

CHAPTER 4
THE URBAN HISTORICAL CONTEXT: PHILADELPHIA, REDEVELOPMENT, AND PUBLIC ART

In this chapter, I will provide a brief history of the development and redevelopment of Philadelphia's built environment, paying close attention to economic forces. Because one of the aims of this dissertation is to examine the linkages between the redeveloped urban environment and public art, I will interweave a history of the way public art manifests itself in the city. Before I introduce this investigation, it is necessary to clarify the concept of redevelopment, since it takes on a significantly different meaning depending on historical context.

As Carolyn Adams, et al. argue, the terms "redevelopment" and "Philadelphia" conjure up images of 1960s urban renewal projects like Society Hill and Independence Hall, or perhaps more recent ones like Market East, Penn's Landing or even Liberty Place. Yet, the urban spaces of Philadelphia have undergone constant restructuring since the city was first settled, so redevelopment is actually not a new phenomenon. The inevitable alteration of William Penn's grid system (Penn's vision emphasized open space, large residential yard lots, and flora—the "Green Country Towne" idea) to accommodate population increase through the partitioning of residential plots by adding alleys between main streets on the grid; the creation of the Fairmount Waterworks, Laurel Hill Cemetery, and Fairmount Park in the mid- to late- 19th century; the development of the new city center at Broad and Market streets with the construction of City Hall in the post-Civil War era; and the construction of Benjamin Franklin Parkway in the early 20th century all represent attempts to "overcome the past, remove obsolete structures, and stimulate economic growth" (Adams, et al. 1991: 101). Still, there are significant differences between redevelopment efforts of pre- and post-World War II Philadelphia. The most obvious difference is that all of the redevelopment projects undertaken before 1945 were driven by the growth and industrialization of the city and those thereafter were undertaken in the *absence* of industrial growth (Adams, et al. 1991: 103).

I begin this history of development and public art with the work of William Rush, the creator of the first large-scale public art works in Philadelphia. It is no coincidence that Rush embellished and celebrated engineering marvels, including a public sculpture for a fountain in Center Square, *Allegory of the Schuylkill River* (1809). Center Square was the site of Philadelphia's first major public water system. Later, when the water system was relocated to the present site of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Rush

was again involved with creating public sculpture for the waterworks engine houses—a seamless integration of art, architecture, and industry that celebrated water and the ability of human beings to exploit it. Short-term projects, like the Centennial Exposition of 1876, celebrated technology and industry integrating stunning architecture and public sculpture, the latter which represented anthropomorphic representations of prominent industries. By this time, Philadelphia was heavily industrialized with large-scale bureaucratic organizations and a managerial class—a fitting location for a celebration of progress. At around the same time, significant public sculpture honoring the “great men” of war and industry were installed on or near public buildings. The ideology and mystification of such celebrations were evident in sculptures idealizing Native Americans and cowboys, for example. By 1900, under the influence of the “city beautiful” movement unveiled at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, Philadelphia was preparing for a major redevelopment project that aimed to remake a portion of the city into an area reminiscent of the grandeur of Paris and Washington D.C.—the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. The redevelopment of the Parkway area marked a watershed in the history of Philadelphia’s built environment. It was the last major project undertaken during the expansion of industrial capitalism. The terms “development” and “redevelopment” now take on a different connotation, referring to projects realized in a state of industrial decline. By the post-World War II period, Philadelphia appeared worn out, with crumbling infrastructure, declining population, loss of industry, and unemployment. Philadelphia is now the leader among large American cities in terms of population decline (Downs 1997).

In the wake of deindustrialization, Philadelphia devised redevelopment strategies in order to prevent the city from being eclipsed by the suburbs. In order to make Philadelphia more automobile friendly, highways were built and improved, streets widened, and parking garages built. Commuter access was improved through better commuter rail line linkage. However, accessibility meant little if Philadelphia was not attractive to potential tourists or new residents. New sports facilities, museums, convention facilities and hotels, and shopping centers were targeted for expansion, not merely to offer job opportunities, but to announce Philadelphia’s arrival in the service economy. The second goal of redevelopment was to replace the built environment of the old industrial regime with that of the service-corporate economy emerging in Philadelphia. Old downtown factories and warehouses, train tracks and

stations, narrow streets and alleys were demolished and new skyscrapers, hotels, restaurants, and retail outlets were erected. Finally, if the new service sector professional class will work in the city, they must also live in the city. Redevelopment, thus, attempts to increase the white middle class population and lessen the proportion of poor, unemployed, and minority residents. Historic districts, like Society Hill, were gentrified, high-rise luxury apartments buildings were built and residential density was reduced in certain areas to entice those with suburban sensibilities (Adams, et al. 1991). During the era of postindustrial redevelopment, it became evident to urban planners that public art needed to be included in new building projects in order to compensate for the disappearance of ornament on architecture and the increasingly bleak urban environment as exemplified in the International Style (Bach 1992). In order to address these issues, “percent-for-art” regulations were adopted in which one percent of construction funds were to be set aside for fine art.

After I relate the historical context of the integration of public art with the built environment, attention will be paid to contemporary Philadelphia. The city is in the process of economically restructuring itself as it deindustrializes. Much of these efforts are literally about structure—the renovation of former industrial buildings and banks for hotels and apartment buildings, and the creation of new ones for entertainment and art-related activities. Such projects focus on what Zukin might term “landscapes of consumption,” built environments provided to tourists or middle- and upper- strata service economy workers which the city desires to attract. While Schuylkill River Park (SRP) is still in the planning stages, there has been some articulation by its planners to direct development toward a destination park for tourists. Recently, as mentioned previously, a luxury apartment building, created from a former industrial building, opened across the street from SRP. As boosters have argued, and this will be detailed in Chapter 5, SRP has the potential for substantial economic impact on Center City, Philadelphia.

