
Abstract

This dissertation explores the development, implementation, impact and legacy of the ‘Philadelphia Plan for Balanced Transportation,’ a loose set of postwar governmental programs and nongovernmental projects that preserved the historic role of commuter rail in resettlement of the shrinking city. Privately owned and operated until the mid-1980s, commuter rail companies, concessionaires and conservancies serving the Pennjerdel region long integrated new residents and companies into the social and spatial fabric of Philadelphia and its suburbs via special railroad property and passenger management programs such as railroad gardening and park-n-ride planning. These corporate acts of participatory governance became government enterprises of New Public Management between 1950 and 1985 as philanthropic bodies—both private foundations and public charities—invested in citizens councils, commuter clubs and community associations that researched and reclaimed railways undergoing divestment, degradation, disintegration, debt restructuring and desertion. Building on the ‘new suburban history’ of voluntary associations, this case study of strategic partnerships in critical infrastructure protection shows how a participatory praxis of infrastructure planning, policymaking and provision perpetuates private management and philanthropic finance of the public realm.

A dizzying array of foundation-funded civic bodies and community-based organizations have sustained private equity in public transportation across Greater Philadelphia. The financial resources, technical knowledge and social capital of six nonprofit corporations operating in the
postwar period are the focus of this dissertation for they developed provisional forms of rail revitalization (e.g. ‘park-n-ride’ lots and paratransit fleets) as well as more permanent foundations for railway reclamation (e.g. land trusts, long-term leases and easements). Some acts of critical infrastructure protection undermined the agency of municipal corporations, metropolitan compacts, state agencies and federal administrators, while others underwrote public access to private property and public accommodations in protected spaces. Some emerged from the bottom up via coalition-building amongst corporate builders and community foundations before the tenure of U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Robert Weaver; others benefited from federal sponsorship of public-private partnership in metropolitan transportation planning, policymaking and provision, namely CONRAIL and AMTRAK. In spite of differences in their temporality and spatiality, origins and objectives, each inquiry, intervention and institution recast rail rights-of-way as avenues to the right to the city.

Paratransit, park-n-ride lots and passenger recruitment programs are rarely the focus of urban history or planning theory. Case studies of these marginal places, practices and products of back-to-the-city movements illuminate (in)equity in transportation-land use planning and policymaking. Rail rehabilitation, ridership retention and real estate redevelopment initiatives not only relied on but reified civil rights activism in Greater Philadelphia. Charters for the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia (est. 1960), unlike congressional entrées into transportation equity that came more than two decades later, brought diverse competencies, capacities, and communities to bear on planning roles, development rights and managerial responsibilities of the third sector in the post-civil rights era. The dissertation lays bare how the most progressive of postwar fixatives for splintering urbanism still privileged former fixers of the fractured metropolis: philanthropic “friends” of regional rail.
The Other ‘Philadelphia Plan’:
Community Philanthropy & Corporate Investment in
Critical Infrastructure for Back-to-the-City Movements, 1950-1985

Fallon Samuels Aidoo

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iv

INTRODUCTION 1

PART I. Groundwork for Distributed Governance

CHAPTER 1
The Parens Patriae of Public Transportation 25

CHAPTER 2
The Right of the City to Rights-of-Way 81

CHAPTER 3:
The Metropolitics of Municipal Incorporation 132

PART II: Emergent Authorities of Emergency Aid

CHAPTER 4
Railbanking—A New American Right 205

CHAPTER 5
A Region in Transition: State Receivership of Railbanking Rites 251

CHAPTER 6
The Contentious Politics of Consolidated Rail 292

CONCLUSION
The Resilient Third Sector 345

BIBLIOGRAPHY 370
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Figure 1.1. Railroad facilities under contract (purchase-of-service agreement, lease agreement, or tariff agreement) with the City of Philadelphia as of 1960. Philadelphia City Planning Commission, *Comprehensive Plan of 1960*, appendix.
On December 16, 1949, when the holiday travel season commenced, a new era of secure commuter rail sites and services was supposed to begin in the state of Pennsylvania (fig. 1.1). A 25% increase in the cost of commuting from the suburbs of Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Lancaster and Pittsburgh would, according to railroad executives, insure the metropolitan mobility of all those sitting in traffic not just those riding the Reading and Pennsylvania Railroads. While major newspapers quietly broke the news of a forthcoming fare increase to those buying and living in homes beyond the “crabgrass frontier,” community-run periodicals like Glenside News, The Main Line Times and Levittown Times broke their silence on the role railroad companies were playing in the declining affordability and livability of suburbia.

Complaints focused on the lack of railroad reports concerning which suburban sites and services could prove profitable if rehabilitated, redesigned and/or rebranded with the additional revenue that a fare increase afforded them. Nor, they argued, had the railroad companies shown where and when retirement, retrenchment or some other means of rescaling the service areas and their infrastructure would yield dividends for riders as well as stockholders. Such substantive critiques also accompanied histories of “women waiting at unmanned stations” and herstories of working women, who “missed dinner with their kids” as a result of delayed trains. Both ways by which suburbanites claimed their right to the city have solicited derisive criticism or dismissive comments from urban historians, but, on June 27, 1950, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) afforded such “complainants” the opportunity to demonstrate the fare hike

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1 Journalists did not use the phrase “crabgrass frontier” in 1950 but it captures their collective understanding of who and what their so-called “commuter crisis” affected. I use the term as Kenneth Jackson employed it—to describe a geopolitical and socioeconomic boundary between built environments deemed incompatible or incomparable from a socioeconomic, spatial, architectural and/or political perspective. See, Kenneth Jackson, The Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States (1985). See also, the “Forward” to The Suburb Reader, eds. Becky M. Nicolaides & Andrew Wiese (NY: Routledge, 2006), pp. xxi-12.
compromised “the fairness, justness, reasonableness and lawfulness” of commutation between the City of Philadelphia and surrounding suburbs.\(^2\)

Suburban commuter clubs and community associations that appeared before the state’s public utility commission in 1950 proved unsuccessful at controlling the cost of metropolitan mobility. In the process of making their case for urban accessibility, however, suburban citizens engendered new ways and reasons for the City of Philadelphia to stake their claim for home rule. Penned and promoted primarily by women and men of Philadelphia’s peripheral neighborhoods, a new City Charter of 1951 not only proposed the city possessed the power to regulate, restore and reclaim rights-of-way once granted to private operators of public utilities within city limits.\(^4\)

The home rule provisions of the charter also afforded the city’s taxpayers—those who dwelled and/or worked in the city—the right to challenge state control of metropolitan transportation.\(^5\)

\(^2\) PUC Complaint Docket No. 14844—Earl E. Wells, Charles H. Williams, John Dusch, F. Howard Van Zant and Commuters Association of Pennsylvania v. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company and the Reading Company, 27 June 1950, pp. 1-3. Folder 19-9: “Commuter Fare Case for 1949-1951,” Box 1139, Reading Company Legal Department Collection (Acc. 1520), Hagley Museum & Library. The Commuters Association of Pennsylvania, a coalition formed by Harrisburg and Philadelphia commuters, alleged that the proposed increase would be unjust and unreasonable on a long-term basis, not just within the 6-month period that state and federal regulators intended to review, given the increasing number of middle-class migrants to once-bourgeois suburbs. Upon review of the association’s legal standing to contest fare increases, PUC found the association’s membership insufficiently representative of the ridership for which it advocated. These suburban men were allowed to testify to their lived experiences not present suburban livability issues as commonplace or collective.


Thus, not every vote for the Home Rule charter in November of 1951 affirmed public interest in municipal power. Rather, each vote represented public trust in Philadelphians—civil society and civil servants—to perform roles and responsibilities of the state, their official Parens Patriae.⁶

To whom did the citizenry entrust city planning? What were their ethics, experiences and expertise? How long did this covenant last? Whom did it serve and what services did it render during that time? Under what conditions did the partnership collapse? Who, if any, benefited or suffered as a result? These questions remain conspicuously absent from political discourse in postwar Philadelphia as if the city gave the voting public no reason to question the conflation of nongovernmental agency and governmental authority. Citizens have always contributed to urban revitalization, particularly recovery from divestment and disasters, historians, sociologists and anthropologists of the risk society conclude from the history of voluntary associations, philanthropic foundations, nonprofit corporations and nongovernmental organizations. Urban studies in particular suggest civic agency in cities depends on the political and social capital of resource-rich residential and commercial property owners.⁷ Largely missing from the literature on public-private partnership in urban renewal, revitalization and recovery are the nonprofit


⁷ Literature on the in urban planning, policymaking and development in the postwar period has long centered on the political capital of business boosters and the social capital of resource-rich residential and commercial tenants of urban space. See, Alison Isenberg, Downtown, Inc.: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004) Susan Fainstein, Restructuring the City: The Political Economy of Urban Development (New York: Longman, 1983); John R. Logan and Harvey L. Molotch, Urban Fortunes (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); While the actors in these narratives of cities' commodification have changed, the political economy of profit-seeking individuals and institutions remains at the center of critical urban studies, See for example, Kevin Fox Graham, Crisis Cities: Disaster and Redevelopment in New York and New Orleans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Kevin Loughran, “Parks for Profit: The High Line, Growth Machines, and the Uneven Development of Urban Public Spaces,” City and Community 13, no. 1 (March 2014): 49-69; and Neil Brenner, Peter Marcuse, and Margit Mayer, eds. Cities for People, Not for Profit: Critical Urban Theory and the Right to the City (Abingdon, Oxon, New York: Routledge, 2012).
organizations and philanthropic bodies that rendered public benefits, in theory and practice. Immense economic, racial and institutional diversity in public benefit corporations points not only to vast differences in social collectivity, political consciousness and economic capacity but also organizational behavior.

As I will show in this chapter, directors, delegates and donors of Philadelphia’s Citizens Council on City Planning (CCCP) cultivated credibility in regime maintenance by routinely reclaiming regulatory operations of the public and private sectors—program evaluation, project management, plan review and procurement—constituted core competencies of the “third sector.”

The first section introduces the Citizen Council on City Planning (CCCP) as a trustee of community philanthropy for technical education and public investment in techno-politics. Founded as nonprofit in 1946 after political machine bosses abolished the shelter-focused


Philadelphia City Planning Commission, CCCP focused on transportation and other areas of urban policy overlooked by settlement houses and civic bodies invested in “infrastructural politics of the poor.” Narratives of failure in community-based economic development, particularly cases of commuter rail commercialization, discount sociotechnical (ex)change amongst the female “housers” and “Blue Sky Boys” that miscarried mid-century campaigns for Main Street on Market Street. Instead of ‘throwing the baby out with the bath water,’ so to speak, I analyze revision and re-accreditation of their transit-oriented development plans by community development corporations and corporate philanthropies.

Revisiting CCCP’s campaign to monetize Philadelphia’s *Plan and Program of Balanced Transportation (1955)* for the Penn-Jersey region, the following section offers a spatial understanding of both market failure and CCCP’s failure to convince FIRE (financial, insurance and real estate) consultants of its credibility in New Public Management. Here sociotechnical

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13 “New Public Management” took form in the early 1950s as a praxis of public sector innovation amongst faculty of the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton Business School, who marketed the liberalization of public enterprise to FIRE (financial, insurance and real estate) industries and urban research centers such as Penn’s Institute of Urban Studies and the Joint Center for Housing Studies. See, Brendan Moran, “Sociological Imagination of the City:
change in how publics planned public transportation are the focus. Finally, the chapter concludes with critical assessment of CCCP’s reincarnation as an accreditor of private equity in public transportation—that is, a curator, counselor and incubator of transit-oriented development. operations of the city’s own nonprofit Passenger Service Improvement Corporation (1960-71).

