

# Bakery Row Vision Plan

**A Collaboration of  
East Liberty Development, Inc.  
& Shadyside Action Coalition**

*with the neighborhoods  
and stakeholders of Bakery Row*

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July 2008

## **BAKERY ROW VISION PLAN**

### **Bakery Row Stakeholder Group/Project Team**

**Special thanks to Councilman Bill Peduto and his staff for their leadership that supported the development of this community-driven plan.**

This plan is the product of the neighbors and stakeholders of the Bakery Row Study Area whose participation at community meetings in 2007/2008, as well as online at the East Liberty Post Blog inspired and contributed significantly to this Vision Plan.

Thanks to Rob Stephany, Skip Schwab, and Peg Ott for guiding the stakeholder organizations and consultant team.

#### **Stakeholder Organizations**

East Liberty Development, Inc.  
Shadyside Action Coalition  
North Point Breeze Planning & Development Corp.  
East Liberty Chamber of Commerce  
South Point Breeze Organization  
Village of Shadyside Condominium Association

#### **Developers & Institutions**

Walnut Capital  
Chatham University  
Club One  
The Ellis School  
Giant Eagle  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Eichleay, Inc.  
Franklin West Real Estate

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Jim Hartling, Urban Partners, Market Analysis

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and the Community Design Center of Pittsburgh*

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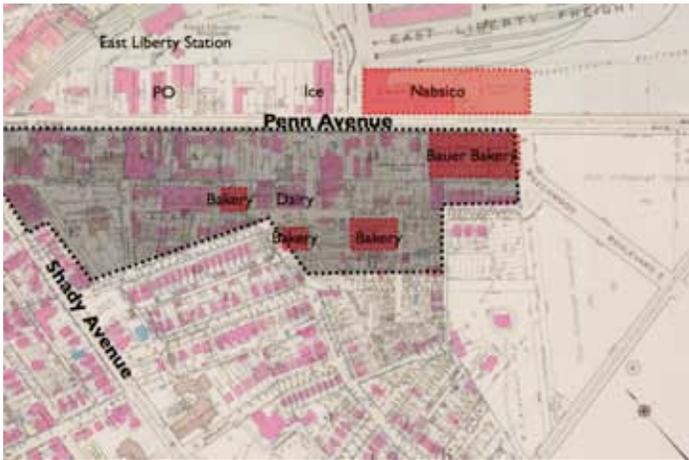
**See an online version at:**

**<http://gallery.me.com/robertpfaffmann2#100298>**

## **BAKERY ROW VISION PLAN**

### **A Joint Project of**

### **East Liberty Development, Inc. and the Shadyside Action Coalition**



Bakeries were a common land use in the 1930s (Present Reizenstein site)

### **Introduction**

Friends, neighbors, and investors,

So much is happening in the East End of Pittsburgh. High-rises of poverty have been replaced with new, mixed-income neighborhoods. The national retail stores, which have located along Centre Avenue, have attracted new businesses and restaurants into the East Liberty business district. Arts and related businesses continue to move into vacant storefronts along Penn Avenue. The new Children's Hospital will soon move into their new campus, which will result in an additional 100,000 cars per year using Penn Avenue. And of course, Walnut Capital is transforming the old Nabisco plant into new retail, office, and hotel space.

Now is the time to plan for future development along the Penn Avenue corridor. East Liberty has already prepared design guidelines for the section of Penn Avenue around the historic East Liberty Presbyterian Church and our neighbors in Garfield, Friendship, Bloomfield and Lawrenceville have recently completed similar design guidelines for their portion of the corridor.

Now is the time for our community to develop design guidelines and standards for the "Bakery Row" portion of Penn Avenue. Now is the time to establish community standards for pedestrian friendly, environmentally responsive development in our neighborhood.

On behalf of Shadyside Action Coalition and East Liberty Development, Inc., we want to thank the many participants of this process and their diligent work, insight, and leadership during this process. The following pages reflect the views and opinion of the community. Thank you so much for taking the time to participate in this community process.

Sincerely,

*Peggy Ott*  
Shadyside Action Coalition

*Maelene Myers*  
East Liberty Development, Inc.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT & EXISTING CONDITIONS



Redevelopment Zones over time



Shady & Penn (Present busway area)

At the turn of the last century, a major rail yard existed along Penn Avenue between Fifth Avenue and Shady Avenue. These rail lines supported a manufacturing community and associated worker housing. As the area developed, it became a center for the production of baked goods with several large-scale bakery plants located along Penn Avenue. In honor of this history, the stretch of Penn Avenue between Fifth and Shady Avenues has been dubbed “Bakery Row.” It should be noted that Bakery Square is but one component (private public investment) of the vision for Bakery Row, which is a community driven visioning process.

Since urban renewal in the 1970s, the area has gone through a number of major building and infrastructure upheavals. The Shakespeare School and several surrounding residential blocks were demolished and replaced by the Giant Eagle shopping plaza and, more recently, the Shadyside Village complex. Several more residential blocks were demolished and replaced by Reizenstein Middle School. The old rail yards were redeveloped into shopping centers and light manufacturing facilities. The historic Nabisco Building remains as a landmark. East Liberty was significantly restructured by the development of Penn Circle and associated shock waves rippled all along Penn Avenue. Shady Avenue once crossed the busway but was rerouted to make room for the bus station. Ellsworth Avenue and Frankstown Avenue were likewise rerouted to make room for the busway, the bus station and Penn Circle.

The Bakery Row corridor is the convergence point for seven distinct neighborhoods including East Liberty, Homewood, North Point Breeze, South Point Breeze, Squirrel Hill, Shadyside, and Larimer. This stretch of Penn Avenue feeds into the Baum Boulevard/Centre Avenue corridor and the emerging Penn Avenue/Children's Hospital corridor. Despite this geographic convergence, Penn Avenue's high traffic volume presents a formidable barrier to intra-neighborhood connectivity. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that the 0.6-mile segment of Penn Avenue between Fifth and Shady has only one side street outlet—the heavily traveled East Liberty Boulevard. Along the residential areas, fences, walls, and security gates have prevented direct intra-neighborhood movement.



The six zones of the Vision Plan

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR REDEVELOPMENT

Due to changing market forces, several parcels in the Bakery Row corridor may be facing immediate or long-term redevelopment pressure. (See appendix for an expanded review by Urban Partners from 2007).

### 1. Penn and Shady Development

The proposal for a context-sensitive, transit-oriented, urban “big box” complex located on both sides of Penn Avenue at the busway station will likely continue gaining strength as the adjacent new housing development nears completion. Giant Eagle has withdrawn plans across the Busyway to develop a “Get Go” gas station in their existing parking lot. This vision plan advocates stronger, denser, urban neighborhood infill to transform the poorly designed suburban-style development into a sustainable mixed-income development.

### 2. East Liberty Station

Staples and Trader Joe's have recently been joined in the strip shopping center by discount gift and home accessory chain Tuesday Morning, continuing development successes at the perimeter of downtown East Liberty. Stronger pedestrian connections and streetscape and street facade improvements were supported at the community meetings.

### 3. Reizenstein Middle School

The School closed in 2006 as a middle school. During this study the property's future was in question. As of this writing the school has been opened as Schenley High School. The long term use of the school and site has not been determined by the School District.

**4. Bakery Square / Penn/Fifth** is the Walnut Capital reuse of the Nabisco Building as a mixed use “Life-Style Center” consisting of office and retail space and a hotel. Recently Chatham University purchased two buildings of the Eicheley complex, at the corner of Penn Avenue and Washington Boulevard, and has proposed to relocate academic programs there, which appears to be a strong reuse for these buildings. Redevelopment proposals will need to be carefully designed to extend pedestrian connections to the Bakery Square development and the surrounding neighborhoods of Larimer, North Point Breeze and Homewood.

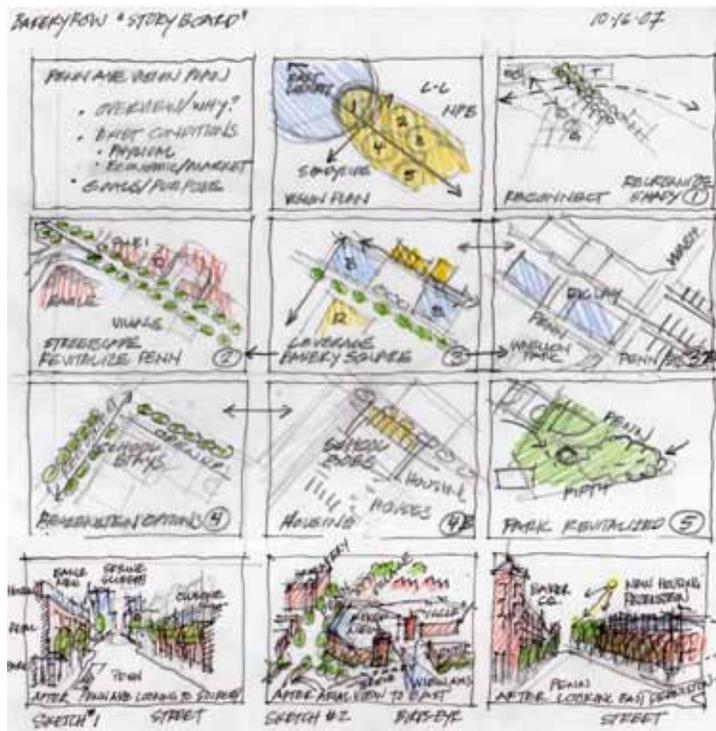
**5. Mellon Park** provides a key resources for open space in the East End. The section of the Park between Fifth and Penn is highly utilized for organized sports leagues and tennis. The need for better support facilities such as toilets and possibly a cafe/refreshment stand is desirable. Protection and care of mature street trees along Penn avenue continues to be a an area of citizen concern.