Philadelphia’s Rise: Industrial Growth and Public Art

Philadelphia began its urban existence as a colonial port city, with residences and economic activities concentrated along the Delaware River. The original grid as laid out by William Penn in 1682 comprised only what is today considered downtown, or Center City (Goode and Schneider 1994: 32). During its years of industrial growth, from 1830-1880, Philadelphia was one of the largest centers on the

eastern seaboard for textile, garment, carpet, printing, publishing, foundry and machine manufacture. Industrial areas were located along the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers. In the eastern section of the city, industry spanned along the Delaware north, in such neighborhoods as Northern Liberties, Kensington, and Richmond, and south, in neighborhoods including Southwark and Moyamensing. The western shore of the city, along the Schuylkill River, was known for textile mills, among other industries, and working class enclaves, such as Manayunk, and Schuylkill, an Irish neighborhood whose vestiges still exist near SRP (Goode and Schneider 1994: 32; Clark 1980).

Philadelphia emerged as a major port and shipbuilding center at the end of the 18th century and provided opportunities for craftsmen who carved figureheads and ornaments for the maritime industries. One such artisan was William Rush, a woodcarver's son who made the transition from craftsmen to sculptor (the discussion on Rush and his contributions to Philadelphia public art, which follows below, is from Bach 1992: 26-31). Once proclaimed the "father of American Sculpture," his concern for civic improvement, his work on public buildings and park plans, and his collaboration with architects all anticipated the directions public art would take in America. Rush was responsible for creating America's first publicly funded decorative fountain, *Water Nymph and Bittern or Allegory of the Schuylkill River*, installed in 1809, in Center Square, future site of City Hall. Center Square featured a public water system where water was pumped from the Schuylkill River into an elevated water tank and Rush's fountain was funded as an embellishment. Soon after installation, walkways and trees were added and Center Square became Philadelphia's first public garden.

By 1812, the waterworks at Center Square proved insufficient and a new system was devised which would pump water from the Schuylkill River to an elevated reservoir, the present site of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, from which it flowed by gravity to the city below. Soon, civic pride dictated that the area surrounding the waterworks be landscaped and extended to a thirty acre garden amenity. Walkways, lawns, and sculpture enhanced the waterworks, which would eventually become the nucleus of the extensive Fairmount Park System (of which SRP would later become an addition). Rush's allegorical sculptures, *The Schuylkill Freed* and *The Schuylkill Chained*, were placed above entrances to the waterworks engine houses in 1825 and existing Rush sculptures were added to the site. Opened in 1825, the

“Fair Mount Gardens” was a pleasure garden and showcase for art and industry, combining an engineering marvel embodied in the pump mechanisms, Frederick Graff’s Greek Revival architecture, landscaping, and Rush’s sculpture. It was also among the first international tourist attractions in the city.

In 1836, the Laurel Hill Cemetery was opened in a rural section of Philadelphia, three miles northwest of Center City (this discussion draws from Bach 1992: 36-40). At the height of its popularity, the owners of the cemetery had to issue admission tickets in order to control the steady stream of visitors to the site. Like the waterworks, Laurel Hill Cemetery became a place for social gathering, a rural retreat for urbanites, an environment for meditation, inspiration, and a kind of outdoor museum of sculpture.

According to Penny Bach:

Laurel Hill was a forerunner of the planned urban park and sculpture garden. At a time when sculpture was confined to niches or otherwise subordinated to architecture, the arrival of the garden cemetery provided a wholly new setting for public sculpture in Philadelphia (1992:36).

A number of reasons, both historical and practical, converged to make Laurel Hill. By the middle of the 19th century, America was undergoing a fascination with the rural landscape. Ralph Waldo Emerson’s essay “Nature” was published in 1837 and Henry David Thoreau published *Walden* in 1854. Landscape painting was flourishing. John Ruskin’s essays encouraged an escape to country dwellings for those who could afford them and for those less fortunate, city parks for growing urban populations. On the more pragmatic end of the spectrum, the developers of Laurel Hill noted that a non-sectarian rural cemetery offered a solution to the problem of finding burial sites in an expanding city. Laurel Hill continues to offer the spectator a landscape punctuated by a variety of monuments offering a symbolic language in the form of sculpture. For example, Greek forms were used to express democratic ideals, Middle Eastern styles were used for Jewish patrons, a broken column signified a life cut short, a broken urn represented a violent end, and sleeping lambs were often associated with women and children.

The Fairmount Waterworks and surrounding garden became the nucleus of Fairmount Park, and Laurel Hill cemetery, while never officially a part of Fairmount Park, was located adjacent to it (in Hunting Park), and contributed to a growing appreciation of the public benefits of landscaped gardens. During the 1850s and 60s, City Council approved the acquisition of the Robert Morris estate, later owned by Richard Pratt, who rebuilt Morris’ mansion and created an extensive garden; acreage on both banks of the

Schuylkill River; and land northwest of the city in the Wissahickon Valley. In 1867, Fairmount Park was officially created, comprising the aforementioned areas, and eventually totaling more than 9,000 acres. In 1872, as Fairmount Park expanded and more extensive landscaping was undertaken, the Fairmount Park Art Association was established and became the nation's first public art organization (it is a private, non-profit citizen's organization). Originally conceived to enhance Fairmount Park through the commissioning of outdoor sculpture, the concerns of the organization are now city-wide (Bach 1992: 41-43).

By 1880, Philadelphia was marked by newly rationalized production systems, innovative technology, and large-scale bureaucratic organizations and a managerial class. As an index of Philadelphia's growing status as an industrial giant, the city was selected as the site for the National Centennial Exposition of 1876—a celebration of technology and industry (Goode and Schneider 1994: 33). Public statuary decorated the exterior of the Centennial Art Gallery, now Memorial Hall, celebrating prominent industries. At each corner of the base of the building's glass and iron dome still stand colossal figures symbolizing Industry, Commerce, Agriculture, and Mining. The main cornice of Memorial Hall features allegorical figures representing Science and Art (Bach 1992: 53).

