

CHAPTER 5

THE RESEARCH SITE: NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT AND SCHUYLKILL RIVER PARK DEVELOPMENT, PAST AND PRESENT

This chapter provides context on the neighborhood in which Schuylkill River Park (SRP) is situated and the development of the park from the 1970s to the present. The neighborhood to the south and east of the park was originally settled by Irish immigrants in the middle 19th century—a distinct river-oriented settlement that combined workplace and residence in close proximity. Many 19th century homes remain in the area, although most, if not all of the factories of that time period have been demolished. Vestiges of the Irish community, which formed in Philadelphia near SRP in the 1830s, remain as the area was once the center of Irish ethnic segregation and the largest community of Irish in Philadelphia. In a city known for its ethnically heterogeneous working class neighborhoods, such defined ethnic concentration was unusual (Burstein 1981). While stable ethnically for many years, the neighborhood's livelihood constantly changed with the advent of new industry. What began as a port facility in the early 19th century, became later a center of manufacturing, before turning into a transportation point for the great department stores around World War I. With the growth of the Irish community in Center City West and the industry along the Schuylkill River, Philadelphia became the city with two river fronts that William Penn and his surveyor Thomas Holme had envisioned in 1682. However, as the wealthy built their estates a few blocks away from the working class Irish community in the 1880s, social, ethnic, and economic segregation became pronounced to an extent never envisioned by the city's founder (National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form 1987: 3; Clark 1980).

What currently constitutes SRP is a fairly new spatial entity, undeveloped as such until the 1970s. Originally a site of coal distribution, cattle slaughter, and many kinds of manufacturing, the Schuylkill River banks, from about South Street to the falls at the Water Works, near the Philadelphia Museum of Art, were industrially active albeit an environmental disaster until after World War II. Plans to transform this area of the river were first articulated by John Fredrick Lewis in 1924, who later provided funding during the late 1950s and early 1960s for the City of Philadelphia to devise a Center City Plan, orchestrated by Edmund Bacon of the City Planning Commission, of which a developed Schuylkill River Park figured prominently. During the 1960s, the city acquired land purchased from industrial landowners, and, over

time, from the early 1970s to the late 1980s, community volunteers worked closely with government officials and landscape architects in developing the park. In 1992, the era of development by volunteerism essentially ended when community resident, John Randolph, established the Schuylkill River Development Council, a private, non-profit development corporation, whose goal is to finish the development of the park, linking the Fairmount Park bike path with Center City, creating further amenities through landscape design and public art, and to establish private concessions in the park.

Historical Overview of the Schuylkill Neighborhood

The Schuylkill district, which was also dubbed “Ramcat” by the 19th century Irish, parallels the Schuylkill River from about Locust Street to the north and Fitzwater Street to the south. The Schuylkill River shore creates its western boundary, while 24th Street, between Bainbridge and Locust Streets, serves as the neighborhood’s eastern border. Grays Ferry Avenue, originating at an angle at South and 23rd Streets and leading southwest, parallels the Schuylkill River, following its elbow-like bend. Grays Ferry Avenue also serves as the Schuylkill district’s eastern border since it logically follows the sinuous river rather than the existing city street grid-pattern. The neighborhood has been referred to by a variety of names, including Taneytown, which describes the portion of the neighborhood closest to SRP, and Devil’s Pocket, which refers to the larger Irish neighborhood southwest of Schuylkill. Today, the neighborhood southwest of SRP is usually referred to as Gray’s Ferry, and has been in the news recently for racial unrest between African Americans and whites (Tofani 2000). During the 1880s, Rittenhouse Square, the exclusive neighborhood of Philadelphia’s Protestant elite, employed Irish people as servants from the Schuylkill district, located just a few blocks away.

Early Philadelphia records from the late 18th and early 19th century indicate that the Schuylkill riverfront was a transfer point for trade with the hinterlands to the west and south of the city. The river shore became a mooring area for barges and other watercraft, which sailed up the river from Delaware Bay and the Atlantic. Thus, while Philadelphia grew along the banks of the Delaware River, and settlement developed in a western direction, the Schuylkill area was similarly expanding and extending eastward to meet it (Clark 1980: 128). By the 1830s Philadelphia was on the rise industrially and Irishmen were busy unloading coal and wood along Schuylkill River docks to fuel homes and factories. Early Irish women

immigrants who settled in the neighborhood took in washing, gathered bones and dung, or worked as poorly paid seamstresses while the men labored dockside (1980: 128). During the 1830s, poor, incoming Irish squatted on the banks of the Schuylkill, between South and Arch Streets, where coal distribution facilities were located. Living on the riverbank, the squatters were in close proximity to jobs unloading coal barges which navigated down river from the anthracite regions upstate. A strike by Irish coalheavers in 1836, at Pine Street on the riverbank, was the first by unskilled laborers in the United States (Clark 1980).

As a result of the 1845-46 famine, the Irish population of Philadelphia grew from about 40 to 70 thousand. The Irish settling in the Schuylkill neighborhood at this time concentrated themselves between Lombard and Bainbridge Streets, 18th Street and the riverbank. Many new immigrants continued to work on the docks as coal heavers, but some were employed as weavers, wool sorters, stonecutters, carpenters, and shoemakers. According to tax records taken in 1850, some residents began to acquire land, and more middle class professions, including a doctor and a pharmacist, first appeared. While the neighborhood remained working class, by the middle of the 19th century it had developed some economic variety (Clark 1980: 128-129).

The incoming Irish were looked upon with scorn by Philadelphia's Protestant natives and represented disease, drunkenness, crime and vice, and even racial inferiority. In 1844, Irish Catholic weavers fired on a Protestant political rally in the Kensington section of the city, and in retaliation, Protestants burned two Catholic churches near the Delaware River and attacked a third church in South Philadelphia (Clark 1980: 129). Irish alienation from the general community took extreme forms and reached its apex in Philadelphia's first large-scale criminal gang, the Rangers, which operated from the Schuylkill neighborhood, and came to signify the problems of the Irish community to the rest of the city. Under the leadership of two men, the gang engaged in petty thievery, mugging, burglary, intimidation, and prostitution, controlling the neighborhood. The Rangers even extorted payments from barge and ship owners along the Schuylkill riverfront until the gang's demise in 1857 (Clark 1980: 129-130).

By the 1880s, the Schuylkill district's population had swollen substantially and its well-to-do neighbor, Rittenhouse Square, was also in the process of expansion. Portions of the area closest to the square emerged as an exclusive, upper-class residential enclave amidst the homes and shops of the less

fortunate. The concentration of wealth at the heart of the area created a web of interdependencies between rich and poor, and Protestant and Irish Catholic. The heaviest concentration of Irish had moved from the southern section of the Schuylkill district to a more northern area near the bend of the Schuylkill River above Gray's Ferry Avenue—the general vicinity of the present neighborhood that borders SRP to the south. Thus, as time unfolded, rich and poor moved closer in proximity to one another. With more than 9 thousand Irish-born and their relatives in a neighborhood approximately a mile square, by 1880, the Schuylkill district was the most Irish section of Philadelphia (Clark 1980: 130).

Throughout the late 19th century Schuylkill district were many industrial and commercial facilities including eighteen textile and fabric-processing mills. Coal and lumber yards continued to be economically vital for area residents, employing many men. There were 38 fuel and wood establishments and ninety-eight building and construction firms which also provided jobs for Irish residents. There were over 300 food outlets and over 170 liquor stores (Clark 1980: 130-131). Yet, despite the teeming economic activity, Ramcat still had its share of poor. The Western Soup Society, located at 16th and South Streets, provided food to area residents—its register for 1878-79 contained mostly Irish names (Clark 1980: 131). To accept alms was to risk the contempt of one's Irish neighbors since charitable organizations received much of their funding from wealthy Protestants living near Rittenhouse Square and often required that food recipients be guided toward Protestantism (Clark 1980: 131).

The post-Civil War years were prosperous times for Philadelphia and jobs were plentiful for the residents of the neighborhood. As downtown retail and entertainment amenities expanded, the Irish took positions as singing waiters, doormen, bartenders, hotel maids, telegraph runners, cab drivers, firemen, and policemen. The Schuylkill district was now also linked with the transportation industry in Philadelphia. In addition to working in the factories located along the Schuylkill shores, the Irish were employed in track gangs and as switchmen, trainmen, freight handlers, and engineers. The Pennsylvania Railroad owned and operated a huge terminal and switching yard west of the Schuylkill River above Market Street and provided jobs for neighborhood males. At 26th and South Streets were horsecar “turn arounds” and carbarns and many Irish worked as horsecar line drivers, conductors, and maintenance men (1980: 131).

Just a few blocks away from Irish labor and residential life existed a completely different world of Protestant wealth. Situated around Rittenhouse Square were the mansions of Philadelphia's Victorian era elite, including the Wanamakers, the Drexels, and the Lippincotts, department store heirs, bankers, and publishers, respectively, among many other wealthy folk. As Clark argues, the homes on the square became wildly adorned shrines to aggressive vanity and the obsessive flaunting of riches. An aristocratic way of life requires much more than money and manners—"it demands presumptions of superiority, the exercise of assured authority, and the collaboration of a servant class to do the thousands of jobs necessary to guarantee an elaborate system of personal comforts" (Clark 1980: 135). During the 1880s, Irish Schuylkill women entered the households of the Rittenhouse Square elite where many remained into the early twentieth century. Toward the end of the 19th century, Irish Catholics created their own wealthy class and some entered the social and physical orbit of Rittenhouse Square. But just as wealthy Irish could afford to buy mansions on the square, the Protestant elite were vacating for the suburbs. By 1930, the great fortunes were under siege and most of the wealthy were gone—apartment houses were fast encroaching on the square. Irish women who once worked as servants opted instead for careers as nurses or secretaries, and some even chose to attend high school and college (Clark 1980: 135).

By the early 1900s, manufacturing was firmly established on the Schuylkill River banks, including locomotives (Baldwin), automobiles (Hudson and Thorton Fuller), printing (Lippincott and Lanston), textiles (Vulcan Mills and Cleveland Worsted), and food processing (Crane Ice Cream and New York Pie Baking). Major department stores built distribution facilities located at 24th and Walnut Streets (Wanamaker's) and 24th and Chestnut Streets (Gimbel's) (National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form 1987). Although many of these buildings still exist, they have been renovated for use as offices, condominiums, schools, and parking garages. A tavern called Killeen's, complete with a ladies entrance, was owned and operated by the same family for over seventy years, and closed in 1992 when I first moved to the neighborhood. I recall buying draft beer for 50 cents a glass.