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Corporatization of Active Citizenship

Throughout the summer of 1948, Philadelphians attending the Democratic and Republican National Conventions carried placards for their preferred platforms but also posters from the first Bulletin Contest organized by the Pennsylvania Railroad, Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and Reading (RR) Company (fig. 1.2). Men and women dressed for success in Philadelphia’s business district disseminated black-and-white bulletins designed to bring awareness to the corporate benevolence of commuter clubs, community associations and other “member organizations” of the Citizens Council on City Planning.16 While some chronicled small-scale “shares” such as newspaper exchanges and gossip-laced gin rummy games on crowded trains, others called attention to larger-scale sharing economies such as the carpooling networks that commuters mobilized and activated during transit labor strikes (fig. 1.3 and 1.4).17 Not all communications of grassroots organizations and operations counted towards the competition, but the cornucopia of such communications at mid-century gave the impression that competitive citizens (not corporate competition) cultivated a responsive city.

The Board of Directors of CCCP, voted in November 1950 to convene its first of over two dozen annual assemblages of social enterprise leaders—and become one of Philadelphia’s only civic bodies devoted to community incorporation. According to CCCP’s by-laws, each “delegate” of a grassroots organization earned a vote on CCCP’s engagement with policymakers,


politicians, companies and communities concerned about “commutation.” In practice, however, CCCP’s Transportation Committees, one for each transport mode in each quadrant of the city (e.g. Northeast Expressway Committee), included representatives of fee-financed advocacies for road and rail users (e.g. AAA chapters) and FIRE (financial, insurance, real estate) industry professionals. John W. Bodine, Lloyd Wells, Edward Hopkinson, Robert B. Mitchell and a half-dozen other included self-described “professional citizens” on CCCP’s Board of Directors relied on this subset of the citizenry to alleviate the “critical financial situation” of railroads in the region and the impending fiscal crisis of the Citizens Council on City Planning.

Figure 1.2. Passenger representatives W. Preston Cox (left), of the B. & O, and T.J. Costello, of the Pennsylvania Railroad, discuss accommodations for the student winners of the Bulletin American History Contest. Philadelphia Evening Bulletin Collection, TUUA

18 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 8 Nov 1950, Citizens Council on City Planning (hereafter CCCP), Charles Frazier Papers (CF Papers hereafter), URB 1/II/3, Folder 81, TUUA, Philadelphia, PA.

19 Based on a review of Meeting Minutes for the CCCP Transportation Committee, when chaired by Charles Frazier between 1948 and 1954. CF Papers,

20 Ibid, 17 September 1953, URB 1/III/3, Folder 81, CF Papers, TUUA
Figure 1.3.: "Commuters, diverted from strikebound PTC lines, jam the 49th Street and Chester Avenue Station of the Pennsylvania Railroad." *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, 15 January 48. Because PRR added train cars to accommodate the increased capacity, many boarded via grassy banks of the right-of-way not the platform. Philadelphia Evening Bulletin Collection, TUUA.

Figure 1.4. Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, "Carpooling in Center City during the PTC Strike of 1946," Philadelphia Evening Bulletin Collection, TUUA
CCCP directors also strategically engaged center-city professionals seeking political and financial capital. Formal educational events, such as lectures by local members of the National Real Estate Board, local presidents of National Banks and local leaders of national federations, afforded all of CCCP’s dues-paying “member organizations” access to potential funding sources.\(^1\) To prospective center-city partners and participants in walking tours of improving neighborhoods, CCCP board members sold their record of fundraising from suburban branches of downtown banks and businesses (over 2/3 of its 1950 budget, or $23,500).\(^2\) CCCC’s board of directors decidedly sited their limited enrollment events in the central business districts to recruit businessmen who could make three-year, financial commitments to the organization, including women leading the fund-raising efforts of community philanthropies and minorities apart of Philadelphia’s professional class. Mid-day seminars and dinner meetings took place at historic hotels, while CCCP’s exhibitions built city-wide consensus on city planning amongst women visiting downtown department stories.\(^3\) Within the decade, white women and men of color ascended CCCP ranks, filling Board seats vacated by city planner Robert B. Mitchell, community developer Lloyd Wells, lawyer John W. Bodine and other CCCP’s founders.

By 1960, the the Citizens Council on City Planning received national recognition for executive education of civil servants and professional development of civil society. Prolific planning practitioners and academics came from Chicago to London to join internationally renown critics of sprawl such as William H. Whyte, Lewis Mumford and John Keats at CCCP’s

\(^{1}\) CCCP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 12 November 1953, URB 10/III/9, Folder 87, CF Papers, TUUA.

\(^{2}\) CCCP’s 1950-1951 Capital Campaign coincided, not coincidentally, with its evaluation and exposition of “Operation Fix-Up”—the city’s block-by-block neighborhood reinvestment program. Citizens Council on City Planning and the Philadelphia Housing Association, *Operation Fix-Up*;

\(^{3}\) On CCCP’s invited guests, particularly renowned visiting practitioners and scholars, see CCCP Board of Director Meeting Minutes, URB 10/III/8-10, Folders 86-88.
annual meetings on economic development, community conservation, historic preservation and transportation planning.\textsuperscript{24} Local leaders (governmental and nongovernmental) so regularly attended these seminars that participation in CCCP’s education enterprises—and recording one’s attendance at these events—became routine practice for Philadelphia’s public figures (fig. 1.5). In a report to the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency, the Redevelopment Authority’s executive director William Rafsky and Deputy Mayor Richardson Dilworth boasted about the wealth of community groups that had become, through the Citizens Council on City Planning, the city’s “partners in renewal.”\textsuperscript{25} Eventually, even directors and designers of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, namely Edmund Bacon, David Wallace and Oscar Stonorov, also recognized the role of the Citizens Council on City Planning in constructing a “Better Philadelphia”—both the visionary exhibition and the built environment (fig. 1.6).\textsuperscript{26}

\begin{figure}[h]
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\caption{The Philadelphia City Planning Commission’s David Wallace at a Community Planning Meeting organized by the Citizens Council on City Planning, n.d. McDowell Evening Bulletin Photograph Collection, TUUA}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{26} David Wallace, “Renaissanceship,” \textit{Journal of the American Institute of Planners} 26, no. 3 (1960): 157-176
Figure 1.6. Cover of the pamphlet of the 1947 Better Philadelphia Exhibition reads: “conceived by the Citizen’s Council on City Planning and the Chamber of Commerce…sponsored by the City of Philadelphia … designed by Oskar Stonorov and Edmund Bacon … administered by Richard A. Protheroe … produced by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission… paid for by the City and civic-minded business and industrial firms.” Charles H. Frazier Papers, TUUA

“The Center of it All”

Penn Center, the largest downtown redevelopment projects undertaken in Philadelphia post-war, presented the first test for CCCP’s consortium of professionalized citizens. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company’s plans to demolish its elevated railroad tracks (the “Chinese Wall”), depress railroad service (Pennsylvania Railroad “Main Line”) and develop the rail yards above (“Broad Street Station” land tract) posed unprecedented land and transport development problems for Edmund Bacon, David Wallace and Oscar Stonorov. The architectural educations and professional experience of these acclaimed urban designers had consisted of comprehensive planning not complex spatial programming (fig. 1.7).27 To assure PRR project managers adopted

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their recommendations, Bacon, Wallace and Stonorov called on the Citizens Council on City Planning to produce a “phasing plan” for their proposed development of glass towers, transit concourses, pedestrian plazas and parking lots (fig. 1.8). The Planning Commission specifically solicited a plan for public benefit, citing the potential for PRR to procure pernicious forms of spatial organization. CCCP’s Board of Directors not only recommended new commercial buildings on railroad property incorporate local companies, but also rendered tenants of the city’s crumbling building stock the rightful recipients of premium real estate. (figs. 1.9 and 1.10).

Figure 1.7. Penn Center parcels pre-clearance of PRR tracks and embankments that formed a so-called “Chinese Wall” in Center City Philadelphia. 1952. McDowell Evening Bulletin Collection, TUAA

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28 Penn Center Citizens Advisory Committee, Meeting Minutes, Box 192, “Penn Center,” Richardson Dilworth Administration Records, Philadelphia City Archives (hereafter RDA Records, PCA).


30 Penn Center Citizens Advisory Committee, Meeting Minutes, Box 192, “Penn Center,” RDA, PCA
Figure 1.8. Penn Center Plan, as proposed in 1952 and portrayed, in the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin in 1955. McDowell Evening Bulletin Collection (11-18-58), TUUA;

Figure 1.9. 1953 Appraisal of Penn Center parcels above PRR tracks serving Suburban Station (PRR’s regional rail terminus in the central business district of Philadelphia). U.S. National Archives II, Cartography Division, College Park, MD
The Pennsylvania Railroad Company (PRR) “Penn Center” project proceeded, as CCCP directors counseled, along a un-paved path of right-of-way redevelopment in the Rustbelt. PRR sold a small parcel (colored pink in fig. 1.9) to Quaker City Life Insurance Company, an underwriter of local commerce, as compensation for offering other properties exclusively to developers with a track record of railroad property redevelopment in Boston (Prudential Life

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31 Other cases of right-of-way redevelopment covered to some extent in Elihu Rubin, *Insuring the City: Prudential Center and the Postwar Urban Landscape* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012)
Insurance Company) and Pittsburgh (Metropolitan Life Company). PRR also agreed to lease commercial spaces to public benefit corporations as well as FIRE (financial, insurance, real estate) industry companies-- tenancy proposals that CCCP accepted as its “part in clearance of Center City.” The Citizens Council on City Planning took responsibility for recruiting other prospective tenants from membership organizations, then took the opportunity to locate its own operations within the city’s most celebrated commercial properties in half a century: the PSPS building on Market Street. By 1961, CCCP had joined the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia in one of the few high-rise spaces of Penn Center marked for government-sponsored enterprises.

CCCP’s towering and centralized position within the city upended its philanthropic foundations. CCCP’s capacity to research city plans, evaluate municipal policies and manage community participation in urban programs largely depended on the small but annual contributions ($5 to $500) of charitable citizens to the Community Chest of Greater Philadelphia (fig. 1.11). Following completion of the Penn Center consulting project in 1954, CCCP experienced its first of several decreases in Community Chest funds since it first began, in 1948, to receive a portion of the Chest’s support for professionalization of citizens’ inquiries and interventions. (fig. 1.12). The Community Chest dialed back its annual donation of $30,000 by

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33 CCCP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 21 Oct 1953, URB 10/III/11, Box 3, Folder 89
35 CCCP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 11 February 1954, URB 10/III/10, Box 3, Folder 88, CF Papers, TUUA
more than two-thirds come 1957, because of not in spite of its expansive research and development programs.\textsuperscript{37} The city-wide coverage of CCCP and other nonprofit advocacies aligned with municipal planning and policy undermined their eligibility to receive aid from charitable trusts designated for discrete and sometimes discriminatory purposes, the Pennsylvania Attorney General relayed in an interview with the \textit{Philadelphia Evening Bulletin}.\textsuperscript{38} In the wake of funding reductions, the Council engaged less with grassroots organizations that helped the council rise to the grasstops of city planning and urban development. By the end of the 1950s, CCCP planning and procurement projects for the public and private sector centered around the interests of its directors and donors, their firms and friends.

