrought a series of radical interventions on the urban built environment" and does not refer to one specific act or law (Avila & Rose, 2009, p. 339). The built environment in Eastwick has been the subject of their greatest issues: flood infrastructure, the demolition and construction of homes, the unfulfilled promised of investments in housing and light industrial and the connection that Eastwickians have to their homes and spaces. This chapter will look into the history of Eastwick to gain a better understanding of how the current activism and built environment came to be. Data was gathered from the Philadelphia Inquirer's archival search from 1930 to 2017.

Neglect towards the citizens of Eastwick and flooding perils (see figure 10) are chronicled in newspapers since the area became known as Eastwick in the 1920s. Dangerous flooding, poor infrastructure and lack of investment has plagued them ever since. The urgency of Eastwick's perils had always been well known by Philadelphia's government, but it was frequently ignored or passed off as someone else's problem, whether it be the neighboring Delaware County, state of Pennsylvania or federal. The history of Eastwick's neglect is important to detail because it shapes the current activism surrounding present-day land use decision-making processes.

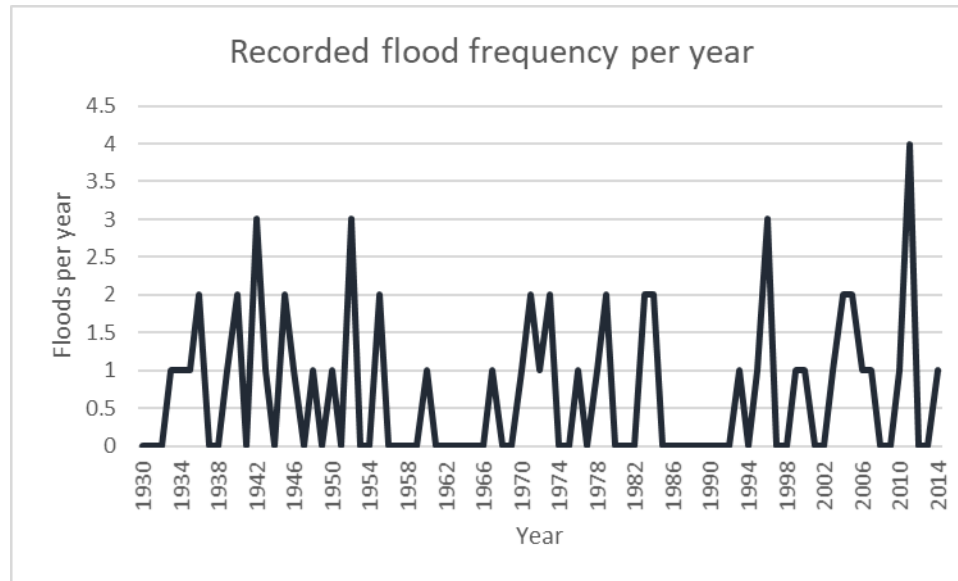


Figure 10: Number of floods (above 11ft crest), recorded by the National Weather Service 1930-2014 from the Schuylkill River gage at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (National Weather Service, 2016)

4.2 Eastwick 1930-1950: Early Activism

As far back as the 1930s, flooding and infrastructure problems were detailed in the Philadelphia Inquirer, citing excuses such as “[t]he extravagances of the predecessors have depleted the city treasury to such an extent that he [the mayor of Philadelphia] cannot obtain for the residents of Southwest Philadelphia improvements badly needed there” (Moore Criticizes City Extravagance, 1932). Early accounts in The Philadelphia Inquirer also detail the frustrations of Eastwick citizens who, as taxpayers, felt as though their needs were being ignored by the city officials (Darby Creek Dikes Break Under Flood, 1933). Dyke repairs and assistance to flooding victims was slow in the 1930s as the US War Department and Delaware County cited both their lack of funding and responsibility to the people and infrastructure (Still Pass Buck as Floods Swirl, 1933; Eastwick Seeking U.S. Aid for Dikes, 1933). The few

repairs made to the dykes were never enough for the area, which was inundated by floodwaters after every heavy rainfall (U.S., City and Red Cross Aid Eastwick Flood Refugees, 1933; Heavy Rains Flood Parts of Eastwick, 1934; Rising Rivers Hold Flood Peril, 1936). Many of the floods displaced families for days or weeks at a time and fears of typhoid outbreaks increased the trauma during several dyke breeches in the 1930s and 1940s (Two Boys Missing in Eastwick Area, 1933).

Frequent flooding of Southwest Philadelphia and the frustrations of those who live there had some members coming together to try and fight for their rights as citizens. The Eastwick Improvement Association (EIA) was one of the earliest activist groups out of the area, founded the late 1920s. They petitioned and obtained signatures to protest the neglect by their government representatives who refused to take action to make repairs and protect the area (Flood Area Protests, 1933; Why Eastwick Section Makes Protest, 1933). Starting in the 1930s, there is evidence that the citizens of Eastwick asked repeatedly for flooding infrastructure and sewer improvements (Eastwick Seeking U.S. Aid for Dikes, 1933; Kaye, 1940). Activists in the 1930s “jumped scales” and took their complaints as far as the White House with thousands of signatures when their local government continued to dodge their pleas (Phila. Flood Victims Appeal To Roosevelt, 1934; Seek Flood Relief, 1934). The constant petition to their government representatives elevated the voices of Eastwick and pushed for immediate research, funding and protection of the citizens (Darby Creek Dike To Be Replaced, 1950; Ask Eastwick Dikes, 1933). However, the disinvestment and neglect continued as the dike broke several more times and the area continued to be inundated with flood and sewage up through 1950 (Protest Rally at Eastwick To Demand Dike Repairs, 1950; Workers Start Repairs On Storm Damage in Park, Ridley Township,

1942; Storm Blows Self Out As City Counts Damage, 1945). Despite all of the early problems, the citizens of Eastwick were very much attached to their space. Eastwick's 19,000 residents took pride in their status as one of the only racially integrated communities in Philadelphia (McKee, 2001). The community appreciated the vast open spaces for their children to play and the neighborly connectedness of their community. The activist's connection to the land and their desire to improve the quality of life for themselves and their neighbors was well-documented and celebrated by the Philadelphia Inquirer. However, the next thirty years brought a dramatic upheaval of the land and people of Eastwick, but the spirit of activism remained in the land.

4.3 Eastwick 1950-2000

Continued flooding and disrepair of the dike brought criticism from the Philadelphia inquirer, which called the situation a "disgraceful... buck-passing and irresponsible refusal to protect the public..." (Put an End to the Public Health Menace in Eastwick, 1950). The small sections of Eastwick which contained sub-par housing and flood-prone land became part of a nationwide trend to protect the public by slum clearance. Billions of federal dollars were slotted to assist with slum clearance programs and soon many neighborhoods had tracts of housing razed and citizens displaced, backed by the government with authority through the 1937, 1949 and 1954 Housing Acts (Talen, 2014).

The houses in Eastwick were described as being in poor condition and many without plumbing. Eastwick was designated as blighted in 1950 (Knapton, 2006). Blight designations were common during this time as a means to move people and initiate land use changes (Cahn, 2014). Soon after, a study funded by the "Slum

Clearance and Redevelopment division of the Housing and Home Finance Agency” kicked off with hopes of creating homes for 15,000 families (U.S. Approves Eastwick Planning, 1951). Eastwick’s redevelopment plan was approved in November 1951. The narratives of Eastwick in the Philadelphia Inquirer changed from critically looking at neglect by the city prior to 1950 to reclamation efforts of the “mosquito-infested marshlands” after the introduction of the redevelopment plans (Reclamation Set In Eastwick Area, 1952).

Eastwick was not alone in this push towards massive land change projects. The “first phase of postwar urban renewal, in the 1950s and 1960s, was characterized by massive public work projects that razed established neighborhoods in favor of new commercial districts, housing projects and highways in the name of modernization” (McCann, 2009). Eastwick was now being described by its faults instead of its charms; buildings were being reported as being in poor condition and without plumbing, the grid street pattern described as “faulty” (Feist, 1951). Narratives of city decay due to the exodus of the middle-class from the inner city promoted the massive Eastwick redevelopment as a cure to draw people back in from the suburbs (Keith, 1955). Eastwick as the largest redevelopment in US history was big news for Philadelphia. The city’s aspirations for Eastwick to be a “city within a city” and an asset to Philadelphia brought nearly daily news reports on the process (Kohler, 1957). The drama from protests and inner-governmental disagreements of this \$100m, federally backed project were the subject of many articles.

The Philadelphia Inquirer continued to report both on the prospects and the drawbacks of the plan as well as the activism and tremendous attendance and public meetings (see figure 11).