Environmental disregard of the Schuylkill River came in tandem with industrialization. The coalyards discharged large quantities of coal dust into the river, the Atlantic Oil Company refinery spewed fumes into the air, and across the river in West Philadelphia, where 30th Street Station now stands,

stockyards and slaughterhouses poured blood and animal byproducts into the river. By 1923, 6 thousand head of beef, sheep, and pigs were slaughtered daily on the 30th Street Station site. By the late 19th century, Philadelphia had completed a huge sewer system, but no sewage treatment facilities. Raw sewage was pumped directly into the Schuylkill (Lewis 1924).

The Neighborhood and Schuylkill River Park Today

Today, while some people in the SRP neighborhood can proudly trace their ancestry to potato famine emigration, newcomers steadily enter the community. According to neighborhood resident, Richard Kirby, a part-time arts administrator who lives at 25th and Lombard Streets, the Irish in the neighborhood are usually older since the younger Irish have been slowly leaving the area for southern Delaware County, Northeast Philadelphia, and South Jersey. Another neighborhood resident, Bill Hostetter, a court administrator for the State of New Jersey who resides at 23rd and Delancey Streets, speculates that the rising property values of homes the ethnic Irish have owned for five or six generations has made it very appealing to sell and move—the exodus beginning in the 1970s and continuing into the present. Over the last twenty years, Irish homes have become occupied by professionals, who buy, and students, who rent. Before limiting the domain of its subsidized mortgages to West Philadelphia, the University of Pennsylvania allowed employees to purchase housing as far east as 25th Street, over the Schuylkill River, into Center City. As a Penn employee, Kirby’s wife purchased their home through the Penn subsidized mortgage plan. Kirby believes his family has been lucky that they moved into a relatively stable, owner occupied area. While he acknowledges that the influx of more professional people is a kind of gentrification, he points out that it has not been difficult for people in the neighborhood to hold on to their houses, since many have owned their homes for generations. University of Pennsylvania students have also chosen the SRP area as a prime location in which to rent. Due to increasing crime near the Penn campus, students have chosen to migrate over the river, but remain relatively close to school by relocating to the western edge of Center City.

Hostetter recalls that the Irish community was still very much present in the 1970s, when, for example, large July 4th parades were held in the neighborhood. Parades originated at 25th and Pine Street, at the site of a former American legion hall. There, children would assemble on bicycles, waving American

flags, and cars bunted in red, white and blue would lead the throngs of cyclists through the neighborhood blaring patriotic songs on loudspeakers.

Over the past two years, entirely new condominium complexes have been developed at two sites: 24th and South Streets and at 26th and Lombard Streets. The National Book Publishing building overlooking SRP at 25th and Locust Streets, was recently converted into luxury condominiums, Locust on the Park. According to Paul Levy, executive director of the Center City District, two camps of renters are migrating to Center City: restaurant and hotel workers, students, and beginning professionals paying \$800 to \$1 thousand a month; and higher income professionals and suburban empty nesters relocating to the city paying \$2 thousand a month and up (Warner 1999). A recent survey of Locust on the Park tenants reflects the professional status of newcomers entering the SRP neighborhood: 34 percent worked as managers; 16 percent as doctors/hospital administrators; 15 percent as academics or students; 7 percent as attorneys; 6 percent as financial analysts; 3 percent were retired; and 19 percent were in other occupations (Warner 1999).

Thus, the neighborhoods that border SRP are predominantly white and upper middle class with pockets of working class Irish remaining. To the east of the park between Locust and Lombard Streets and 23rd and 25th Streets, the neighborhood is predominantly upper middle class, even affluent. The corridor between Spruce Street and the Philadelphia Museum of Art that has not yet been developed and is non-residential for the most part.

I have made repeated visits to the park during my tenure on the public art advisory committee. From my observations, it appears that in the already-developed portion of the existing park, park users are most often white local residents from the surrounding neighborhood who walk their dogs in the park and socialize with other dog owners or, in the warmer months, tend plots in the community garden. The history of the community garden will be related at a later point in this chapter. A dog run was created in 1998 in order to lessen the abuse of grass in the park caused by frolicking dogs, as well as the danger of unleashed animals that often caused problems. The construction of a special area for dogs was undertaken by a local neighborhood association, The Friends of Schuylkill Park, which primarily raise funds for the maintenance of SRP. Jeff Barker, the president of that organization, was responsible for the dog run. Barker, who is an

attorney specializing in labor law and resides at 21st and Locust Streets, believes that the recent population increase in Center City has also seen an increase in the number of dogs descending on SRP. He explains the issues that converged in precipitating the dog run:

We had numerous meetings with dog walkers establishing when dogs could be off leash in the park—before 9 a.m. and after 7 p.m. (5 p.m. after daylight savings time). We advised the Streets Department not to ticket people during these hours. People were not honoring the rules because we have a large transient population of dog walkers—college students and also people coming from other places to walk their dogs. Regardless of the issue of when dogs could be off their leash, we also received word from the Fairmount Park Commission that there was just too many dogs in the park. Grass was being killed by the numbers of dogs. This was impetus for the dog run. The initial plan, in order to save money, was to build the dog run as part of the extension of the park. We had John Collins [the landscape architect of SRP] design a dog run that would be on the river side of the railroad tracks, a very long and narrow design. We had dog owners on our board who said that if the dog run was located there, it would not get a lot of usage because dog walkers would have to cross over the railroad tracks (Barker 2000).

Local resident and Center City Residents Association president Sarah Brenson, who had worked under former Mayor Wilson Goode as the Director of Special Project for the Office of City Representative and lives at 24th and Spruce Streets, claims that part of the increased difficulty in finding parking in the SRP neighborhood is the result of dog walking service employees parking their vehicles adjacent to the park and using the park to exercise clients' animals (Brenson 2000). Brenson says that the dog walkers come from as far away as New Jersey—she has paid attention to license plates—but I have not personally noted this interstate traffic in dog walking services.

During the day, I have seen white male sunbathers lying on the grassy areas of the park. Local residents assume that these men are gay. According to informants' accounts, in the early 1980s, sunbathers, in warmer months, became very prevalent in the park and the grassy sections were referred to as the “25th Street Beach.” Hostetter elucidates gay use of the park for sunbathing:

The first summer the [first phase of the] park was completed, the park became a magnet for gay men who would sunbathe on the grass. When it got hot they would bathe themselves in the fountain, much to the scandal of the older, Irish people who lived nearby. This is maximum conflict between the very traditional Schuylkill community on the one hand and the influx of a Center City gay community. Soon, the fountain was broken, possibly by people offended by how it was being used. It has not been on in many years. It was a shame.

Recently, a number of smaller trees and bushes were suddenly “missing” from the park. Resident Bill Hostetter inquired about the missing vegetation to a few older men who can often be seen sitting in the

park. While they did not admit cutting down the trees, according to Hostetter, they claimed that people 'have no business fucking in the bushes.'

I have observed African American youth and young adults who live a number of blocks away in neighborhoods south of South Street playing pick-up basketball games with white youth from both the vestigial Irish ethnic community, and more affluent Center City. On a few occasions, I have spotted white squatter punks from West Philadelphia playing Saturday afternoon soccer games. While I have not witnessed this, one informant told me that Latin American men use the baseball field for soccer games. Many different softball, baseball, and soccer leagues use the baseball field, from little leagues to workplace teams. In the summer time, local community groups from the more affluent eastern neighborhoods show films in the park.

According to several informants, racial relations have improved demonstrably over the course of the years. When the first phase of the park was completed in the late 1970s, local whites would tear down the basketball hoops to dissuade use by African American players, when whites thought the courts were becoming too "overrun" with blacks. White neighborhood teens would also guard the courts preventing African Americans from using them. According to Richard Kirby,

There has been a history of racism on the part of the white Irish recreation administrators to keep black kids out of the park, but that is not as pronounced as it once was. Sometimes it seems like the white and black kids are playing harmoniously, while other times you will only see white kids and wonder where all the black kids got chased to (Kirby 2000).

Hostetter has explained to me the insular nature of the Irish community that was once the primary occupant of the neighborhood—an insularity that bred racism. According to Hostetter,

There was a very large settlement house at 26th and Lombard Streets that was dismantled in 1980. This served as a community center and was located across the street from where the swimming pool still is—at 26th and South Streets. The racial conflict between blacks and Irish, and between the Irish and more affluent Center City residents had gone back over 100 years. A very insular community. The settlement house was one of the centers of that community, as was the swimming pool. I heard a story that back in the late 1960s, some black kids came and tried to swim in the pool. In anticipation of the black kids coming, the whites broke glass bottles, threw the glass into the pool, onto the decking around the pool, and left.

Julia Gold, a local resident who lives at 24th and Waverly Streets and is an independent art critic and curator, remembers that one New Year's Eve in the early 1970s, a group of drunken white local residents

flooded out of a bar located at 24th and Lombard Streets chanting “two-four-six-eight-we don’t want to integrate” (Gold 2000).

SRP is also known as Judy Garland Park by the gay community. In the evenings of warmer months, gay men use the existing park to meet one another. Neighborhood residents have complained about public sexual behavior and used condoms, at various times, for years. In the summer of 1992, police arrested 19 men for violating the rarely enforced 1 a.m. curfew that applies to all Philadelphia parks, unless posted otherwise. Park curfews are rarely enforced, and the action enraged the gay community. Gays staged a demonstration that was met by approximately two dozen angry residents. A few weeks later, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) reached a settlement on the matter. The city dropped the charges against the men and the ACLU took no legal action. Since the incident and protest a number of years ago, the police do not arrest curfew violators, they just ask them to move on. (Rosenberg 1993).

Most of the people I interviewed about the topic of gay cruising had never been negatively affected by it. One gay man I interviewed, Mike Gardi, was still ambivalent about certain aspects of cruising, although he helped organize the first protest and participated in the one-year anniversary (of the arrests) all-night vigil. He explains,

The round-up really upset me. People were arrested just by walking by—arrested for ‘walking while gay’—I think the police acted inappropriately. That is why I got involved. But as a neighbor, and someone who respects the integrity of the neighborhood, I get upset with guys who go down there and don’t behave themselves. They are loud, blasting music out of their cars. Some expose themselves to oncoming traffic. I have yelled at people who are doing this kind of thing because I walk my dog in the park, I have a community garden plot, and I see it (Gardi 2000).

