



Public Meeting Summary

**November 13, 2002, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Montgomery County Human Services Building**

Meeting Announcements

Mailing lists

The project mailing list was derived by compiling the addresses of owners of property within the project study area. The Montgomery County tax database was used as the source for this data.

Postcards and Flyers

A total of 407 postcards (copy attached) were mailed to those on the mailing list. Because of the high concentration of renters and Hispanics in the study area, an additional 299 postcards (written in English on one side and Spanish on the other) were hand delivered to homes and businesses along Lafayette Street and Main Street. In addition, 25 11" by 17" bilingual flyers (copy attached) announcing the meeting were handed out to businesses and churches in the project area.

Newspaper ads

Advertisements announcing the meeting were placed in several local newspapers to augment the postcard mailing. Three-column by 5-inch display ads appeared in *The Times Herald* on Thursday October 31, 2002 and in the *Philadelphia Inquirer Montgomery County Neighbors* edition also on October 31, 2002.

Meeting Description/Process

SEPTA Shuttle

A free shuttle bus was arranged with the help of SEPTA to offer rides to and from the meeting place for those who may not have cars or would need to rely on public transportation. The shuttle covered a circuitous route that started at Diamond and Isabella Streets in Plymouth Township, traveled along Main, Lafayette and DeKalb Streets in Norristown to the meeting, then back along Fornance Street to the intersection of Ridge Avenue and Diamond Street. A map indicating the shuttle stop was printed on the bottom of the flyers that were distributed earlier and laminated posters were posted at those stops on the day of the meeting.



Sign-ins

The doors to the meeting opened at 6:00 p.m. There was a sign-in location in the building lobby. Each attendee supplied their name, mailing address, and e-mail address and was given a project summary handout that featured a description of the project, anticipated milestones and a map of the study area. A total of 104 signed in. A Spanish interpreter was available if needed.

Floor layout

As this was an open house display format, the panels were arranged in a semi-circle around the perimeter of the room, leaving ample room in the center of the floor for attendees to move from display to display at their own pace and in their preferred direction.

The primary display stations consisted of 4-foot by 8-foot boards with mounted aerials, maps and artist renderings. Residents could pinpoint their home or place of business on an aerial photo, scan maps that identified natural and cultural resources in the project area, learn about the environmental and historic laws and regulation that guide the project development process, view a selection of possible cross sections for the new roadway, and mark up an aerial photo with issues of concern for local residents.

Project specialists, engineers, planners, traffic specialists and environmental and historic specialists were on hand at their respective display stations to answer attendees' questions and listen to concerns.

Survey

Each attendee was asked to respond to a survey (copy attached), either at the meeting or by mail after the meeting. The questions were general in scope (what they liked best or least about the proposed improvements and what additional comments they might have). A copy of the survey and the responses have been transcribed in a separate file.

Press Coverage

A press release announcing the meeting was distributed to local newspapers one week before the meeting date. An article entitled, "Input sought in revitalization," written by Margaret Gibbons, appeared in the Norristown Times Herald on Saturday November 9 announcing the meeting (copy attached). A summary article entitled, "Lafayette Street connection seen as key to revitalization," written by Keith Phucas, appeared in the Times Herald on Friday, November 15 (copy attached).



Public Officials Meeting

Elected officials from Plymouth Township and Norristown, along with Montgomery County Commissioners, state representatives and senators, U.S. representatives and senators, and selected economic redevelopment officials were invited to attend a special session from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., before the meeting was opened to the public. A total of 13 attended, representing Plymouth Township, Norristown Borough Council, county commissioners, State Senator Connie Williams, the redevelopment authority, and Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Association.

They were given a “walk-through” presentation by Steve Nieman, in which he explained each of the displays and their relevance to the project, and fielded questions. Their comments and questions are summarized in a separate file.