At the turn of the 19th century, the Fairmount Park Art Association commissioned a variety of public artworks, both copies of European masterpieces, and original work, usually honoring “great” men. The latter embodied a renewed patriotism and confidence in a unified country, which had recently undergone a bloody civil war. Many sculptural commissions of this period were intended for public buildings and were officially endorsed by governmental agencies at all levels. Immortalized and cast in bronze, statesmen, presidents, generals, and soldiers became permanent fixtures in American cities. In Philadelphia, the Fairmount Park Art Association commissioned a variety of works for placement in parks, squares, libraries, the Zoo, or wherever people congregated during their daily lives. Of “the hero on the horse” variety, perhaps the most well-known is *General Ulysses S. Grant* by Daniel Chester French and Edward C. Potter. Local heroes, including historic figures, bankers, industrialists, and civic leaders, were also honored with monuments, both privately and publicly commissioned. Among these are: *Morton Michael*, former mayor and first president of the Fairmount Park Commission; *Tedyuscung*, a Lenni Lenape chief; *Matthias William Baldwin*, the founder of the Baldwin Locomotive Works; *John Christian Bullitt*, a

financier and advocate of civic reform; and *Joseph Leidy*, a natural scientist and pioneer in paleontology (Bach 1992: 63).

As the American frontier drew to a close—Turner delivered his renowned essay “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” in 1893 and in that same year, the Dawes Commission paved the way for an aggressive revoking of Indian land holdings and dissolution of tribal governments—Philadelphia contributed to the mythology of the American West by commissioning three major works: John J. Boyle’s *Stone Age in America*, a sculpture featuring an idealization of a Native American woman with her two children created under the popular assumption that Native Americans were the living “primitives” of another era; Cyrus Dallin’s *Medicine Man*, an equestrian statue featuring another idealization of Native American people, in this case, a holy man; and Frederic Remington’s *Cowboy*, an equestrian statue of the Native American’s conqueror (Bach 1992: 67) As Penny Bach notes, unveilings and dedications of such public works as the ones mentioned above were planned to inspire patriotic spirit. The 19th century tradition of public spectacle and pageantry included bunting, music, speeches, fireworks, and a holiday from work. Dedications were important events that invited public participation (1992: 68).

By 1900, Philadelphia was poised to embark on a significant redevelopment project which owed its origins to the “city beautiful” movement unveiled at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The exposition fairground showcased a unified, planned environment punctuated by classical buildings, elaborate sculptural ornamentation, wide boulevards, and broad vistas. In Philadelphia, the influence of this movement resulted in the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. The Parkway Plan was proposed in an attempt to connect Fairmount Park with Center City utilizing a boulevard to link two architectural “points:” an art museum, which would be constructed on the site of the old reservoir, and the recently completed City Hall. The boulevard would serve as a counterpoint to William Penn’s original grid system, cutting a diagonal route through the city, and afforded a grand opportunity for architectural effects, including monuments, statuary, and fountains (Bach 1992: 76-78). The diagonal route was reminiscent of the Champ Elysées or the great boulevards of Washington D.C., which also echoed French urban planning, and represented Philadelphia’s attempt at urban grandeur. The construction of the Parkway required \$25 million of public

money and the demolition of more than a thousand buildings, many of them working class homes (Adams et al. 1991: 101).

While originally calling for a parkway lined with buildings, plans were changed under the leadership of the French landscape architect, Jacques Gréber, upon completion of the demolition of the existing neighborhoods in 1917, to create a more open area with green spaces. Public art figured prominently in the new design. In Logan Circle, Alexander Stirling Calder's *Swann Memorial Fountain* was installed in 1924. Rudolf Siemering's *Washington Monument*, completed and installed in 1897 near Fairmount Park's Green Street entrance, was moved to its present location in front of the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1928, the year the Museum was completed. Other commissions that dovetailed with the completion of the Parkway included the *Shakespeare Memorial*, placed in front of the Free Library in 1926; Auguste Rodin's *The Gates of Hell* and *The Thinker*, which were added to the collection of public art on the Parkway upon the completion of the Rodin Museum in 1929; Carl Paul Jennewein's *North Pediment* crowned the Philadelphia Museum of Art with polychromatic elements inspired by figures from the Parthenon, in 1933 (Bach 1992: 123-124).

Philadelphia's Decline: Redevelopment and the Post-War Years

The redevelopment of the Parkway area marked a watershed in the history of Philadelphia's built environment—it was among the last of the major projects undertaken during the expansion of industrial capitalism, which saw the beginning of its decline during the Great Depression. Echoing Adams et al., the word “redevelopment” now takes on different meaning, and refers to projects realized in a state of industrial decline. David Harvey has been an important figure in arguing how capitalist accumulation affects the production of space and the built environment. Now that industrial capitalism is waning, Harvey argues that an important shift has taken place: cities are now marked by consumption, not production, thus altering urban space. According to Harvey:

The American city is now designed to stimulate consumption. The emphasis upon sprawl, individualized modes of consumption, owner-occupancy, and the like, is to be interpreted as one of several responses to the under-consumption problems of the 1930s (military expenditures being another). And it is in these terms, too, that we can interpret how the financial superstructure, itself created in response to the crisis conditions of the 1930s, so mediated the flow of investment into the urban infrastructure, including housing, that its mediations served to transform cities once fashioned as the ‘workshops of industrial

society' into cities for the artificial stimulation of consumption (Harvey quoted in Gottdiener 1985: 94).

But before consumption can be “artificially stimulated,” the city must be presented as the kind of place attractive to consumers. Redevelopment, in the lexicon of contemporary urban discourse, therefore, is the catalyst for consumption, a means to stimulate economic growth in the absence of industrialization.

