



Design Guidelines

for the neighborhood of

SOUTHWEST CENTER CITY

Philadelphia, PA 19146

Architectural Review Committee (ARC)

1901 Christian Street
Philadelphia, PA 19146



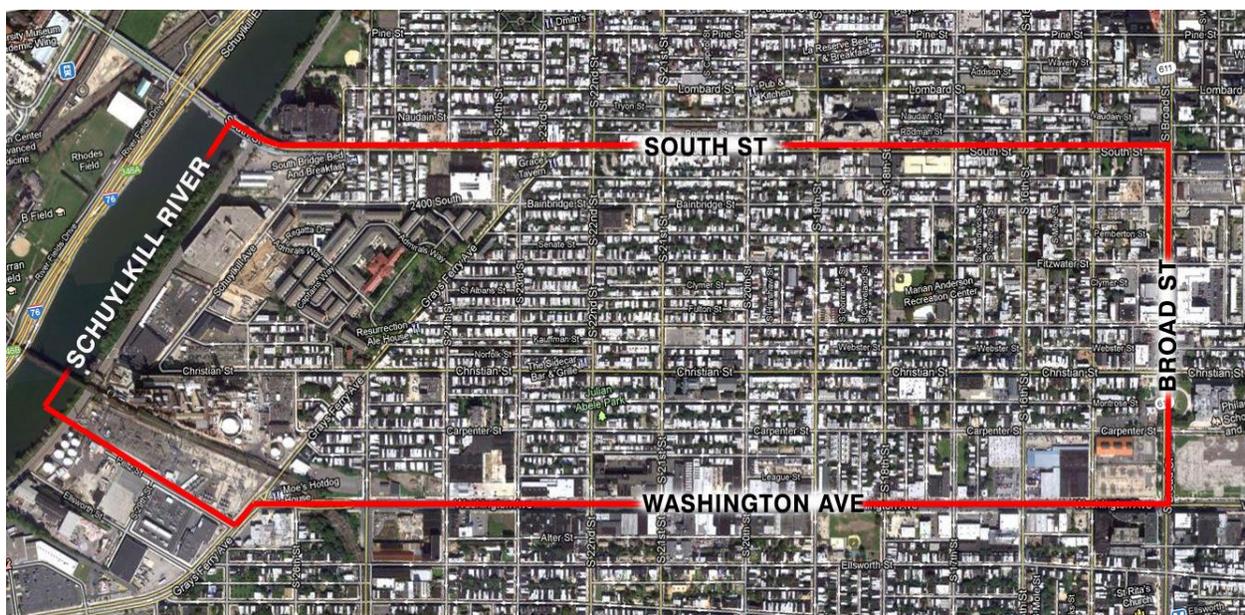
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Neighborhood Identity and Purpose

Our neighborhood goes by many names - Graduate Hospital, South of South, Southwest Center City - but regardless of the name, it is a neighborhood with a rich history, unique built environment, and diverse, community-minded residents. The area's identity has traditionally been forged by its close proximity to Center City and it is this proximity that has attracted so many new residents in recent years. From the historic Christian Street YMCA, to the Marian Anderson Rec Center, to public parks along the 22nd corridor, the neighborhood has a wealth of recreational assets. Its schools – E.M. Stanton, Chester A. Arthur and Universal Institute Charter - are growing and improving year-after-year, gradually transforming their campuses into sustainable, public spaces.

The neighborhood is also blessed with a strong presence of ecclesiastical structures that are fixtures on the neighborhood skyline and serve the community in myriad ways. Corner commercial stores remain a staple (albeit threatened by development) of the neighborhood and the South Street commercial corridor is humming with life. The industrial corridor along Washington Ave meanwhile serves the community with a variety of building supply stores. Easily navigable on foot or bicycle, with great access to public transit, this neighborhood, whatever name it goes by, is growing and thriving.