### 6. Sustainable Design

The “Green Infrastructure” of the park and surrounding streetscapes was highly valued and seen by many as one of the most important assets to the communities of the East End. One of the most important “greening” issues identified in the community meetings was the need to make pedestrian-oriented and high quality transit-oriented development connections to surrounding neighborhoods.

## VISION PLAN PRINCIPLES

Over the course of almost two years, the Vision Plan has been refined and presented to two well-attended community meetings. The first meeting was a hands-on workshop to develop priorities and principles. The second was a review of the Vision Plan draft. The principles for the plan are as follows:



- **Connections & Corridors:** Ideas to bring people and neighborhoods together. Transportation modes of all forms in a balanced manner.

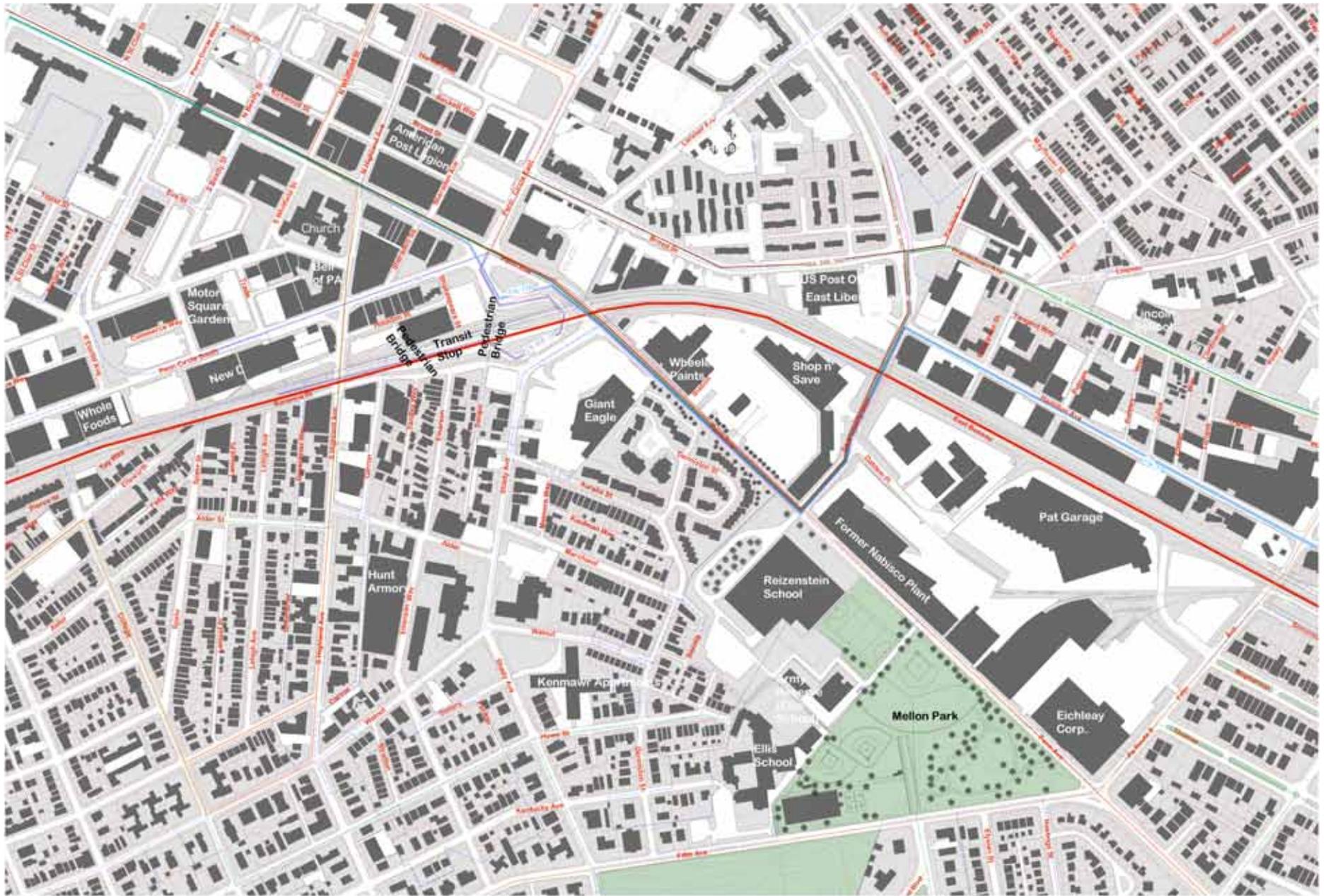
- **Contextual Urban Design:** Buildings and public open space that reinforce pedestrian and transit-oriented life styles while providing realistic accommodation of automobiles.

- **Managing for Growth:** Identify ways to accommodate growth that serves the surrounding neighborhoods (housing, retail, office, research, small business and open space) while recognizing that the growth of East Liberty's downtown will be a growing destination for many East End residents and visitors.

- **Strong Public Open Spaces** ("Public Realm"): Parks, fields, sidewalks and private spaces that front them.

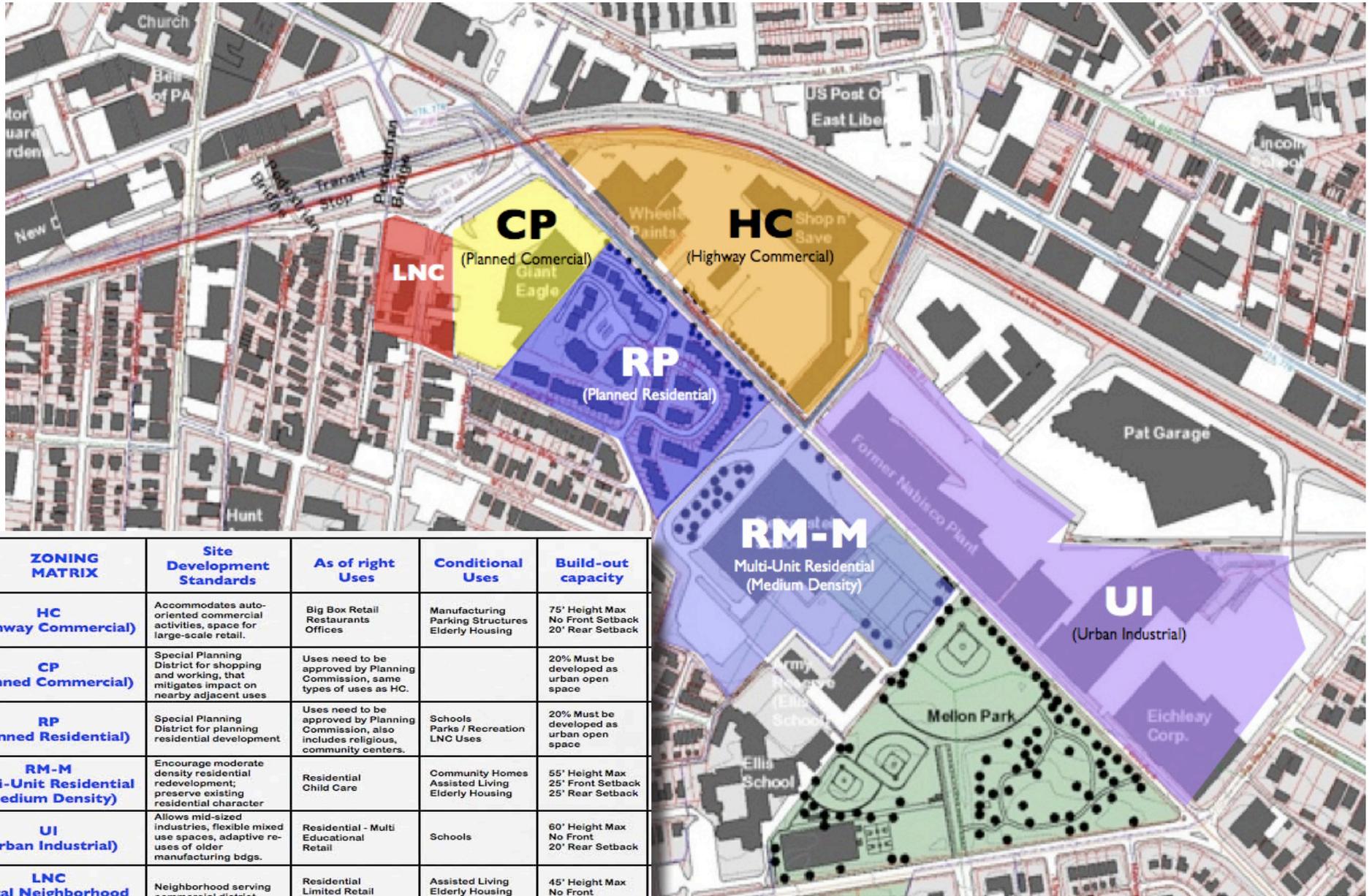
- **Diverse Development:** Projects that respond to and also anticipate the diversity of social, economic and cultural needs (retail, housing, access).