Gardi, who lives at 22nd and Lombard Streets and is Councilman Angel Ortiz’s executive assistant, notes that cruising has changed over the years because of increased lighting and the creation of the dog run, the latter which has eradicated a certain degree of privacy by changing the landscape of the park. Cruising has become more automobile focused—people will meet and then drive away in a car, or have sex in their cars. Gardi also indicated to me that gay people use the park to socialize and meet other gay people—there are many gay men who use dog walking as a social opportunity. Gardi participates in a gay soccer league and the teams use the park baseball field to compete on Wednesday summer evenings. He believes that cruising in Judy Garland Park is a white activity, for the most part (Gardi 2000).

The undeveloped northern sector of the park is a more marginal space, attracting homeless people, gay cruisers, and fishermen. The gay cruising area here is referred to as Gay Acres, and is used most frequently by African American men. Years before I began this dissertation, I recall, when bike riding through this area, African American men wandering in the underbrush as if they were looking for someone or something. Little did I know that this was a popular cruising area. During a site visit with the SRP public art advisory committee I remembered seeing many used condoms littering areas alongside the well-worn path. Julie Courtney and I jokingly discussed that a worthwhile public art project would incorporate a bench with a condom dispenser, as well as a receptacle for the used condoms. People have complained that this area attracts men cruising for male prostitutes as well as to purchase drugs. Like Judy Garland Park to the south, many men arrive in Gay Acres by car. It is the commotion caused by vehicular activity and people yelling and playing music in their cars that angers residents nearby. As Bob Rothman explains, “They park, or just pull over, enter the park, make their drug buy—it’s just like Acme. Then they return to their cars laughing, yelling, screaming, singing loudly some nights ‘til dawn” (Rothman quoted in Wiegrand 1993). As a result of the perceived drug activity, the curfew in Gay Acres is 9 p.m. during day light savings time and 6 p.m. during Eastern Standard Time (Rosenberg 1993).

I have observed homeless people who live in ersatz shelters in the open space near Locust Street almost directly on the waterfront, as well as in more clandestine quarters underneath the Walnut and Market Street bridges, which intersect the undeveloped corridor north of the current park. When the artists Stacy Levy and Winifred Lutz were preparing their proposal for submission to the SRP public art competition, they noticed homeless men who actually lived in the rafters of the Walnut Street bridge—twenty-five feet above the ground. Occasionally, I have seen mountain bikers, usually white males, using the trail that parallels the railroad tracks—the trail, worn by mountain bikers, cruisers, and fisherman, connects with the Fairmount Park bike path. I myself have biked along this trail.

Census data supports my observations that park users are basically white and middle or upper middle class—reflecting the class and racial makeup of the surrounding neighborhood. As would be expected, most residents in the vicinity of the park are either in managerial, professional, or administrative occupations. As I will soon argue, this data supports the vision of the SRDC, which is predicating the

development of the park on middle class sensibilities, in terms of recreation amenities, housing, etc. Census information also reveals the radical discrepancy in income and racial segregation still evident in Philadelphia (see Tables 1-3, below; Figures 2 and 3, Chapter 1: Introduction).

Table 1. Selected census data, Schuylkill River Park tracts (US Census Data 1990).

	Tract 13: South- Wash; River to 21 st	Tract 12: Spruce- South; River to Broad	Tract 8: Walnut- Spruce; River to Broad	Tract 7: Chestnut- Walnut; River to Broad	Tract 4: Arch- Chestnut; River to Broad	Tract 3: Vine- Arch; River- Broad	Tract 125: Spring Garden- Vine; River- Broad
<i>Race</i>							
White	21%	89%	91%	90%	83%	87%	84%
Black	78%	8%	5%	5%	13%	7%	13%
American Indian	.5%	>1%	>1%	1%	>1%	>1%	1%
Asian	.5%	2%	3%	3%	3%	6%	2%
Other	>1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	>1%	>1%
<i>Occupation</i>							
Manager	36%	59%	65%	55%	43%	59%	61%
Administrative	28%	28%	28%	28%	42%	30%	33%
Laborers	9%	1%	1%	2%	3%	2%	1%
Service	21%	10%	4%	13%	8%	7%	1%
Other	6%	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%	4%
<i>Education</i>							
No high school diploma	36%	7%	5%	11%	25%	12%	17%
High school diploma only	32%	10%	12%	23%	28%	12%	13%
Professional and/or bachelor's degree	17%	68%	65%	47%	30%	61%	56%
Some college/ Associate's degree	15%	15%	18%	19%	17%	15%	14%
<i>Median Family Income</i>	\$18,316	\$71,425	\$65,106	\$52,013	\$42,083	\$88,408	\$55,131

Table 2. Selected census data averages, Schuylkill River Park tracts (US Census Data 1990).

	Percentages Across All Tracts
<i>Race</i>	
White	79%
Black	17%
American Indian	>1%
Asian	2%
Other	>1%
<i>Occupation</i>	
Manager	58%
Adminis.	29%
Service	8%
Laborers	2%
Other	3%
<i>Education</i>	
No high school diploma	14%
High school diploma only	17%
Professional and/or bachelor's degree	53%
Some college/associate's degree.	16%

Table 3. Total population and average median family income, Schuylkill River Park tracts (US Census Data 1990).

Total population, all tracts	32, 791
Average median family income, all tracts	\$68,889

The Development of Schuylkill River Park

Plans to reclaim the Schuylkill River banks as a site for renewal have been under consideration for decades. In 1924, John Fredrick Lewis, a city planner, articulated the need to beautify the industrial squalor of the Schuylkill River. He argued that it was shameful that the Lower Schuylkill, the section of the river that runs from the falls at the Fairmount Water Works near the

Philadelphia Museum of Art (which at that time was still under construction) to its mouth near League Island in the Delaware River, was an open sewer lined with refineries, paint and chemical factories, and garbage dumps. This was in marked contrast to the upper reaches of the river, which meandered through Fairmount Park, and offered a bucolic experience, punctuated by the fine architecture of boat house row. Environmentalism was not his only concern, however. Lewis was aware of the economic potential of river bank land based not on industry but on leisure and tourism:

Experience in other cities has always shown that the finest sites are upon improved river or lake banks, and the highest taxed buildings, hotels for example, are ordinarily located upon such banks, whereas in Philadelphia, the ugliest portion of the City is unquestionably its Schuylkill River fronts (Lewis 1924:139).

Lewis' rhetoric anticipates the thinking of postindustrial city planners by fifty years. Unfortunately for Lewis, Philadelphia would have to wait for its river-based industry to erode before any plans for a waterfront park could be realized. Much of the background information on the early development of SRP was provided by neighborhood resident Bill Hostetter, who has lived near the park for over thirty years. He was involved in community-based lobbying for the development of the park from about 1970-1985, through residents associations, as well as specialized lobbying groups. Hostetter argues that his early efforts in the development of SRP stem from his interest in the 1940s-50s Philadelphia Democratic reform movement's focus on city planning.

Although a masterplan for SRP was developed in 1967 which sought to connect Center City, Philadelphia to the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Fairmount Park bike path, plans to redevelop Center City, including the Schuylkill waterfront, originated in the 1950s under the reform administration. Hostetter, who has completed extensive research on the movement as a graduate student in Temple University's history department, explains,

John Fredrick Lewis lived in Center City, Philadelphia and was influential in the Democratic reform movement in the 1950s. He was very wealthy and bankrolled a lot of the reform movement. The majority of his efforts centered around city planning. Edmund Bacon was one of the central figures, as well as my father. It reached its peak in 1951 when Joe Clark was elected mayor and the reform administration stayed in for 10 years with one term for Joe Clark, one term for Dick Dilworth, and then another half term before Dilworth decided to run for governor. The point of this is that the City Planning Commission was very powerful and aimed to revitalize Center City, including Schuylkill Park. The Center City plan was publicly presented to a large group of people in 1964 through a Sunday *Philadelphia Inquirer* piece. One of the major aspects of the plan was the development of

Schuylkill Park. The City Plan was officially adopted in the early 1960s, but never was realized in earnest because City Council kept deferring on voting for the implementation of a budget. In the meantime, the city, with the assistance of the federal government and the state, acquired a lot of the land along Schuylkill River. Most of the land along the river, from the South Street bridge to the Art Museum, was acquired in the 1950s (Hostetter 2000).

In short, Lewis heavily subsidized planning research, and renowned planner, Edmund Bacon, spearheaded the overall design of the Center City Plan in the early 1960s (Petshek 1973). During the 1950s, in anticipation of development along the Schuylkill River, the City, with federal and state assistance, purchased large amounts of land owned by railroad corporations and zoned it for recreational use.

In its 1964 plan outlining the proposed SRP, the City Planning Commission noted the following conditions on the east bank of the Schuylkill River from Arch Street to South Street:

unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate or overcrowded conditions of certain buildings; inadequate planning of the area, excessive land coverage; lack of proper light, air and open space; faulty street and lot layout; defective design and arrangement of buildings, and economically or socially undesirable land uses . . . Interspersed among the residential uses are various commercial, and vacant land used. There are a number of transportation and warehousing facilities between the residential section and the river which have a blighting effect on the area (City Planning Commission quoted in Mandel 1971: 7).

In presenting its plan, the Commission suggested extending Fairmount Park south from the Philadelphia Museum of Art to South Street as “the east bank of the Schuylkill offers a unique possibility to Center City.” According to the Commission, a park and pedestrian promenade would offer Center City residents a badly needed park and open space directly adjacent to their neighborhoods. “The existing obsolescent industrial land uses prevent this” (City Planning Commission quoted in Mandel 1971: 7). City Council approved the Planning Commission’s ideas and gave the Redevelopment Authority eminent domain—the right to condemn land for public use. The southern terminus of the park, the City Planning Commission proposed, would be re-zoned from industrial to residential use and multiple middle- and upper-income high rise apartments would be built. Development never occurred and Bell Telephone constructed a telecommunications facility on the site instead (Mandel 1971; Hostetter 2000).

The facilitation of the masterplan has been organized into three building phases spread over twenty years. Phase I, 1977-1992, included construction of restrooms and a community center,

recreation facilities, the first installation of public art, the creation of a community garden, and landscaping between Pine and Spruce Streets. Phase II, 1992-present, includes the construction of the bike path, the construction of stair towers to access the park from the Walnut, Chestnut and Market Street and JFK Boulevard bridges, as well as the possible construction of pedestrian bridges which will span railroad tracks that run through the majority of SRP. The latter project appears very doubtful and even the permission to receive grade access over the tracks is unlikely at this point, as I will explain later. Also included in Phase II is the construction of concrete bulkheads to bounder the eastern shore of the Schuylkill River, and the installation of fencing and lighting. Bulkheading was completed in 1998 and the remainder of the construction is anticipated to begin in March of 2001. Phase III, 2001+, will include final landscaping between Spring Garden and Spruce Streets decorative lighting, visitor amenities, and the installation of more public art.