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I. General Project Information

- Address including Building Number and Street
- Copy of Zoning Application and Refusal
- Location Map showing surrounding area
- Zoning District
- Current zoning designation and requirements under designation
- Proposed Use

Scaled Drawings: Drawings are to be to scale and presented on 24"x36" (min) paper. For projects on lots smaller than 5K SF, drawings should be at a scale no smaller than 1/4" = 1'-0". For projects on lots larger than 5K SF, drawings can be presented at a scale of 1/8" or 3/16" = 1'-0". Drawings should include but are not limited to:

1. Proposed **Site Plan**

- Site plan should include but is not limited to building footprint(s), all public amenities, street furniture, trees and plants, public utilities and parking
- Include a north arrow
- Include street names
- Include scale (graphic or listed)

2. Proposed **Floor Plans**

- All floors must be clearly labeled
- Include room and space names
- Include a north arrow
- If applicable, include street names for reference
- Include scale (graphic or listed)

3. Proposed **Exterior Elevations**

- Key to floor plans or label elevation direction as north, south, west or east (not "front" or "rear")
- Render and/or clearly notate materials and finishes
- Indicate important heights significant to the project's context including but not limited to storefront windows, canopies, parapet/cornices, step-backs, roof top elements, and floor-to-floor heights
- Include scale (graphic or listed)
- Including a human scale element is always helpful, such as an outline of a 5'-6" person

4. Proposed **Building Sections**

- Key to floor plans
- Indicate important heights significant to the project's context including but not limited to storefront windows, canopies, parapet/cornices, step-backs, roof top elements, and floor-to-floor heights
- Include scale (graphic or listed)
- Including a human scale element is always helpful, such as an outline of a 5'-6" person

Renderings and Illustrations: Three-dimensional renderings, photomontage, and/or models are not required for this Review but are encouraged as they help clearly illustrate the project.

Context: The extent of existing context should be sufficiently presented and relate to the overall scope and scale of the project. Elevations and renderings should include no less than two buildings or lots to either side of the proposed structures.

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II. Neighborhood Context

Zoning: What zoning variances to the *Zoning and Planning Code* would be required for the project and would they be consistent with the community master plan and urban design best practices?

Use: Are the proposed building uses appropriate to the particular site and the neighborhood and is the development consistent with the community master plan?

It is important that development at the intersections along emerging commercial corridors (such as Christian St and 22nd St) be built with the flexibility to support the growing need for additional commercial space. In other words, mixed-use is highly encouraged. Should first floor residential be constructed, it should be built so as to allow for ready conversion for a commercial use to meet demand as necessary.

Use of buildings should thoughtfully reflect the use of the block currently and should consider how effectively it functions under its current use. For example, most of the blocks along the Christian St Corridor have strong residential uses (with only corner commercial) and can successfully remain this way. However, Washington Ave poses great possibility for vibrant commercial uses that could support the families and individuals living and working nearby. Many blocks in the heart of Southwest Center City are primarily residential but corner stores, cafes, and restaurants are common and encouraged.

Development along South Street should follow the already established fabric of mixed use. The typical building on South Street contains commercial space on the ground floor with apartments or condos above.

Open Space: Does the proposed open space meet or exceed code requirements for the particular zoning district?

While vegetated or “green” roofs are highly encouraged (see “Sustainability” below), they should not be used as a categorical substitute for ground level open space. Open space must be usable and physically accessible to occupants for normal outdoor activities.

Historical Context: Does the proposed design appropriately incorporate or respond to any historic assets, or would the development destroy or compromise such assets? Incorporating or responding to historic assets does not necessarily mean that new developments must be aesthetically traditional or historic. While traditional and historic architectural styles are appropriate in many cases, progressive and modern developments can also be sensitive to historical assets by introducing a counterpoint or reinterpretations of historic styles.

Street Life: Do the building uses at street level promote sidewalk activity? Are the building fronts designed to articulate pedestrian entrances? Does the proposed development maintain or strengthen the existing street edge, or would it create an interruption in urban continuity?

Front garages are discouraged. Such features break the street wall, discourage pedestrian engagement and compromise the safety of residents with cars backing out into the traffic of a commercial corridor.