- **Sustainable "Green" Development:** Projects that reduce environmental impact on our resources (energy, water, environment).



Vision Plan: Existing Conditions





ZONING MATRIX	Site Development Standards	As of right Uses	Conditional Uses	Build-out capacity
<b>HC</b> (Highway Commercial)	Accommodates auto-oriented commercial activities, space for large-scale retail.	Big Box Retail Restaurants Offices	Manufacturing Parking Structures Elderly Housing	75' Height Max No Front Setback 20' Rear Setback
<b>CP</b> (Planned Commercial)	Special Planning District for shopping and working, that mitigates impact on nearby adjacent uses	Uses need to be approved by Planning Commission, same types of uses as HC.		20% Must be developed as urban open space
<b>RP</b> (Planned Residential)	Special Planning District for planning residential development	Uses need to be approved by Planning Commission, also includes religious, community centers.	Schools Parks / Recreation LNC Uses	20% Must be developed as urban open space
<b>RM-M</b> Multi-Unit Residential (Medium Density)	Encourage moderate density residential redevelopment; preserve existing residential character	Residential Child Care	Community Homes Assisted Living Elderly Housing	55' Height Max 25' Front Setback 25' Rear Setback
<b>UI</b> (Urban Industrial)	Allows mid-sized industries, flexible mixed use spaces, adaptive re-uses of older manufacturing bldgs.	Residential - Multi Educational Retail	Schools	60' Height Max No Front 20' Rear Setback
<b>LNC</b> (Local Neighborhood Commercial)	Neighborhood serving commercial district	Residential Limited Retail Religious	Assisted Living Elderly Housing Parking	45' Height Max No Front 20' Rear Setback

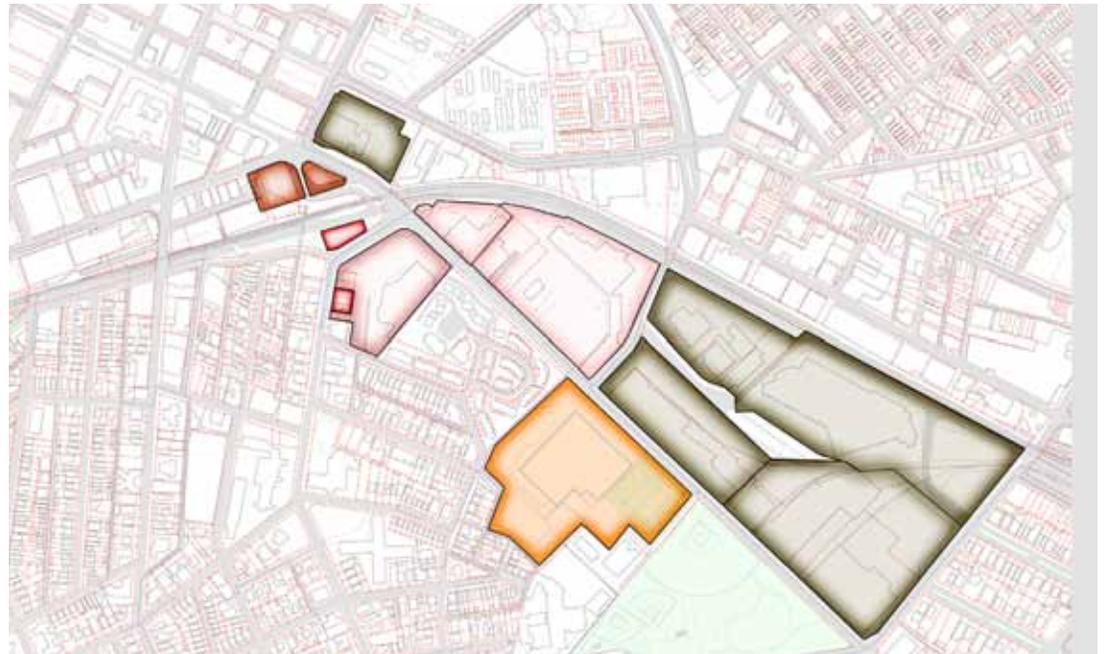
Zoning Districts with development approval requirements (inset)



Vision Plan: figure ground: existing building footprints  
(colors indicate zoning designation)



Vision Plan: large development footprints & zoning





Vision Plan: Full Build Out (RED)



Arial view of Penn/Shady intersection. Busway in foreground.

## ZONE 1: SHADY AVENUE TO BUSWAY

### *Shady & Penn Avenues: Reconnecting To The Heart Of East Liberty*

**Reurbanize Shady & Penn; Work with Giant Eagle to find an alternative(s) “Get Go” gas station location.** See alternative design concepts for expanding and “reurbanizing” the site.

**Support quality urban streetfaces, focusing on the perimeter of Giant Eagle’s suburban-style plaza.**

**Develop strong streetscape/pedestrian connections across the busway to East Liberty/East Side.** See proposal sketches increasing the green space across/next to the Busway/RR overpass.

**Maintain visibility and connections to the existing Giant Eagle; Relocate its entrance.**

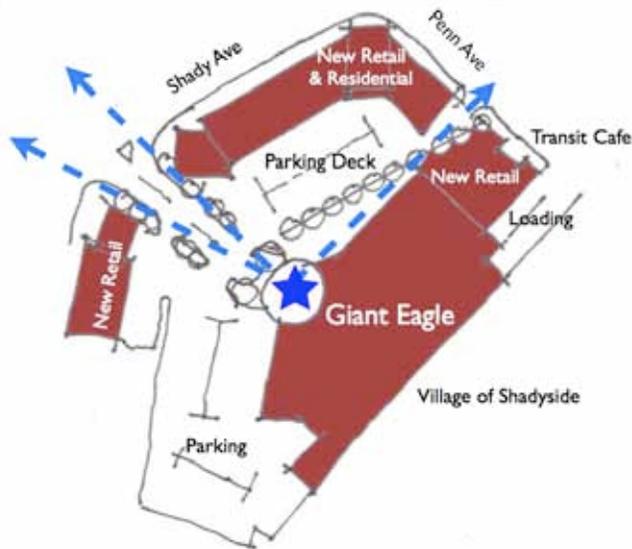
The existing site has been studied briefly and it appears that the existing market could be modified to relocate the entrance closer to center of the site while developing the Penn and Shady edges of the site.

**Develop capacity for midsize retail and market housing with shared adjacent parking capacities.**

Shady Avenue connects the residential Squirrel Hill and Shadyside neighborhoods to the institutional and commercial activity along Penn Avenue. A few blocks from its terminus at Penn Avenue, the street shifts from a residential zoning to a small LNC (Local Neighborhood Commercial) zone with small 2-3 story mixed shops and offices. The streetscape shifts dramatically in the final block approaching Penn Avenue as the intimate streetscape is replaced by Giant Eagle’s expansive parking lot on one side and the busway access ramp on the other. The busway access ramps are formidable barriers to intra-neighborhood connectivity. Past development proposals include developing an out-parcel gas station (heavily opposed) and an out-parcel suburban-style retail pad in the Giant Eagle parking lot.