Figure 11: Eastwick residents learning about the redevelopment plans (Kohler, 1957)

After becoming aware of their imminent displacement, Eastwickians began to protest the redevelopment plans (McKee, 2001). These protests were as diverse as the community itself in racial and gender representation and their resistance gained public and government attention. However, millions of dollars in federal-matching grants, money given to Philadelphia to offset some of the costs of the project, promised to the city of Philadelphia were slotted to go towards development in other Philadelphia neighborhoods and would not be guaranteed if the plan changed. Despite the recognition that Eastwick's racially diverse and content neighborhood was at risk and that many would be unable to afford the new housing, the council approved the

redevelopment in 1958 (McKee, 2001, pp. 558-560). 2572 properties were approved to be condemned at the end of 1958 (Leeway in Eastwick, 1958). In 1960, the Reynolds Metal Company received the contract for the construction in Eastwick's redevelopment (Eastwick Unit in New Office, 1960). Reynolds Metal Company put a team of local builders together and formed the New Eastwick Corporation (NEC) to construct the homes in Eastwick (First Families Due in New Eastwick Homes by Christmas, 1961).

The Philadelphia Inquirer cast shadows of doubt on the project with headlines such as "City and U.S. Are Betting \$77,790,000 That Eastwick Project Will Succeed" (1962) and, by 1963, the entire redevelopment was being called out as a colossally expensive failure. James McDermott, republican candidate for mayor in 1963 was quoted as saying:

"People were driven from their homes to build this 'city within a city,' thousands were kicked out to make way for progress. They were given first choice to return to the new homes being build, but they were too expensive for them. Eastwick has everything- except people and the industry to attract people" (McDermott Raps Eastwick 'Flop', 1963)

The developers and the PRA denied accusations that homes were hurriedly built and poorly constructed (Matters of Mistake: Eastwick and Initials, 1963). Despite the rush, the NEC was not meeting their goals: two years after they began, they had built only 253 homes of the 2000-plus homes they planned for the first three years (Goulden, 1963).

In an attempt to recreate the racial diversity of old Eastwick, the NEC refused to house many African American families. This was justified using a study by the University of Pennsylvania that claimed if more than 20% of the new homes were bought by African American families, that solely African Americans would eventually

inhabit the neighborhood. The NEC denied the housing applications of African American families in an overtly racist attempt to artificially create an integrated neighborhood by spatially separating them or forcing them wait a year before moving in (Goulden, 1963). Fears of scaring away white buyers ultimately contributed to the imminent failure of the plan.

Lagging development led the New Eastwick Corporation to assign future construction to the Korman Corporation, who eventually became the face of the redevelopment and an infamous household name in Eastwick as the target of blame for the ultimate failure of the “city within a city” (McKee, 2001, p. 547; Lagging Eastwick Gets New Builder, 1964). Block by block, these developers took over the neighborhood, allowing each newly acquired home to dilapidate which, in turn, lowered the property values of the neighboring homes. This justified rapidly decreasing offers on homes, sometimes offering a third or less of the market value (A field of Weeds, 1989). The neighborhood was eventually transformed, bringing in new residents in the 1970s and 1980s to live in the nearly ten-thousand new housing units (Cahn, 2014, p. 466). However, alongside the new development, old problems persisted. The slow development of razed lots created cul-de-sacs which were out of sight and an invitation for short unpermitted waste dumping (Thomas, 1978).

The Eastwick Project Action Committee (PAC) emerged as a powerful activist group in the late 1970s. In 1981, they succeeded in blocking the development of one hundred Section 8 units in Eastwick, not because they were low-income housing according to the Philadelphia Inquirer, but because they did not agree that they should be built on an industrial section with potentially hazardous processes adjacent to the future housing (Russel, 1981). The City recognized the PAC for their efforts in

community organizing and blight removal, especially for areas affected by urban renewal (Office of the Chief Clerk, 2002).

The Korman Corporation ran into many issues with their plans including material and labor shortages, which prompted them to only construct homes after they were purchased by prospective homeowners (Austin, 1978). Demand for houses stagnated, partially due to the area's proximity to two landfills, locally known for "glowing" medical waste, awful smells and frequent fires (interview, 9/13/2017). Continued flooding and home prices that were too high for displaced residents to return to Eastwick kept interest low (McKee, 2001). In some sections of Eastwick, homes built on unsteady dredge material began to slowly sink, with noticeable damage as few as ten years after their construction in the late 1960s and early 1970s, further adding to the low public interest and stagnated construction.

4.4 The Beginning of Trauma and Distrust

The Philadelphia Inquirer's Letters to the Editor section became a forum for opinions on the redevelopment in the 1950s. Concerned citizens of Eastwick spoke out against their blight designation and imminent displacement. The Letters to the Editor section was also a space where people defended the massive redevelopment and called on the Eastwickians to stop their protests and leave their homes for the good of the city (see figure 12).

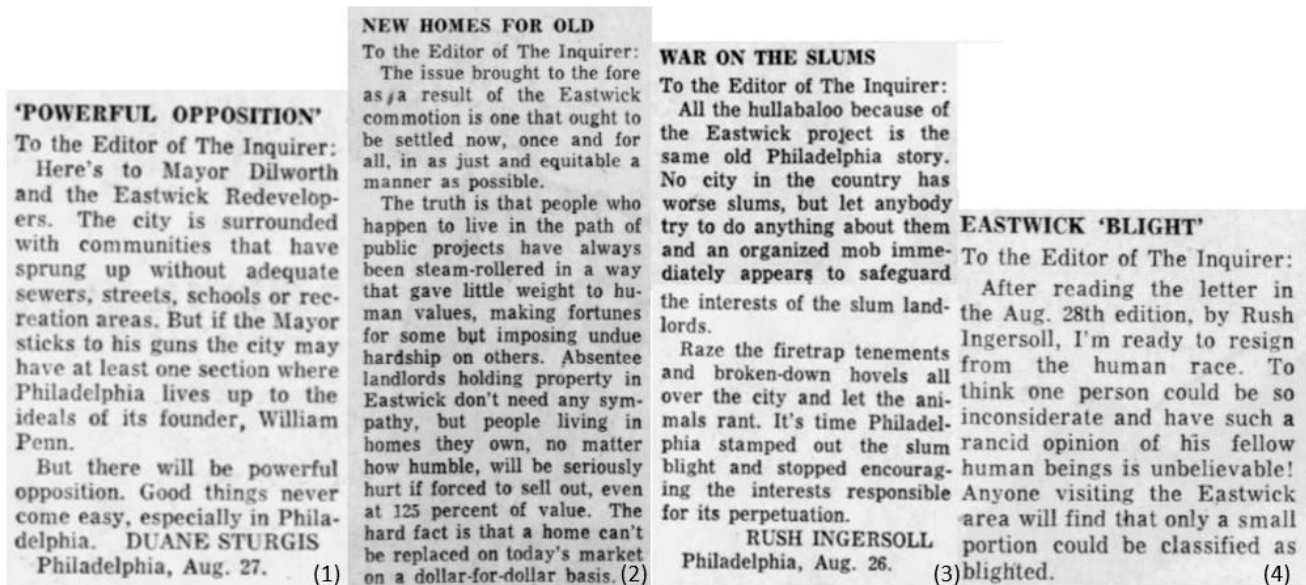


Figure 12: Excerpts from the Letters to the Editor section, “The Voice of the People” in the Philadelphia Inquirer (The Voice of the People, 1957a; 1957b; 1957c; 1957b), respectively.

Many citizens became concerned for the health of the old or sick who were about to be displaced. Adult children of elderly parents who were “heartsick at the thought of giving up her home to make room for “progress”” continued to plead to the city for a better solution (The Voice of the People, 1957a). Citizens attributed an increase in “nervous disorders” during the redevelopment to the anxiety of displacement and uprooting (A field of Weeds, 1989). Many Eastwick residents agreed that there were areas that needed to be improved, but they felt as though it was unfair to give a blight designation and take over such a large area with eminent domain because of only a small portion of the homes and other buildings were substandard. Simply the proximity to blight damned the entire neighborhood. Public meetings drew hundreds of people ready to “fight to the last drop of our blood for the preservation of our homes” (Home Owners Assail Eastwick Eviction Plan, 1955).

Others were scared to move to a new neighborhood and leave the one they had spent their entire lives in (Owners Fight Eastwick Plan For Dream City, 1955). Citizens placed blame on the city for what they claimed was an unjust blight designation. In meetings that, at times, drew over 1000 people, people were openly weeping as they pleaded to their government to not take away their homes (Tears, Boos Mark Stormy Meeting on Eastwick, 1957). Compensation for their homes, many said, would never be enough to move elsewhere in Philadelphia. Conspiracies against the city started to spring up from Eastwickians' sense of powerlessness and fear including charges of "communist influence" by opponents (Red Influence In Eastwick Plan Charged by Foes, 1957). These anxieties from imminent displacement, fear of the unknown and orders to move set a tone in Eastwick of betrayal, neglect, conspiracy and trauma. These ghosts still plague the area today.