Urban redevelopment and its resulting landscapes owe their origins to transformations in the capitalist system which surfaced in the post-World War II period. As Mark Gottdiener relates, Ernest Mandel has argued that our current stage of capitalism, which he terms late capitalism, is marked by three features that differentiate this stage from the previous one: 1) the rise of multinational corporations, an international division of labor, and a growing concentration of industry, as exemplified by increased frequency of mergers; 2) the increased cooperation of the state and private enterprise in economic affairs; 3) the rise of knowledge and technology as forces of production. These three transformations affect space in the following ways: suburbanization, the transformation of agriculture to agribusiness, the shift in industry from the rustbelt of the East and Mid-west to the sunbelt of the Southwest, and the restructuring of the central city (Gottdiener 1985: 57). Urban redevelopment is essentially a spatial-economic reaction to industrial decline—a move to revitalize “worn-out” urban industrial economies—and is among a myriad of signifiers of the service economy.

By the late 1940s, Philadelphia indeed appeared to be well worn, with 60 percent of its industrial buildings obsolete and 30 thousand properties vacant (Adams, et al. 1991: 103). Infrastructure began suffering in the Depression, and restrictions on investment due to World War II prevented any improvement to the built environment in the 1940s (Adams, et al. 1991: 103). The city's physical plant consisted of an industrial landscape of a bygone era: old manufacturing lofts, narrow streets, and tiny houses crammed on any available space. Furthermore, Philadelphia's population began to decline after World War II, while suburban populations grew. Throughout the 1950s and 60s, business and industry moved to the suburbs as well as residents, draining the city's tax base in the process. Between 1954 and 1977 the number of retail stores in Philadelphia's Central Business District decreased by 32 percent and the Central Business District's share of the retail sales in the region shrank from 15 to 6 percent (Adams, et al.

1991: 103). In order to combat the nationwide decline in manufacturing, older rustbelt cities like Philadelphia had to convince businesses and investors that they were regional hubs of economic activity. What this meant was cities now had to compete with the suburbs for business, industry, and residents.

Between 1955 and 1975, 75 percent of Philadelphia's manufacturing jobs were lost (Adams, et al. 1991). The loss of industry was the result of both national and global trends. Many economic analysts argue that the 1970s marks a watershed in the economy where new global economic integration drastically affected the U.S. economy (Goldsmith and Blakely in Goode and Schneider 1994: 35). Philadelphia area firms were bought by large multinationals; executives decided to seek cheaper, non-unionized labor by relocating to the sunbelt or offshore. Still, other losses to Philadelphia industry occurred when local firms moved to the suburbs in search of less tax pressure and cheaper, more abundant land. If industry was locating elsewhere, so was the labor force. According to Goode and Schneider:

Familiar public policies accounted for much of the redistribution of population to the suburbs after World War II—investment in new roads and corresponding disinvestment in public transportation, and the favoring of new-home construction by federal mortgage subsidy programs and corresponding redlining or disinvestment in city neighborhoods. Ultimately, the loss of population and jobs to the suburbs has critically wounded the city's tax base, creating the decline in quality of life (1994:35).

According to figures released by the U.S. Census Bureau in 1997, during the years 1990-96, Philadelphia lost 7 percent of its population, while counties in the suburban rim soared in terms of growth. Montgomery County, for example, grew by 61 percent. Philadelphia was the leader among large American cities in terms of population decline (Detroit and Chicago were ranked second and third, with 3 and 2 percent population drops, respectively) (Downs 1997).

The pattern of population, jobs, and tax base relocation to Philadelphia's surrounding suburbs is a pattern typical of old manufacturing cities, but, like the statistics mentioned above, Philadelphia seems to be the leader of such losses nationwide. A recent comparative study shows that Philadelphia has lost many more economic activities to the suburbs than forty-two comparable Standard Metropolitan Statistic Areas (Summers and Luce in Goode and Schneider 1994: 30). Such misfortune has generated class conflict, "usually expressed as city against suburb, downtown against neighborhood, and race against race" (Goode and Schneider 1994: 30). The exodus of residents has left Philadelphia with a population that is older, poorer, and more nonwhite than the suburbs (1994: 30).

The chief goal of Philadelphia's post-World War II redevelopment was to prevent Center City from being eclipsed by the suburbs. In order to make Philadelphia more accessible to the automobile, highways were built and improved in and around the city, streets widened, and parking garages constructed. Commuter access was improved by linking commuter rail lines, adding more suburban transit lines, and rehabilitating ailing subway systems. Accessibility meant little if Philadelphia itself was not attractive to potential tourists or residents. Amenities had to be strengthened in order to make Philadelphia the hub of the region. New sports facilities, museums, convention facilities and hotels, and shopping centers were planned and strategies to refurbish and market historic areas were devised. Universities and hospitals were targeted for expansion, not merely to boost job opportunities in the new service economy, but to announce Philadelphia's arrival in the service economy (Adams, et al. 1991: 104).

The second goal of redevelopment has been to replace the spaces of the industrial city with the spaces of the service-corporate economy emerging in Philadelphia. Old downtown factories and warehouses, train tracks and stations, narrow streets and alleys were demolished and new skyscrapers, hotels, restaurants, and retail outlets were erected (Adams, et al. 1991: 104).

Finally, according to Adams et al. "redevelopment aimed to change the distribution of the population in the metropolitan area to correspond with the changing function of the city" (1991:104). In other words, if the new service sector professional class will work in the city, they must also live in the city. Redevelopment attempted (and continues to attempt) to increase the white middle class population and lessen the proportion of poor, unemployed, and minority residents. Historic districts, like Society Hill, were gentrified, high-rise luxury apartment buildings were built, and residential density was reduced in certain areas to entice those with suburban sensibilities. In short, "[m]aking the transition to a corporate service economy implied remaking the city to attract and retain white-collar classes as residents and to downplay the presence of the poor and working classes" (Adams, et al. 1991: 104). As Zukin, Boyer, and Sieber have argued in Chapter 2 and Deutsche intimates in Chapter 3, "remaking the city" is a process which relies not only on the allocation of money, property and labor, but on representations of the ascendant city.