**Community concerns about future development.**

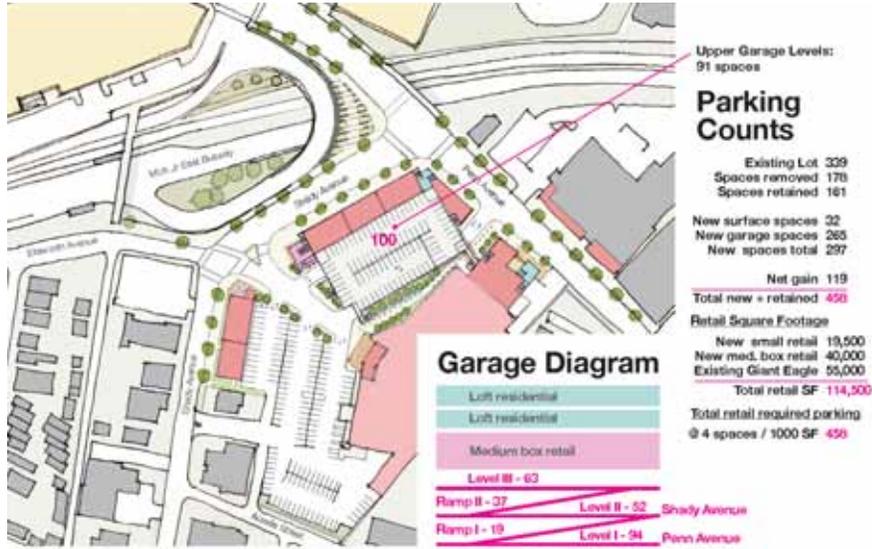
The community expressed significant concerns about the transportation impact. Although the CP (planned commercial) zoning designation affords the community some additional protection from development pressure, community members were concerned that such protections may be insufficient to ensure quality development. Members also expressed concern that new retail and residential development might be redundant with efforts currently underway in adjacent neighborhoods.



Concept Diagram showing importance of visibility to existing Giant Eagle

# ZONE 1: SHADY & PENN AVENUES CONNECT TO DOWNTOWN EAST LIBERTY

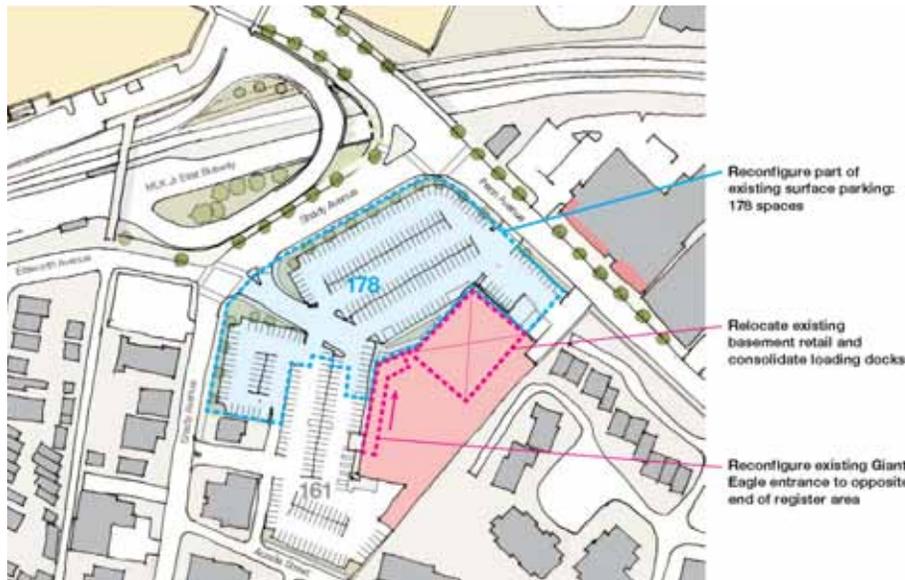
## Giant Eagle/Echo Real Estate Parcel



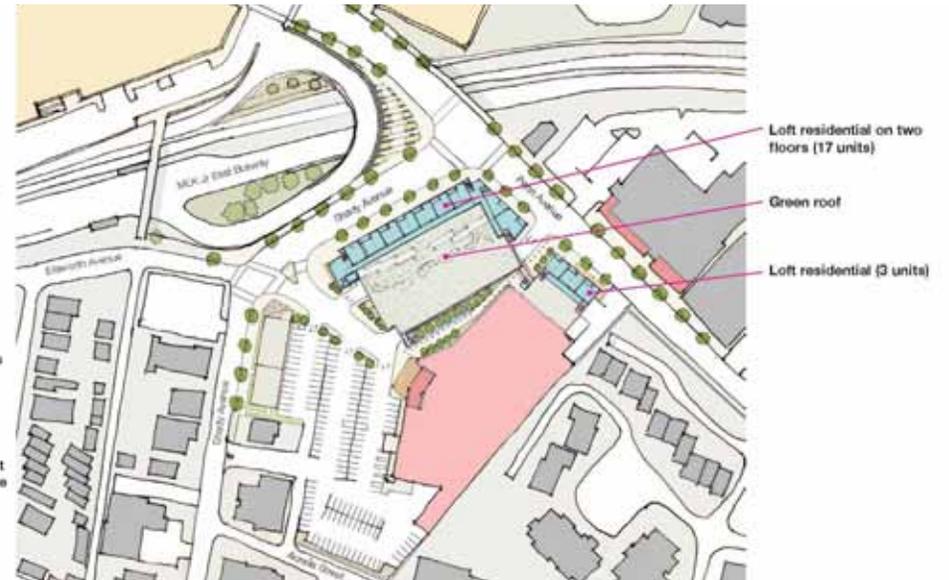
Preliminary Parking Analysis



Perimeter Outparcel: Retail Ground Level



Existing Site Development



Perimeter Outparcel: Market Residential Upper Levels

Penn Avenue Streetscape



Penn Avenue looking to East Liberty next to Club One



Vision: Pedestrian-oriented storefronts and mixed use development across the street at the Giant Eagle

Penn/Shady Avenues & Busway Transit-Oriented Development



Existing Conditions looking east



Massing overlay of new development in the Penn/Shady area

Shady Avenue Entrance to Giant Eagle



Present Ellsworth & Shady entrance to Giant Eagle



Vision: Mixed use infill on parking lot

Penn Avenue Pedestrian Connection Over Busway



Penn Avenue looking east crossing the busway overpass



Vision: Taking advantage of leftover adjacent space



School district proposes to “green” the 1960s Reizenstein

## ZONE 2: REIZENSTEIN SCHOOL SITE

### “Alternative Futures”

- No matter what the future development (school or residential), reconnect the residential areas to Penn Avenue, with strong pedestrian connections at Denniston and Festival.
- Underlying zoning is Residential (RP); if the school is sold, new use should be housing within reconstructed street grid.
- Strong streetscape/pedestrian connections to adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Maintain parking capacities, share adjacent parking capacities.

**Community-generated development ideas.** Support for residential development on the Reizenstein site was almost unanimous. Although the vignettes all depict demolishing the school building, some preferred that the building be converted into a residential complex through selective demolition and façade reinvention. Alternative suggestions were to convert the school building into a high-tech office facility that could make use of the existing fiber optic cable network. Community members articulated significant interest in maintaining the Reizenstein ball field as community green space. Some were also in favor of incorporating additional park amenities into the Reizenstein redevelopment.

Although new development may have advantages, the community feels strongly that associated impacts should be mitigated. Traffic is a major community concern; infrastructure improvements are desired to better manage the existing load and to accommodate the increased traffic flow resulting from future development. Community members feel strongly that new development should take full advantage of the established transit amenities and the Shady Avenue commercial district. The community also wants to protect existing businesses and avoid draining neighboring commercial cores. To this end, new commercial incursions should be strategic in their tenant selection and location, and should be compatible with the downtown East Liberty development plan.

**Community priorities.** Traffic management is of central importance. Modifications should improve pedestrian safety at major intersections.



2 Reizenstein School Site Alternative Futures: “Green” Festival Way To Bakery Square



Reconnecting old Denniston Street as a pedestrian passage



Reconnecting old Festival Way as a pedestrian passage



Redevelopment of Reizenstein Site as mixed density residential

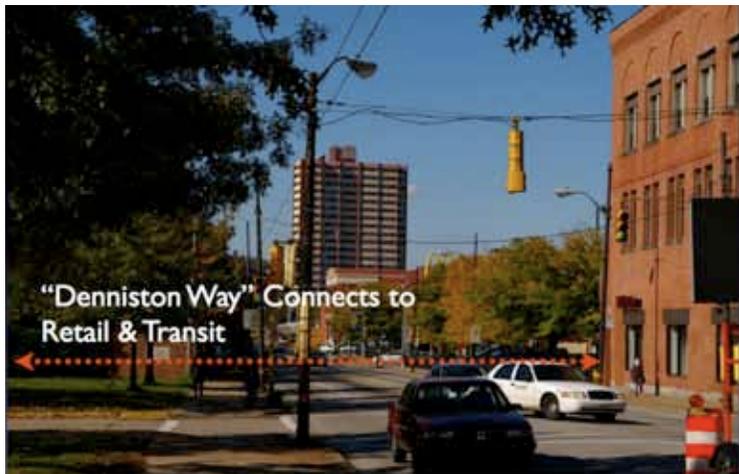


**ZONE 3: PENN AVENUE FROM EAST LIBERTY BLVD. TO 5TH AVE.**

*Bakery Square Retail Center: Historic Anchor*

- Minimize impact of traffic-related improvements on surrounding park and neighborhoods.
- Maximize return on TIF (tax increment financing) with commitment to improving Mellon Park, pedestrian improvements along East Liberty Blvd. at the underpass, and Penn Avenue.
- Make provisions for connections (now/future) to the adjacent neighborhoods (Larimer/Homewood) and developments (Chatham Eastside/Eichleay and Shadyside Station) to avoid socioeconomic isolation and auto dependency.