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\caption{Figure 1.11 (left). Penn Center, Karl Lutz Collection, Athenaeum of Philadelphia. Local ID #: 76-P-112-016.}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figures/figure12.png}
\caption{Figure 1.12 (right). Community Chest fund-raisers, Philadelphia, 1952. McDowell Evening Bulletin Collection, TUUA}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{37} Report of the CCCP Finance Committee, 1958, 13 May 1954, URB 10/III/10, Box 3, Folder 88, CF Papers, TUUA

CCCP’s Board of Directors turned to the city’s new crop of financial, insurance and real estate (FIRE) industries for assistance in rebuilding a revolving revenue source for research. In their communications with prospective donors, CCCP directors lamented how easily it had turned into “the sole spokesman for the collective citizen opinion” on model city growth and renewal. The board recognized “one function of the CCCP was to overcome public apathy and strongly advocate public improvements” given the leadership role it assumed in city planning and policymaking. However, the majority of executive board members rejected the idea that “it was incumbent on the CCCP to publicize that the growth of the city [depended] on continued improvement projects and passage of the loan proposals to expedite them.” Concerned that “so much staff and committee time” was spent on policy publicity and plan promotion at the expense of policy and plan evaluation, CCCP’s Board of Directors voted to make “Analysis of the Capital Program” the core mission. In short, “the ‘watch-dog’ function of the CCCP” preoccupied its long-standing Committees on housing, transportation and industry.

The Citizens Council on City Planning assembled a corps of renowned city planners and emergent urban policymakers in 1956 to help audit urban policy and planning. First, CCCP hired

39 CCCP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 13 May 1954, URB 10/III/10, Box 3, Folder 88. At this meeting, Board members agreed that declining support from the Community Chest required CCCP discontinue its pro-bono services. CCCP also agreed at this meeting to “perform community relations services of an interpretative nature in the Eastwick Redevelopment Area.” The Board voted unanimously to approve the community relations services contract proposed by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, but acknowledged “there might be difficulties in carrying out the proposed arrangement.” The contract proved “subject to the approval of the delegates at the annual meeting” given “the Citizens Council has been performing this service, without charge, in other redevelopment areas.”

40 CCCP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 11 Feb 1954, URB-10/III/10, Box 3, Folder 88, CF Papers, TUUA.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

43 CCCP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 21 October 1954, URB 10/III/11, Box 3, Folder 89, CF Papers, TUUA.
Aaron Levine, formerly Senior Land Planner for the Philadelphia City Planning Commission and the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Administration, as its the Executive Director. At a salary of $9000, with annual increments of $500 for 2 years, Levine’s compensation nearly consumed new funding from FIRE industry firms. Consequently, additional staff entrusted with the enormity of CCCP’s task — George A. Haviland, John J. Tormey and an unnamed “female landscape architect” with degrees from Harvard’s Design school and Bryn Mawr in “community planning”—contributed expertise and experiences at a discount to the organization.

Each of these full-time, paid staff members received free, technical support from a half-dozen private consultants in the field of road and rail planning. Robert B. Mitchell, the first director of Philadelphia’s City Planning Commission, resigned in 1954 from CCCP’s Board of Directors to direct sponsored research at several nonprofit institutions: Columbia University’s Institute for Hosing and Urban Studies, the University of Pennsylvania’s Institute of Urban Studies, and, lastly the Citizens Council on City Planning. Richard P. Miniot, of the accounting firm acquired by the Pennsylvania Railroad and Reading RR Company (Peat, Marwick and Mitchell), filled the executive board vacancy left by Howard E. Hansen, a partner in the transportation planning firm that previously served as CCCP’s technical advisor (Alan M. Voorhees and Associates). And finally, CCCP’s Board of Directors appointed consulting traffic engineers and transit planners (e.g. Charles Elcock and Meyer Casman) to its Transportation Committee, which modeled, according to the Philadelphia City Council’s Bureau of Municipal Research, the Council’s “proposed organization to recommend an urban transportation and traffic

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44 CCCP Board of Director Meeting Minutes, 14 May 1953, URB 10/III/9, Folder 87, CF Papers, TUUA
45 Ibid.
policy and program for Philadelphia.” 46 Altogether, these full-time staff and a host of board-appointed consultants comprised a “research corporation,” postwar planning parlance for think tanks and the collectivity of policy advisors.47

**Corporatists at City Hall**

The sprawling expertise of CCCP Committees made them indispensable to the shrinking city of Philadelphia. City Councilmen, in particular, took note of the organization’s leadership in critical thought and action, and took steps to sustain it. Lewis M. Stevens, a City Councilman-at-Large noted that “it [was] of first-rate importance for the City [to] have such an independent agency as the Citizens Council, willing and well-qualified to analyze and come to conclusions on the many difficult problems which a capital program and a capital budget provide.” 48 Other councilmen agreed “Philadelphia is facing a transportation and traffic crisis in which…policy-level decisions can better be made by a broadly representative board by leading citizens than by a governmental agency, which may tend to avoid decisive and controversial proposals because of its wish to avoid impairing its long-range public relations.” 49 But they joined the Acting Director

46 Ibid.


48 Letter from Lewis M. Stevens, Councilman at Large, Phila City Council to Aaron Levine, CCCP, Executive Director, 8 Dec 1953, URB-10/III/9, Folder 87, CF Papers, TUUA

49 Ibid.
of the Bureau of Municipal Research (the City Council’s official auditor and advisor) in keeping
critical distance between with the Citizens Council on City Planning and the City Council.

Competition for city contracts in capital plan evaluation seemed likely when the City
Council authorized the mayor to assemble citizens from across the metropolitan area as an Urban
Traffic and Transportation Board. Ironically, because the City Council still contracted CCCP for
program management and evaluation, CCCP held responsibility for assisting the mayor’s office
in board governance. The Board, CCCP’s Board of Directors assured,

“is not intended to encroach on the functions of the Planning Commission….. The new
board is recommended because Philadelphia is facing a transportation and traffic crisis in
which the Bureau of Municipal Research believes that the policy-level decisions can
better be made by a broadly representative board of leading citizens than by a
government agency.”50

“As more people see how valuable it is to have such an independent agency as this make studies
in this field,” City Council chairman James Tate pilled on, “the usefulness of this new procedure
of a capital program and a capital budget becomes better known among the citizens of
Philadelphia.”51 In the meantime, however, he joined fellow councilman in hedging CCCP’s role
in urban governance safeguarded the city against any corruptive forces of the newly created
Urban Traffic and Transportation Board (UTTB).

Chairman Tate also attempted to convince CCCP’s directors of UTTB’s value to its future
in city planning and policymaking. CCCP “might benefit” from “being relieved of controversial
issues and the necessity of securing public acceptance,” had suggested to CCCP when the idea
first surfaced in 1953.52 A year later, Tate sweetened the deal, enlisting CCCP to vet Board

50 CCCP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 13 July 1953, URB-10/III/9, Folder 87, TUUA

51 Letter from James Tate, Philadelphia City Council to Aaron Levine, CCCP, Executive Director, 8 Dec 1953,
URB-10/III/9, Box 3, Folder 87, CF Papers, TUUA

52 Ibid.
appointments, procure its technical directors and review its plans and programs. Entrusting the Citizens Council on City Planning to set the epistemic boundaries of mayor Dilworth’s transportation advisors, CCCP actualized its founders vision of a “Municipal Research Service.”

By the time Richardson Dilworth moved into Offices of the Mayor of Philadelphia in January 1955, CCCP’s land use and development planners had crafted inter-county, inter-state transportation planning frameworks and policy platforms for the city’s Urban Traffic and Transportation Board. The Corporation conceived of a board that crossed scalar, municipal and sectorial boundaries. It recommended executors of public enterprises to chair a board of FIRE industry executives, established methods of board governance and issued membership and operational guidelines to ensure convergence rather than collusion between these corporations, the city and Citizens Council on City Planning. CCCP also vetted these candidates for their suitability to public service, propriety with public information, expertise in public enterprise and experience in public relations.

Mayor Richardson Dilworth at once fulfilled his campaign promise to professionalize mayoral advisory commissions and reneged on his commitment to reform the city’s citizen advisory boards by following CCCP’s recommendations. To reinstate checks and balances, Dilworth turned to Charles Frazier, whose decades-long tenure as President of the Philadelphia

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53 CCCP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 15 October 1954, URB-10/III/3, Folder 87, CF Papers, TUUA.
55 Board of the Directors Meeting, 9 May 1951, in URB-10/III/4, in Box 3, Folder 82, CF Papers, TUUA
56 Ibid.
Gas Company matched his years of service as an economic advisor to “Young Turks” of Philadelphia’s midcentury reform movement. Frazier’s expertise in engineering management and experience defending private equity in public enterprise before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission earned him credibility amongst City Councilmen that later helped the city build the credit-worthiness of municipal corporations modeled after the Philadelphia Gas Company (e.g. the Philadelphia Food Distribution Corporation, Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation, the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia).

In nominating Charles Frazier as the new Chairman of Philadelphia’s Urban Traffic and Transportation Board, Dilworth effectively commissioned a ‘majority whip’ of inter-governmental commissions, multi-company consortiums and cross-sector compacts in the city’s interests.

Conflicts of interest abounded amongst Dilworth’s other board appointees, perhaps inevitably, given the small pool of prospective candidates CCCP commissioned. CCCP refrained from appointing any of the organization’s godfathers—donors that had supported the Citizens Council on City Planning’s Penn Center inquiries and interventions with $100-$500 in individual donations as well as annual corporate contributions of $22,000-$25,000 until a revolving revenue source—city contracts—materialized. But, CCCP’s efforts to preempt claims of patronage

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58 Petschek, Urban Reform, 15-35.


61 1951 donors to CCCP included: Walter Woodward of the Woodward Estate and the Brotherhood of Local Fireman and Engineers; Paul M. Chalfin, Chairman of the CCCP’s Zoning Committee; W. Carroll Keesey, VP and Treasurer of Fidelity Mutual Life Insurance Co.; James Crawford, VP of Indemnity Insurance Company of North America; John Diemand, Jr. Secretary of Insurance Company of North America; Henry Baton, Jr of Baton
towards the donor class obscured its prejudice towards CCCP delegates (representatives of CCCP’s grassroots member organizations) and preference for former and current CCCP directors. For instance, John W. Bodine, a Chestnut Hill lawyer simultaneously served as chairman of CCCP’s Transportation Committee; President and Executive Director of Penjerdel Corporation, a regionalist think tank funded by the Ford Foundation; senior partner of the corporate law firm Drinker, Biddle and Reath, and a member of the city’s Urban Traffic and Transportation Board (UTTB). Bodine relinquished his role within CCCP to qualify for mayoral appointment. Still, the Citizens Council on City Planning insisted “professional citizens” with such multi-sector experience had earned confirmation by the Mayor Dilworth and the City Council.