The park as it currently exists in 2000 includes a community building with restrooms and facilities that offer recreational programs for children, located at the south entrance to the park at Taney and Pine Streets; tennis and basketball courts, and a baseball field also near this entrance; walkways and open grassy areas lined with trees leading from Pine to Spruce Street; and a community garden near the Spruce Street entrance at 25th Street (see figure 1, Chapter 1, for reference). There are three public art projects currently in the park: a fountain-sculpture by Peter Rockwell, a cistern in the community garden by Timothy Duffield, and gates to the garden by Greg Levitt, which were placed there during Phase I of construction.

Beginning in the late 1960s, residents of the neighborhood bordering SRP continually lobbied City Council for funding to develop the park, with little success. One of the first rallying issues that brought local residents together regarding the development of SRP was the proposed Bell Telephone building, now the AT & T building, at the corner of 27th and Lombard Streets. In 1971, a group of neighborhood residents organized to prevent its construction. Bill Hostetter recalls his involvement in organizing against this building:

In 1971, the Bell Telephone Company received a permit to build what is now the AT & T building. A group of us came together to try to stop it. The Center City Residents Association, which represents the interests of people living in the area from Broad Street to the Schuylkill River and from Market to South Streets, on which all of us were very active, was ambivalent about the building. But there was a group of us very strongly opposed to it, so we formed our own separate interest

group called the Citizens Coalition to Develop Schuylkill Park, for which I was a cochair. We later dissolved this group and later formed the Schuylkill Park Committee. For a period of five years I would go to City Council and try to lobby for a development budget for Schuylkill Park. This was around 1971-75 (Hostetter 2000).

The opposition lost and the building was constructed as planned. Hostetter and other supporters had argued that Edmund Bacon's plan to develop three high-rise apartment buildings at the corner of 27th and Lombard Streets, which were included in the original Center City Plan, were, at least, "life-generating" entities for the park. In other words, apartments would bring people to the park while the Bell Telephone building, which housed a switching station for telecommunications along the eastern seaboard, employed few people, and was very monolithic. On the other hand, other members of the local community favored the development of the Bell facility. Long-term residents—members of the Irish ethnic community—believed that the building's employees would patronize local bars in the neighborhood. They also believed that the facility would provide employment opportunities. Furthermore, some believed that the developed park would "probably be like Rittenhouse Square," according to one resident (Porter 1971: 30). What she feared, Hostetter clarified for me, was the counterculture folks that used Rittenhouse Square during that time period. Today, Rittenhouse Square attracts a much more well-heeled set.

The construction of a tow lot in the park for illegally parked cars a few years later galvanized the Schuylkill neighborhood into action and ushered in the first phase of development. Hostetter recalls the chain of events:

I was not fairing very well in convincing City Council in funding the development of the park. Something very unexpected happened. Mayor Frank Rizzo, in the mid-1970s, was convinced that he had to take care of an illegal parking problem in Center City by making a tow lot for illegally parked cars. The transportation coordinator, Brian Feldman, looked on city maps for a large area of land that was fairly remote, that the city owned. They decided to site the tow lot in Schuylkill Park. So I came out of the house one day to the sound of jackhammers. I thought, what a miracle, they are finally building the park! I began talking to the construction workers and realized that they were going to pave a lot and put a ten-foot tall chain link fence around it (Hostetter 2000).

The 1973 tow lot project took approximately three weeks and could accommodate 1,500 cars. Hostetter convinced the Center City Residents Association (CCRA) to file a lawsuit against the city, with the support of the state, which was opposed to Frank Rizzo. CCRA, in advocating for the development of SRP, was very familiar with how land was zoned along the riverbank. Rizzo had

commandeered land that was zoned for recreation and had been purchased by the city with federal and state funds. CCRA alerted a state representative, who put pressure on the city administration asking that the city give back the \$10-12 million of state funds that were utilized in the purchasing of the riverbank land or the state would not release any funds to the City of Philadelphia. According to Hostetter,

That worked very effectively, but in the meantime, Rizzo had towed 1,500 cars to his parking lot in the park. So we worked out a deal: the city could use the land as a tow lot for eighteen months with the understanding that at the end of this time period they would tear it up and then begin development of the park. We planned the park for about one year or so, and then ground was broken in December 1977 for Phase I (Hostetter 2000).

A development plan for Phase I was reached despite a divergence of opinion over passive vs. active use of park facilities. The Irish ethnic community, which was still an active presence in the area bordering SRP in the 1970s, wanted, as Hostetter explains, “the whole place turned into recreational facilities—baseball fields and basketball courts.” The more affluent residents wanted grass, trees, and benches and less of a focus on facilities. Thus, a compromise was reached which took into consideration both points of view.

In the late 1970s, CCRA persuaded the Fairmount Park Commission to rent them a parcel of land near 25th and Spruce Streets for the creation of a community garden. The Fairmount Park Commission charged CCRA only \$1 per year for rent. According to Hostetter, the soil posed a major problem since the garden was sited on top of an old trainyard. Removing the brick, coal detritus, and concrete foundations was back-breaking work—all conducted by volunteers who wanted an urban garden plot. The garden was initially quite a “ramshackle affair,” as Hostetter described it—an ad hoc enterprise that was unsightly according to some observers. In 1983, Leo Brooks, City Managing Director, bought a home in a recently developed section on 25th Street, between Spruce and Locust Streets. He thought the community garden constituted an eyesore—particularly in winter—and suggested continuing the green space of the already-existing park and relocating the garden. Residents who had spent months laboring to establish the garden did not want to relinquish it. Bill Hostetter, then president of CCRA, negotiated to keep the community garden. Since the land on which the community garden was created was zoned for recreation, Hostetter argued that gardening was a high intensity, recreational use of that space. Convinced, the City agreed to let the community garden remain,

provided some improvements, funded with city money, be implemented. An agreement was reached whereby trees would be planted as a screen so Brooks' view of the garden would be obstructed. The garden perimeter would also undergo landscaping (Capuzzo 1988: 4A).

Hostetter met with John Collins, members of CCRA, and other community members to facilitate a design plan for the garden in order to integrate it with the rest of the park. Even though the garden would be fenced, the designers wanted the public to have access (provided a gardener was present and the gate was open). Visual access was enhanced by a staggered perimeter fence that made it possible to see garden plots much more clearly. A cistern at the center of the garden provided a gathering place—a common well—where gardeners could fill their buckets for watering. A decorative gate gave the garden an aesthetic appeal. The improvement to the garden gave it a higher profile and people increasingly inquired about the possibility of gardening there. A rotation schedule and waiting list was instituted by CCRA, whereby plots had to be given up after a certain number of years. Two waiting lists exist: one for members of the CCRA, the other for non-members to place a check on the garden's perceived exclusivity. While there was some controversy over the formalization of the garden—those who originally claimed squatters' rights were incensed—according to Hostetter, the garden has still maintained its “live and let live” air and people continue to “do their own thing” in the garden. The garden, as it exists today, was completed in 1988.

In 1992, neighborhood resident John Randolph founded the Schuylkill River Development Council (SRDC) to secure funding necessary for what he saw as the completion of the park, from the current terminus near Spruce Street to its future boundary north of the Philadelphia Museum of Art (see figure 1, Chapter 1). While talk of completing the park according to the masterplan drafted by John Collins in 1967 has been discussed for years, the impetus for its completion is the responsibility of John Randolph. According to Bill Hostetter, Randolph's involvement marks a watershed for the park. Until Randolph formed his development council, the development of the park was a volunteer initiated affair. Now, with SRDC, development is tied to large fundraising efforts that are not only directed toward improving the park, but in raising the salaries of SRDC employees.

Randolph has lived across from SRP at 25th and Locust Streets for thirty years. He graduated from Harvard University with a masters degree in architecture and proceeded to run a design and

construction firm, with services available to the general public, for nearly twenty years. Having witnessed SRP grow—in 1978 with landscaping and recreational facilities and then again in 1987 with the community garden—he often ruminated on the prospect of improving the site. In 1989, economic recession affected Randolph’s business and he decided to dissolve it. With the extra time, he began investigating ways in which to realize the final development of SRP. In June 1992, he started SRDC as a non-profit corporation, and proceeded to raise nearly \$10 million in grants for the park. As I explained in Chapter 4, SRDC is a private-public partnership in which general operating costs are provided by private foundations and corporations; building projects are funded almost exclusively by the city, state, and federal government.

Public art installation was originally to begin in summer 1998, but the lack of sufficient funds and other unforeseen difficulties, including the delay in beginning construction for most of Phase II, deferred the installation of public art. Phase III of the park, which not only includes public art, but decorative lighting, landscaping, and the construction of visitor amenities, cannot begin until the appropriation of government funds. As of Summer 2000, ground has still not been broken for the public art component, nor for further landscape design. Please refer to my discussion of the construction phases discussed earlier in this section for the clarification of each of the three phases.

The difficulties in realizing aspects of SRP’s development can indeed appear insurmountable. The original plan to use stair towers at Chestnut and Market Streets as a northern entrance to the park and then ramps at Cherry and Locust Streets to cross over railroad tracks owned by CSX corporation thereby providing access down to the park, has been put on hold. The federal government has stressed that the ramp design does not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, since the grade of the planned ramps is too steep. Building ramps to code is much too financially prohibitive and SRDC is now attempting to argue for ground level access over the railroad tracks. However, CSX claims that the possibility of people getting injured or killed attempting to cross the tracks is too high. The irony is that people have crossed the tracks for decades without injury—now that the development plans for SRP are moving forward, the question of liability has entered the minds of railroad officials. In the meantime, SRDC is petitioning the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission (PUC), asking for access

to the tracks. If PUC votes in favor of CSX, SRDC must either have to revert back to the more costly ramp idea or devise another solution (Shaffer 1999: 10).

The construction process for the creation of the bicycle and pedestrian path (Phase II of construction) will begin once the Philadelphia Streets Department receives final construction documentation approvals from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Once the proper approvals are satisfied, the Streets Department will initiate the bidding process, which includes advertising, proposal review, and contractor selection (SRDC 2000: 6-7). As in the bulkhead construction, funds for Phase II have originated primarily from the Intermodal Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) program and the City of Philadelphia Streets Department (see Chapter 4). Additional funding for basic park infrastructure implementation in Phase II has been provided on the state level by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources's Heritage Parks Program (SRDC 2000: 6). SRDC awaits construction funding for Phase III of development. Both state and federal funds (on the state level, a Pennsylvania Redevelopment Capital Assistance grant, and on the federal level, a grant from the Water Resources Development Act, US Army Corps of Engineers) are pending to complete this aspect of development, which will total over \$4 million (SRDC 2000: 6-7).