**Existing building uses.** This stretch of Penn Avenue separates the UI (Urban Industrial) district to the north (abutting the train tracks) and the Reizenstein School and Mellon Park to the south. The Nabisco Building is an historic 7-story structure that provides a visually prominent urban backdrop to Mellon Park visible from the South Point Breeze edge. Warehouse and administrative buildings extend from the Nabisco Building to 5th Avenue.



Community members feel that traffic congestion and problem intersections along Penn Avenue (at East Liberty Boulevard, at 5th Avenue, and at Dallas) and along 5th Avenue (at the train trestles) are particularly troublesome. Related problems stem from cut-through commuter traffic and non-resident parking along the North Point Breeze residential boulevards. Another significant concern is the limited opportunities for alternative transit. This stretch lies beyond the 1,500-foot pedestrian radius from the busway commuter hub. A number of bus lines are accessible from the Penn Avenue/East Liberty Boulevard intersection, but few lines run the length to 5th Avenue or stop at the Penn Avenue/5th Avenue intersection. Although this block is not currently a pedestrian destination, this block is nevertheless a primary pedestrian/cycling circulation link between the Point Breeze neighborhoods and the Penn Avenue and East Liberty retail opportunities. It is also the only route connecting the East Liberty Boulevard bike path and the Beechwood Boulevard bike path. Community members feel this stretch is particularly ill suited for non-auto circulation due to the high traffic volume, the limited transit service, the lack of bike lanes, the narrow sidewalks, and the opaque building facades.



Community members expressed concern about traffic conditions and the nature of proposed retail development. Although a consensus on the appropriate mix of local and national retail was not reached, big-box retail alternatives caused particular concern. The community is concerned that insensitive commercial development in this area might drain the vitality in neighboring areas instead of bringing new opportunities to the city. Community members also feel that transportation issues need to be addressed by new development in a coordinated way.

Community members proposed light manufacturing or university spin-off development along 5th Avenue opposite North Point Breeze. Recently Chatham University purchased two buildings of the Eichleay complex and has proposed to relocate academic programs there, which appears to be a strong reuse for these buildings and will drive the improvement of pedestrian connections to 5th Avenue and North Point Breeze.



The community is strongly in favor of local hiring initiatives, of opportunities/incentives for local independent retail, and of MBE/WBE (Minority-Owned/Women-Owned Business Enterprises) incentives during construction and operation (especially when the project is publicly subsidized).

Improvement of the planning and physical relationships of the Bakery Row district to Larimer should be a high priority for future planning and development initiatives.

The community suggested several strategies to improve the sidewalks. New bike lanes, traffic noise control measures, and intersection improvements were also proposed. Streetscape improvements could be used to strengthen this block's connection with adjoining neighborhoods and to strengthen the connections between Penn Avenue and its parallel streets (e.g. Hamilton Avenue).



**ZONE 4: PENN & FIFTH**

*New Economy/New Urban Future*

- Existing uses are compatible with neighborhoods, but need to look beyond current uses to connect to North Point Breeze, Larimer and Homewood.
- Develop urban mixed-use large floor plates (office/research/flex) with internal circulator streets and structured parking concealed from view from Mellon Park.
- Connect to McPherson and Thomas Boulevards to the east and Bakery Square to the west for strong pedestrian and internal parking circulation to reduce traffic impact on Penn (Chatham and Walnut Capital).

New development should maintain the neighborhood's existing streetscape, compatible development form and uses, and sense of place. New connections from Shady Side to Mellon Park and to Penn Avenue are encouraged with qualifications. All new street connections should discourage "cut through" traffic, incorporate street calming elements, and include a strong green street edge. The community does not support any zoning changes that would allow significant commercial development on the Reizenstein site. Some members support a potential zoning change that would allow higher density residential development facing Penn Ave and the Reizenstein ball field (as a compensatory move only) in exchange for the developer retaining the ball field as is, or incorporating equivalent new green space into the development.

**Community generated development ideas.** The community encourages development that would extend/restore the urban fabric along Shady Avenue as it approaches Penn Avenue. This streetscape is envisioned as a residential-scale, tree-lined main street with intimate sidewalks, nice homes, and green landscaping. Community members suggested meetings with Echo, the owner of the Giant Eagle site, to discuss redevelopment alternatives. Some suggested converting the ends of the Giant Eagle site on Shady Avenue and on Penn Avenue into usable public open spaces. The group also suggested redeveloping the Penn Avenue/Shady Avenue corner to function as a gateway to downtown East Liberty. Infrastructure improvements at Shady Avenue and Penn Avenue are recommended to manage the potential increase in traffic volume resulting from future Penn Avenue and East Liberty development. Physical modifications to the busway turnaround that would minimize neighborhood disturbance were encouraged. Other proposals included park-and-ride amenities and perhaps relocating the transit stop further east.

**Community priorities list.** New development should reinforce the traditional urban streetscape. Street trees are essential. Commercial development should take the form of mixed-style retail shops that serve neighborhood needs. Hours of operation should vary to provide an active street life at all times of the day. The streets should be well lit, safe, and green.

## ZONE 5: MELLON PARK

### *Revitalization & Reconnection*



**Existing conditions overview.** Pittsburgh Parks & Recreation maintains Mellon Park and operates the onsite Tennis Center. Other highly used athletic facilities include the playground, basketball courts, and the ball fields. The western corner of the park contains a wooded area with an accessible walking path. Basic restroom facilities and an off-street parking area are provided. Park-goers also make extensive use of the adjoining Reizenstein athletic field. Fifth Avenue separates the athletically oriented portion of Mellon Park from the arts-oriented green space to the south. Mature trees line much of Penn and Fifth Avenues.

**Community concerns about existing conditions.** Although highly active, some community members feel the park is more of a destination location rather than a community amenity. The park has weak relationships with the Point Breeze neighborhoods. Pedestrian access from the Fifth Avenue/Penn Avenue intersection is particularly difficult to navigate. The park is similarly isolated from the Shadyside residential area by large institutional footprints and associated security fencing. Cyclists feel the park's internal pathways are suboptimal for through-park bicycling. Although the ball fields are considered a significant amenity, restricted access and parking creates a bottleneck during game times. Some community members are concerned about the park's evening safety, especially along the relatively weak Reizenstein School edge. Penn Avenue's blank façade is also detrimental since it encourages drivers to speed and creates a void in the urban fabric.



**Community generated ideas to improve access and neighborhood presence.** The current "front door" entrance from Fifth Avenue could be re-invented and de-cluttered to create a more welcoming threshold. Residents suggested infrastructure proposals that would improve navigability at the Fifth Avenue/Penn Avenue intersection, and proposed installing a pedestrian activated traffic signal. Community members want to see new cyclist and pedestrian access points from the Ellis School, Denniston Street, Penn Avenue, and Fifth Avenue. The group also expressed a desire to better connect the upper and lower portions of Mellon Park currently segregated by Fifth Avenue. Other suggestions included improved through-traffic paths for cyclists and more strategically located fence openings for pedestrians. Some proposed developing wrought iron fencing around the park to help define the edge and to give the park more character. Cyclists requested covered bike shelters.



**Community generated ideas to augment the park's activity level.** Using the park to host fairs, movies, and other cultural events can help make the park a more vibrant place and can help generate revenue for its upgrades and maintenance. Some community members proposed regrading a portion of the park near the large ball field to create an amphitheater. Since event parking is already problematic, better parking strategies are needed to accommodate current and future activity levels. Suggestions included developing on-site grass parking and shared parking arrangements, allowing Sunday parking along 5th Avenue, and/or closing Penn Avenue on Sundays or holidays. All agreed that the park should maintain balance between active, passive, and special event uses. Other ideas included updating the playground, developing dog-friendly amenities, and installing bleacher seating for the fields. The suggestion to develop a perimeter running path was especially popular since it would provide a much needed community exercise amenity and would help activate the park edges.

**Community priorities list.** All community members expressed an interest in strengthening connections back to Shadyside's residential areas and improving accessibility from Penn Avenue and the Point Breeze neighborhoods. All agreed that no new land should be taken up with parking; however, existing parking locations near the school might be made more user friendly by improving the roads and access. All agreed that using some of the land associated with the Reizenstein property for parkland would make the park better suited for its current athletic uses. Widening Penn Avenue is only permissible if the health of the mature trees is preserved and if pedestrian crossing improvements (such as a pedestrian island) were made as part of the process.