UTTB Board Chairman, Charles Frazier, relied on neither his own experience running a public utility company nor the expertise of UTTB Commission appointees to test theories of rail reinvestment and restructuring. Instead, Frazier brought on board transport research, modeling

Construction Corporation; William Mensing; Philip Klein—“Head of Junto and also connected with professional advertising and promotion.” CCCP Board of the Directors Meeting, 9 May 1951, in URB-10/III/4, Folder 82, CF Papers, TUUA;


63 Longstanding CCCP policy prevented John W. Bodine from holding both positions simultaneously. Earlier crises of representation led the CCCP Board of Directors to limit “dual citizenship.” Since the organization incorporated as a nonprofit, “No person who holds office involving the preparation or application of city and/or regional plans [could] be eligible to serve as a Director or as an Officer of the Corporation, and any person who, while serving as a Director or as an Officer of the Corp, assumes such a public office shall forfeit such office with the Corp; provided, however, that the Board of Directors may include not more than one member each of the City Planning Commission, the Philadelphia Housing Authority and the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority. The caveat—that CCCP remain represented on the city’s three major statutory authorities of spatial production—proved ineffectual at limiting conflicts of interest, but prudent in assuring Frazier continued to whip up interdisciplinary expertise, inter-sectorial partnerships and intergovernmental cooperation in transportation planning and policymaking. Board of the Directors Meeting, 9 May 1951, in URB-10/III/4, in Box 3, Folder 82
and forecasting experts from think tanks across the Penn-Jersey region. John A. Bailey, who managed land development for the Chicago Transit Authority before joining the Public Management Group of Wharton Business School, helmed UTTB’s Technical Committee. John Rannells, an urban economist investigating downtown reinvestment at Columbia University’s Institute for Housing and Urban Studies, took on the role of assistant director while preparing his manuscript for The Core of the City (1960). And finally, Howard Lapin, who had just left the Bay Area Rapid Transit District planning team to form the Regional Science Research Institute (a Philadelphia-based think tank), reviewed the regional restructuring plans of metropolitan transportation districts, authorities and contractors.

Subsequently, Charles Frazier hired transportation consultants with experience in the practice of transportation plan making, analysis and implementation. Louis T. Klauder, a public transportation consultant, made his firm’s associates available to model metropolitan mobility

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64 The Technical Committee included William O. Adams (Manager, National Council of Traveling Salesmen’s Associations); Robert A. Mitchell (Land Use Planner, Philadelphia City Planning Commission); Alfred E. Tumminia (Industry Demographer, Montgomery County Planning Commission); Howard Lapin (Fellow, University of Pennsylvania Institute of Urban Studies; Regional Science Research Institute); John Rannells (Economist, Institute of Housing and Urban Studies, Columbia University). And John A. Bailey (Former Manager, Chicago Transit Authority); and Edna S. Russell (secretary); Addendum to Plan and Program of 1955: Conclusions and Recommendations, Philadelphia Urban Traffic and Transportation Board Reports, Philadelphia City Archives.


and land use patterns. Charles Frazier also turned to Robert B. Mitchell for direction in research and reporting. Mitchell agreed in 1954 to forecast forthcoming development of vacant land owned by transportation companies. Mitchell and Chester Rapkin had excluded rail rights-of-way from *Urban Traffic: A Function of Land Use* (1954), an urban development treatise they penned with financial assistance from Columbia University's Institute for Housing and Urban Studies and the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads, administrative support from the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, technical assistance from Louis T. Klauder and Associates, and last but not least, tacit knowledge of community-based organizations apart of the Citizens Council on City Planning. All in all, Charles Frazier assembled a shadow government of technical professionals to shape and sustain policies, plans and programs of the Urban Traffic and Transportation Board in times of political contestation and consensus.

**The Capital Plan and the Corporate Program of Balanced Transportation**

In its first order of business, UTTB revived a defunct, diffuse system for developing and distributing knowledge of traffic and transportation. Philadelphia’s founding Director of City Planning first established processes of information collection, coding and conversion for traffic forecasting, planning and regulation in accordance with the U.S. Bureau of Public Road’s prewar

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69 John A. Bailey, Deputy Mayor. Weekly Reports to the Mayor. 2 September 1954. Box 192, RDA Records, PCA

70 Charles Frazier to Robert B. Mitchell, 12 October 1954, CF Papers, TUUA


procedures for expressway planning.73 After the Federal Aid Housing Act of 1949 passed, Director Mitchell’s purview expanded to planning concrete connections between Philadelphia and suburbs south and north of its smaller sister cities in the Delaware Valley: Camden, New Jersey; Chester, Pennsylvania and Wilmington, Delaware.74 Mitchell, which helmed a small staff of technical advisors to the Planning Commission chairman C. Holmes Perkins, enlisted fledging yet formidable thought leaders across the region. Not coincidentally, CCCP delegates—leaders of commuter clubs, neighborhood organizations and businessmen’s associations—counted amongst those assisting Wilbur Smith, Louis T. Klauder and their Associates in their efforts to ascertain and aggregate vehicular traffic data required by state highway administrators for federal highway aid.75

The Philadelphia City Planning Commission’s costly, community-based compilation of commuter data—the Origin-Destination (Traffic) Survey of 1947—might have been its last, if not for the Better Philadelphia, a widely-acclaimed World’s Fair-style exhibition of Philadelphia’s spatial transformations by mid-century. The exhibition rendered Philadelphia both accessible and responsive to human forces and social movements transforming industrial cities. The Citizens Council on City Planning, then a fledging body concerned with transportation policy and planning, and its more corporate contemporary, the Greater Philadelphia Movement (GPM), co-sponsored models and maps that the Planning Commission’s staff created for visitors


GPM’s membership of downtown businesses financed installation of the exhibition at Gimbel’s department store, but dues paid and donations made by member organizations of the Citizens Council on City Planning outfitted the exhibition with the latest curatorial tools and leading pedagogical technicians of civic education (fig. 1.14). Highly speculative yet data-driven, the exhibition projected images of how Philadelphia could and should growth given the data that citizenry and consultants collected and the designs that architects and planners constructed. Regular attendees of CCCP seminars recognized these representational regimes and the technological machinery behind them as commonplace approaches to city planning, but contributors to American City, a national periodical, heralded Better Philadelphia as “the most significant thing that has happened to planning in nearly a score of years.”

Figure 1.13. The Time-Space Machine photographs installed in the Better Philadelphia exhibition, which the Citizens Council on City Planning and the Greater Philadelphia Movement co-sponsored and co-organized in 1947. University of Pennsylvania Special Collections

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77 Ibidl, 30.

78 Gregory Heller, “Edmund Bacon, Salesman of Ideas;”

79 Ibid. 31. ft. 53.
Engineers of the postwar city also took notice of Philadelphia’s innovations in transportation policy and planning. Lawrence Costello, one of a dozen directors of the U.S. Office of Civil Defense Planning enlisted the City Planning Commission’s sprawling human infrastructure in the Evacuation, Transportation, and Emergency Welfare Unit he helmed.\textsuperscript{80} Charged with designating and training wardens of the city in threat identification, classification and diffusion, citizens and consultants of the City Planning Commission mobilized a couple hundred civilian ‘block captains’ to apply their knowledge of neighborhood buildings and people

\textsuperscript{80} John Bauman, “Expressways, Public Housing and Renewal.”; The devolution of civil defense planning to municipalities, particularly industrialized cities, operated at the direction of federal administrators but the discretion of local authorities. See Jennifer Light, 
towards the prevention of physical damage and social disintegration.\textsuperscript{81} As historian Scott Knowles notes, the Unit’s sparse deployments failed to meet the standards of stakeholders with “real resources and infrastructures with which to defend…from atomic annihilation,” namely the Transit Division of Philadelphia’s Department of Public Property, Reading (RR) Company, Pennsylvania Railroad Company and Budd Company (the manufacturer of train cars).\textsuperscript{82} But, citizens and consultants enlisted in Costello’s Civil Defense Planning Unit managed to produce “paper plans” for New Public Management of critical infrastructure protection—perhaps the only concrete outcome of many “hypothetical tests” that Philadelphia’s Civil Defense Planning Office conducted between 1951 and 1955.\textsuperscript{83}

Procurement plans of the Civil Defense Planning Office’s Evacuation, Transportation and Emergency Welfare Unit successfully gave rise to reforms in how Philadelphia recruited and regulated transportation companies in critical infrastructure protection. The City of Philadelphia and National City Lines, Inc., had jointly chartered an “emergency control board” in 1948 to restore streetcar lines of the Philadelphia Transportation Company (PTC) after a combination of wartime transit strikes and racial strife led PTC shareholders to reduce their quality and quantity post-war.\textsuperscript{84} The control board had yet, in 1954, to creep beyond the procurement of PTC services already slated for development or decommission. And any effort to regulate these civil defense

\textsuperscript{81} Knowles, “Defending Philadelphia,” 226-227.

\textsuperscript{82} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{83} These precursory plans are discussed in publications of the Regional Science Research Institute and the Institute of Urban Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, as well as the Joint Center for Urban Studies at Harvard University, and Pennjerdel, Inc.—arguably the three legs that anchored New Public Management (NPM) advocacy and praxis in the 1950s. Critical infrastructure protection plan analysts included Art Row, Walter Isaard, Britton Harris, John Herbert, Benjamin Stevens, Anthony Tomanzinis, Abe Gottlieb, D.R. Seidman, G.V. Wickstrom, and Henry Fagin.

\textsuperscript{84} Agreement between City of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Transportation Company, extending the terms and conditions of certain leases and agreements between the City and the Company for five years, 1 July 1957. Albert Greenfield Papers, Greater Philadelphia Movement Folder, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
planners, such as the city’s “Service Standards Board,” faced stiff opposition from the patrons of transit operators that capitalized on PTC’s transit strikes and slowdowns (fig. 1.15). The Service Standards Board—an innovative postwar proposition for public-private partnership—nonetheless survived criticism from liberal and conservative city councilmen.85

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The Board met stiff opposition from most city councilmen but vigorous support from Victor E. Moore, City Councilman-at-Large and Chairman of the City Council’s Transportation Committee between 1954 and 1958. Councilman Moore placed blamed for the protracted process of permitting city-company cooperation with the administration of mayor Richardson Dilworth, which considered litigation the only recourse for private transportation companies that short-shifted city planning and payments for streets, bridges and tunnels. Just before ETEW Unit disbandment in 1954, Moore proposed the Service Standards Board take up its duties and take them one step further beyond review and renegotiation of purchase-of-service contracts towards research and redevelopment of transit services needed during periods of crisis as well as strikes. Behind the scenes of City Council debate, Moore successfully negotiated signatures from Albert M. Greenfield, chairman of the PTC Executive Committee and the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, and Charles H. Frazier, Chairman of the Urban Traffic and Transportation Board that Mayor Dilworth, for self-protection program of real estate research and rolling stock development. Although the city devoted no funding to the program, it endorsed it—and took credit for the public-private partnership it represented.

A feat of progressive postwar politicians in the wake of Republican control, the Service Standards Board’s “emergency management” of streetcar rail removal and reduction enabled the Urban Traffic and Transportation Board to concentrate on long-term, strategic plans for

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87 Ibid.