After the fast clearing of Eastwick homes and the slow, incomplete rebuilding, neglect became an issue for the area. Many citizens still felt like a forgotten portion of Philadelphia. Fifty years after activists demanded basic infrastructure from the city, three blocks of houses that were not removed during redevelopment remained without basic infrastructural amenities (Dubin, 1980). Activists complained that they had "tasted only the dust of urban renewal without being offered its fruits" (Currie & Wilk, 1980). Homes, which were built next to the Clearview and Folcroft landfills, were upset about the dangers of (often illegally) dumped chemicals wastes, constant fires and odorous air pollution and the resulting drop in their property value. The local Department of Environmental Resources, and later, the US Environmental Protection Agency, disregarded complaints since the sites opened and protests began in 1958 (Reid, Phila. and Delco Homeowners Criticize Landfill, 1984).

The redevelopment left 128 acres of empty land that remain vacant to this day (Jaramillo, 2017a). The halted plan further soured the relationship between the remaining Eastwick citizens and the planners. The undeveloped land, still owned by NEC/Korman, sat vacant for decades. In the early 2000s, the land began receiving considerable attention for planners and developers, yet none of whom were able to gain access to it from Korman.

In 2003, the city and the Philadelphia Planning Authority attempted to end the contract with Korman and get out of “the worst real estate deal since the Indians sold Manhattan Island to the Dutch for a handful of beads and blankets” (Young, 2003, p. 3). The value of the land was apparent to the city and the Korman Corporation had still not developed it despite 42 years of control. Korman refused to entertain any plans for the land, but also refused to sell the land back to the city or the airport (Young, 2003). The city attempted to take the land back in court, citing an unauthorized transfer of ownership in the 1960s as a nullifying breach of contract, but the judge ruled in favor of Korman (Anderson, 2005). The 128 acres continued to sit vacant in Eastwick, collecting more tires from short dumping and remaining vacant. In 2006, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission recertified Eastwick as blighted, citing the unsanitary and unsafe accumulation of debris from illegal dumping on the empty, undeveloped greenspaces within the community (which are not privately owned) (Knapton, 2006). Despite the blight re-designation and failed attempts to obtain the land for community improvements, activists laid in wait for their chance to be a part of redevelopment when it came.

4.5 The end of Korman and the Rise of Activism

In 2011, as the contract was nearing its end, Korman attempted to gain zoning approval for 722 apartments and 1000 parking spaces on 23 acres. Korman representatives, District Councilman Kenyatta Johnson and the Philadelphia Planning Commission initially agreed to approved the zoning, but the community backlash prompted Johnson to hold the bill (Melamed, 2015; Gates, 2012; Melamed, 2015). The plan would have also given the Philadelphia International Airport 93 acres to build an employee parking lot. The community's was outraged at being informed rather than asked and their concern over exacerbated flooding from the increase in impervious surfaces ultimately influenced Johnson's decision to deny the zoning change (Gates, 2012a). The Korman Development's zoning approval was halted at the last moment. This was a huge victory for Eastwick activists, especially the Eastwick Friends and Neighbors Coalition (EFNC), which led the charge for the protest. Since this incident, Councilman Johnson has been an advocate for the Eastwick community's involvement in planning, which gave the EFNC a boost of power and bolstered activism throughout Eastwick.

4.6 Lower Eastwick Public Land Strategy

At the end of 2016 when the Korman contract finally ended, talks of a new plan started immediately. This time, the city promised that the community would be involved and injustices of the past would not be repeated. They began by creating a steering committee consisting of community members, stakeholders and public officials (see figure 13).

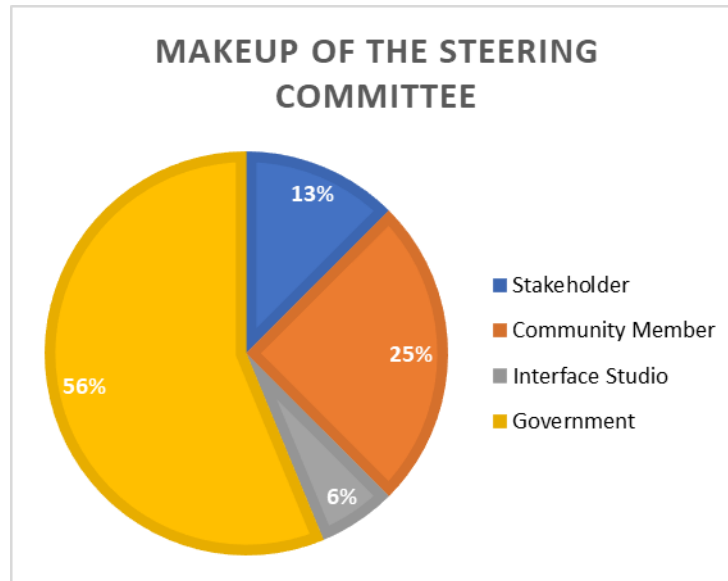


Figure 13: Breakdown of the 16 members of the Steering Committee (Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, 2017). Interface Studios was added after they were selected by the original committee.

The Steering Committee selected Interface Studio LLC, an urban planning company based in Philadelphia, to lead the new plan. The head of Interface Studio was later added as a member of the steering committee. Interface Studios immediately began to promise the people of Eastwick that the planning process would be inclusive and serve as an attempt to heal from the trauma of the previous redevelopment (Jaramillo, 2017) and engage the community in a process which does not deepen distrust or trauma. This trauma lives on in the community and manifests both as mistrust of planners and a firmly held belief of their right to be involved (Jaramillo, 2017a). The Eastwick Friends and Neighbors Coalition, a community activism group, is leading the charge to ensure that the people of Eastwick have their concerns heard and their needs addressed in the new plan. Interface Studios has been speaking to news outlets ensuring Eastwick that the planning process will be a community effort (Jaramillo,

2017). In fact, the language being used around Interface Studio's new plan is quite hopeful considering the attitudes and air of mistrust that they are mitigating. It is with this history in mind that the new Eastwick plan will be created and their representatives held accountable.

The LEPLS began in January 2017 as a 12-month process to create a feasibility report on 134 acres of land in Eastwick. These are divided up into five sections and include a large tract of vacant land and two historical buildings, the George Pepper Middle school and Communications Technology High School, both shuttered (see figure 14).