## ZONE 6: GREENING PENN AVENUE

Green features of the Vision Plan include:

**Green Streetscapes:** Work with the City and Friends of the Urban Forest to maintain/grow the health of Penn Avenue's trees.

**Green Transportation Corridor:** Identify traffic calming techniques, pedestrian friendly crossings, and transit stops integrated with new construction wherever possible.

**Green Buildings:** All projects shall commit to LEED certification; government subsidized projects (TIFs, etc.) should be mandatory. Further subsidies for private development should not continue trends of subsidizing parking but rather improved pedestrian connections described in the plan.

At the second community meeting residents spoke passionately about the need for a green Penn Avenue, both for the natural and built environments resulting in the creation of this sixth part of the Vision Plan. Concern was expressed that the proposed additional lane on Penn Avenue would endanger the alleé of mature oak trees (see illustration showing impact).



The Bakery Row Vision Plan places a high priority on sustainable design and in particular reducing the impact of automobiles and traffic. Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) has been identified by researchers as the first priority of sustainable urbanism. The Vision Plan's emphasis on improving the pedestrian environment and connections to existing residential neighborhoods must be a priority for any new development proposals.

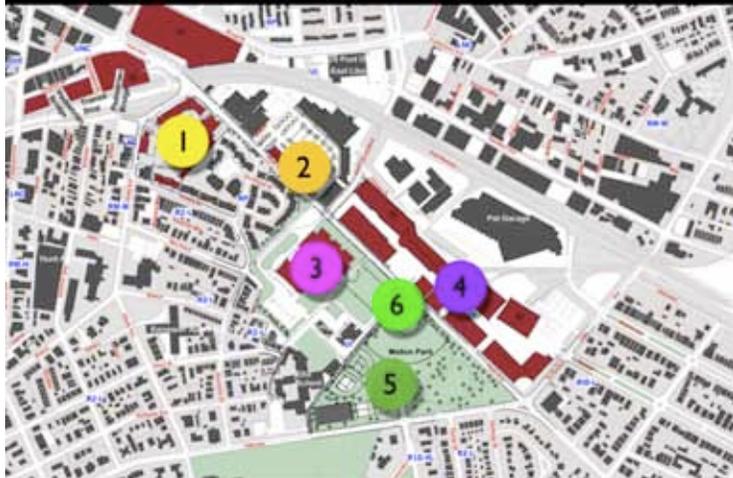
The recent announcement by Chatham University only reinforces the importance of a walkable and green Penn Avenue.

## Vision Study Areas

- 1 Shady & Penn Avenue: **Reconnecting To The Heart**
- 2 Reizenstein School Site: **Alternative Futures**
- 3 Bakery Square Retail Center: **Historic Anchor**
- 4 Penn & Fifth: **New Economy/New Urban Future**
- 5 Mellon Park: **Revitalization & Reconnection**
- 6 **Greening Penn Avenue**

### Bakery Row

### Summary Plan



## NEXT STEPS: SUGGESTED STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE THE VISION PLAN

1. Present the Plan to Council and the Planning Commission for endorsement
2. Develop a comprehensive transportation analysis that assesses the impact and improvements needed along the Penn Avenue Corridor and adjacent neighborhoods.
3. Meet with the Port Authority to review opportunities for a shuttle loop from Baum/Centre to Bakery Row, with East Liberty as the hub.
4. Meet with Echo/Giant Eagle to coordinate redevelopment options with the East-side 2-3 expansion.
5. Prepare proposals for private, local, state and federal funding of public improvements.
6. Meet with the City, Friends of the Urban Forest and Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy to review ideas for the renewal of Mellon Park.
7. Meet with Chatham University and the Ellis School to continue dialog and updates
8. Meet with the School District to track the Reizenstein School redevelopment and Redesign with neighborhood input.
9. Present/promote the Vision Plan to community and business groups.
10. Create a standing review committee, similar to Baum/Centre Planning Initiative, to track and review new development proposals.

## **APPENDIX 1:**

### **Bakery Row District Development Strategy Base Conditions Memorandum**

**August 2007**

Prepared for: East Liberty Development, Inc.  
Prepared by: Urban Partners

Urban Partners has been retained by East Liberty Development, Inc. (ELDI) to evaluate development strategies for the Bakery Row District of East Liberty and Shadyside in light of current proposed development and pressures. (See **Map 1** for the boundaries of Bakery Row.) We have interviewed the majority of current property owners along Bakery Row as well as other major property owners in the immediate area. Using the information gathered from these meetings as well as market data and research, we have assessed the draft master plan for the Bakery Row area and determined key development sites for ELDI to consider when pursuing alternative development strategies.

The Bakery Row draft Master Plan defines five corridors located within Bakery Row. For this analysis, only two corridors are relevant, Corridors 2 and 3; however we will take into consideration all elements of the master plan when assessing each corridor. This memorandum will assess each of these corridors and determine the key elements that ELDI or other entities should focus on.

#### **Current Tenant Mix in Bakery Row**

A current inventory of all users within Bakery Row has been created. As detailed in **Table 1** below, Bakery Row is made up of office, industrial, retail, and civic uses. Not specified in Table 1, but along Bakery Row is Mellon Park which is located on the corner of Penn and Fifth Avenues and the Village of Shadyside, a residential townhome development backing up to Penn Avenue across from the Village at Eastside Shopping Center.

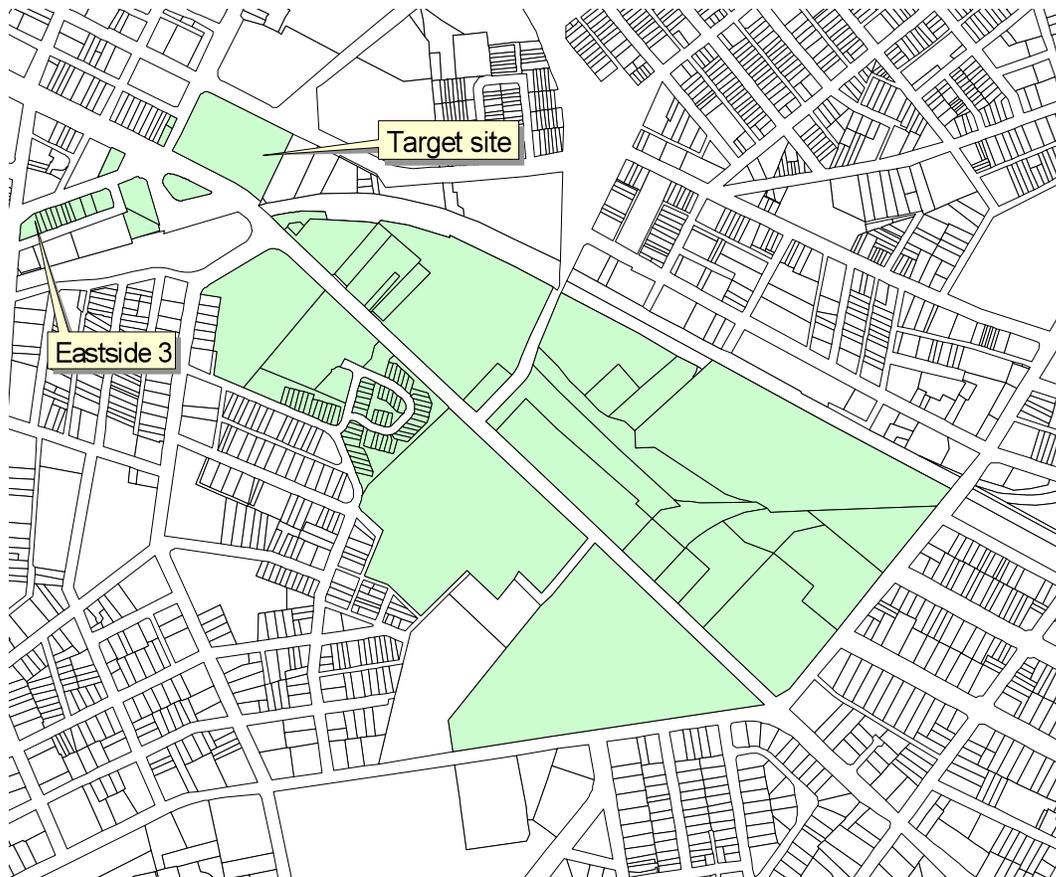
**Table 1: Current Inventory of Active Users Along Bakery Row**

Address	Current Use	Ownership	Business Activity	Vacancy
6320 Shakespeare Street	Shady Hill Plaza	Echo Development	Retail	None
6315 Penn Avenue	Residence	Equity Trust Company	None	None
6325 Penn Avenue	Club One	James Rosenbloom	Gym	None
6343 and 6401 Penn Avenue	Village at Eastside	Ballymoney Real Estates Services	Retail/Office	Significant
6425 Penn Avenue	Bakery Square?	Regional Industrial Development Corp.	Unknown	Total
6447 Penn Avenue	Verizon Facility	Verizon	Storage	None
6519 Penn Avenue	Matthews International	Matthews International	Commercial	Unknown
6543 Penn Avenue	Business Records Management	Commerical Storage Leasing	Commercial	Unknown
6555 Penn Avenue	CMU Storage	CMU	Storage	Unknown
6583 Penn Avenue	Bus Parking Facility	Port Authority	Bus Parking	None
6585 Penn Avenue	Management Science Associates	Penn Avenue Associates	Unknown	Unknown
129 Denniston Avenue	Reizenstein School	City of Pittsburgh	Office - SD	None

Source: Urban Partners

In addition to the above active users in Table 1, the Bakery Row District also includes the Mosites Company's Eastside 3 development along the 6000 block of Penn Circle South. This proposed development will be primarily retail and commercial development. Adjacent to Eastside 3 is the proposed site for the new Target retail center. Lastly, the District includes the property directly adjacent to Citizens Bank at the intersection of Penn Avenue and Penn Circle. This property is currently open space with minimal landscaping.