In order to understand how SRP is envisioned as a specific kind of landscape that contributes to the economy of Philadelphia, it is important to briefly examine the missions of both the DCED and the Heritage Parks Program. According to the DCED's website:

DCED's community and economic development strategy has been designed to make Pennsylvania more attractive to existing companies, more competitive with other states in attracting new jobs, and more focused in efforts to link community development to produce vibrant communities in a world-class economy (DCED 2000).

The development of SRP meets with the DCED's objective to make Philadelphia more attractive in order to retain existing corporate interest in the city, as well as to prove attractive for future economic development. Essentially, DCED funds projects that assist in facilitating the necessary prerequisites for success in the new service economy. One of these prerequisites is to transform obsolete landscapes of the old industrial regime and make them a magnet for service economy investment (and appealing to employees who now return to cities, such as Philadelphia, in order to fill jobs in the new economy).

Aside from making Philadelphia attractive to corporations through the creation of places like SRP, SRP can be seen as an aspect of the new service economy in its marketing as a tourist destination. In 1997, Governor Ridge launched the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program through DCNR in order to strengthen economic opportunities through what is called “heritage tourism.” According to Governor Ridge,

heritage parks help tell our world renowned industrial heritage story, increase tourism and create other economic development opportunities in the state. It is this blending of the old with the new that will protect our significant heritage resources and enhance the quality of life in these areas (Ridge in DCNR 1997).

Among the recipients of Heritage Parks grants was the Schuylkill River Heritage Corridor, which includes SRP. The concept of the Schuylkill River Heritage Corridor will be explained shortly.

Thus, funding at the state, city, and federal levels, as well as from private foundations, corporations and individuals have all played parts in the legitimation process of SRDC. But an equally important component of SRDC’s legitimation was timeliness and good relations with former Mayor Edward Rendell. SRDC came into being just as former Mayor Ed Rendell gained power and launched several campaigns promoting Philadelphia as a place poised for a major renaissance. Much of that renaissance hinged on marketing Philadelphia as a tourist destination. Thus, John Randolph, the director of SRDC, courted Rendell to support SRP, which Rendell did at various moments throughout his tenure. SRP was a project well-suited to the Mayor’s cause to move away from one-dimensional tourism (like simply marketing Philadelphia as a Colonial city) to a more diversified approach (SRDC 1995: 8). SRP, with its plans for a river trail, waterfront dining, and recreation signaled the latter. At the SRDC’s first “Spotlight on the Schuylkill,” in October 1994, Karen Butler, Executive Director of the Mayor’s Action Council for Visitors, endorsed SRDC’s development of SRP, effectively giving the Mayor’s endorsement of the park’s development; at the conclusion of the symposium, Rendell greeted guests at a cocktail party and joined them on a river tour of SRP (SRDC 1996a). Rendell has publicly endorsed SRDC’s efforts at the “Spotlight on the Schuylkill II” conference, in October 1995, and presented the opening speech at the SRP inaugural celebration in May 1997. In addition to public endorsement, Rendell garnered nearly \$2 million in private support for the Schuylkill River bridge lighting project (SRDC 2000: 2), which I will explain in detail in Chapter 6.

SRDC, in overseeing the development of SRP, wishes to “transform an abandoned, trash-filled section of the city’s riverfront into a scenic riverine esplanade” (SRDC 1995: Section III). Integral to the development of the site is landscaping, ornamental lighting, public art, the creation of new recreation and bicycle transportation offerings, and private concessions. The larger context of the park’s development includes its role as an economic stimulus for Center City, a new attraction for tourists, which also has potentially powerful economic ramifications, and the marketing of the park as a regional attraction. Before I enter into a discussion of the public art process in SRP, which will be discussed in the following chapter, it is important to address this broader context. The issues of economic stimulus and tourism will then be given special consideration. In October of 1996, SRDC hosted a symposium, “Spotlight on the Schuylkill III: Progress Towards the Vision,” featuring lectures on the revitalization of the Schuylkill River waterfront, including issues of economic development, comparative analysis with other waterfront projects, marketing and tourism, and public art. It is from this conference that my discussion of SRP’s potential for economic impact and tourism draws.

According to SRDC, SRP will stimulate the local economy by creating construction and permanent jobs and providing an expanded tax base in the neighborhoods bordering the park. According to SRDC, a fiscal impact study projected a gain of \$24 million in increased tax revenue. The park will entice further development, attract new businesses and residents to the city, and encourage existing residents to remain in the area (SRDC 1995: Section 3). The Pennsylvania Economy League conducted an extensive study of the economic impact of the development of SRP and this will be addressed in further detail, below.

In order for SRP to fully succeed, argues SRDC, the park must be marketed as a tourist destination. SRDC has proposed a riverboat tour that reveals the water links among local waterways. The tour would convey passengers by boat from Penn’s Landing on the Delaware River, past Fort Mifflin at the mouth of the Schuylkill River, and up-river to the Fairmount Water Works. Further services for tourists would include water taxis, dinner cruises, docks and floating restaurants, and retail offerings (SRDC 1995: Section 3). Tourism will be examined in greater depth, shortly.

SRP will be one component of a larger, regional plan, the Schuylkill River Heritage Corridor, a regional initiative to create a “heritage park.” This heritage park will interpret Pennsylvania’s

cultural, industrial, and commercial development by showcasing a wide variety of historic and natural sites along the Schuylkill as it runs through four counties: Philadelphia, Chester, Berks, and Schuylkill. SRP will form the urban component of the heritage park, which is rural for the most part. SRDC has also sought the assistance of public and private agencies in the promotion of the role of the Schuylkill River in the renaissance of Philadelphia, and SRP's role in providing linkages with other historic and natural resources (SRDC 1995: Section 3).

A major element in the development of SRP is the esplanade/bike path that will provide improved and expanded recreational and commuter possibilities. The bike trail will allow safe and convenient bike travel from East and West River Drives (in Fairmount Park) to Center City and West Philadelphia. SRP will be part of the Valley Forge Bicycle and Recreational Trail, a twenty-six mile trail that links Philadelphia with Valley Forge. Other recreational opportunities include canoe, kayak, and rowing lessons offered in the warmer months. Bike and in-line skating concessions will rent and sell equipment.

In 1996, the Pennsylvania Economy League (PEL), a non-profit, nonpartisan, civic organization that supports Pennsylvania's private-sector leadership "in promoting better government and a more competitive Pennsylvania" conducted a study on the economic impact of developing SRP (PEL 1996: 2). What follows was gleaned from a lecture and materials provided by David Thornburgh of PEL, featured in the "Spotlight on the Schuylkill III" symposium that I attended, as mentioned previously.

The PEL study was grounded on four simple questions, dependent on both the specific case of SRP and its location in Philadelphia, and waterfront developments in general: 1). What economic value do riverfront parks bring to cities and regions? 2). What value does SRP bring to Philadelphia? 3). How can we rank these values based on relative magnitude and likelihood? 4). What have other regions experienced?

There are six major types of economic value that can result from riverfront parks:

**Construction benefits*

State and federal funding means economic benefits for cities. Construction has strong multiplier effects, that is, construction generates substantial related economic activity.

**Recreational amenities*

Recreational amenities not only enhance the urban quality of life, but encourage consumer spending (once businesses like in-line skate rentals and food concessions operate on waterfronts). The ultimate goal is to attract regional tourists to the waterfront through recreational offerings.

**Downtown revitalization (commercial/residential retention and expansion)*

An urban waterfront park increases the livability of downtown areas; would serve to keep people from moving to the suburbs or some other region; would prove attractive to new residents and new employees; would encourage the development of apartments, retail facilities and hotels, on, or in close proximity to the waterfront; would raise the property values of surrounding residencies.

**Tourism*

Waterfront parks can prove very attractive to visitors and extend their stays in cities; they may not only attract regional tourists, but have the possibility to prove attractive to tourists nationally.

**Education and research*

Waterfront parks can provide education programs for youth; institution-based environmental research; education and research, may, in turn, provide the potential for tourism benefits.

**Access and linkages*

Waterfront parks can provide public access to long-obscured urban riverfronts; serve as connectors between various parts of cities; facilitate potential commuter connections.

According to Thornburgh, it is clear to most observers that once SRP is constructed, it will have recreational amenity, but there are a variety of assets that the park brings to the economy of Philadelphia. While it is difficult to pinpoint the dollar amount of each type of value, it is possible to assess them qualitatively and compare them relative to one another.

Three types of value—construction benefits, downtown revitalization (residential retention and expansion), and recreational amenity—have a high likelihood of occurring and will do so in the short-term. The construction benefits could have a \$25.1 million impact on Philadelphia's economy, and the park-related appreciation of residential property values is estimated to be \$9.3 million. The latter is based on the premise that SRP will increase residential property values within a reasonable distance of the park, and the assumption that within two blocks of the park, from Spruce to Vine Streets, all residential property values will rise by 5 percent.

The other three types of value—commercial retention and expansion, tourism, education and research—are expected to take longer to develop, and are not as likely to do so as the others. Still, there is the possibility for these values to be realized if there is a recovery of the commercial real estate market (which, as of 2000, has recovered significantly since Thornburgh gave his presentation), strong marketing campaigns initiated by the city and region's tourist industry, and if partnerships are formed

to facilitate education and research programs in SRP. Thornburgh related that the prime beneficiaries of the park's economic value would be the city (through property, wage, and sales tax revenues), the state (through income and sales tax revenues), and area businesses (through sales of their goods and services to visitors from the region and beyond).

Thornburgh also stressed that the park offers an intangible value as well, represented in linkages and access. By opening up access to the Lower Schuylkill, the park enhances Philadelphia's quality-of-life and makes possible other activities. By linking the recreational assets of Fairmount Park, fashioning a greenspace "Western Gateway" to Center City, and connecting students of University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University to Center City, SRP not only maximizes its own value, but attracts value from other sources.

A number of other American cities have developed their waterfronts in recent years and can serve as models for SRP, according to Thornburgh. Portland, Oregon's waterfront project along the Wilamette River has helped spark a major downtown revitalization. The \$100 million public funding package has leveraged \$2 billion in private investment. Thousands of residents have moved into downtown Portland, driving up property values and spurring new residential construction. Pittsburgh's waterfront redevelopment provides a case study for developing education and research programs, which in turn have the ability to spawn tourism benefits. The Pittsburgh Voyager program runs river tours, teaching students about marine science. The program has the potential to earn income with the right marketing. The Pittsburgh Science Center contributes docks, parking, and technical assistance to the program.