Throughout the postwar period, redevelopment in Philadelphia has been mainly concentrated in Center City. Why? Because redevelopment is only possible with the support of private investment, which has historically viewed poorer areas of the city as too risky for investment dollars. No matter how large the public sector's start-up grants may be, it is still ultimately private sector dollars that pay for major construction costs. Of course, the public sector is instrumental in rallying support for redevelopment and this is accomplished in a number of ways. Public agencies (such as the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development; the local city planning commission, the Redevelopment Authority; the Industrial Development Corporation, and others) have coordinated major projects and have brought together private interest groups in the name of the common good—supposedly legitimating redevelopment for the “public” rather than just for the market. The public sector has used its legal authority, usually through eminent domain, to gain property from resistant owners and to reduce the costs of acquiring property, as was the case in the Redevelopment Authorities acquisition of former industrial space along the Schuylkill River to be eventually developed for recreational use. Yet, in the last instance, it is private investment that makes or breaks a redevelopment project (Adams, et al. 1991: 116) This raises the issue of public accountability in redevelopment strategies, since no incentive is powerful enough to entice investment in needy areas that the private sector views as unprofitable. If success is measured in dollars then the public sphere is only a marketplace. As one observer has remarked, the agencies “that control urban renewal in fact reinforce the ‘decisions’ of the marketplace . . . [and have contributed] not only to the dynamism of the downtown districts but also to the decay of the remainder of the city” (James O’Connor quoted in Adams, et al. 1991: 118). The bluriness between the state and the marketplace is symptomatic of the manner in which space is produced in our postindustrial era.

Therefore, while public agencies have played important roles in redevelopment, redevelopment in Philadelphia, indeed redevelopment in general, is ultimately the business of private enterprise, and private enterprise of a certain stripe—the service sector. The year 1948 marks the ascendancy of the new business elite, comprised of lawyers, bankers, and insurance executives, who would be instrumental in revitalizing a tired Philadelphia. Their organization, the Greater Philadelphia Movement (GPM), was not part of the established business community, and was in fact at odds with the Chamber of Commerce, who

represented the interests of the now waning industrial era: large manufacturers and transportation firms. The partners of the new service economy elite were the Young Turks, a political reform group interested in city planning. The Young Turks and the GPM argued that planning, political reform, and economic growth were interrelated issues. Philadelphia became one of the first cities to initiate the idea of the public-private partnership—the hallmark of redevelopment strategies nationwide (Adams, et al. 1991: 113).

There are two kinds of public-private partnerships that continue to operate in Philadelphia's redevelopment process: quasi-public agencies and coordination groups. The former were established to perform specific tasks as in the example of Old Philadelphia Development Corporation, which oversaw the revitalization of Society Hill, and Philadelphia Industrial Corporation, which arranges financing for the growth of manufacturing businesses. Coordination groups, like the Greater Philadelphia Movement, bring together both government and business leaders to initiate and carry out larger city-wide redevelopment strategies (Adams, et al. 1991: 113).

As mentioned above, Philadelphia was one of the first American cities to initiate a public-private venture, one which focused specifically on historic preservation and neighborhood revitalization. In order to better understand the context of redevelopment, it is worth relaying an abbreviated history of Philadelphia's postwar redevelopment. Philadelphia's success in turning a slum area into the luxury residential enclave of Society Hill would influence subsequent redevelopment policies throughout the United States. According to Christine Boyer, by the late 1940s,

Philadelphia had put into place a curious mixture of public and private organizations that over the next several decades would guide urban renewal and neighborhood redevelopment in line with the policies of historic preservation, inner city gentrification, and tourist and market development (Boyer 1994: 393).

The following discussion draws from Boyer's *The City of Collective Memory* (1994).

The agenda for 1944 was the modernization of downtown Philadelphia in order to make it automobile accessible. Proposals included the construction of off street and underground parking facilities, new bridges over the Schuylkill River, an elevated highway along the Delaware River, and the demolition of a huge viaduct, dubbed the Chinese Wall (paralleling what is now John F. Kennedy Boulevard), that brought the Pennsylvania railroad tracks across the Schuylkill River, through the city, to the old Broad Street station. But Philadelphia had major economic problems: Center City residential property values

were declining, banks were deinvesting in properties, the industrial base was declining, and its wealthy population was fleeing to the suburbs. Redevelopment had to focus on increasing property values and attracting the professional class back to the city. By 1948, nine districts were certified for redevelopment. Among the nine districts first selected were the Historic Independence Hall District and the Triangle, located between the Benjamin Franklin Parkway and Market street (Boyer 1994: 394).

Given Philadelphia's status as a colonial city, redevelopment, especially around Independence Hall, was carried out step by step with historic preservation. In 1944, plans had been initiated to make a formal setting for Independence Hall—a large urban park, with the Hall as its crown jewel. The park would not only showcase the historic integrity of colonial Philadelphia, but serve a practical link with the proposed downtown highway loop and as a graceful transition from an automobile to a pedestrian scale city. Models for the Independence Hall park area presented the space cleared of old factories and 19th and early 20th century buildings deemed “threatening” to colonial history. The L-shaped park would lead to a newly revitalized waterfront and across a refurbished district of colonial homes known as Society Hill, an area between Front and Eighth Streets and Walnut and Pine Streets. In 1947, Edmund Bacon, who later would serve as executive director of the City Planning Commission (1949-70), proposed a series of greenways or small parks and footpaths that would further link the Independence Hall area with Society Hill (Boyer 1994: 395). The project took until the mid-1960s to realize. In the Autumn of 1997, a new plan for Independence Park was initiated, which will “give back” the northern part of the park to the grid of the city. The late 20th century planners see Bacon's plan as too reliant on open space—space rarely utilized by the public—and devastating to historic grid patterns and buildings that did not fit into a colonial conception of history.