**Map 1: Bakery Row District**



## **Stable, Full-Utilized Properties**

### *Corridor 2:*

There are several properties on the north side of Corridor 2 that will most likely stay the same due to recent construction or the positions of current owners. The residence at 6315 Penn Avenue will likely remain unchanged. Based on interviews with property owners along Penn Avenue, it was stated that the owner has a vested interest in the home and will not sell. East Liberty Station will remain the same in the near future due to the new addition of Trader Joes. Also, the Village of Eastside with the new Staples will most likely remain in its current configuration. The property owner is more interested in attracting successful, long-term tenants than redesigning the shopping center. The owner believes the current configuration with the parking lot acting as a buffer between Penn Avenue and retail within the Center is a better approach than bringing the retail directly adjacent to the street.

On the south side of Penn Avenue, the Village of Shadyside, the townhome development abutting the Avenue, will remain. Due to the value of the townhomes, the backyard fencing will also most likely remain.

### *Corridor 3:*

On the north side of Penn Avenue, only the Port Authority's bus parking facility behind is considered a fully-utilized property. On the opposite side of the Avenue, Mellon Park is a key asset to the community and will remain constant in the near future. Additionally, the soccer field adjacent to the Ellis School will most likely be preserved due to community pressures.

## **Dynamic Properties**

### *Corridor 2:*

Due to the new development in the immediate area, the PAT Transit hub and pedestrian bridge may be modified. The transit hub and bridge were mentioned in several interviews as an area that needs immediate improvement. The area may get an upgrade with the addition of the proposed Target along Penn Avenue; however, improving the connectivity should be included in those upgrades.

Shady Hill Plaza with the Giant Eagle is a shopping center that is oriented away from Penn Avenue. Additionally, the loading dock and facility is located directly on Penn Avenue. The parking lot for the shopping center is used by shoppers as well as park and ride commuters (up to 75 spots are reserved for commuters). During interviews with Echo Development, we learned that Giant Eagle is amendable to reconfiguring Shady Hill Plaza and the Giant Eagle store; however, Giant Eagle requires adding a gasoline kiosk (a Get Go convenience store and pump station) to the shopping center if improvements are made. While the surrounding community is opposed to the gasoline kiosk, the Shady Hill Plaza is still a property that could be improved.

During interviews with Club One, it became evident that the fitness center would like to expand if space was available and the amount of parking remained the same or increased. Club One has recently remodeled certain areas of the center and would like to continue offering its customers racquetball courts which require significant space. However, the owner of Club One appeared amenable to expanding the facility as well as reconfiguring the layout of the center so that its blank façade along Penn Avenue was improved, such as creating windows into the Center and moving the Center's retail operations to face Penn Avenue or adding retail tenants with Penn Avenue entrances.

### *Corridor 3:*

The former Nabisco Plant is the proposed location of Bakery Square which consists of 216,000 SF of office space, 170,000 of retail space, and a 120-room hotel and parking garage. While this development will most likely occur in the near future, the users and exact square footage are still being determined.

All properties from the Bakery Square site to 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the north side of Penn Avenue are dynamic and could be redeveloped, particularly the Carnegie Mellon University property and the Business Records Management property.

On the south side of Penn Avenue, the Reizenstein School is closed and the School District will sell it. The current zoning for this property is residential and the surrounding community supports residential development at that site. However, the property could sell for a higher price if the zoning were changed and the property could be developed commercially.

### **Key Development Sites**

After interviewing property owners along Bakery Row and extensively surveying the Bakery Row corridor, there are several key themes and observations that should be noted:

- It is unlikely that this section of Bakery Row along Penn Avenue will be a two-sided retail district. While the proposed Bakery Square will introduce retail along one side of Penn Avenue, Mellon Park and the Village of Shadyside are properties that will not change in the near future. Additionally, the Reizenstein School is zoned residential and the surrounding community believes that this property should remain residential. Thus, there is little opportunity for retail development along the south side of the Avenue beyond Shady Hill Plaza.
- The section of Bakery Row between the new Trader Joe's store and the transit hub is not pedestrian friendly and offers no connectivity between Bakery Row and East Liberty. Instead, this portion of Penn Avenue is a high-speed automobile area that does not encourage the driver to slow down and focus on the retail along the Avenue.
- The two major shopping centers along Bakery Row, Shady Hill Plaza and the Village of Eastside, are either oriented away from Penn Avenue or set back with a parking lot separating the retail from the Avenue. This lack of retail directly abutting the Avenue causes drivers to continue at high speeds and discourages pedestrian traffic and shopping.

In light of these elements within Bakery Row, we have outlined the key development sites within Bakery Row in both Corridors:

*Corridor Two:*

1. The area surrounding the transit hub is key to improving the connectivity between East Liberty and Bakery Row. With the new Target development and proposed Eastside 3 development, ELDI should ensure that this area around the hub is not overlooked and should be included in development plans. This would include (1) the store/door orientation of the Eastside 3 development; (2) the potential for developing a store adjacent to the Citizen's Bank on Penn Avenue with orientation facing the busway; and (3) developing stores facing the Target on the northwest corner of Penn Avenue and Penn Circle. Eventually some store development on the portion of the busway site facing Penn Avenue would also be helpful in creating continuous retail pedestrian circulation.
2. Shady Hill Plaza contributes to the lack of connectivity between East Liberty and Bakery Row and discourages pedestrian traffic due to the center's parking lot location at the corner of Penn Avenue and Shady Avenue and the center's orientation away from Penn Avenue. While certain concessions need to be made, the owner of the Plaza (and the Giant Eagle management) may be willing to reconfigure the shopping center by (1) creating a mixed use retail/residential building at the corner of Shady Avenue and Penn Avenue; (2) screening or reconfiguring the loading docks facing Penn Avenue; and (3) adding structured parking to support this additional development.

*Corridor Three:*

1. The Reizenstein School is a key development site. While the parcel is zoned residential, there may be pressure on the City to change the zoning to commercial due to the property's value as a commercial site. However, it is likely that the parcel will remain residentially-zoned and alternative residential development scenarios should be outlined.
2. The on-going use of the Eichleay Building needs to be monitored since this parcel could provide the site for a substantial retail anchor that would further extend the active retail district.

## Appendix 2

### East Liberty Post

#### BLOG COMMENTS

**Brian Kavalukas** says

It is very important that this area of our community be developed in a responsible manner. The number one priority for bakery row is thoughtfully planned multi-family housing and some small retail development carefully targeting specific resident needs that are not served by surrounding areas. Residents and communities are what make city neighborhoods livable, and provide nexus for a broader, stable, and more equitable tax base. Warehouse-sized shopping centers with asphalt oceans do nothing to accomplish these objectives. Retail competition led only by economies of scale rather than differentiated offerings lead to monopoly and lack of diversity in a community. I am against the presence of any large scale retailer in this area. It doesn't make sense.

October 26th, 2006 | #

**Jon Waters** says

Having moved to Shadyside 2 years ago, I have been struck by the large swaths of urban blight of Pittsburgh. One of these areas is this row of warehouses called Bakery Row. The money that has been injected into the Baum corridor with the introduction of new retailing and especially a Trader Joe's is particularly welcome. I think that if retailing is introduced to Bakery row in the same way, then I would welcome it. When I visit younger, actively growing cities of the south and west, a major difference between Pittsburgh and these regions is that of the infrastructure. Here it is old and decaying. There it is new, clean and vibrant. Since Pittsburgh doesn't have weather, it needs to offer ease of living in order to stabilize and grow its population. Having a wide variety of convenient retailing will help improve the quality of life here. For residents of Shadyside, many of our retailing needs require us to go to the northside or southside of the city. The roads of Pittsburgh are narrow, the speed of traffic is poorly controlled, and the drivers don't follow many traffic laws. So, traveling to the Northside or Southside of the city to find these retailers is particularly unappealing. In order to enhance the livability of this area, I would strongly support development of this area.