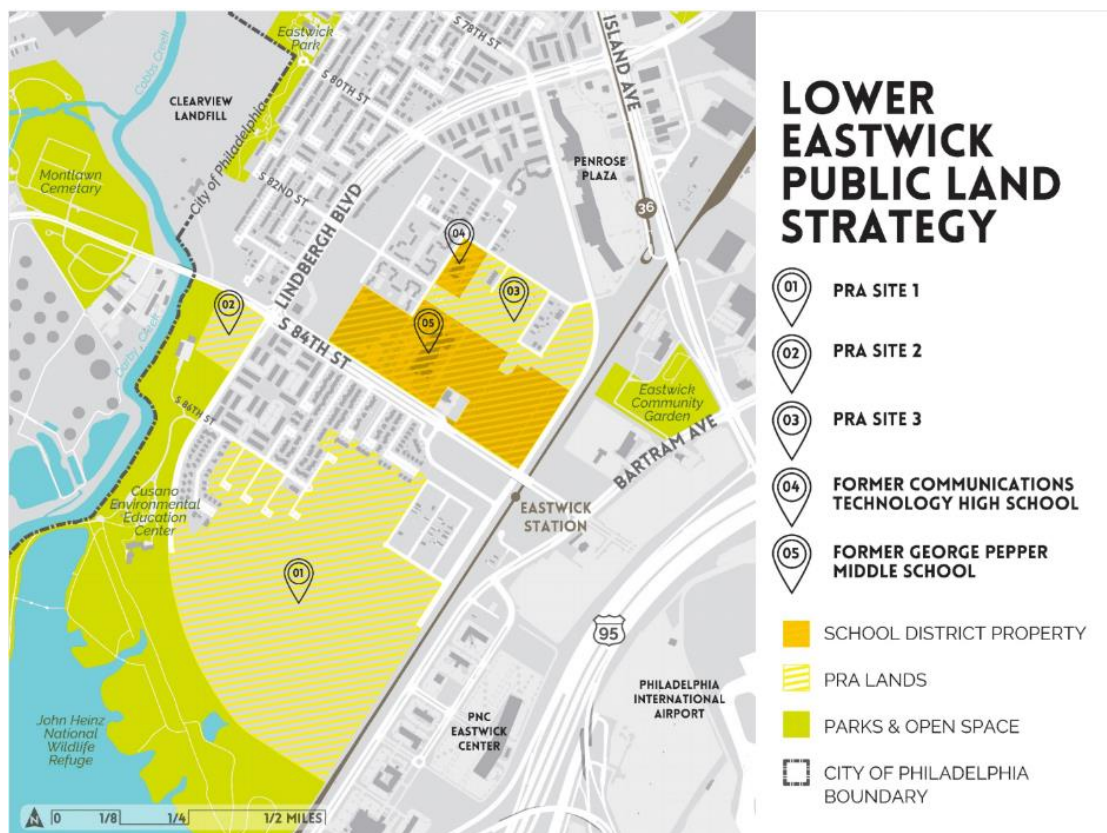


Figure 14: Five sites included in the LEPLS. Graphic by Interface Studios, 2017

Interface Studio collected their data on the community via tours, interviews with residents and stakeholders and through their steering committee meetings. “Lower Eastwick” roughly includes the two southernmost census tracts in the Eastwick area. In the first community meeting, Interface Studios stated that the population of this identified area is about 2,400, compared to the total population of Eastwick which is about 10,000 (Interface Studios, 2017; Cedar Lake Ventures Inc., 2015). The first public meeting drew a crowd of 144 and at the end of Interface Studio’s presentation, an activist group took control of the meeting, microphone in hand, and confronted the planners. Their immediate issues with the process included accusations of their true intentions, the underrepresentation of other groups besides the EFNC and the way the meeting was dismissed before hearing from the community.

Dr. Mindy Fullilove, who joined Interface Studios for the LEPLS, ran the next three meetings. She is a psychiatrist and author of two books on trauma and urban redevelopment from the University of Orange, an organization that focuses on the creation of equitable cities. The meetings were “roundtable” work sessions, smaller than the public meetings by design, which employed several presentations and exercises designed to gather data from the community. Data on what the residents liked about their neighborhood, what they hoped to see in the future and their biggest concerns both of the land and with the planners were collected.

A second public meeting presented their findings and allowed the community to give their opinions on the initial land use suggestions that Interface Studios synthesized. Learning from their first meeting, the planners opened the floor for questions. This time, there were several bold and impassioned attendees who took the

microphone and asked the planners tough questions or addressed the crowd with accusations of conspiracy.

The final meeting, initially scheduled for November 4, 2017, was postponed until after the new year. Interface Studios requested the extra time to analyze their data and create a better plan that will please the greatest number of residents. Despite being a feasibility plan rather than a development plan, Interface Studios is struggling to mitigate the distrust of Eastwick residents enough to confidently complete their study. This is not a surprising outcome considering the community's historical experiences with redevelopment and planning.

Chapter 5

METHODS AND DATA

5.1 Overview of methods

Eastwick's rich and complex history has physically and socially shaped the landscape into what it is today. The influence of past transgressions and the impact of present activism create layers of lenses through which the community members view their roles as citizens. A qualitative approach to collecting the perspectives of the citizens of Eastwick was necessary to obtain an honest and complete synthesis of this chapter in their lives. While no community member was directly questioned about their connection to Eastwick's history, everyone who spoke of the present-day redevelopment and their rights as citizens mentioned it as an influencing factor. The importance of the history to current activism is what prompted my collection and explanation of archival historical accounts of relevant histories of trauma, disinvestment and disenfranchisement. It was necessary to understand the influences of the past in order to better analyze collected data. My hope was to construct qualitative methods which would foster a forum of understanding and safety in which the community members could articulate their perspectives freely and thoughtfully.

Data collection began in March 2017 and continued through October 2017. It included a historical analysis using The Philadelphia Inquirer's archives, a city hall meeting, public meetings, public work sessions, a small, invite-only discussion panel, a focus group with fifteen participants and sixteen semi-structured interviews of 1-3 people with community members and government/planners. Meetings, work sessions and discussion panels were for participant observation only; a point was made to interact as little as possible so as not to influence any of the proceedings or taint any of

their discussions with non-member input. My presence at the meetings helped to foster a relationship with the community. Participants for interviews and focus groups were recruited at the conclusion of several meetings and at the completion of interviews and would typically suggest other members who they felt I should speak with. Using snowball sampling methods to build contacts was helpful; however, participants would typically suggest contacts with whom they were most familiar and shared similar views, so it remained necessary to seek out members of many different activist groups or non-affiliated persons as possible. This was done in an effort to compile a more complete story which includes many differing viewpoints and activists from different sub-neighborhoods, each of which have different issues, relations to the land and activism styles. It is my intention to avoid favoring one group over another, although some groups were more eager to participate than others.

The recruitment process was difficult at first due to the activists' very busy lives and heavy amount of interviewing and research occurring in the neighborhood about the current process. However, the people generally understood the importance of academic research and appreciated my historical knowledge of Eastwick. Activists made snowballing very easy because of their connectedness and excitement towards my research. Despite being an outsider, I was welcomed into their important spaces and homes.

5.2 Historical Analysis

The Philadelphia Inquirer articles used for the archival analysis of the were all obtained through a subscription to the Inquirer Daily News archival search. The search was limited by date (1930-2017) and searched for all articles containing the term "Eastwick." Although it returned a very large number of articles, any more specific of

a term may have excluded important articles containing new or useful information. The purpose of this analysis was to document the history of flooding, disenfranchisement, governmental neglect and activism of Eastwick. From this analysis, a shift in empathy for the people is noted and discussed.

The name “Eastwick” was consistently attached to the area around 1930. Before that time, it had many names including “The Meadows” and “The Low-lands.” The attachment of the name came about through the efforts of the Eastwick Improvement Association, an activist group which the Philadelphia Inquirer frequently reported on. The decision was made to start from that date for those reasons and to prevent miss-associating articles using former names of the area that may or may not be about the study area. The search feature for this archive was very helpful in finding articles and pictures using “Eastwick”, but also pulled thousands of articles with advertisements, ads and articles which mentioned “Eastwick Avenue,” the prominent Eastwick family in the area or chapters of fictional stories ran in the paper which included characters by the same name. Each article which mentioned the Eastwick area was collected and organized including: flooding, dyke (dis)repair, government (lack of) action, activist work, redevelopment prospects, opinions on the treatment of Eastwick, opinions on the activism in Eastwick, the use of Wolf and Pepper schools or interesting articles to pass along to community members with specific interests.

Flooding events and instances of government distrust/neglect were used to show trends of suffering. Although each instance is not described separately, they are cited as proof of the trends that the people of Eastwick and my analysis refer to when discussing historical trauma and transgressions. An in-depth description of these events was not necessary to conclude that the anger, distrust and activism present in

the community stems from its history of real and true stories (lived or inherited) that shaped the community into what it is today. Headlines in the citations of each article provide a snapshot of the content and allow for the ease of further investigation by interested parties.

The content of the articles is meant to provide a brief history of trends relevant to this study and to supplement the historical recounting by the interviewees. It is used as a lens through which their perceptions may be understood. Although the articles show specific instances of neglect and trauma, they are not meant to fact-check or prove any stories; this study is to understand how the lived or inherited history (subject to imagination inflation, schematic/intrusion/time-slice errors, etc.) influences perceptions. There is no way to prove if each personal recount is completely true, but the perceptions that come from the memory are true and real to the participants and is the focus of this study.

5.3 Participant observation

I first observed activism in Eastwick in early 2017 at a city hall meeting. An activist group waited patiently for hours while the meeting dragged through the agenda. Speaking clearly and with authority, one Eastwick community leader addressed the city council with his concerns while a small group sat silently behind him. All of the concerns were articulated and thought-out, and each with a suggested solution. Although the problems were pressing and severe, he remained calm and professional. The councilmembers thanked him for speaking and their time was up in minutes- a very small fraction of a very long meeting. To wait for so long just for a moment of representation was important enough to dedicate their entire afternoon.

This was an indication of the passion I would find in each activist who I have met in this journey.

Participant observation was a critical component of this research. This method allowed me to see the activists functioning from the inside (Cook, 2005) without the pressure or performance of a one-on-one interview. I watched activists in the City Hall, large public meetings, small working sessions, and a community-led meeting with the mayor of Philadelphia. At each, I was given the privilege of gaining a deeper understanding of the activists' profound attachment to their community. It was also here that I began to see the conflict between activist groups. In many ways, the activists wanted the same things, but it was the path to that future which created animosity between them. It was a vie for power amongst the newly empowered. Understanding and appreciating the dynamics of the community was very important to ensure that I made no assumptions and no enemies. It was very important to me that I produce work which takes into consideration as many viewpoints as possible and, if presented to this community, would not deepen or create more conflict.