I.M. Pei won a 1958 architectural competition and designed three apartment towers near the southeastern edge of Society Hill and another two near Washington Square. It was obvious that private capital had to become even more involved if the revitalization of historic Philadelphia was to succeed. Thus, Old Philadelphia Development Corporation (ODC) was formed, with representatives drawn from banks, insurance companies and corporations to precipitate the private rehabilitation of hundreds of old houses. ODC contracted with the Redevelopment Authority, which held the power of eminent domain, to

condemn slum properties, to rehabilitate them, and to build on vacant lots. Previous residents could remain in the area only if they could afford to buy back their condemned homes from the Redevelopment Authority. They had to follow a timetable in rehabilitating their homes, as well as strict guidelines for proper maintenance and authentic historical preservation. Needless to say, few of the indigenous working class people could afford to stay. After much hesitation, the Federal Housing Administration finally permitted the construction of I.M. Pei Towers, for it feared that the luxury apartment buildings would become outposts in a sea of lower income housing. Slowly, a plan developed for the entire revitalization of Society Hill as an upper income residential enclave, and the first step towards redeveloping Center City Philadelphia had taken place (Boyer 1994: 396).

Adams et al. ask a critical question: Why has redevelopment in Philadelphia been so attractive to private business interests? They offer two explanations. The first reason for the involvement of business in redevelopment is based on the notion of “capital logic,” which stresses that capitalist accumulation strategies change over time and certain steps affecting space must be taken in order for profit-making to continue. Simply stated, the new service economy requires a certain scheme, redevelopment, that will assist in the destruction of physical structures and social relations of the old industrial regime to make way for new industries and a new class of worker (Adams et al. 1991: 114). The second reason that redevelopment has proven attractive to the private sector is the theory of land values. Investments in property will lose their value over time since the built environment always represents the past: having done one thing with a piece of property precludes using it for another purpose, at least without drastic structural changes and reinvestment. Since property values are always changing, parts of the built environment, and sometimes entire sections of cities, may be nearly worthless at any given time. Redevelopment allows for the destruction of such worthless structures to make way for the new and valuable. The normal process of economic growth thus requires the destruction of past investment in the form of the built environment (Adams et al. 1991: 114-115).

Providing context on aspects of Philadelphia’s postwar development shines light on the manner in which the Schuylkill River Development Council (SRDC) operates. Like Mandel argues, in postindustrial capitalism, cooperation of the state and private enterprise becomes more pronounced and, according to

Adams et al., this climate gives rise to public-private partnerships in the development process. SRDC functions as a quasi-public agency, a development corporation brought into existence in order to perform a specific project or neighborhood-oriented development task. Quasi-public agencies are created by individuals functioning outside the domain of government, as in the case of SRDC, which was incepted by neighborhood resident, John Randolph, who selects his own board of advisors. Quasi-public agencies are, therefore, private development corporations that, as I will explain below with the example of SRDC, obtain funding from both private and public sources. While the state plays some role in legitimizing these organizations in terms of awarding grants for building projects, they do not have to answer to governmental bodies. As I will explain in Chapter 5 and 6, the private nature of SRDC buffered the organization from the local community. Since SRDC is not technically accountable to local residents, this has created some tension between SRDC and the community. SRDC exemplifies the private-public partnership of the quasi-public development corporation.

SRDC's general operating costs are funded mainly by private contributions. It received a start-up grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts, a private foundation, for \$50 thousand in 1992 and later received a \$75 thousand challenge grant from Pew by raising nearly \$500 thousand in fiscal year 1994-95. Annual private contributions earmarked for the operating budget averaged \$400 thousand out of a total budget of \$461 thousand for the fiscal year 1994-1995, with significant corporate gifts provided by Core States Bank (\$10 thousand), PNC Bank, Mellon/PSFS and Sun Company (\$5 thousand each) (SRDC 1996a: 8). Major construction projects undertaken thus far have been paid for with federal and city grants; upcoming construction projects will be funded on the federal, local, and state levels. Bulkheading to firm up the Schuylkill shore line was funded by a federal grant of approximately \$3.8 million with approximately \$932 thousand in additional grants provided by the city (SRDC 1996a: 8). The federal contribution for bulkheading originated from the Intermodal Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), a federal mandate to explore and fund non-automobile forms of transportation in order to reduce highway congestion and pollution (SRDC 1993). Since one of the chief goals of SRDC is to link the Fairmount Park bicycle path to Center City with the completion of a river esplanade in SRP, as well as exploring waterborne forms of transportation on the Schuylkill River, SRDC was a likely candidate for an ISTEA grant. The city matched

the ISTE A grant with a 20 percent contribution (of the ISTE A total) from the Streets Department. The public art projects have a budget of \$500 thousand; during my tenure on the public art advisory committee (from December 1995-December 1996), approximately \$67 thousand was raised from grants contributed by three private foundations: The Samuel S. Fels Fund, The Dolfinger McMahon Foundation, and The William Penn Foundation. In spring 1998, the National Endowment for the Arts awarded the SRDC \$75 thousand for public art projects. In Chapter 5, I will provide more context on SRDC, explaining the urban Philadelphia context that is partially responsible for the genesis of that organization.

Public Art and Postindustrial Redevelopment

With redevelopment came an urban austerity as exemplified in International Style office buildings, which eschewed all ornamentation, and offered instead an over-abundance of dull, concrete walkways and plazas. The construction of Penn Center in the mid-1950s epitomized the neglect of planned, artistically enlivened social spaces. Although City Planning Commissioner Edmund Bacon originally called for a design strategy in which new buildings be placed on a north-south axis, allowing light to reach a unique landscaped concourse, the leadership of the Pennsylvania Railroad altered the plan. The new alignment ran east to west, and most of the proposed garden area was roofed over. It became obvious to urban planning professionals that public art needed to be included in new building projects in order to compensate for the disappearance of ornament from architecture; it was believed that art might be able to save an increasingly bleak urban environment (Bach 1992: 126-130).