In conclusion, Thornburgh discussed areas that might determine the success of SRP. The role that SRP plays in the future of the city and region must be well-articulated from the very beginning. Private sector leadership must be strong, as must the level of support by government at all levels. The city's cultural institutions, including university, museums, and science centers will need to be accessed for the implementation of education and research programs. The continued improvement of the city's hotel market could prove positive for the construction of a hotel in or near SRP, which in turn would provide the park with a visitor base. In tandem with this last issue, if Philadelphia succeeds in its

campaign to market itself as a destination location for tourists, fulfilling its hospitality potential, SRP may benefit in the long-run.

Tourism, as Thornburgh intimated in his presentation, is an issue that weighs heavily on the minds of those concerned with the economic vitality of Philadelphia in general and the success of SRP in particular. In an age of declining industry, tourism is often seen as a fix for ailing cities and urban waterfronts serve as the loci for many tourism marketing strategies. While Thornburgh underscored the importance of attracting tourists to SRP his was not the only voice stressing the significance of tourism during the “Spotlight on the Schuylkill III” conference. An entire panel with representatives from inside and outside the Philadelphia region was devoted to tourism. The panelists seemed to concur that making SRP, among other waterfront locations, attractive to outsiders required the creation of a leisure-based landscape distinguished by a balance between history, recreation, food, and, retail attractions.

Charles Norris, an urban planner for TAMS consultants, Boston, discussed the growing importance of ferry services in U.S. urban centers for both commuters and tourists and offered scenarios in which ferries might link important regional waterfront attractions. A ferry based river-link in which SRP is utilized as a hub that connects the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers might be one possible way to make SRP a commuter and tourist destination. For New Jersey commuters who work on the west side of Center City, a ferry could navigate south on the Delaware River, link with the Schuylkill River, and discharge passengers at SRP. While it is hard to imagine commuters who rely so heavily on automobiles favoring a public mode of transportation (especially a rather leisurely waterborne version!), the use of ferries to transport tourists to and from attractions along the two rivers seems perhaps a little more plausible. Norris mentioned a number of sites that may prove attractive to potential tourists: relics of industrialization along the Delaware and lower Schuylkill Rivers, Bartram’s Garden (in southwest Philadelphia), the Navy Yard at the nexus of the two rivers, Forts Mercer and Mifflin, and river traffic itself as an attraction (the viewing of commercial ships and recreational watercraft). While these links may take time to develop, in the short-run, a river link using already existing docks that would not require too much investment could provide access between Bartram’s Garden and Fort Mifflin, near the Philadelphia International Airport. A commuter-tourist bus shuttle

could provide a land-based link (via Walnut Street) between the rivers two respective waterfronts, SRP, on the Schuylkill River, and Penn's Landing, on the Delaware River, as well as points in-between.

Another way in which to enhance the tourism potential of SRP is to exploit the park's recreational and entertainment possibilities. At the "Spotlight on the Schuylkill III" conference that I attended, Greg Slye, Manager of Wilburger's Ski Shops, a Philadelphia-area business, discussed the marketing of in-line skate rentals along the revitalized SRP waterfront esplanade which will feed into the Fairmount Park bike path. Slye made it clear that in-line skating must be adequately linked to larger tourist marketing strategies; in other words, recreational activities must be integrated with commercial attractions in order to be completely successful. Slye envisions the creation of a combined indoor recreational, retail, and entertainment facility to integrate a variety of activities and to continue offering warm weather recreation year-round. In Slye's indoor complex on the Schuylkill, espresso/martini/cigar bars would share space with restaurants, a skating rink, and an entertainment center offering the latest virtual reality video games. Slye's vision of a high-tech, upscale entertainment center seems almost indebted to Disney.

Indeed, Disney's influence on the tourism industry is profound as a presentation given by Meryl Levitz, President and CEO of Greater Philadelphia Tourism and Marketing Corporation at the "Spotlight on the Schuylkill III" symposium indicated. Levitz explained that Disney can teach us important lessons in how to market Philadelphia to tourists. Combining education and recreation with the fact that middle class Americans are now taking shorter, more frequent vacations, Disney now offers workshop oriented "adult education" vacation packages through the Disney Institute. According to Levitz, the Disney Institute is premised on the notion that busy people not only want to relax on their vacations, but also want to be challenged or pursue areas of interest that they simply lack the time to explore in their daily lives. In short, the average middle class American wants "adventure without risk" and "authentic experiences" that theme park vacations which stress fantasy and escape, fail to offer. Thus, Disney Institute vacations are both a departure from the kind of experience it normally offers tourists through its theme parks and resort hotels, and at the same time, borrow liberally from what one expects from Disney. The Disney Institute maintains its own private campus free from the

intrusion of the outside world and offers low risk experiences where expert instructors coach visitors in activities such as sports, computer animation, television production, and photography. While Levitz admits that SRP will not be the Disney Institute, developing programs based on local history, science, and water-oriented recreation, may prove appealing to tourists who desire more authentic experiences.

For Levitz, though, tourism can only impact Philadelphia's economy if people spend the night—in the parlance of the tourism industry, we must have “heads on beds.” Philadelphia, including SRP, must attract the “overnight leisure traveler” in order to insure that they will spend adequately. Echoing Thornburgh, Levitz claimed that if a riverfront hotel is constructed, and SRP is marketed as a tourist destination, SRP may prove financially beneficial to Philadelphia. Levitz discussed the ways in which Philadelphia day-long events could be marketed as two day events so people will make hotel reservations. By offering special attractions, like fireworks the night before the Mummers Parade, for example, tourists will be encouraged to spend the night in the city.

Levitz and Slye's ideas for hotel and entertainment facilities along the Schuylkill River are not unprecedented. In 1986 the developer H. Leonard Fruchter proposed for the site bounded by John F. Kennedy Boulevard, the Schuylkill River, 23rd Street, and Cherry Street, a far-fetched urban theme park for adults. The complex would contain three hotels (luxury, moderate, and budget), an ice-rink lined by concessions, a vertically revolving cocktail lounge mounted on a Ferris wheel, restaurants, and a sprawling swimming pool with waterslides culminating in a grotto beneath a tropical garden (Hine 1986). The architect Charles Moore, known for his appreciation of Disney, proposed a costume rental where visitors might make themselves into someone else. The complex, as Hine mentioned, would be designed for display and voyeurism. According to the developer, ‘this won't be like Disneyland, where you come and see someone dressed like Mickey Mouse. People will come here to see each other’ (Fruchter quoted in Hine 1986: 10H). As Hine reminds us, the proposal for such a place is part of a growing trend in which “Cities are resorting more and more to the theatrical devices to make themselves magical and memorable” (1986: 2H). The packaging of retail, entertainment, and amusement in mall-like settings surfaced during the 1970s and continues to this day. Examples include the Mall of America in Minneapolis; Canada's West Edmonton Mall; Disney's redevelopment of 42nd Street, New York; South Street Seaport, also in New York; among many others. Whether fortunate or

not, the economic recession of the late 1980s curtailed the development of Moore's complex near the upper reaches of the proposed SRP.

Since SRP is still in the planning stages, it is difficult to determine the outcome of the park and whether such tourism and marketing strategies, articulated by Thornburgh, Slye, Levitz, or even Moore's shelved adult entertainment complex, will be ever implemented. When I attended the "Spotlight on the Schuylkill III" conference I assumed that since SRDC had sponsored the event, the opinions offered by people such as Meryl Levitz and Greg Slye were endorsed by John Randolph, the director of SRDC. In conversations I have had with Randolph, he seemed hesitant to speculate regarding the finality of the SRP's development. And with good reason. Given the economic instability of Philadelphia's future, it is difficult to project the direction development in SRP will take. The building of hotels, concessions, and an entertainment facility on the Schuylkill River waterfront, could be just the rhetoric of party-line postindustrial city marketeers. John Randolph, while not wanting to denounce city boosters, since boosters claim that the economic livelihood of cities like Philadelphia is partially dependent on tourism, sees the development of SRP in more intimate, low-impact, less glaringly commercial terms.

For example, Randolph envisions a "Schuylkill Outfitter," an information center that would coordinate all the river's new attractions. According to Randolph,

residents and tourists would be able to stop there to rent bikes, in-line skates or water vehicles. They can bike down to Bartram's Garden for a picnic lunch, take a tour of the historic mansion and return by boat. Or they can bike north to the Wissahickon and stop for lunch at Valley Green Inn, with lunch reservations made by the Schuylkill Outfitter. Or a Center City couple, off for a get-away weekend, can rent bikes to travel the Schuylkill Trail to a bed-and-breakfast in Valley Forge; the Schuylkill Outfitter will handle their reservation and baggage transfer (Randolph 1996: 6).

This approach to tourism in SRP emphasizes the recreational amenity of the park rather than consumption activities, like shopping and entertainment, for example, that rely on a more retail-based development strategy.

As Randolph has explained, a major issue that he must confront regarding the development of the park is the limited amount of land, which cannot support large amounts of people, nor extravagant development. According to Randolph, there are many possible tourism opportunities for the park that will not overwhelm the space, causing bottlenecks, or create excessive parking demands on the

neighborhood. A concession offering bike, in-line skate, or small boat rentals, would give people the means to explore the “natural assets of the city.” According to Randolph:

A facility to get you reservations for lunch at a restaurant, or bed-and-breakfast, to provide you with your needs for a bike excursion from Valley Forge to Center City, would be a very exciting addition to the tourist trade in Philadelphia and would not create undo strain on the park’s resources. This would be a low impact form of tourism (Randolph 2000).

SRDC hired Armstrong Kaulbach Architects to design a Schuylkill Sports Center that is seemingly a less commercial/consumer oriented facility than the one Greg Slye proposed at the “Spotlight on the Schuylkill III” conference. The proposed structure, built south of the Walnut Street bridge, where Locust Street intersects with the river, will encompass a land-based facility and two boat storage docks, located in the river. The sports center will provide training facilities, public restrooms, locker rooms, and a rooftop restaurant. Boat storage will be open to the general public, as well as high school and university rowing programs which have not been able to find adequate space along boathouse row on the Upper Schuylkill River. SRDC proposes that they move their offices to this new location. A small apartment for an on-site caretaker will provide security. Space will be allotted at ground level for a skate and bike rental facility and a snack bar. The proposed cost for the entire facility is estimated at \$3 million (Armstrong Kaulbach Architects 1997).