From these observations, I was also able to study the power dynamics between the community members and their government/planners. This was a crucial perspective into the way the planners were mitigating distrust and collaborating with a highly active community. The personality and experience of the planners changed the way the community received them each individually.

5.4 Semi-structured interviews

Sixteen individuals from Eastwick and five governing bodies were interviewed either individually or in groups of no more than three. Using semi-structured interviews allowed me to tailor my questions to the individual's specific interests and

experiences (Valentine, 2005). The ages of the community members were not collected, but most identified as senior citizens and offered a living memory of Eastwick's history. The member interviewees lived in Eastwick for a range of time from as few as 10 years to as many as 85. All community member participants identified themselves as currently or formerly belonging to an activist group except for one. All participants were recruited at community gatherings or by other activists.

The interview topics for activists covered the following: how/why they are participating in the process, opinions on the urban planners and the PRA, the needs of the community, the attendance at meetings and roundtables, their sources of information, activist groups and how Eastwick's history affects activism and the current process. Interviews with planners and government representatives covered many of the same questions, but asking about the community and not of themselves. Planners were also asked about how meetings were advertised and the scope of the plan.

The guidelines for the interviews contained many somewhat specific questions pertaining to their perceptions of the process and planners and their involvement in the current redevelopment. These questions were categorized into broader themes and were only asked when the participants went off topic for an extended time or did not understand how or where to begin answering the broader questions. Many of the sub-topics were brought up by the participants with no direct mention. This was helpful in identifying the influencing factors which affect much of the community.

Interview questions began with their history of occupying the neighborhood such as when they arrived, why they moved, if they had left then subsequently returned and why they made these decisions. I asked about the current planning

process and how they felt about their role. I gaged opinions on the leadership of Interface Studios and the PRA, followed by an inquiry into their optimism/pessimism regarding the anticipated outcome. I asked broadly about the needs of the community, their biggest concerns and what activism meant to them. Although there were many topics, I guided the interview to flow from one to the other in a smooth manner. Often, it was very easy to touch on all topics because the participants naturally wanted to speak about many of the topics I was interested in. As interviews progressed, many questions were cut from the list in order to streamline the process and allow more time for participants to organically flow between topics and better articulate their thoughts. The interviews flowed like a conversation; they were interrupted only to further explain a situation by short interjections: “Who?” “Why?” “How?”

The final task of the interviews was to have the participants place Eastwick’s planning process on a graphic derived from Sherry Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation (see figure 15) (1969).

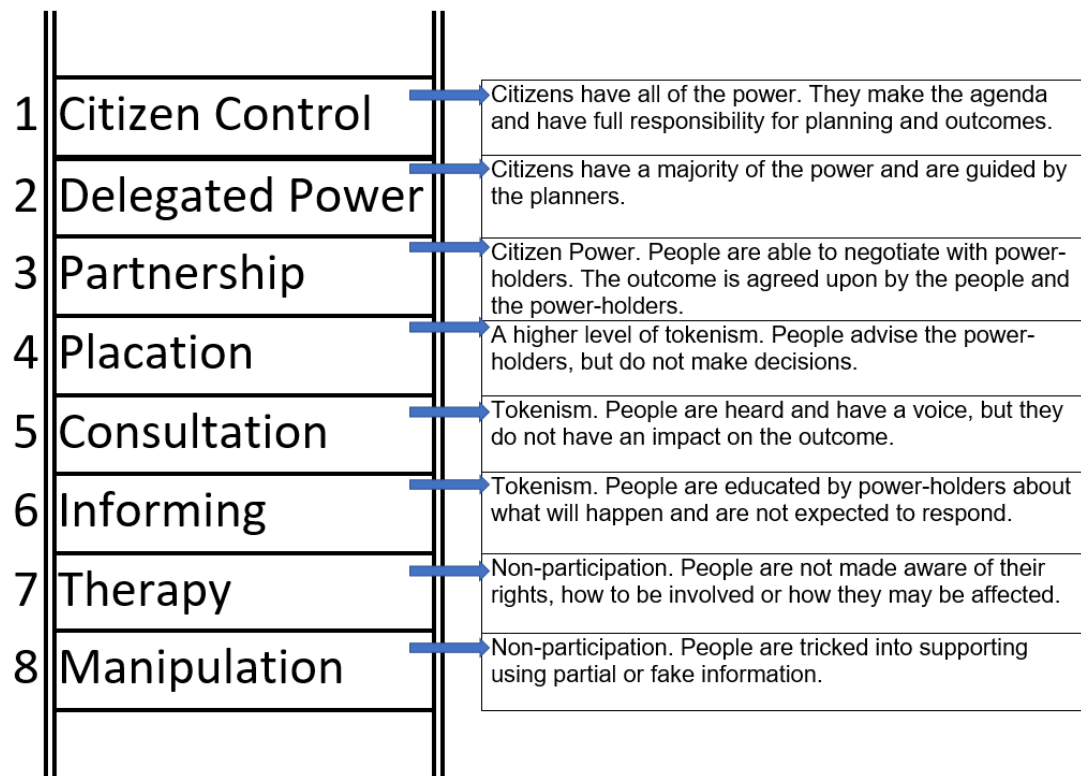


Figure 15: Adapted from Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation, 1969

It was used as a closing task for two reasons. First, over the span of the interview, the activists and planners discussed their opinions of the LEPLS so far, attitudes between planners and the community, the history of the activists and the needs of the community. This prepared them to quantify the what they had been discussing and forced them to synthesize their opinions into a single word score on the ladder. It was an intentionally difficult task, but activist participants were fascinated by the descriptions and, during group interviews, often discussed among themselves why their scores differed. Some participants asked to keep the ladder graphics and others asked for a copy of “Ladder of Citizen Participation.” For planners, it was a reflexive task; they struggled to first place the community at the level which they felt

the community was participating then, to assign a score to where they felt the community would place themselves.

A conversation-style interview allowed participants to speak freely and comfortably. I arrived at each interview knowing that they have likely been interviewed many times before by journalists, researchers or developers. Rigidity present in the beginning of the interviews typically relaxed quickly. One interview began by questioning my motives and later ended with an offering of pie. I attribute this to my efforts to interview them with a deep appreciation both of their motivations behind their activism and my positionality as a researcher probing about potentially sensitive subjects. I did my best to research their history beforehand so they did not have to spend time teaching me and to help them see that I took the care to learn about it. I made sure to speak with them using a trauma-sensitive style of conversational interviewing to ensure I did not pressure them to speak about anything that was emotionally stressful. However, the pride and action-oriented dispositions of the activists encouraged them to tell me a complete and accurate story of their activism in the area, even if it included sorrowful or traumatic instances. Many of them understood that my work would serve as a record of their efforts and that motivated them to ensure that I understood their positions, aspirations and hope for Eastwick.

The audio recordings of participant observations, interviews and the focus group were examined for themes and understanding the perspectives and concerns of community members. Additionally, all collected audio data was coded using Atlas.ti software to assist in finding trends and quantifying certain details. All data was collected throughout 2017 during the redevelopment process. Interviews were scheduled in the weeks between public meetings and small planning sessions in order

to understand their perceptions of the process, their involvement, the planners and the likelihood that their input would be reflected in the final land use decisions.

The activists I interviewed couldn't possibly cover every perspective present in this community; each person has inherited the history and expresses their right to the land differently. However, there are broad trends which showed up in the interviews which I believe are representative of the perceived needs of the community.

Conversation-style interviews were utilized to give participants ample time to express their opinions and reflect on the topics we covered. After reflecting on their perspectives and articulating the how's and why's of their activism, many interviewees expressed that they felt as though they had explored a new way of thinking about their role. Interviews were semi-structured, which granted me with the opportunity to listen to their concerns and learn about what they attributed to or associated with their concerns.

5.5 Focus group

One focus group was conducted with the collaboration of a pastor who had mentioned that his congregation had some of the oldest residents of Eastwick. The focus group was useful for understanding the views of the particular group and the way they related to each other (Conradson, 2005). I was invited to speak with them in their place of worship after service. The group was 15 people, half of who was actively participating in the current redevelopment process. Although the focus of this research is on the activists, the input of long-standing residents was an invaluable insight into how history shapes the lives of this community. I spoke to the group about my historical research of the area and asked for their personal input on the trends I

noticed such as flooding and disinvestment. Activists within the group were asked for a follow-up interview.

Chapter 6

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

6.1 Introduction

The results of each method of my research are presented in this chapter. Themes found in the narratives of Eastwick activists and planners are explored and placed into literatures from Chapter 2. A historical analysis from the Philadelphia Inquirer will be combined with the applicable sections. The history is entwined with every aspect analyzed, and I believe it is best to show it side-by-side with current narratives for comparison.