88 Ibid.

municipal transit and metropolitan transportation.\textsuperscript{90} While the Service Standard Board (SSB) addressed PTC’s plan to de-install streetcar rails and trains from the streets of Philadelphia, UTTB assessed the human and financial costs of replacing streetcars with more rapid transit services such as trackless trolleys, buses and railroads.\textsuperscript{91} In its first order of business, the Service Standards Board formalized paratransit operations of Citizens Council on City Planning, incorporating them into the publicly-traded private transportation company as government-sponsored enterprises. CCCP’s member organizations, such as the Chestnut Street Community Association, had organized “shopper’s shuttles” for PTC subway riders during transit strikes of the 1940s (fig. 1.16). city officials envisioned a “Loop” of shuttles would stretch well beyond PTC-serviced subway stations to the railroad terminals at which most customers of downtown department stores arrived in 1954, according to the Origin-Destination Survey that Citizens


\textsuperscript{91} UTTB Annual Report (Philadelphia: Urban Traffic and Transportation Board, 1954), 10, RG 60-2.4, Box A-487, Municipal Developments—Administration, RDA, PCA.
Council on City Planning updated that year.\textsuperscript{92} Stopping short of this goal, PTC buses serviced only Gimbel’s and Wannamaker’s during the holiday shopping season of 1957.\textsuperscript{93}

Figure 1.16. An advertisement for PTC Loop Service in Center City Philadelphia published in the Germantown Courier & Chestnut Hill Local, 1956. Germantown Historical Society.

\textsuperscript{92} UTTB, Annual Report (1954).

\textsuperscript{93} Richardson Dilworth to Charles Frazier, 29 March 1957.
Critical Infrastructure for Camden’s Commuters

Despite the procurement and financing challenges that Philadelphia’s Service Standard Board encountered, the Urban Traffic and Transportation Board pegged the city’s future on affordable access to existing services. While SSB procured center-city bus services from PTC, Charles Frazier and John A. Bailey began negotiating what would become the first of a dozen annual agreements between the city of Philadelphia and the operators and owners of commuter rail in the Penn-Jersey region. The first purchase-of-service agreement (PSA), which UTTB signed with the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA) in 1954, stood apart from passenger service improvement contracts signed with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and Reading (RR) Company between 1958 and 1970. The Delaware River Port Authority, a bi-state, benefit corporation, serviced city debt, through rental payments for use of the Locust Street Subway and Market Street Subway, while Philadelphia performed debt service for multi-state railroad companies like the Pennsylvania RR Company and Reading Company.

Temporarily eschewing their own esteemed engineering staff and planning advisors, UTTB and DRPA hired independent counsel on profit-loss and population loss to render a Center City Commuter Connection in which both Philadelphia and Camden could reap revenue and ridership. The Delaware River Port Authority commissioned Parsons, Brinkerhoff, Hall, Inc., an internationally renowned transportation consultant, to survey high-speed transit within a 35-mile radius of Camden, while UTTB contracted Marketers Research Service, Inc., a new spinoff of

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94 Purchase-of-service agreements are scattered throughout the Richardson Dilworth Administration records. See, RG 60-2.4, Box A-487, Box A-500, A-2221, for those negotiated by the Urban Traffic and Transportation Board.

95 The city’s “sites and services” approach to debt service stemmed, however, from equity planning that UTTB and DRPA performed in 1954, when both agreed to produce a “Center City Connection” between the subways of Philadelphia and rapid rail transit lines owned and operated by the Delaware River Port Authority. UTTB Annual Report (1954), 6. RG 60-2.4, Box A-487, Municipal Developments-Administration, RDA, PCA.
the oldest and most prolific accounting consultancy in the world, for its innovative “method for estimating and projecting movement volume in the Philadelphia metropolitan area.” Since PB had the means to apply Jurkat’s methods at a larger scale, they combined forces in the fall of 1954 to design a “lease-back” plan for all DVRPA property in the central business district of Philadelphia and Camden. Given DRPA needed to increase ridership from both suburbs and cities of the Penn-Jersey region in order to avoid a takeover of its physical plant by the burgeoning NJ Transit Authority, Philadelphia agreed to purchase riverfront land that would DRPA could lease and develop into new sites of transit service or other means of staying in business. 96 In exchange, Philadelphia garnered, in perpetuity, tariffs from the DRPA for city properties it long used without payment. All in all, DRPA and Philadelphia found common ground as well as a common cause—rail reinvestment and ridership—around which to cooperate.

Councilmen, the gatekeepers of municipal finance, skeptically received UTTB’s reports on its first phase in the joint development of a Center City Commuter Connection. Presuming the DRPA partnership precluded tunnel use by other railroad companies, city councilmen questioned the judgment of Charles Frazier and John A. Bailey and quelled all hopes that UTTB and DRPA consultants could claim their spatial methods of match-making yielded the first transit-oriented development project. 97 Extolling the virtues of “trackless trolleys” and their circuitous routes

96 John A. Bailey to Edmund Bacon, Memo: Port Authority Position on Bridge Approaches, 25 March 1957.

97 Howard Lapin, a member of the Bay Area Rapid Transit Commission before joining the Technical Committee of Philadelphia’s Urban Traffic and Transportation Board, particularly promoted the connections between the “Philadelphia Plan” for regional consolidation and revitalization (in cooperation with PBQD) and that of the Bay Area Rapid Transit District/Commission, which also commissioned PBQD. See, for example, Howard Lapin, Bibliography on the Journey to Work: A Preliminary Compilation for Intra-Departmental Use (August 1954), UTTB, Box 487, RDA, PCA. See also, PBQD, Summaries of all Reports of the Past on San Francisco Rapid Transit Plan: Review, Comparison, Remarks & Evaluation as to the Rapid Transit Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area (New York: Parsons, Brinkerhoff, Quade and Douglass, 1953); PBQD, San Francisco Bay Area: Land Use and Circulation Plan (San Francisco: Bay Area Rapid Transit Commission, 1956).
through the city, councilmen joined the president of Red Arrow Lines, the most profitable light rail transit operator in the region, in calling for city investments in the freeways that this less-expensive form of mobility technology shared with other automobile transport—cars, trucks and charter buses. The first trolley line to undergo conversion from electric to diesel energy transported approximately 500 passengers per day from Villanova, the college campus and liberal space of otherwise conservative Delaware County, to Stafford, a sleepy railroad town at the end of the Main Line of many regional rail and trolley companies since the late 19th century. Subsequent cases of conversion suggest suburban communities from Strafford to Villanova—Jewish and Black middle-class streetcar suburbs within city limits as well as the leaders of the exclusively, exclusionary white communities just beyond them—upheld the city’s position and swayed their decision. However, the anti-highway sentiments of their commuter clubs, community associations and business lobbies—strong enough to derail state highway officials’ plans to build a Mid-County Expressway through the inner-ring suburbs of Philadelphia—betrayed such a conclusion. Contradictory appeals for mobility and accessibility brought bold ideas of the Urban Traffic and Transportation Board and Service Standards Board into fruition.

Worth noting, UTTB’s consultants and commissioners strategically marketed rail rides to be sustained—not transit riders to be gained—from the construction of a Center City Commuter Connection. UTTB’s Executive Director John A. Bailey and UTTB Chairman Charles Frazier publicized the appendices of their Plan and Program of Balanced Transportation in affluent railroad-centered communities at risk of depreciation. “The rising cost of ridership on railroads had a more deleterious impact” on sales, income and property taxes than the decline of trolley

98 Suburban, 30 Jan 1958, 1; 18 April 1958, 12B; 9 May 1958, 13B; 12 Nov. 1959, 1;

99 UTTB Annual Report (1954), 6. RG 60-2.4, Box A-487, Municipal Developments-Administration, RDA, PCA.
commuters, Bailey reported to attendees of a plated luncheon in Center City Philadelphia. To assuage attendees concerns, he asked Ernest Jurkat of Marketer Research Service Inc. “to describe in a general way his approach to [the] projection of movement…population…industrial growth…and its distribution” and the way by which his subcontractors (e.g. Wilbur Smith and Associates) had conducted these surveys of the Penn-Jersey region. Parsons, Brinkerhoff, Hall, Inc. followed up with a report on the “rationale behind a metropolitan mass transit survey” that relied on both the resources of the Citizens Council on City Planning and the coffers of governmental and bodies across the region. Perhaps in spite of not because of these detailed presentations of railroad suburbs at risk, the city councilmen representing outlying wards decided adopted the Urban Traffic and Transportation Board’s Plan & Program of Balanced Transportation, including a Commuter Connection tunnel between railroad termini throughout the region.

Risks & Rewards of Regionalism

Although City Council and the Citizens Council on City Planning could not agree on a capital plan for infrastructure improvements, the U.S. Congress and U.S. Senate made a deal in 1956 that indelibly impacted the prospects of a Center City Commuter Connection of any form or function coming to pass. The Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 committed public finance (gas tax revenue) to limited-access roadways of all kinds—expressways, bridges, tunnels and other

101 Ibid.
edifices approved by the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads (BPR).\textsuperscript{103} In its first memoranda to state highway officials in 1957, BPR promised government-business cooperation in the decongestion of central business districts, and proposed strategies for co-production of transportation improvements.\textsuperscript{104} From the Port Authority of New York’s Lincoln Tunnel to the Chicago Transit Authority’s Congress Expressway, long-planned transit investments transformed into traffic improvements under their supervision.\textsuperscript{105} In each of these cases, state highway departments allocated federal funding to state-sponsored metropolitan transportation authorities—either privately-financed port authorities or privately-managed transit authorities.\textsuperscript{106} Philadelphia lacked both, UTTB Director Bailey informed the BPR’s resident engineer in May of 1957 with hope for some other means of federal aid to Philadelphia’s underground tunnel and the joint development opportunities it would afford.\textsuperscript{107}

\textsuperscript{103} On the variety of car-related improvements the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads funded in American cities, see Owen Guttfreund, \textit{Twentieth Century Sprawl: Highways and the Reshaping of the American Landscape} (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004) and Bruce Seely, \textit{Building an American Highway System: Engineers as Policymakers} (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987). In the 1960s, the BPR returned to the practice of standardization in road planning and building, honed during the Progressive Era but later outsourced to the American Society of State Highway Officials, For urban studies of BPR’s transition, see Raymond Mohl, “Stop the Road: Freeway Revolts in American Cities,” \textit{Journal of Urban History} 30, no. 5 (July 2004): 674-706


\textsuperscript{107} John A. Bailey to Stenson, Resident Engineer, U.S. Bureau of Public Roads, 1 May 1957, Box A4401: Mayor’s Files – 1958, RDA Records, PCA.
Federal underwriting of the Center City Commuter Connection materialized just after the Federal Highway Act of 1956 passed, but not as Philadelphians envisioned. The legislation enabled federal agencies to aid metropolitan transportation authorities in projecting the traffic impacts of expressway constructions on decongested intercity arteries.\textsuperscript{108} The most expensive of the metropolitan transportation studies that federal highway administrators funded in the 1950s and 1960s, the nearly $5 million-dollar \textit{Penn-Jersey Transportation Study} enabled engineers of the Delaware River Port Authority to join engineering consultants across the country in a race to realize the first regional rapid transit network of the postwar period using highway funding.\textsuperscript{109} Because of the study focused on how fast not how frequently commuters could move throughout the region, it excluded the owners and operators of street-level rail transit that sought to invest in the tunnels and underground concourses that constituted the Center City Commuter Connection. The federal funding formula for “joint development” of railways and roadways excluded the Delaware River Port Authority and other proactive planners and developers of transit-oriented development in Philadelphia and industrial cities like Camden and Chester.\textsuperscript{110}

Federal funds primarily supported the acquisition of innovative hardware, namely the first IBM supercomputers for both urban data manipulation and computer-simulated urban transport.