In order to address these issues, “percent-for-art” regulations were adopted in which one percent of construction funds were to be set aside for fine art. Philadelphia established two different percent-for-art programs in 1959: one for city construction projects, created through an ordinance of City Council, and another for privately redeveloped property, created through a resolution by the Redevelopment Authority (RDA). Philadelphia was the first city in the United States to ratify such percent-for-art ordinances.

The resolution passed by the RDA would require the integration of art with housing, office buildings, industrial plants, hospitals, churches, schools, and even retail stores. Ultimate responsibility for the selection of the work belongs to the developer, although the RDA established a Fine Arts Program to review proposals, develop policy, and monitor compliance. A full-time fine arts coordinator works with a

volunteer appointed committee and serves as a liaison with developers and artists. (The current director of the RDA's Fine Arts Program sat on the Schuylkill River Development Council's public art advisory committee with me). The architect's role is less clearly defined and ranges from no involvement to close interaction (Bach 1992: 131). An example of the power of the developer to veto potential art projects occurred in the public art selection process for the new Sansom Common retail/hotel complex, next to the Institute of Contemporary Art, at the University of Pennsylvania. After the appointed jury selected the renowned artist Vito Acconci for the commission (and after much time and money was spent), the developer declined Acconci's proposal, a project that included seating, tree planting, and sail-like sculptures, citing that the art would obstruct the visibility of retail signage. No public art project has been realized on the site; the money allocated by the developer and the University of Pennsylvania for public art at Sansom Common was proposed for Schuylkill River Park, which will be explained in detail later. Thus, the public art process is subject to bureaucratic labyrinth and the whim of private interests.

The intent of the city's ordinance, entitled "Aesthetic Ornamentation of City Structures," was similar to the RDA's initiative, but the public art process was even more apt to become stymied in bureaucracy. City procedure lacked coordination and gave responsibility for selecting artists to the project architect, with final approval under the jurisdiction of the city's Art Commission. The results depended on the goodwill of the architect or on the determination of an enlightened administrator. To complicate matters even further, projects fell under the separate auspices of the Department of Public Property, the Department of Recreation, the Free Library, and the Fairmount Park Commission (Bach 1992:31).

In addition to the initiation of Philadelphia's percent-for-art ordinances, federal programs assist in the realization of the city's public art projects. In 1963, the federal government's General Services Administration (GSA) initiated a policy of spending one-half of one percent of the cost of new or renovated federal buildings for fine art. Called the Art-in-Architecture Program, it had a slow start due to disagreement over selection procedure. Eventually, the program was saved by integrating panels of art professionals appointed by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). In 1974, Philadelphia received its first GSA commissioned public art at local federal building sites (Bach 1992: 134).

Soon after the GSA's Art-in-Architecture Program, the NEA established its Art in Public Places Program in 1967 to provide matching funds for public art projects initiated by communities across the United States. The first major commission funded by this program was Alexander Calder's *La Grande Vitesse* for Grand Rapids Michigan. Installed in 1969 to mixed public response, the sculpture eventually became a symbol of the revitalization of the city. Philadelphia's initial encounter with the NEA's Art in Public Places Program was less than successful. In 1967, the agency contributed funds to the purchase of a Calder, which was placed in Penn Center. Its scale never quite fit the site, and it was removed in the mid-1970s, where it remains in storage (Bach 1992: 135). Other Art in Public Places works have proven more longstanding. Alexander Liberman's lipstick-like *Covenant* situated along Locust Walk (installed in 1975) and Claes Oldenburg's *Split Button* in front of Van Pelt Library (installed in 1985), both on the University of Pennsylvania campus, have created a sense of place (1992: 135).

The Present and Prospect for the Future

Philadelphia faces major obstacles in its restructuring as a postindustrial city. Areas earmarked for development strategies focus on high technology and the service sector, despite indications that limit the possibilities for growth along these lines (Goode and Schneider 1994: 31). Philadelphia is poorly situated relative to other Northeast urban areas. Philadelphia competes with Washington and New York, which are stronger economically and politically, for dominance in the service industry sector. It has not been able to make its central location into an advantage. In fact, since air transportation favors Washington and New York, "location becomes a disadvantage in an international strategy to revive import-export" (1994:31). Furthermore, unlike Pittsburgh, Philadelphia does not have a clearly defined region to serve, which would enhance its position as a corporate control center. Because of poor relationships with the state legislature and community opposition to new highway construction, the construction of statewide railways and roads has left Philadelphia "poorly situated as a port or major transportation hub for the region in comparison with such smaller cities as Baltimore" (1994: 31). As of 1994, Philadelphia lagged behind Washington D.C., Baltimore, and New York in terms of tourism; and the hotel industry lacked an adequate supply of rooms to house conventioners attending events at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, which opened in 1993. "Finally, the history of Philadelphia's political-interest groups, the breakdown of important

alliances, and the unintended outcomes of particular local policies have weakened the glue that held the city together” (1994:31). In comparison to Pittsburgh, for example, Philadelphia has had a difficult time forging the public-private partnerships necessary for investment in the city. The manufacturing economy with its local base created linkages between classes and interest groups, providing a kind of social contract. The new postindustrial economy, oriented towards national and international systems of exchange, no longer provides these linkages (Adams et al. in Goode and Schneider 1994:32).

However, despite the problems facing Philadelphia in economically restructuring, the recent economic boom and the leadership of former mayor Ed Rendell has forged some optimism for the city. Whether or not various projects undertaken, such as tourism and redevelopment, will provide the city with long term economic gains remains to be seen. Who are the primary beneficiaries? is also a question on the minds of people who have seen neighborhoods continue to crumble as Center City receives another face lift. Several trends reveal the promises of a redeveloped, tourist and conventioneer-friendly, yuppie-attractive postindustrial city.