6.2 Right to Their Space: Divinity and Taxes

“What gives you the right,” I asked each interviewee, “to be a part of this process?” I typically saved this question for the end of the interview to allow them ample time to reflect on their roles as activists and their connection to the community and history before being asked what was sometimes taken as an offensive question. The offense was indicative of their connection to the land- one that many had dedicated their lives to, some working as many as 80 hours per week on community organizing, meetings and education of the public. However, their responses typically fell into three categories: their rights came from paying taxes, divine purpose and/or that simply living here (long or shorter durations) gave them the right.

All activists agreed that they had the right to shape their community in the current redevelopment process. Tax-paying as the ticket to one’s rights of the land echoed many historical accounts of activism prior to the redevelopment from the 1950s. Some iteration of “I live here” began many responses. In fact, it was the most common response. In Right to the City literatures, residence is the only requirement

for these rights (Harvey, 2008). The divine purpose narrative was particularly prevalent during interviews. The religious beliefs of these activists extended to their work in Eastwick and enhanced their sense of purpose and determination. Two participants said that they were told directly from God that their purpose was to protect and guide their community into prosperity, which gave them strong purpose and the authority to challenge their government. Others spoke intensely of historical disenfranchisement of Eastwick residents. Their right to shape their space came from a sense of justice and righting wrongs of the past. For lifelong residents, having lived through the previous redevelopment and experiencing the negative effects of redevelopment meant that they now were owed this opportunity more so.

Eastwick activists gained a sense of empowerment from the assertion of their rights was a source of their power. Their attachment to the land in spite of adversity is a testament to their firm belief that this is their right:

“Even within industrial landscapes that have been systematically devalued by capital, social attachments to place persist as people struggle to defend the everyday practices and institutional compromises from which capital has sought to extricate itself” (Brenner & Theodore, 2002, p. 8).

Despite the historical trauma that lives on in the activists, there is a general air of positivity towards the future. Many activists who have high hopes for the future of Eastwick were also well aware that they would be making compromises and that the assertion of their rights, tax paying and divinity are not enough to achieve complete citizen control (Arnstein, 1969). The right to plan their space was viewed more about their right to have a meaningful partnership with planners than to plan without government guidance.

6.3 Connectivity and Impressions of Power

All activists interviewed with the exception of one identified a group to which they belonged. Interviewees who associated with EFNC were typically more optimistic and felt more empowered than those associated with other activist groups. A coalition-style activism was mentioned when describing their power. Much of their local, bottom-up power came from the accumulation of knowledge, expertise and their connections with planners and government. Members of the EFNC are not only powerful and driven activists, but some are highly educated in environmental and planning policies, political structures, land use management and flooding. Members of the EFNC typically rated their participation higher on Arnstein's ladder than other groups. Their optimism was also much greater. Their victory against Korman in 2012 was often cited as their moment of empowerment when they became both more influential and more well-known. In fact, when looking into Eastwick using the news media, one might believe that the EFNC is the only active activist group. Discussions about the current redevelopment lean heavily onto the EFNC as the community group which is leading the charge on participatory development.

Other groups which are represented in this analysis include the Eastwick Lower Darby Creek Area Community Advisory Group (CAG), the Eastwick Project Area Committee (PAC) and Eastwick United. The perceptions of these groups with respect to their power in the redevelopment process were similar. Many of the non-EFNC activists felt as though their participation in the public meetings was tokenistic and that decisions had already been made for the area. Some community members had optimism despite their acknowledgement of many conspiracies. Still, these groups identified EFNC as having the greatest power amongst activist groups due to their

close connections with government, planners, business, lawyers and their recognition in the media.

The level of perceived power has a correlation with connectivity. Amongst groups who have direct contact with their government and the planners are seen as having more power than those who do not interact as much. The community member representation on the steering committee has a majority of EFNC-affiliated activists. Not only did this result in animosity between activist groups, but it further boosted the EFNC as the most powerful group.

Planners and government representatives painted a much different and equal power dynamic of activist groups. Any direct mention or inference of preferential treatment towards one group would be against their mission statement and a source of activist protest. Considering their positionality, the analysis of their responses may not be reflective of their actual opinions of the power dynamic. Sentiments of equal influence, despite what I, and many activists, see as an obvious hierarchy, are a reflection of their commitment to avoid having residents feel underrepresented again:

“I’d say we also stumbled into the process without knowing the history between the two groups. So, it never occurred to me until the first public meeting that having more EFNC people on our steering committee that Eastwick United would be a problem or that the two groups really didn’t see eye-to-eye. None of that was apparent to us until the first public meeting. Then it was like “oh, ok, I stepped into something. Oops.” (Interview P21020, 20/10/2017)

This, in reference to the takeover of the first public meeting, shows that despite their efforts to represent the community through their steering committee and initial data presentation, they were not being equally representative. The process began with palpable frustration amongst the different activist groups. The planners admittedly were not aware of the dynamic. While most of the activists praise the work EFNC has

done for the community, there are groups in Eastwick who find the dominance of EFNC to be discouraging and sometimes offensive. The power dynamic between activist groups has created competition between them. Between groups, there are several suggestions for land use changes. It is the difficult task of the planners to synthesize them:

“And then for those that believe that flooding is first and foremost the issue and everything should be green and improved as landscape: that’s also not really realistic because there are other community wants and needs. So, because we are gonna be somewhere in between those extremes, it’s going to make everybody a little unhappy” (Interview P21020 10/20/2017)

Upon working with and learning more about the area, the planners now understand the power of Eastwick activists, who will continue to hinder the momentum of planning and remain ready to challenge any data or decisions they disagree with. This is the cause Interface Studio identified for the delay of the final public meeting. The combination of distrust and fierce assertion of their rights continues to make this process difficult.

6.4 Inherited Trauma

“After the water receded, there was a blue ring- a water mark was left around the walls at the height of the water in my home. So, talking to the other neighbors and we learned that our property was bordered by a landfill- Clearview Landfill. The floodwaters brought the contamination into our house. We were ready to move.”

-Unidentified Citizen, Public meeting October 2, 2017

One unifying story among all residents was the importance of their history as context for the LEPLS. Both the history of the land and the people were universally seen as vital for setting the stage for current activism, demands to developers and

asserting their right to protect and plan their space. When asked how long an interviewee had lived in Eastwick, a number rarely sufficed. Their entire story could never be reduced to a number and the number of years lived in Eastwick did not make one more or less connected to the land. Stories varied, but most participants had moved to Eastwick 20+ years ago or had lived there their entire lives. Some had also been displaced with their family due to eminent domain in the 1950s and returned. Regardless of background, all participants showed a deep and caring connection to the land and community which included a sense of trauma related to the history of Eastwick. Although many of the respondents were very young or did not live in the area at the time, they expressed a deep empathy for the citizens who were affected by the redevelopment and said that they were personally affected by the history:

“We are all for the planning process. We just want to make sure it is done right. Because, number one, in the 50s or whatever and they did all this without the people. Back then people didn’t have a voice when they forced like 10,000 people out of the community. I wasn’t living back here but I know all the history about it. People didn’t have any say whatsoever.” (Interview E10913, 9/13/2017)

Eastwick citizens who did not directly experience the traumatic events of the previous redevelopment still experienced an inherited trauma. Trauma is transferred through the Eastwick narrative, especially for activists who participate in community building and are involved in the LEPLS. Their indoctrination into Eastwick includes empathy for the suffering experienced in the community. Trauma in Eastwick is affecting the planning process. The distrust that has been built over decades of disenfranchisement and the inherited perils of displacement have pushed activists to demand political transparency and a role in land use decisions. The tremendous amount of activism in Eastwick is bolstered by the residents’ refusal to be shut out of the process again.

Fears of flooding both experienced and learned have given activists a reason to learn and understand the physical geography of their unique space. The threat of water inundation is understood in terms of future predictions of hydrometeorological conditions and the fluvial geomorphology of Southwest Philadelphia and not just something that they have been told and accepted as fact.

6.5 Anger, Conspiracy and Solutions

There is a lot of anger amongst activists. An air of distrust complicates the planning process, whether it is connected to the trauma in Eastwick, belief in conspiracy, cynicism towards the government or inner-activist group animosity. The urban planners and PRA are well aware and have been proceeding cautiously to avoid and mitigate anger as it presents itself.

In the first public meeting, the anger bubbled up from the packed church as the planners presented data from a survey completed by EFNC. The planners mistakenly said that it was representative of Eastwick, when in truth (and it was labeled as such on the presentation slide), it was representative of a sub-neighborhood of about 250 people. The immediate reaction of the residents after seeing their neighborhood represented as pie charts of a survey most had never seen before is an indication of their passion and determination to be accurately represented and informed. Later in the same meeting, a group of activists took over the meeting when it was concluded before allowing the audience to ask questions.