\textsuperscript{109} On the relative cost of the PJ Study, see John Kain, et. al. “Empirical Models of Urban Land Use: Suggestions on Research Objectives and Organization (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, Columbia University Press, 1972). Other studies considered include the: Detroit Area Transportation Study (DATS), Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS), Boston Area Transportation Study (BATS) & Niagara Frontier Area Study (NFAS).

\textsuperscript{110} PJ News, v. 1, 1 (February 1961). Study Report No. 1, Pamphlets Collection, TUUA.
modeling. They also enabled Robert B. Mitchell, founding director of the Penn-Jersey Transportation Study, to hire a successor who could manage the multitude of contributors to this complex planning project. Mitchell selected Henry Fagin, the director of transportation studies at the Regional Plan Association, and dedicated the rest of the PJ Study budget to Wilbur Smith, a prolific traffic engineering consultant and advocate of traffic modeling, and the Regional Science Research Institute, which collected and cleaned the study’s ‘big data.’ In light of study that effectively eliminated citizen engagement, community philanthropy and corporate investment, UTTB’s Executive Director John A. Bailey advised Mayor Dilworth late in 1956 that the work of Philadelphia’s “transit task forces remained too critical to hand over to the Penn-Jersey Transportation Study.”

Lacking both federal aid and local authorization to connect Penn-Jersey commuters to the rest of Greater Philadelphia, UTTB set out to develop the city’s first and only treatise on how to actualize public-private partnerships in mass transportation. This revised Plan and Program of Balanced Transportation (1955) fit bond referenda brochures in style, scale and scope, even though it referenced a ream of economic data on rights-of-way and their associated rental, ridership and revenue, and cited academic research on how to contract which public investment in private transport and private investment in public transportation. The collection of policy


113 John A. Bailey “Memorandum: Mayor’s Transit Task Force,” 1958, UTTB, Box 500, RDA, PCA.

114 “Philadelphia’s Future Depends on these Loan Projects,” Pamphlet Collection, TUUA. Handled too much, perhaps, these pamphlets are unfit for reproduction.
briefs on “joint development” outlined problems not property that Camden and Philadelphia could soon share—a vicious cycle of population and profit loss.115 Therein, UTTB’s Executive Director John A. Bailey further explained,

“The objective of the stockholders is to make a profit. The best way to make profit is to cut service; to eliminate routes or vehicles which are not carrying their costs. But headways [time between arrivals] are lengthened thereby and so more and more people are driven to automobiles. This slows down buses, discourages riders and thereby produces the next round of service cuts. I believe this policy denies the full use of the City’s $200 million investment in subways because there rent is charged based on ridership.”116

UTTB insisted that Philadelphia had the power to intervene but time was limited for it to do so on “a limited liability basis.”117 Philadelphia could purchase critical sites of railroad operations and produce “passenger service improvements” at these locations, as UTTB staff found the Chicago Transit Authority and others were doing upon their review of regional transportation authorities.118 Instead, Bailey and his counterpart at the DRPA attempted to convince councilmen of Philadelphia and Camden that, to protect private equity in public transportation, they must purchase passenger service improvements on an “avoidable cost basis” or produce a


117 Ibid.

118 John A. Bailey, to Walter J. McCarter, Chicago Transit Authority (and UTTB Technical Committee), 20 February 1957, RG 60-2.4, Box A-87, Municipal Developments—Administration, RDA, PCA.
municipal corporation to do so on allocated basis. Either way the cities needed to get into the railroad business.

City Councilmen struggled to underwrite a public benefit corporation, instead opting to regulate public benefits and beneficiaries of private railroad companies. While the Delaware River Port Authority lobbied Camden councilman to appropriate funds for its suburban transport ventures, UTTB planned an “experimental program” of private investment in public property—both building stock they already owned and rolling stock they planned to purchase for service improvement. Even mayor Richardson Dilworth joined the campaign, sending Philadelphia City Councilmen an article in *Urban Land* magazine, entitled “A Businessman Looks at Transit,” and a letter imploring them to at least meet their Camden counterparts half way. By then, October 1957, Camden congressmen had already agreed to grant the Delaware River Port Authority “complete freedom in their method of operation and contracts,” a common framework by which public benefit corporations build endowments and enterprises. Not until fall of 1958 could John A. Bailey report to Mayor Dilworth that, “it will be possible (for the first time) for the City and the railroads to agree on what the true cost of commuter service is” and take “the first step in reaching a long-term understanding on how it can be improved, and if necessary, underwritten.”

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120 Ordinance of the Council of the City of Philadelphia, Bill No. 1629, October 1957.
121 “Operation Northwest,” Preliminary Draft, 1957, UTTB, Box 487, RDA, PCA
Corporate investment materialized only as the *Plan and Program of Balanced Transportation* (1955) became, according to Mayor Richardson Dilworth's senior economic advisor Kirk Petshek, "something of a bible" for private corporations already providing a public benefit. As early as January of 1958, the presidents of Pennsylvania Railroad Company and Reading RR Company pledged to Mayor Richardson Dilworth that they would aid directors and donors of the Citizens Council on City Planning in devising a capital program for “passenger service improvements,” but reserved their commitment until the Community Facilities Act or some other federal aid for those improvements materialized. The explicit extent of their commitment remained elusive until June 19, 1961, when the City Solicitor David Berger and legal counsel of the railroad companies finally signed a Memorandum of Understanding. Agreeing to public-private partnership “in principle,” Reading and Pennsylvania Railroad leadership authorized their lessees, licensees, concessionaires and consultants to produce various kinds of passenger service improvements—equipment and labor replacement, property rehabilitation, and land reclamation. In essence, public-private partnership in public transportation remained in limbo and a liability to the companies that transported citizens to and from the city.

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127 James Symes to Richardson Dilworth, 16 June 1961, UTTB, Box 500, RDA, PCA.
A Devolution Disaster? Community Planning for Commuter Connections

Not surprisingly, the Citizens Council on City Planning, the leading client of the City Council throughout the 1950s, reemerged in the 1960s as governess of the city’s inquiries and interventions in the private marketplace for public transportation.\textsuperscript{128} CCCP directors and trusted member organizations assessed real estate redevelopment and reclamation opportunities in commercial and residential communities; audited ridership recruitment and retention operations; directed community and corporate philanthropy towards worth-while public investments; and ascertained government funds for civic improvements.\textsuperscript{129} Like the nonprofit financial institutions to which federal policymakers assigned fiduciary responsibility for neighborhood investment in the 1970s, CCCP-directed development corporations and lent financial and human capital to grassroots operations in the field of transportation. By its own admission, however, CCCP directors lacked the resources to monitor and manage the many far-flung community-based organizations and operations clamoring for a place in transport research and development.

The new geography of transport R&D mirrored the spatial and economic inequities of community philanthropy in the long 1960s. When the Germantown Historical Society, a dues-paying member of CCCP requested assistance in establishing a community development corporation, CCCP’s Finance Committee chairman revealed the corporation’s budget "limited [it] to addressing material [CCCP] had already produced,” and other communications “that do not overburden our staff.”\textsuperscript{130} To prevent CCCP from splintering and stretching its limited resources


\textsuperscript{129} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{130} CCCP Board of Director Meeting Minutes, 8 January 1958, URB-10/III/13, Box 3, Folder 91.
for city contracts, CCCP directors enlisted CCCP donors in organizational development. Beginning in January 1958, the same companies and corporate executives that had generously given up to $25,000 annually to CCCP, diverted some of their charitable contributions to community philanthropies with a track record of evaluating community-scale rehabilitation programs and infill development projects.\footnote{CCCP Board of Directors, 1957, to Community Chest (re: Solicitations of corporate contributions to community philanthropies), CF Papers, “Citizens Council on City Planning,” TUUA} Years before “the decade of the neighborhood” dawns, CCCP-rooted development corporations extended their political capital, social equity, financial resources, and expert knowledge to community-based organizations lacking as much philanthropic, professional and political support.\footnote{Even historians that consider the 1970s the “decade of the neighborhood” from the perspective of federal urban policy and conservative suburban politics, acknowledge that the neighborhood emerged as a unit of urban planning, policymaking and political action in the “long sixties.” See, for example, Jeffrey Lowe, \textit{Rebuilding Communities the Public Trust Way}; Suleiman Osman, “The Neighborhood Movement,” in Osman, \textit{The Invention of Brownstone Brooklyn: Gentrification and Authenticity in Postwar New York} (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) and Christopher Klemek, “The Tide Shifts: Neighborhood Protectionism,” in Christopher Klemek, \textit{The Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal: Postwar Urbanism from New York to Berlin} (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 129-173, 187-238.}

City Council stances towards affluent enclaves of the city significantly shifted the direction and directorate of the Citizens Council on City Planning from City Hall to Old Philadelphia, where community stewards, philanthropies and development corporations had already resolved “we must help ourselves.”\footnote{“We Must Help Ourselves,” \textit{Chestnut Hill Local}, 24 April, 1958} CCCP-directed nonprofits working with a robust network of community-based organizations took shape primarily in historically affluent districts of the city, where corporate philanthropists largely lived until Philadelphia began underwriting luxury residences within Center City neighborhoods like Society Hill. While William L. Day co-founded the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation to preserve and revitalize collapsing residential and commercial communities of the central business district, Lloyd Wells established
the Chestnut Hill Development Group to facilitate transit-oriented development of open spaces surrounding historic residential and commercial communities on the urban fringe. Both worked with company presidents and corporate board members that lived in their respective quadrants of the city to ensure community-based organizations within their midst conducted research that would generate reinvestment in both tracks and tracts. With their financial, political and technical assistance, restoration architects and resilience planners seeking to preserve Germantown’s historic streetscapes finally, in 1962, established conservancies and community land trusts.\footnote{134 Colonial Germantown, Inc. “Origins, Purposes, and Operations of Colonial Germantown, Inc.” Acc. 12: Colonial Germantown, Inc., Germantown Historical Society. See also, David R. Contosta, “Philadelphia’s Miniature Williamsburg’: The Colonial Revival and Germantown’s Market Square.” The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 120, no. 4 (Oct 1996): 282-320.}

Paradoxically, the narrow-focus of CCCP-directed operations yielded sweeping changes to the nonprofit sector. Both men and women took part in community-corporate partnerships of the Chestnut Hill Develop Group and the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation. Female graduates of urban design and city planning programs contributed to research and rehabilitation contracts, while “designing women” without professional training sustained institutional memory as administrators and editors for periodicals, publications, project proposals and press releases of the two corporations.\footnote{135 Based on a review of OPDC annual reports and periodic newsletters that OPDC published, and qualitative and historical research on their contributors. See also, Stephanie Ryberg, “Historic Preservation’s Urban Renewal Roots,” Journal of Urban History, vol. 39, no. 2 (2013): 193-213; Dissertation on Preservation in Germantown.} Both community development corporations appointed suburban housewives and young women to task forces and technical committees, oftentimes rewarding participation in their professional development modules and recognizing those with experience serving the Citizens Council on City Planning.\footnote{136 Shirley Hanson (CHDG staff member from 1958-1975), Interview by author. 4 August 2016. Also, see Annual Reports of the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation, 1957-1976.} To complement not compete with their existing “manpower,” CHDG and OPDC trusted the wives of leading men to cultivate credible and
consistent sources of information, funding and land for particular policy prescriptions and planning projects. For young women like Shirley Hanson, who worked with the Chestnut Hill Development Group during this period, women’s right to work on rights-of-way appeared self-evident even though trailblazers had yet to earned exert authority in their communities (fig. 1.17).