Randolph has also underscored community and organizational opposition to concessions and hotels in SRP. The Center City Residents Association (CCRA) is very vocal regarding this matter and is especially wary of problems associated with parking and access to the park which impacts directly on SRP neighbors. The Fairmount Park Commission, which presently administers SRP, must approve concessions in the park. As Randolph has explained, it is very difficult just finishing the “simple” aspects of park design such as landscape architecture, lighting, the esplanade, and the installation of public art, let alone foreseeing grander development prospects. While he acknowledges that more consumer oriented, economically stimulating amenities like a hotel and entertainment complex are “interesting as ideas,” more low impact forms of development, like restaurants, appear more likely, but are still speculative. According to Randolph, “there will be plenty of opportunity for private interests in the park, just not the high profile projects that may impact on parking in the neighborhood, and residential quality of life” (Randolph 2000).

CCRA board member Nancy Feltz, who is an attorney and lives at 16th and Pine Streets, claims that when John Randolph indicated to CCRA that the development plan included private concessions and the building of facilities along the waterfront, its members became very suspicious of his intentions. At one particular meeting in the fall of 1997, John Randolph and John Collins presented the Armstrong Kaulbach plan for the sports center to those in attendance. CCRA was very concerned about parking and vehicular access to the boat launching facility. Furthermore, they did not favor the idea of any concessions along the Schuylkill River's Center City waterfront, with the possible exception of skate and bike rentals. Feltz recalls:

I first encountered the private concession aspects of development when John Randolph came to one of our meetings with ideas for concessions, a festival plaza, a floating boathouse. There were a lot of people at the meeting who were concerned about parking, about vehicular access to the boathouse—how would boats get to the boathouse? People were very suspicious (Feltz 2000).

According to Nancy Feltz, “The big issue is neighborhood vs. destination park. People want a neighborhood park, not a destination park” (Feltz 2000). CCRA's position on development is simple: they only want the esplanade completed, thereby linking SRP with Fairmount Park.

Nancy Feltz has also articulated to me her mistrust of John Randolph and SRDC in piggy-backing on the issue of racism and elitism in the culture of rowing along the Schuylkill River. A number of years ago, then City Council President John Street (who is now Mayor of Philadelphia), claimed that rowing was a sport of white privilege. He insisted that a minority rowing program and attendant boat house be erected along boathouse row, north of the Fairmount Waterworks and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, to counterbalance the sport's overwhelming whiteness. According to Feltz, Randolph has tried to exploit this issue by proposing that the sport center might accommodate a minority rowing program and facility. However, Feltz believes that Randolph's suggestion may have proven alienating. According to Feltz,

I think Randolph has worn out his welcome on getting a minority boathouse built in Schuylkill Park because the boathouses are all on the Upper Schuylkill, along boathouse row. The black community sees the location of a minority boathouse [in SRP] as a back of the bus location (2000).

Neighborhood resident Bill Hostetter, who had been active in the early development of SRP, has underscored a number of problems with the way in which SRDC envisions developing the park, as well as problems with SRDC in general. According to Hostetter, the Friends of Schuylkill Park, which

is an offshoot organization of CCRA, took a position when it was incepted 12 years ago that further development in the park along the lines that SRDC envisions would be difficult. The main reason is the issue of park maintenance and the residential quality of life in the bordering neighborhood—the latter would be threatened by an increase in traffic and the need for more parking. The Fairmount Park Commission is already overburdened in terms of maintaining existing Philadelphia park land. That organization simply cannot absorb another park into its budget. The Friends of Schuylkill Park already assists in park maintenance, both in terms of fundraising and volunteer labor, and the existing portion of SRP is under the auspices of the Fairmount Park Commission. According to John Collins, before the Friends of Schuylkill Park began their fundraising efforts and grass mowing program, grass in the park would grow up to three feet high (Collins 2000). The Friends of Schuylkill Park argue that unmaintained park land becomes a hazard to the community. However, simply discussing issues of maintaining the undeveloped park land is a moot point, according to Hostetter. He doubts that the park as SRDC sees it, will ever get built. Since 1992, only bulkheading and access stairs have been constructed. Jeff Barker, president of the Friends of Schuylkill Park is less critical of SRDC and, despite the problems inherent in maintaining an enlarged park, claims that his organization supports the development of the esplanade, but has reservations regarding other aspects of development, including concessions and boat houses. John Randolph, at one point before SRDC received its non-profit status, used the Friends of Schuylkill Park's non-profit designation as a conduit for fundraising purposes. According to Barker, SRP is a neighborhood park and is already heavily used by residents, especially dog walkers. While he believes that outsiders would be welcome passing through on bicycles or skates (just as these folks utilize the Fairmount Park bike path already), SRP could never sustain itself as a destination park due to the lack of available parking and the limited amount of land .

Sarah Brenson, current president of CCRA, echoes the sentiments of Feltz, Hostetter, and Barker regarding more large-scale development of the park. Development would cause parking problems and increased vehicular traffic along the neighborhood's small streets. Brenson, who lives at 25th and Spruce Streets near the entrance to the park, believes that John Randolph has no public support for the development of the Schuylkill waterfront, except for the esplanade. According to Brenson,

John Randolph took the attitude that he would tell us what he was doing, but not ask for any input. He would set up an arrangement where he created “mock public input.” On the other hand, I am not sure how you set things up for real public input. There was no public demand for his proposal to develop the riverfront. He took a couple of ideas, found a few financial backers, and created the demand for his vision. He has created a career for himself—as the self-appointed keeper of the Schuylkill River. Well, who appointed him? He did. He decided to do it, he acted as if everybody wanted to develop the riverfront—and maybe they did say, “develop the riverfront, what a great idea,” but they did not know the kind of development John might have had in mind, they never thought about the difficulty of having the railroad tracks in the park and the incredible expense it would entail to build bridges over them for access (Brenson 2000).

Both Feltz and Brenson argue that it appears as if keeping SRDC viable through obtaining grants to fund various planning studies eclipses the importance of actually developing the park. In other words, as Feltz explains, the organization is driven “by what it can get funding for, by creating targets of opportunity rather than fulfilling a public demand for a specific kind of park” (Feltz 2000). As Brenson point out, foundations and grant givers are often interested in new, exciting ideas “so what happens with SRDC is that they get funding for planning, but implementation is difficult to get money for” (Brenson 2000).

Local residents who are not affiliated with CCRA, Friends of Schuylkill Park, or with long-term efforts in developing the park (such as Bill Hostetter) were less involved in following the details of SRP’s development, but espouse the general sentiment that SRP is best left as a neighborhood park. Richard Kirby, Julia Gold, and Mike Gardi, who live in the neighborhood and use the park in varying degrees, all revealed this to me in interviews. Gold argues that the neighborhood “cannot sustain large visitor impact” without being “substantially changed—facilities would have to be created for parking, for instance” (Gold 2000). Kirby supports the development of the park in more intimate terms for local residents. According to Kirby, “I am open to a variety of users—and all kinds of people already use the park—but marketing the park as a place for tourists is something I would see as a problem. The park is too small” (Kirby 2000). Kirby believes that development of the park should center on building the bike path, public art (I will refer to Kirby’s opinion on the topic in the next chapter), and landscaping. Kirby emphasizes the importance of tree planting as an aspect of landscape architecture: “I hope they continue with careful tree planting. The first tree installation, about 20 years ago, was carefully planned. I see the trees themselves as a kind of public art and the most important one in the park. The trees should be an integral part of the design” (Kirby 2000). Mike Gardi, who walks his dog

daily in SRP, had been active in the Judy Garland Park issue, and tends a plot in the park's community garden, also vocalized his belief in the neighborhood park concept:

I am someone who generally likes to see more restaurants and businesses in the city because we cannot survive without them, but I do not think SRP is the best place for them. I would like to see nice green spaces where I can ride my bike, walk my dog, socialize with other dogwalkers—and for the space to be kept up. I don't want to see restaurants and concessions down there—I think it is more of a neighborhood park. I would also like to have access to the water, for boating, for example. I think the bike path is a great idea (Gardi 2000).

According to John Collins, whenever John Randolph talks about new activities in the park, whether it be rowing clubs, restaurants, or some other kind of concession, it upsets the Friends of Schuylkill Park and CCRA. “They are quite happy to see the park never expand, never connect to the Fairmount Park bike path—which I think is selfish” (Collins 2000). Having reaped the rewards of their, and their predecessors efforts over the last thirty years—the community garden, the open spaces, the recreational facilities—on “their side of the tracks . . . I am unsympathetic when they get uptight thinking Randolph is trying to fool them with some new idea” (Collins 2000). The maintenance issue, with which the Friends of Schuylkill Park continually deal, must be taken into consideration before any plans for development are instituted, according to John Collins. Randolph's SRDC, Collins' Delta Group, the landscape architecture firm in charge of the park's design, and the Fairmount Park Commission are in the process of researching a maintenance plan whereby private interests, including the University of Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia Energy Corporation (PECO), and any private concessions which may develop along the riverbank, contribute, as discussed earlier. Maintenance would therefore be handled in a similar way businesses maintain urban areas through business improvement districts.

Marsha Moss, a public art curator and consultant who sat with me on the SRDC public art advisory committee, pointed out the contrast between Penn's Landing, located on the Delaware River waterfront and the soon-to-be-developed SRP. The Delaware is a much larger river than the Schuylkill, with a correspondingly larger waterfront. Zoned for commercial activity, Penn's Landing is under major development once again, including the construction of a large hotel and an entertainment center featuring a movie complex with over twenty-five theaters. Moss underlined that SRP is not zoned for commercial property development, although this could easily change. Moss likes the idea of

developing SRP into a more “wholesome” space—a space that is “non-Disney” (Moss 2000). “Marketing Philadelphia as a city with two contrasting waterfronts can only help in attracting more tourists to Philadelphia” (Moss 2000). Moss stressed, however, that plans can radically change even with strong community opposition: “we know from experience that what residents say means nothing.” It is still too early to determine the direction that development will take in SRP, but she believes that SRDC, as lead by John Randolph, does not intend to commercially overdevelop the park (Moss 2000).

The residents of Irish descent I have engaged with convey a different perspective on the development of SRP that is more similar to the vision articulated by SRDC and tourism officials than the other, more affluent residents that I had spoken to. Four men I informally chatted with near the park entrance at 26th and Pine Streets, and who did not want to be identified by name, acknowledged that the Irish community has “kept to themselves” for too long and that “outsiders coming in may be a good thing.” They concurred with what more affluent local residents had discussed about their neighborhood: wealthy people were not moving in in large numbers and forcing out longtime residents:

Local people have decided to sell and move to places like New Jersey, just like anyone else who chose to move from the city to the suburbs. Lots of us have owned these houses for a really long time—passed the house down to the next generation. No one is evicting us. It’s our choice to leave the neighborhood or stay and enjoy what we have.