Some of the activists, however, were displeased with the interruption of the first meeting by the protesters. Although they empathized with the protesting group, they were displeased with the timing of their demonstration:

“Personally, I told them [protesting group] I didn’t agree with what they did because that wasn’t the time for it. But I think what really did it was when they [planners] told the people that they can’t ask any questions. And we did talk and we had conversation about that: whenever you have public meetings, you at least want to get a chance to let the people to ask some questions. When you have a meeting and people can’t voice their opinions, they get totally upset. And that’s why I said from now on if they have any meetings, you have to let the people talk.... That really escalated everything when you’re only going to talk but they can’t ask any questions” (Interview E10913, 9/13/2017)

After the rambunctious first meeting, the planners gained a fuller understanding of the discontent that many Eastwick residents have towards planners. The next meetings were smaller and more structured, but planners were still unable to mitigate the strong distrust of the community.

During the small, workshop-style roundtable meetings, developers, stakeholders and investors were invited to sit among community members and contribute to the data being collected by the planners. Community members were very unhappy about this because they believe their input should have higher priority, or at least be differentiated, from non-community members:

“That was one of the biggest take-aways because we totally didn’t like that. This was a meeting for community people and residents to say what they want. It wasn’t the time for [developers] to be there. I can’t say we couldn’t have them there, but for them to put in their opinions- then that will be in the record!” (Interview E10913, 9/13/2017)

Having the developers at the meeting fed into their fears of conspiracy. Many Eastwick residents felt that the developers were there to skew the results and give false data. This added another narrative which Eastwick residents referred to when expressing their dissatisfaction with the process.

The fear of being left out of the process is a trauma that these activists live with every day, much like the vacant lots near many of their homes, which serve as a constant reminder that promises mean nothing until they are fulfilled:

“So there’s a lot of promises the city made when they took the property for urban renewal that they never followed through with. So the city to me is a bunch of liars. They tell you one thing, they get you all excited and ready, then they take it back and they don’t do what they say.” (Interview C11006, 10/6/2017)

[Speaking of the 1950s redevelopment] They more or less just forced them out. And you made all these promises- you want all to be able to move back into the community which didn’t happen. We’re gonna build all these homes-they only built a fraction of and that’s why you have all these open spaces now out here in Eastwick. Because they tore down the homes and promised they was going to build homes and put people back in it but they never did. So, this time, we said the people in the community want to have a voice, not just the city saying we are going to do xyz and we just believe them.” (Interview E10913, 9/13/2017)

Broken promises from the previous redevelopment add to the distrust in which the planners must mitigate in order to move plans forward. How can planners make more promises and foster a sense of trust that they mean what they are saying?

“I always think that the best way to mitigate anger and distrust is through honesty.... we’re talking about more than 60 years of issues in this community that have led to a very significant amount of distrust. And I don’t think that we’re gonna overcome that in 10 months. I don’t have any misconception that that’s possible, but I wasn’t there back then. And what I promised the community the first time I spoke to them about this project was I don’t know what’s going to come out of this but I guarantee that we are going to be honest throughout this process. What you see is what you get and we are committed to do this with a high degree of integrity.” (Interview P11012, 10/13/2017)

Going forward, the planners must maintain transparency and an appreciation for the power of activists and the positive relationships they have built so far. Fostering a

sense of equal partnership with the activists. Some of the activists may never trust planners.

Planners are not immune to conspiracy beliefs. Discussing the takeover of the first public meeting with one of the planners led to a very interesting insight into the way the activist dynamic is viewed by one of the leaders of the process:

“I think they are being manipulative. I think it’s what Donald Trump does- stirs up fears people have so that they’ll... see them as protecting them from things they fear- it’s just propaganda... I don’t think they [Activist Group] are afraid of gentrification; I think they are stirring up people’s fears so that they will support them and their effort to get the land.” (Interview P41011, 10/11/2017)

To say that only one group has a fear of gentrification shows that this planner is not aware of how deeply the activists fear displacement. Most activists who were asked about gentrification believed that it is an entirely possible outcome of community improvements. This was across all groups represented in my sample regardless of power or connectivity.

6.6 Acceptance and Resistance to Neoliberal ideals

“One thing that would be important to consider is that we do have a lot of needs for flood infrastructure and addressing the environmental concerns. Sometimes, a development will actually help to provide revenue to make those improvements. Right? So we have some money we can then re-invest into the sites and create landscapes that help to manage storm water... Certainly open space will help to address the flooding, but it also requires money to maintain, so that gets back to the revenue piece. We have 200 acres of land here. We have to balance the need to handle the environmental concerns but also generate some revenue to pay for those improvements and maintain them over time.”

--Scott Page, Interface Studios

Public Round Table 2, 8-29-2017

As in the preceding quote from the second Round Table session and other public meetings, the urban planners discuss the flooding infrastructure needs of the community as second to economic growth, which is a way of normalizing neoliberal tendencies (Peck & Tickell, 2002, p. 47). This is indeed normalized in this process—no one was observed questioning why localized revenue was required as up-front payment to receive flood protection infrastructure or landscaping. Many activists included Eastwick becoming economically beneficial to the city as a desired outcome of the LEPLS.

Despite the reduced role of government regulation that is important for the reproduction of neoliberalism, Greg Heller, the Executive Director of the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, expressed his intent to keep a hand in the process, stating:

“[There are] some people out there who believe that the public sector’s role when it owns real estate is simply to get the highest return for its land- to get the most amount of money back into the public coffers and bring land back to private use as quickly as possible so it can get back on the tax rolls. I don’t agree with that. I think that the public sector has a social responsibility to use its assets in a way that is beneficial to the city from an economic perspective, but more importantly, that’s beneficial to communities where it is located from a social perspective.” (Interview 10/13/2017)

Mr. Heller’s disposition when it comes to public input and social wellbeing is one of compassion and, in many ways, in contrast to neoliberal ideologies as it involves real estate. The “innovation, learning, and openness” that neoliberalism is said to promote but not foster in situ (Peck & Tickell, 2002), is not necessarily reflective of the proceedings in Eastwick. According to Weber, “neoliberal ideology dismisses most forms of public ownership as socially and privately unproductive (2002),” yet, the PRA’s stance is exactly opposite, finding value in the potential prolonged ownership of some of Eastwick’s lands. Unsurprisingly, profitability of Eastwick is a main

concern for the planners. However, there are distinct narratives of resistance to the system by planners as well. The planners expressed an appreciation for the history of Eastwick, both of the physical and of the people. They have shown in their promises and in their actions so far that they are committed to finding a balance between economic gains and social wellbeing. Contradictions among both the activist groups and the planners add confusion as to what residents want and what values the planners are bringing to the process.

6.7 Conclusion

The results of my research show the diversity of values which planning participants and planners bring to this process. In many instances, the trauma of historical transgressions is triggered by the current planning process. This is due to the deep connection that activists have for their space and the lack of foresight by planners, who could have avoided triggering the deep-seated fears of Eastwick residents. Their criticisms of the planners and the process add to a long narrative of distrust and conspiracy. These negative additions to the narrative are reminiscent of earlier transgressions, which for many, confirm suspicions that nothing has changed about the city's attitudes towards Eastwick since the 1950s.

Chapter 7

DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Discussion

My research shows that Eastwick's physical and social makeup add many layers to a scene which demands a much more tailored approach to redevelopment. A unique and democratic planning process, which goes against decontextualized policy models and neoliberal market-led initiatives, is defining the LEPLS and how it will impact the welfare of the citizens. Of the many concerns, the primary focus of betterment in Eastwick should be flood protection infrastructure. Most of Eastwick is sitting on the 100-year floodplain and the risk of fast water inundation during a severe hydrometeorological event may deter developers from investing in the area because of increased costs both of construction and insurance. Following a disastrous hurricane season in the US, attracting investors may be even more difficult. Flood fears also contribute to the daily lived trauma of citizens who have lived or inherited the traumatic history of the many disastrous floods in Eastwick's past. Development concerns and trauma associated with floods are further complicated by Eastwick's proximity to Superfund sites and the threat of flood-exacerbated leachate or leakage of toxic substances into the environment.

Activism surrounding the risk of flooding and toxic dumping in Eastwick remains a defining characteristic of a deep citizen connection to the land. Long-fought battles against disenfranchisement—both the wins and the losses—foster a sense of responsibility and belonging that bolsters activists' determination. Planners of the LEPLS continue to use a narrative which includes the preservation of social ties and an understanding of the geographic rootedness of Eastwick inhabitants. The

acceptance of planner promises vary amongst activists, adding to the complexity of the process.