Figure 1.17. John W. Bodine presides over women and men attending a hearing hosted by the Chestnut Hill Community Land Corporation, an offshoot of the Chestnut Hill Development Group, 1959. Chestnut Hill Historical Society

137 “Maintenance Committee” and “Before and After,” Chestnut Hill Local, 11 Dec 1958; CPDC, OPDC-CPDC: 50 Years Remaking Center City, fig. 1, n.p.

Capital building and coalition building went hand-in-hand as CCCP’s offspring undertook transport research and development in Chestnut Hill and Society Hill on behalf of transportation consulting firms. Old Philadelphia Development Corporation (OPDC) generated revenue from planning, development and management service fees as subcontractors for Alan M. Voorhees and Associates and other pioneers in neighborhood planning for transportation-land use connections. Others sponsored by the Chestnut Hill Development Group (CHDG) assisted Peat Marwick Mitchell, the management consulting firmed that pioneered corridor planning. For Peat, Marwick, Mitchell, the consultant of record for both the Reading and Pennsylvania RR companies, CHDG-directed citizens assessed the profit potential of road development in ‘open spaces’ above rights-of-way through Chestnut Hill. Meanwhile, OPDC rendered land below the Reading and Pennsylvania Railroad as prospective sites of bus rapid transit lanes that Alan M. Voorhees proposed Pennsylvania Department of Highways build in Central Philadelphia.

None of these projects materialized. Nonetheless, Old Philadelphia Development Corporation and Chestnut Hill Development Corporation could boast budgets larger than Philadelphia’s Urban Traffic and Transportation come 1960.

Chestnut Hill Development Group and Old Philadelphia Development Corporation relied on John W. Bodine, a lawyer on the Board of both corporations, to execute their benefit

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agreements and establish them as benefit corporations. The founder of Penjerdel, Inc. and a founding member of the Legal Aid Society, Bodine provided legal aid to numerous neighborhood and business associations looking to underwrite community-benefit agreements with speculative developers and unscrupulous proprietors.\(^{142}\) Contractual agreements and memoranda of understanding that he drafted for Pennjerdel Corporation, a regionalist think tank funded by the Ford Foundation and other philanthropies, not only assured “Mr. And Mrs. Philadelphia know their rights” as prospective owners, tenants, users and neighbors of new residential and commercial developments in their communities.\(^{143}\) For Bodine, people-centered public benefit corporations and property-oriented public benefit agreements could rectify, parcel by parcel, the impact of restrictive covenants on regional rail revitalization.\(^{144}\) Following Penjerdel’s lead, OPDC and CHDG abandoned their operations of managerial governance for more entrepreneurial enterprises of expert advice to the transportation industry.

Unquestionably invasive and disruptive to the nonprofit sector, the organizations that CCCP spawned and sponsored consumed philanthropy once scattered across various civic bodies serving the City of Philadelphia. In 1954, the budget of the Germantown, Mount Airy and


\(^{143}\) John W. Bodine, preface to Charles Frazier, \emph{Lubrication or Friction to Our Region’s Progress} (Philadelphia: Penjerdel, Inc., Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Delaware Metropolitan Project, Inc., October 1962). Penjerdel Corporation, a regionalist think tank, advised both corporations on the social enterprises. Founded and led by John W. Bodine, who served as Citizens Council on City Planning donor, delegate and director, Penjerdel broke out of the cycle of community philanthropy in 1956, when it solicited and received Ford Foundation funding for transport data collection throughout the Penn-Jersey region. Penjerdel, Inc. received funding from both liberal and conservative advocates of self-governance, i.e. the Ford Foundation and the Manhattan Institute, making it less vulnerable and more financially free to take bold positions against the planning paradigms and projects of the federal and local government. On the philanthropies programs, see Alice O’Connor, “The Privatized City: The Manhattan Institute, the Urban Crisis, and the Conservative Counterrevolution in New York,” \emph{Journal of Urban History}, vol. 24, no. 2 (Jan 2009): 333-353; Alice O’Connor, “Community Action, Urban Reform and the Fight against Poverty: The Ford Foundation’s Gray Area Program,” \emph{Journal of Urban History}, vol. 22, no. 5 (July 1996): 586-625.

Chestnut Hill Business Association eclipsed that of the city’s “partners in renewal,” which cooperatively researched the emergence of blight in tracts abutting railroad and streetcar tracks throughout Germantown, Philadelphia’s largest ward (fig. 1.18).\textsuperscript{145} Many members of this association became dues-paying members of the Chestnut Hill Development Group, when it formed in 1956, and donated property to the Group’s offshoots—the Chestnut Hill Parking Foundation (est. 1956) and Colonial Germantown, Inc..\textsuperscript{146} Noting that the Chestnut Hill Community Fund already distributed philanthropy to nonprofit organizations in their jurisdiction, the executive director of Germantown Settlement, Inc. exasperatedly exclaimed to his peers in 1957, “What are they getting involved for?” Moreover, the settlement house director noted that the CCCP offspring were changing the political economy of philanthropy. Whereas Germantown nonprofits had to develop independent track-records of land development appraisal, capital program evaluation and capital investment planning \textit{before} city, state and federal officials commissioned them, CCCP’s corporate donors underwrote the incorporation of “Wharton men [who] have done nothing of note yet.”\textsuperscript{147}


\textsuperscript{146} “What do you know?” \textit{The Chestnut Hill Local}, 27 Jan 1958, 1.

\textsuperscript{147} Internal Correspondence of Germantown Settlement, [Executive Director, written in the margins of a Letter from William Rafsky, Executive Director of the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority to Charles Liddell, Exec. Director, Germantown Settlement, and Sydney B. Markey, Dir. of Heath and Welfare Council, 8 September 1954, Germantown Community Council Collection, Series I: Germantown Settlement, TUUA.
Nonprofit corporations resembled their profit-generating peers in transit-oriented development and traffic research but never replaced these transportation consultancies. Rather, global leaders in railway reinvestment, namely Peat, Marwick Mitchell and Co., Marketers Research Service Inc., and Parsons, Brinkerhoff, Hall, Inc., accepted revenue-sharing with local development corps as a prerequisite for their safe egress from the increasingly risk-ridden, revenue-restricted marketplace of public transportation. Active in both the grassroots and grasstops of transportation politics. Lloyd Wells, John W. Bodine and other directors of the Citizens Council on City Planning at once helped and hindered the city to preside over private investment in its *Plan and Program of Balanced Transportation*. But, the communities and corporations that co-produced Philadelphia’s Passenger Service Improvement Corporation hitched progressive municipal power in metropolitan transportation to places of privilege and prejudice in the Penn-Jersey region.
Conclusion

Why, after relying on the citizenry to plan the city’s survival for nearly all of its regulatory operations, would city officials resort to private corporations for public benefits? This chapter tracks the rough rise of public transportation authorities to their reliance on public benefit corporations. Contrary to evolutionary theories of distributive governance, such as the Citizens Council on City Planning (CCCP), sprung from the crabgrass-roots of transportation policymaking neither naturally nor indiscriminately. Rather, public-private partnerships forged by the directors, donors and delegates of CCCP’s member organizations gained traction in wedges and corridors of the region with the aid of community philanthropy and corporate benevolence, hotels and City Hall.

Over the 1950s, CCCP donors and directors disassembled into conflicting camps of organizational and technological thought. Delegates of CCCP’s one-hundred-odd member organizations, particularly social liberals seeking a responsive city, imagined corporatization of their technological thought would deflate the existing capacity-building and capital-generating operations of community-based organizations.148 Meanwhile, CCCP donors envisioned the research corporation could assist community groups competing for community and corporate philanthropy.149 Even the most progressive donors supported nonprofit management of public enterprises, endorsing mayor Dilworth’s campaign to expand public enterprise beyond gas and electricity to food distribution, industrial development, and public transportation via community-

148 CCCP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 21 April 1955, URB 10/III/13, Box 3, Folder 91.

based organizations. Although both donors and delegates approved of CCCP staff undertaking sponsored research, neither agreed CCCP alone should profit from inquiries and interventions that it undertook for private and public corporations.

Active citizenship, the currency of participation planning and budgeting in the early postwar period, rendered diverse inquiries and disparate interventions in the public and private sectors of the transport marketplace legible, legitimate and, most importantly, linked. As a client of the Citizens Council on City Planning’s directors, donors, delegates and derivatives, the city reimagined new challenges to railroad profitability on the urban fringe and in the urban core. As the next two chapters will show, public benefit corporations banked on community philanthropy and corporate benevolence to insure the transit-oriented development of tracts adjoining Reading and Pennsylvania RR tracks paid off—amateur right-of-way appraisals and assemblages absence from the *Journal of Right-of-Way Appraisers* or the *Bibliography of Right-of-Way Appraisal*. The City’s *Plan and Program of Balanced Transportation*, or rather the one it adopted from a Board of CCCP appointees and adapted to a cautious City Council, primed Philadelphians for private investment in public transportation on a provisional, project-by-project basis and curbed their appetite for a permanent solution to the problem of private divestment from public utilities.

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150 CCCP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, 21 September 1958, URB 10/III/13, Box 3, Folder 91. Profiles of CCCP Board members such as C. Holmes Perkins, city planning academic; John W. Bodine, legal aid lawyer; Lloyd Wells, community developer and businessman; and Justice Scholler Pace Alexander, the only African-American Philadelphia County judge.

CHAPTER 2
The Right of the City to Rights-of-Way

A decade into the Cold War, the Philadelphia City Council had yet to approve the Plan and Program of Balanced Transportation. The city’s capital improvement plan and program of public-private partnership still, in 1960, excluded the recovery of community facilities worn down by war mobilization and the Great Migration of southern blacks to the city’s or abandoned by households and business moving to the suburbs and more transit-accessible neighborhoods.\(^1\) Perhaps Councilmen anticipated Congress would come to the rescue of Philadelphia and every American city portrayed by the American Municipal Association in 1960 as crippled by “the collapse of commuter service” and a “threat to the survival of America’s metropolitan areas.”\(^2\) Federal support for community facilities in “war-impacted areas” waned however, leaving City Councils with no choice but to finance renovation and replace passenger facilities and services in cooperation with public transportation companies, in covenants with private operators and proprietors or in debt to municipal bondholders.\(^3\) Federal authorities thrust municipalities into metropolitan capitalism as they reclassified some vital systems of urban life as critical infrastructure for Cold War and revised the ways and means by which cities under siege underwent renewal.\(^4\)

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\(^3\) Community Facilities Act of 1959. Hearings before the Subcommittee No. 1 of the Committee on Banking and Currency. Representatives, 86\(^{th}\) Congress, 1\(^{st}\) session, on H.R. 5944. (Washington: US GPO, 1959); Community Facilities Act of 1958, report…to accompany S.3497, U.S. Senate Committee on Banking and Currency, 85\(^{th}\) Congress, 2\(^{nd}\) session, Senate Report No. 1431

\(^4\) “Edmund Bacon; Urban Renewal—Remaking the American City,” *Time Magazine*, vol. 34, no. 19 (6 November 1964), cover story; Peter Galison, “War on the Center,” *Grey Room* 4 (July 2001): 7-33; Stephen Collier and
American cities sought relief in the late 1950s from unlikely sources: railroad companies seeking to relinquish their rights and responsibilities to blighted building stock, beleaguered rolling stock and other ‘community facilities’ in need of redevelopment, replacement and/or rehabilitation. First passed on June 29, 1941, the Community Facilities Act facilitated federal investment in the revitalization of common spaces such as the ‘defense housing’ and ‘mutual housing’ communities built between 1941 and 1951, and the education, recreation and health care facilities constructed within them and other subsidized housing campuses.  