Streetscape: Is the sidewalk enhanced with amenities such as benches, paving patterns, and planters so as to enhance the pedestrian experience? Has the proposed landscaping been designed to link the building with its site in a meaningful way? Will existing street trees be maintained and would new trees and plantings be added?

Parking: Is parking be handled in a way to minimize the impact on the surroundings? For larger projects, has underground parking been fully explored?

III. Building Character

Height: Does the height and form of the building have a positive relationship with the street and surrounding buildings as viewed from both near and far? Would the shadow cast by the building adversely affect neighboring buildings and outdoor public space? Would the building obstruct any important view corridors?

Massing: Is the massing of the building an appropriate response to the context? Would the height and width of the building be appropriately subdivided into component parts? Do the elevation and sections drawings articulate the contextual relationship of window heights, storefront or entrances, parapets, etc. in relation to any neighboring buildings?

Composition: Does the design of the façade form a sophisticated composition of component parts? Does the architectural vocabulary relate to the existing context or create a meaningful juxtaposition? Does the design of the building enliven the streetscape?

Materials: Are the building materials and colors attractive and appropriate to the surroundings? Will the materials be durable and are they employed in an appropriate manner? Will the developer maintain a commitment to utilize the proposed materials through the completion of the project?

Openings: Are the building entrances designed to express the importance of the connection between the interior and exterior of the building? Is the scale of the entrance (for example, the height of the stoop) appropriate to the neighborhood context? Are the windows set-in somewhat from the main façade surface, creating a slight “shadow box” effect?

Roof: Has the roof edge been designed to express the termination of the building in an attractive or meaningful manner? Are the rooftop mechanical units and penthouses hidden from sight as best possible, and successfully incorporated into the design of the building?

Sustainability: Does the project utilize sustainable materials and best building practices? Have site issues such as stormwater runoff and urban heat island effect been considered? Have energy efficiency strategies such as building orientation for passive solar heating/cooling; optimizing building envelope insulation values; energy efficient equipment, appliances and fixtures; and on-site renewable energy or “green power” been considered? Will materials and resources be used efficiently by first and foremost reusing existing buildings; managing construction waste; reusing resources such as salvaged material; or integrating materials with recycled, locally manufactured, or rapidly renewable content into the design?

While not required, LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) Certification through the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC – www.usgbc.org) and other recognized green rating systems is encouraged. Vegetated or “green” roofs are encouraged as a way to reduce solar heat gain, reduce stormwater run-off and mitigate the urban heat island effect. Where large paved areas such as parking lots are required, it is recommended that light-colored pervious pavers be used to reduce stormwater runoff and mitigate the urban heat island effect.

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IV. Protocols

1. Schedule: One monthly meeting. 20 minute (max) time slot per project
 - 1st Wednesday at 7pm at SOSNA office
2. Committee: Appointed by SOSNA Board
 - 5 members
 - 3 required at meetings for a quorum
3. Deliverables
 - ARC "Meeting Report" with recommendations (copied to Applicant and Zoning Committee)

V. Resources

City resources and incentive programs

Philadelphia City Planning Commission www.phila.gov/cityplanning
Zoning Code Commission www.zoningmatters.org
Zoning Map www.phila.gov/Map#id=757bbd2d07704a9bb684a1e88ca681c9
Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation www.pidc-pa.org
Empowerment Zone www.phila.gov/ohcd
Real Estate Tax Abatement www.brtweb.phila.gov/brt.apps/OnlineApps/onlineapps_home.aspx
Plan Philly www.planphilly.com
Department of Commerce www.phila.gov/commerce
Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority www.phila.gov/pra
Philadelphia Water Department www.phila.gov/water
Streets Department www.philadelphiastreet.com
Mayor's Office of Sustainability (Greenworks) www.phila.gov/green/greenworks
Green 2015 http://issuu.com/pennpraxis/docs/green2015_full
Green City, Clean Waters <http://www.phillywatersheds.org>

Neighborhood resources

South of South Neighborhood Association www.southofsouth.org
South Street West Business Association www.sswba.org
Naked Philly www.nakedphilly.com
EveryBlockPhiladelphia www.philly.everyblock.com