October 26th, 2006 | #

**Shirley Tucker** says

is there even a remote possibility of having some unique mom-and-pop retail shops in addition to the big anonymous box stores and the smaller chain stores in any of the new developments in the East Liberty and other east end areas? Walnut as a neighborhood street is gone and Ellsworth may soon follow. I miss having owners know not only my name, but also my merchandise preferences!!

November 10th, 2006 | #

**Lars Olander** says

It would be great to see this old industrial site be redeveloped into a higher and better use that would be community serving. My fear is that it will present a disconnect from the core of the East Liberty business district, where we have been experiencing very positive retail and economic development the past several

years. If public money (i.e TIF financing) is to be used at the Bakery Square development, the benefit should be spread over the wider East Liberty community, not just a single development. Funding should be sought to strengthen the vehicular and pedestrian corridor between Bakery Square and the East Liberty business core as well as address the significant infrastructure deficiencies in E.L., namely conversion of the circle into two-way traffic. These improvements will benefit not only the Bakery Square development but also advance several other proposed promising developments in the district. A rising tide lifts all boats.

November 10th, 2006 | #

**neek** says

My top concern for the success of Bakery Row (and many others' in several subgroups) is the ability for people to move in and out of it easily. Transportation infrastructure has led to huge failures in East Liberty in the past. Putting aside what exactly happens inside the development, be it retail, commercial, light manufacturing, etc. the flow of people into and out of this parcel will be key to its success or failure as well as the subsequent impact on the adjacent neighborhoods. There have been plenty of discussion on the impact in Shadyside, Point Breeze, and East Liberty, but what about on the other side of Bakery Row - in Homewood and Larimer. I would like to see some of the traffic congestion problems addressed by also opening up access to Bakery Row from the opposite side of Fifth Avenue, ie from the busway in the rear, and possibly utilizing Hamilton Avenue to take the load off Penn and Fifth. Could something creative be done utilizing the rail bed in the rear, ie using some of that land to secure a path for bicycles and pedestrians to connect to some of these neighborhoods ? Answers to these question can only be resolved by the developers partnering w/ the City and Port Authority to come up with an overall creative vision. By considering some alternative to access from the Homewood/Larimer direction, we would not only be addressing the congestion problem that will exist, but it could also spur development towards the direction of these neighborhoods that could really use it.

November 10th, 2006 | #

**Paul Brecht** says

It is most important that we be sensitive to the many businesses which have invested in East Liberty over the years. They were here when we needed them. They kept East Liberty alive. We must not duplicate their services.

November 10th, 2006 | #

**Bill kolano** says

My 2 cents:

Both sides of the street must compliment each other in order to achieve the right magic in the center. This cannot be a block development. It has to be a street development.

The success of bakery row depends on what is done with the Reinzenstein property. The school building is a dreadful eyesore and fortress. The piece of land has the potential to link the expensive Shadyside residential streets to the new development. The Village of Shadyside development is a walled development

(necessary to be saleable at the time) and the Reizenstein school is an equally impenetrable island.

In order to insure Bakery Row's success, complimentary uses should be planned across Penn Avenue. If the building is converted to condominiums, a 'central park' may enhance value. If Nabisco is retail, additional retail should be considered. (If this happens, I would shelve plans for the revitalization of Penn Avenue inside the circle anytime soon). Adequate free parking must be immediately available for whatever use is planned.

Currently, automobile traffic on this stretch of Penn Avenue moves very quickly, using two full lanes of traffic in each direction. This is a good thing. I would hate to see on-street parking. There should be some thought as to how this stretch of Penn Avenue links to Baum Boulevard. I value Baum as a major vehicular connector (and as such should have no parking, and should not be 'walkable'). The core of East Liberty is an obstacle to quick circulation. The Bakery Row stretch of Penn Avenue continues the efficiency of Baum Boulevard travel. If vehicular circulation is retarded along Bakery Row, people may use Fifth Avenue and bypass East Liberty. Penn Avenue towards Wilksburg is also valued as a quick commuter route (with the exception of the dangerous and annoying parking near South Braddock).

November 10th, 2006 | #

**Andrew** says

Bill's comments make the point that if the Nabisco site is developed as a retail center it will negate the need for the redevelopment of Penn Ave inside the circle. It seems absurd that so much effort would be put into converting the existing Nabisco site as retail when we have so much infrastructure existing at the core of East Liberty just waiting to be given a chance to be given a new life as the commercial core it once was. Put the commercial and retail efforts back into the heart of this district!

November 13th, 2006 | #

**Dick Neff** says

As a neighbor and home owner in Shadyside in the number 4 area, my concern is that no more than local traffic be kept off the streets from Shady Avenue east to Mellon Park. This area is bordered by 5th Ave, Penn Ave, and Shady Avenues. This a residential area east of Shady Avenue including Shady Avenue. Highland Ave is almost all is almost all residential until it intersects with Center Ave. and should remain as it presently is.

There is no advantage to home owners in letting Big Box type retailers in establishing business outlets in these areas. Parking is a problem even for Trader Joes, and when Staples opens parking, and traffic will become a problem.

November 14th, 2006 | #

**Michael Thompson** says  
LARGER PARK FANTASY?

I agree the hopelessly ill-fated Reizenstein structures has to go. It should simply be

leveled and turned into more park. It would be cool, but incredibly expensive to link the expanded Mellon park above or below ground to the park across Fifth Avenue. A single systematic park would be a dream for everyone; it could really be stunning, and tie a lot of things together. Obviously the city could rebuild at the Reizenstein site if suddenly a flood of children overtook the city and new schools were needed.

Obviously it would be a noisy urban park, as the mostly unusable park areas are, except up above Fifth Ave. With more room though, a heavier greenbelt could be built around the perimeter of the existing park, or some of it. Surely there are examples of this in great cities. If people are worried about a Criminal Atmosphere developing, the magnificent gates across Fifth could be replicated in some modern, clever low cost way, and all of it gated at sundown. A system of cool gates would also provide a feeling of protection from the blast of traffic on Fifth and Penn. A shallow moat-like pool with a few fountains and waterlilies and ducks might also help with the need to make a break between the place where people are relaxing and children playing, and the crush of traffic. Again, I think a "water feature" like this could be designed so that it wouldn't become a trash trap like the otherwise lovely little ponds by the Highland Park Pool. The purpose again is psychological protection from the traffic. Bits of moat which make the place visible from the street might also make people more comfortable about "crime" and so on. I don't know what is psychologically best.

With this much space a pretty good jogging trail could be constructed - not my favorite activity, but it would bring a crowd through, who wouldn't have to drive and park if they were from Point Breeze, EL, Homewood or Shadyside.

But the barrier of Fifth Avenue is the completest nightmare imaginable to continuity - and obviously nothing can be done about the traffic carrying role of Fifth/Washington/Penn. (The idea, mentioned above, that traffic should not be impeded along these, but even expedited, by ruling out parking, seems true to me, as unneighborhood-making as it may seem; for one thing, it will make the commerce we are hoping will "revitalize" things more accessible to others.)

On the hare-brained, One Big Park idea, a link across Fifth would have to happen at the tennis courts or playground area. But with more space, there would be no trouble moving these things around. It would be coolest if it was a broad, landscaped above ground pedestrian walk that took account of the immense rise up above, so you start out low over by the tennis courts, and end up high....

I think I could do a really spectacular job with only a few hundred million...

November 19th, 2006 | #

**Paul Heckbert** says

To help encourage bicycle and pedestrian traffic, a bike path connecting Beechwood Blvd, on the south side of Fifth Ave, thru Mellon Park to East Liberty Blvd, across the street from Reizenstein. This would help connect Squirrel Hill, which is quite bicycle-friendly by virtue of the excellent and popular Beechwood Blvd bike lanes, and Highland Park, which is also bike-friendly. Unfortunately, the car traffic on Fifth and Penn Avenues acts like a brick wall to bicyclists at the northern end of Beechwood Blvd, making East Liberty bike-hostile.

It is currently possible to get from Beechwood to East Liberty Blvd on a bicycle by snaking through parking lots, narrow sidewalks, driveways, and risking your life along Penn Avenue, but it is not a route I would take my kids on. The new bike path I am proposing would improve things greatly. We could start without pedestrian bridges across Fifth or Penn (Michael Thompson's idea, above), for economy, but add them later if demand warrants. The existing traffic lights will work for now.

If, furthermore, a path connecting Mellon Park to the east end of Walnut Street were opened up (behind Ellis School), that would help connect Shadyside, Squirrel Hill, and East Liberty, and reduce the Fifth & Penn traffic bottleneck. People could walk or bike from their home in Shadyside to shopping in Bakery Row (Staples, Trader Joe's, Club One), instead of driving "around the horn" on Fifth and Penn.