One of the men noted that even the new condominiums were not eradicating existing housing, but were built either on property once occupied by old warehouses or parking lots. The development of SRP might appeal to the indigenous Irish people in the neighborhood by offering residents jobs in the construction of the park or the various concessions that might be built there. “My great-grandparents worked along the river one hundred years ago, so maybe some of the local Irish who have chosen to stay put could be working not far from here once again.” These attitudes did not surprise me, since, according to Bill Hostetter, the local Irish community supported the construction of the Bell Telephone building in the early 1970s as an entity that might create jobs for the community as well as provide added income for local tavern owners, who believed that Bell employees would patronize their establishments. The men also related to me the fact that developing the park would make it safer. They mentioned that the northern section of the park was very seedy and overgrown and the gay presence

was a “threat to our families.” They hoped new landscaping would “open the place up a bit more” and make it harder for “them [gay men] to do what they do in public.”

This chapter outlines the historical context of the neighborhood in which SRP is situated, as well as a history of the development of the park. As a site once renowned for its industrial squalor, the banks of the Schuylkill River have been intermittently developed as a public park over the past 30 years. While plans to transform the former industrial area to parkland and leisure landscape was first articulated by John Fredrick Lewis in the 1920s, it was not until the Redevelopment Authority began acquiring land by eminent domain, in the early 1960s, that the prospect for SRP first became a reality.

The procurement of land by Mayor Frank Rizzo, which was originally zoned for recreation in SRP but used for a tow lot, precipitated strong community reaction in 1973. A deal was made with the city and local residents to begin the development of the park in earnest, following the allotted 1 _ year period that the contested parcel of land would be utilized as a tow lot. Planning for the park began in the mid-1970s and groundbreaking for the first phase of development started in the winter of 1978. Perhaps reflecting the class differences in the envisioning of public space, the Irish community desired development to take a more recreational emphasis on sports facilities and the more affluent Center City residents requested open, green space. A compromise was made with both points of view taken into consideration.

The community garden was also spearheaded with the grassroots initiative of local residents at this time as well. The Fairmount Park Commission agreed to lease a plot of land to CCRA for one dollar per year. Gardener’s removed debris from the site in their effort to transform the space. Depending on how one looks at the situation, the complaint by City Managing Director, Leo Brooks, that the garden was unsightly, either lead to improvement of the garden (with the installation of gates, public art, additional landscaping, the planting of more trees to hide the garden from apartment dwellers’ views, and the eventual formal legitimization of the space with rotation schedules, committees, members, etc.) or tamed its spontaneous energy. Regardless, as in the tow lot affair, uninvited actions on the part of city officials lead to city funding for the development of the park. However, it was the impetus of local people that was ultimately responsible for making the initial phase of development happen.

The year 1992 marks a watershed in the development of SRP. In that year, local resident John Randolph incorporated SRDC as a private, non-profit entity to oversee the future development of the park. This marks a significant turn of events for a number of reasons. SRDC is not a community-based organization responsible to local residents—it is a private council responsible to a board that reflects corporations that have interest in the Schuylkill waterfront. Because of the professionalization and legitimization of efforts to develop SRP, the scale, scope, and cost of development reflects a wider range of views with more room for conflict than the more simple development plan of Phase I (recreational facilities, landscape design, and the community garden, for example). As Fairmount Park Commission funds for the development and maintenance of Philadelphia urban parks (and public spaces, in general) are either cut or remain stagnant, the climate in which SRDC finds itself requires, for better or for worse, appeals to the private sector. Such appeals create the possibility of conflict, as the interests of corporations may not be coeval with local residents, but this remains to be seen.

In this chapter, I have also outlined the interests and attitudes that converge in imagining the development of SRP. At least two major perspectives in the park's development can be ascertained from this discussion: that of the boosters and that of the local residents. However, as I will explain below, the two visions are not mutually exclusive as some local residents espouse booster beliefs, while others advocate a less ambitious, more locally oriented development strategy.

The boosters represent the various interests of business and government on multiple levels and how they “imagineer”—to borrow a phrase from Charles Ruteiser (1996 and 1999) (see Chapter 1 for explanation)—postindustrial Philadelphia. The boosters envision a concerted effort by private and public partnerships (such as SRDC) in creating a new Philadelphia springing Phoenix-like from the ashes of old industry. Former industrial areas like the banks of the Schuylkill River can be transformed into sites of both a new tourist-based economy and magnets for economic revitalization.

David Thornburgh of the Pennsylvania Economy League articulates the booster vision at its most comprehensive. The development of SRP will very likely have major economic impact on Philadelphia in a variety of ways, including: multiplier effects in which the construction of the park will prove economically stimulating even *before* the park is complete; recreational amenity, such as water sports, biking, and in-line skating, which will encourage the growth of waterfront businesses and

consumer spending and act as a draw from tourists; a better quality of downtown life by retaining residents and proving attractive to new ones, by encouraging real-estate development (including hotels, on or near the riverfront), and raising the property values of homes nearby.

Boosterism is more than verbiage. It is a vision fueled by funding at various levels. SRDC and its plan to develop SRP exist because it has seized the moment—money is available to fund projects in urban areas, which are increasingly focused on the ambience of “play, choice, and festival, not work and compulsion” (Sieber 1991: 132). In short, recreational and tourist-based landscapes are attractive to funders. Thus, clever fundraisers like SRDC have marketed their vision to the federal government, who, for example, provided SRDC with \$2 million in funding to build bulkheads and the bicycle path. The Department of Community and Economic Development, whose mission is to “foster opportunities for businesses and communities to succeed and thrive in a global economy, thereby enabling Pennsylvanians to achieve a superior quality of life,” has provided funds for the development of SRP since the park can be utilized as a tool for economic revitalization (DCED 2000). SRP not only will make Center City more attractive to potential new residents and companies, but the park itself may offer economic incentives as a destination park for tourists. Capitalizing on its tourism potential, SRDC has received funding from another state agency, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, for developing SRP as a vital, urban component of the otherwise rural Schuylkill Heritage Corridor. Heritage tourism, the marketing of industrial history, is seen as a means to create economic development opportunities.

Boosters from the tourism profession (and individuals representing private businesses, such as Greg Slye of Wilburger’s Ski Shop) believe that tourism in SRP may be an important player in the economic development of contemporary Philadelphia. Recreational offerings are the prime attractions for tourists, but the correct marketing of historically important sites accessed by river tours either departing from or arriving in SRP may also prove significant. A water sports center, marina restaurant, and even an entertainment center that would enable visitors to enjoy SRP in the colder months are all possible ways in which to market a destination park.

In relief to the booster vision is that articulated by local residents, some of which are either representatives of CCRA or allied with them. While they encourage certain aspects of the park’s

development, they are very wary of others. CCRA representatives would like to see the completion of the bike path and the landscaping of the park, but are hesitant to embrace the idea of SRP as a destination park. They oppose concessions in the park, including restaurants and boating facilities, and any commercial activities that would attract people who must drive to reach the park. Parking is very limited in the neighborhood already and developing SRP as a destination park would only exacerbate the problem. While representatives of CCRA oppose tourism in SRP, they have supported the recent transformation of the National Book Publishing building, which overlooks the park, from factory to luxury condominiums. The condominiums increase the number of residents in the neighborhood, making the streets safer, they argue. The local parking situation has not been worsened since the developer has provided parking facilities in the basement of the building, as well as across the street in the park. As I will discuss in the next chapter, neighborhood association representatives also support the public art projects, despite the fact that they were upset about not being involved in the public art process.

A variation on the booster perspective has been espoused by John Randolph and precipitated by the interaction between CCRA and Randolph's SRDC. I label this "modified boosterism." SRDC is essentially an organization built on the capitalization of booster beliefs, but it has had to temper its vision in accordance with the perspectives of neighborhood viewpoints, represented by the CCRA, as explained in detail earlier. Some of SRDC's boosterism has also been put in check by the difficulties confronted in the development process, such as waiting for approvals, permits, additional funding, etc. While John Randolph thinks the destination park concept, complete with concessions and tourist amenities, is theoretically interesting, SRDC "sees a number of constraints to this kind of development." Randolph continues,

The CCRA has taken a strong stand about permitting any kind of concessions in the park. The Fairmount Park Commission has made its case that any concessions go through the Fairmount Park master concessionaire. There are issues of access and parking. As interesting as some of these ideas [tourism, commercial development] are, it is difficult enough to get the park built at all. The first thing to do is complete the park. As time moves forward, we can then see if there is a need for low impact amenities, like restaurants (Randolph 2000).

I think it is fair to speculate that SRDC has ridden the wave of boosterism because of funding possibilities. Marketing SRP as a destination park to federal, state, and local funders has certainly paid

off thus far. Aside from the issue of community support for a destination park, SRDC's job in sustaining the park once it is built will be a very difficult. Public money may be available to build the park itself, but funding the maintenance of the park in the long-run will be the responsibility of SRDC and its relationship with private funders. We can only wait and see what the future holds for the more grandiose, booster envisioned development scenario.

Local residents not representing CCRA, other neighborhood associations, or those who have not been involved in the grass roots community-led development of the park's past, either espouse the general perspective of the CCRA people (minus the criticism of John Randolph and SRDC as they have had little or no contact with the man or the development corporation) or that of the boosters. As I explained earlier, three local residents I interviewed believe the park is best developed as a neighborhood park in which the bike trail connecting SRP to the larger Fairmount Park is the primary focus of development. As I will discuss in the following chapter, some of these informants had much to say about the public art selection process for SRP. The local residents of Irish descent that I have spoken to see developing the park more along booster lines since a destination park may prove potentially beneficial to local residents in terms of employment opportunities.

At the risk of explaining the obvious, since so little of the most recent phase of development has actually occurred, community residents, except those privy to details because of their affiliation with neighborhood associations or their historical interest and involvement in the development of the park, have had little to react to at this moment in time. This is partly because adequate information has not been provided by SRDC to the local community regarding the development of SRP. One cannot react to something that they remain ignorant of. Those in opposition to developing SRP as a destination park have not, to my knowledge, attempted to galvanize local residents (non-CCRA folk) in protesting SRDC's intentions. Thus far, conflict surrounding the park's development has essentially remained within the confines of two dueling (this is perhaps even too strong of a word) elite organizations: SRDC and CCRA. As I will argue in the following chapter, the public art process has been no different from the grander development planning process in that community residents, including CCRA, have been largely uninformed.