Center City Philadelphia is currently in the midst of a building boom (Ferrick 1997). Thirty-three major projects, totaling over \$1 billion in construction costs, have been underway or completed since 1997. They include such projects as the bulkheads along the Schuylkill River in SRP, the Regional Performing Arts Center, and myriad hotels. Eight hotels amount to nearly half of the total budgeted amount for all projects, and are a needed addition if Philadelphia is to prove attractive to tourists and accommodate the large convention audiences. With the economy performing well, private financing is now available for hotel developers, and since Rendell had placed hotels near the top of his agenda for stimulating the local economy, the city is making tax credits, grants, and low-interest loans available (Ferrick 1997).

During his tenure as mayor, Rendell also initiated the expansion of the Convention Center in order for Philadelphia to remain competitive as a convention destination. This project dovetailed with either the renovation of existing buildings or the creation of new ones for hotels. By increasing amenities for conventioners, the city can widen its appeal as a place to hold the largest and most lucrative meetings that draw 10 thousand people or more. The city, before the construction of new hotels, could only accommodate

6 thousand comfortably (Belden 1997). The effort to expand the Convention Center and increase hotel rooms has paid off as the 2000 Republican National Convention took place in Philadelphia.

Attracting conventions to Philadelphia is just one aspect of the city's attempt to bring visitors to the city. Because of the decline or stagnation of many industries in Philadelphia, resulting in the loss of more than 100 thousand jobs in the last decade alone, tourism is a potential industry for economic growth. In 1996, tourists spent nearly \$3 billion in Philadelphia (Belden, et al. 1998). Energizing the Philadelphia regional economy means a concerted effort by government and private interests to market the region as an overnight (or longer) destination for tourists. Philadelphia is being marketed on television in the New York area, and in upscale magazines across the country. Personalities as diverse as Oprah Winfrey, Bob Dole, Bill Cosby, Ken Burns, and Kevin Bacon have been enlisted to promote the region in the Greater Philadelphia Tourism and Marketing Corporation's "Philadelphia: The Place That Loves You Back" advertising campaign. Many area museums, attractions, and businesses have added the "Loves You Back" tagline to their literature in order to cross-promote one another. Plans are also underway for numerous capital investments in the tourism business, including the Penn's Landing entertainment center, a rejuvenated Independence Mall, the Avenue of the Arts, numerous hotels, facilities to serve growing numbers of flights at the Philadelphia International Airport, and a new cruise-ship terminal at the former Philadelphia Naval Shipyard (Belden et al. 1998). Such issues demonstrate the resonance of Sharon Zukin's argument on the landscape of consumption, but one wonders how and whether such marketing strategies will impact Philadelphia. Similarly, boosters of SRP, such as Meryl Levitz of the Greater Philadelphia and Tourism and Marketing Corporation, envision the park as a tourist destination, with a hotel, restaurant amenities, waterborne tours, and other recreational offerings, as will be examined in the following chapter.

Center City Philadelphia is not only proving itself attractive to visitors, but to new residents as well. While most of Philadelphia has been suffering from steady population decline, Center City's population has been increasing, from 42,896 in 1980 to 51,718 in 1990, according to the 1990 census (Gorenstein 1998). For the first time in at least a decade, there are waiting lists for Center City apartments. Due to the increased demand, apartment rents have escalated with rents in multistory buildings increasing 3

to 5 percent and in rowhouses and townhouses in neighborhoods like Old City and Rittenhouse Square by as much as 10 percent (Gorenstein 1998). Demand for apartments and subsequent rent increases have allowed developers to invest millions of dollars to convert old business buildings into apartments. Thus far, five former office or industrial buildings have been converted for residential use and five more are planned for conversion. Dranoff Properties recently finished converting an old publishing company into 152 luxury apartments overlooking SRP at 25th and Locust streets, quaintly named Locust on the Park. No new apartment buildings have been erected, although there is the possibility of new construction near Penn's Landing, on the Delaware River.

This chapter serves as a contextual and historical backdrop for understanding Philadelphia's development milieu and the public art that accompanies it. I have outlined a brief history of Philadelphia's built environment, integrating both public art projects and the attitudes that have precipitated them, into this narrative. Public art provides insight into the processes that converge to form the built environment. Conversely, the built environment must be adequately contextualized within the larger economy in order to be best understood. The future direction of Philadelphia's built environment and its restructuring as a postindustrial city still remains to be seen, but some trends can be ascertained. A brief investigation of the promises and difficulties of economically restructuring, related in this chapter, suggest consumer oriented, Center City-based strategies to attract tourists and new residents, and therefore bring capital, to Philadelphia. SRP can be situated in this contemporary climate.

Plans to develop the east bank of the Schuylkill River into a residential, leisure, and recreational site were first proposed by John Fredrick Lewis in 1924. Lewis later provided funding for the creation of a Center City Plan, which was drafted during the late 1950s through the early 1960s by Edmund Bacon, in which a developed SRP played a significant role. Bacon's plan, made public in 1964, called for the construction of high-rise luxury apartments which would be marketed to relatively well-off tenants. Such residential development, indeed the Center City Plan itself, demonstrates the general "rule" of post-World War II Philadelphia development: it is nearly always Center City based, and oriented towards the middle and upper-middle classes. As I will explain in the following chapter, Bacon's proposed apartment complex in SRP never materialized, although, very recently, an old book publishing factory has been transformed

into loft condominiums, mentioned above. The most recent vision for SRP, articulated by the Schuylkill River Development Council, includes landscaping, public art, a riverfront esplanade, boat, bike, and in-line skate rental concessions, and restaurants. Tourism officials and other boosters envision more elaborated “landscapes of consumption” (Zukin 1995), that include hotel and entertainment facilities. The following chapter investigates the SRP research site and a history of the site’s development, and how the latest development proposal serves to economically stimulate Philadelphia—a paradigmatic example of postindustrial urban development. Chapter 5 also presents, differentiates, and investigates the perspectives—represented by SRDC, urban boosters, economists, tourism officials, and local residents—regarding the development of SRP.