The combination of tremendous and passionate activism with a complex, risky physical geography has made the planning process difficult. Interface Studio must take account of all the considerations, both physical and social, leading to a difficult synthesis and creation of feasibility and land use recommendations. However, as the planners have become more familiar with the community, they demonstrate increased reflexivity and promise to learn how to mitigate the distrust and stubbornness of the activists' expressions of their right to the city. Promises have never been enough to satiate the distrust of Eastwick citizens; it will be the future actions of their government which will determine how much longer the activists will delay this process.

The combination of trauma and uncertainty amongst activists allows for the proliferation of conspiracy. Conspiracy among the citizens heavily impacts their perspectives of planners and government. Suspicion of collusion and willful neglect by the city are common narratives among the activists. The narratives are generally unchangeable and the planners have expressed that their goal is to work with the mistrust; they understand that altering these deeply held beliefs are not within their scope or ability. They are also aware of the media coverage and scrutiny that they face and will continue to face as they prepare their feasibility study for public release.

The activists and media are eagerly awaiting the results of the feasibility study. The activist who placed themselves high on the scale derived from Arnstein's Ladder of Participation are optimistic that this process has created a meaningful and impactful partnership. It remains to be seen in early 2018 if the community input has made a

direct influence on the land use suggestions. However, this process is a great studying point for local governments and planners who wish to foster a holistic and socially responsible means of redevelopment planning. Hindrance of the process due to mistakes such as over-representing a single group or area and not being fully aware of existing power dynamics are lessons learned for Interface Studios and can serve as an example to others who wish to develop in an activist-heavy community.

7.2 Limitations

Falling into my own critique, it would be impossible for me to completely cover the wide means and goals of activists in Eastwick. As such, I did my best to interview a range of differing viewpoints from many different groups. Eastwick is home to many groups with specific goals such as zoning, recreation, environmental stewardship, safety, sinking homes, as well as different scales such as geographically-bounded block groups, sub-neighborhood groups and assemblies consisting of a combination of any of the afore mentioned groups and the government- supported steering committee. In that sense, it was necessary for me to limit my interviews to groups which were the most active in the meetings for the LEPLS.

Historical accounts relied heavily on the archives of a single news source. This limited the accumulation of perspectives, as some may have been excluded due to political affiliations or leanings, sponsorship or other influences. The Philadelphia Inquirer, despite the paywall, was the most accessible and easily organized news source available. The search feature allowed me to collect many relevant articles and opinion pieces in a shorter amount of time, which is why it was selected. Future study of the history could include other publications.

Further missing from this study due to time constraints is the results of the feasibility portion of the LEPLS. Originally part of the study plan, the final public meeting has been pushed off beyond the reach of this study, but will be considered in future studies of this area.

7.3 Conclusion

Repairing trust will be the most important and most challenging goal of the LEPLS. This begins with addressing conspiracy and ensuring citizens that transgressions of the past will not be repeated. However, the questioning nature of Eastwick's activists must be fostered and seen as essential to the healing of their trauma rather than a roadblock to the process. This can only be done with clearly demonstrated efforts to create meaningful planner-citizen partnerships and the confirmation of social welfare ideals and appropriate follow-through in the resulting plan for the area.

Planners and governing bodies who are interested in incorporating justice into their redevelopment plans would benefit greatly by understanding how the neoliberal systems in which they are working have been shown to foster uneven development, especially for racial and class minorities. An emphasis on social wellbeing rather than profit and pushing back against the "hypercommodification of urban life" needs to be a political priority (Brenner, Marcuse, & Mayer, 2012, p. 2). This begins with critical reflexivity and positionality in which they take the time to understand the long-term implications of their roles, assumptions and the values they represent in the proceedings (Rankin, 2012, p. 111). Planners need to see the value of existing social structures and incorporate justice within an environment, which fosters a community's right to plan their space. This demands much more effort on the part of cities and

planners than what is happening in Eastwick. The solution may be a reallocation of funds, extra effort into grant writing, a greater emphasis on community partnerships and/or an effort to understand systematic injustices and the willingness to sacrifice profit for justice. For planners to make these changes, it will require a new or intensified reflexive critique of their practice, education or livelihood and expose “the gaps between the principles of justice and empowerment they promote and the work practices and modes of relationality that they exhibit in practice” (Rankin, 2012, p. 113). This is not to say, however, that the historically conscious and community-oriented processes have not been worthwhile. I have found that Eastwick’s power is not being challenged, but bolstered by their involvement. Any less and there would be far more roadblocks to this planning than small protests.

Making a participatory process more democratic can help to better incorporate the needs of a larger number of citizens. In a process like the one in Eastwick, this would mean altering the hierarchical dynamic of the process- allowing citizens to not only participate, but plan how information is collected, interpreted and utilized alongside planners and government. Moving away from neoliberal systems is not impossible, but certainly difficult. The pervasive failures that neoliberalism has created is well studied and with the challenge to the ideology after the 2008 financial crisis, now is the best time to carefully enter the “‘postneoliberal’ world” (Peck, Theodore, & Brenner, 2009). Despite the demonstrated resiliency and adaptability of neoliberalism through crisis, continuing to challenge hierarchical planner-citizen relationships in redevelopment processes is important to slow or halt its reproduction. The transition must be slow and calculated and “alternative politics will surely be structured (and to some extent constrained) by the neoliberalized terrains on which

they must be prosecuted” (Peck, Theodore, & Brenner, 2009, pp. 111-112). An alternative system with a “re-invigorated welfare state” in which the state is “more willing to challenge the values of the unfettered.” Power holders like Greg Heller, who are advocating for an equitable and socially intact future for Eastwick, are crucial to effectively changing these systems and upholding the promises beyond the planning stage. The distribution of power in Eastwick is still heavily weighted on the side of the government, but Eastwick, as an imperfect space of resistance, has the capacity to redistribute, or climb Arnstein’s ladder, through the residents’ strategic involvement and understanding of the flawed systems.

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Appendix A

INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER



RESEARCH OFFICE

210 Hullihen Hall
University of Delaware
Newark, Delaware 19716-1551
Ph: 302/831-2136
Fax: 302/831-2828

DATE: October 9, 2017

TO: Tonya Atherton
FROM: University of Delaware IRB

STUDY TITLE: [1061737-2] Perceptions of Participation and Mitigating Distrust in Eastwick, Philadelphia

SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: October 9, 2017
EXPIRATION DATE: April 20, 2020
REVIEW TYPE: Exempt Review

REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # (2)

Thank you for your submission of Amendment/Modification materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Exempt Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this study to this office.


Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Farnese-McFarlane at (302) 831-1119 or nicolefm@udel.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

Appendix B

CONSENT FROM GREG HELLER

Tonya Atherton [REDACTED]

For publication at the University of Delaware
2 messages

Tonya Atherton <[REDACTED]>
To: Gregory Heller <[REDACTED]>
Cc: [REDACTED]

Tue, Dec 5, 2017 at 3:54 PM

Good afternoon Mr. Heller,

I have completed my thesis and I need your permission to publish one quote and one mention of you from our interview. Please review the following two excerpts from my thesis:

-----Passage 1-----

Despite the reduced role of government regulation that is important for the reproduction of neoliberalism, Greg Heller, the Executive Director of the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, expressed his intent to keep a hand in the process, stating:

"There's some people out there who believe that the public sector's role when it owns real estate is simply to get the highest return for its land- to get the most amount of money back into the public coffers and bring land back to private use as quickly as possible so it can get back on the tax rolls. I don't agree with that. I think that the public sector has a social responsibility to use its assets in a way that is beneficial to the city from an economic perspective, but more importantly, that's beneficial to communities where it is located from a social perspective." (Interview 10/13/2017)

Mr. Heller's disposition when it comes to public input and social wellbeing is one of compassion and, in many ways, in contrast to neoliberal ideologies as it involves real estate.

-----Passage 2-----

Power holders like Greg Heller, who are advocating for an equitable and socially intact future for Eastwick, are crucial to effectively changing these systems and upholding the promises beyond the planning stage.

I have CC'd your Communications Specialist for your convenience.
The contents of your response will be used as proof of your consent for this to be published in my thesis.
Please respond and let me know if I may use your name and your quote in my thesis.

Thank you very much for the valuable insights for my research.

Tonya Atherton
University of Delaware

Gregory Heller <[REDACTED]>
To: Tonya Atherton <[REDACTED]>
Cc: [REDACTED]

Wed, Dec 6, 2017 at 4:50 PM

Tonya, I'm fine with you publishing the quote and mention. I just request that you please correct my grammar in the quote to say "There are some people..."