The Defense Housing and Community Facilities and Services Act that passed in 1951 substantially expanded the amount of land and labor enrolled in the construction and maintenance of community facilities by enlisting the social sector in rehabilitation and rebuilding of rights-of-way—the architecture of roadways, railways and other public utilities (e.g. sewage, water, communication, or power supply and distribution). Widely criticized at the time as a conservative coup of the public-private partnerships that progressive housing authorities promoted, “New Public Management” amendments to the Community Facilities Act in the 1950s enabled cities to

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manage public divestment from private property and private divestment from public works through benefit corporations and benevolent associations.\textsuperscript{7}

The City of Philadelphia, I argue in this chapter, uniquely capitalized on the postwar privileges of public benefit corporations. Philadelphia’s Mayor Richardson Dilworth, as President of the American Municipal Association from 1959 to 1961, not only lobbied cities across the country to partner with commuter clubs and community associations trusted by the presidents, shareholders, executives and board members of railroad companies to revitalize railways.\textsuperscript{8} After the Community Facilities Act of 1958 passed without public service provisions and public utilities protections, the municipality and its mayor exerted their police powers of inclusionary zoning and municipal incorporation to reinforce the soft powers of benevolent associations already invested in railroad real estate. The first half of this chapter chronicles the incorporation of benevolent, businessmen’s associations into the business of rebuilding regional rail ridership in Philadelphia.

The second half of this chapter critically engages with municipal incorporation of these benevolent associations into the city’s \textit{Plan and Program of Balanced Transportation}, as demonstrated by the so-called “Morgan Tract Debacle” of public-private partnership. While the restrictive covenants with railroad concessionaires contained auto-centric redevelopment of rights-of-way, these provisions for park-n-ride properties hindered the city from presiding over the beneficiaries and benefits of ‘balanced transportation.’ The Passenger Service Improvement


Corporation (PSIC), which the City of Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania RR Company, the Reading (RR) Company chartered in 1960, restored balance by including the National Railway Executives Association in their joint ventures. Ultimately, the city’s public benefit corporation exchanged bias towards business communities in corporate benevolence with the partiality of public corporations for technical professionals.

**Banking on Benevolence**

Battered industrial buildings and landscapes underwent reconstruction postwar wherever private benevolent societies and public benefit corporations elected to take care of them.\(^9\) The Philadelphia Buildings Committee successfully lobbied state legislators for federal aid in rebuilding historic properties of the Pennsylvania RR Company and Reading Company, specifically Philadelphia’s small share of nearly 200 Victorian stations that Frank Furness, an acclaimed architect of public spaces throughout the Northeast and Midwest, designed between 1880 and 1910.\(^10\) Furness-designed structures in the Northwest quadrant of Philadelphia such as Gravers Lane Station (*Figure 2.1*) nevertheless received reinvestment while at risk structures of local or cultural significance underwent demolition. Because Furness, an avid supporter of industrial culture, had encouraged reuse of his formulaic design specifications and standardized plans, a number of Furness buildings due for decommission could be rebuilt by the low-skilled laborers that the Federal Works Administration insisted upon.\(^11\)


In spite of the program’s acclaimed record of repairing the architecture of peace during wartime, Congress reduced the initial budget of $115 million for war-time community facilities.

with each appropriation for civil defense between 1950 and 1956. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company’s Real Estate Division relied on the nation’s leading management and marketing consultants to resolve federal retrenchment from railroad relief. In spite of direct solicitation to subscribers of Right-of-Way Appraisal and Railway Age, too few private developers replied to their calls for private investment in the clearance, assembly, rezoning, and remediation of railroad company real estate, especially PRR’s much-maligned “Chinese Wall” of elevated rail yards. Accounting consultants Peat Marwick Mitchell and Co. advised PRR and its competitors to lease its real estate, track-by-track, zone-by-zone, station-by-station, on a provisional and/or probationary basis until the market corrected. According to the consultants, market actors and the media concentrated more on the morass of development issues plaguing PRR’s Penn Center projects in Center City Philadelphia than less legally complex and politically contentious real estate transactions completed by railroad companies. Following their suggestion, PRR proceeded in 1958 to approve tenancy on station-grounds by both for-profit and nonprofit corporations, particularly parking concessionaires.

Citizens, community boards and municipal zoning officials initially contested PRR’s enterprise of land concessions to parking concessionaires on a number of grounds: the spiraling

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Municipal judges often ruled on the side of budding business improvement districts, which found most cars parked in Auto Parks lots belonged to city customers and not ex-urban commuters, suggesting commercial rather than public use of PRR’s right-of-way. Appeals court judges found more merit, however, in PRR-sponsored maps of “transit blight,” which depicted the adverse effect of unwanted vegetation, unfettered vandalism and unproductive vagrancy in open spaces on the value of abutting properties and the extent to which lenders, insurers, and realtors would service the entire area. For Public Utility Commissioners—which possessed the deciding vote—a license to reap revenue from railroad property merely represented the right of right-of-way proprietors to underwrite and undertake improvements to property and personnel pertinent to railroad business. PRR nevertheless shifted strategies, reinvesting come 1958 in restrictive covenants and real estate investment trusts. These methods of indemnifying assets and liabilities that required no regulatory approvals or fiduciary accreditations, only authorization from shareholders and debtors to release and/or lease property to for-profit and non-profit organizations that could manage and/or maintain them.

PRR planned to turn over nearly every square inch of open space within its rights-of-way to Auto Parks, Inc., one of the region’s most prolific developers and managers of pay-to-park

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16 The PCA has not preserved postwar transcripts of zoning boards and appeals courts hearings on land use. However, the Germantown Courier closely followed cases involving parking concessions and concessionaires in the 1950s and serves as the primary source of this account. Discontinuous issues are held by the Germantown Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA. On suburban property owners attracting city dwellers through railway investments, see David Contosta, Suburb in the City: Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, 1850–1990 (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1992); and David Contosta and E. Digby Baltzell, A Philadelphia Family: The Houstons and Woodwards (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).

17 The PA Public Utility Commission ruling was celebrated by the not-for-profit Chestnut Hill Parking Company, which assumed that PRR’s authority to lease land to both for-profit and nonprofit concessionaires would yield contracts for parking design, development, maintenance and management; see “Solution Sought to A&P Parking Problem; PRR also Involved,” Chestnut Hill Local, June 19, 1958, 1.
lots. Amongst the growing number of competitive for-profit corporations in the business of constructing and capitalizing on parking lot demand amongst rail riders, only Auto Parks, Inc. had agreed to take over parking lots developed in Main Line suburbs during World War II and to explore emerging markets within city limits: streetcar suburbs like Chestnut Hill and Torresdale. Indiscriminate, itinerant and insured, the parking meters and maids that Auto Parks, Inc. installed at Pennsylvania Railroad termini within Philadelphia exemplified “lessee operations” on railroad property throughout the region between 1958 and 1960 in that they assembled parking spaces for out-of-town transit commuters from in-town grocers and other large retailers.

Auto Parks, Inc., solicited the aid of Lloyd Wells, President of the Chestnut Hill Development Group (CHDG) and former director of the Citizens Council on City Planning, in producing spatial and social forms of ridership recruitment and retention for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company (PRR).18 Wells reached out to A&P, a national supermarket chain, in 1956 regarding the abundance of vacant land around PRR’s Chestnut Hill station in spite of rising condominiums and other high-occupancy real estate in the neighborhood (Figure 2.2 and Figure 2.3). At a charity event benefiting the Chestnut Hill Parking Foundation, CHDG invited regional managers of A&P to enroll in the easement program of this burgeoning benefit corporation.19 By October 1958, A&P joined PRR in donating a portion of their land for customers and commuters capable of paying parking fees that Well’s declared foundational to property management and maintenance, and fundamental to suburban investment in its strategies of urban security: landscaping, lighting and litter removal. By donating land to the Chestnut Hill Parking

18 This easement program was very informal. Deals were often made at social functions according to women who assisted in event planning. Shirley Hanson (CHDG staff member from 1958-1975), Interview by author. 4 August 2016; Patricia Cove, Interview by author, 5 August 2016.

19 “Solution Sought to A&P Problem,” and “PRR also Involved,” Chestnut Hill Local, 19 June 1958, 1;
Foundation, PRR not only endorsed partnerships between PRR and Auto Parks, Inc. but also between civil society and civic corporations in Chestnut Hill.²⁰

Figure 2.2. In the center of the frame, the empty parking lot for Pennsylvania Railroad Company’s Chestnut Hill Terminus represented unsafe spaces for white commuters to park in city limits until new management—Auto Parks, Inc. and the Chestnut Hill Parking Foundation—took over in late winter of 1958. Chestnut Hill Local. 1958. Courtesy of the Chestnut Hill Historical Society

Figure 2.3. Parking lots donated to the Chestnut Hill Development Group for revenue-sharing. The lots, encircle the parking lot of Pennsylvania Railroad Company that CHDG noted could be mistaken for ‘vacant property’ or ‘open space.’ Chestnut Hill Local (1958). Chestnut Hill Historical Society.

²⁰ Ibid.
The high value of land acquired by the CHDG’s Parking Foundation afforded it the resources to receive and repay construction loans covering the cost to level, light, line and label PRR lots with parking pass numbers. A small percentage of the proceeds went to the Wissahickon Garden Club, which took responsibility for keeping both the hardscape and the streetscape in line with both the community's and the corporation’s heritage. Other cash reserves of the Parking Foundation primarily went towards the leveling, paving and planting of backyards contributed by storefront owners to the Parking Foundation, which assembled the plots into one pay-to-park lot for customers in the corridor. Primarily, however, any revenue generated financed their own regime maintenance: a monthly parking program for non-resident commuters and customers that required burglar-proof parking meters, meter maids, land management and land/hardscape care. Based on how much equity they accrued, the organization could borrow money from community banks, lend money to community businesses, donate money to community organizations, sell stock to community members or receive donations from community philanthropies. The combination of private donations, public grants, philanthropic aid and fees-for-service allowed the Foundation to effectively function as a financial institution for community development (CDFI), generating and distributing capital to organizations that enabled maximum participation in collective action.

As Auto Parks, Inc. overextended its enterprise across the regional rail network, the Chestnut Hill Development Group created a business improvement district to protect profits of the Chestnut Hill Parking Foundation. Staffed by the wives of zoning, taxation, inspection and planning officials and experts including "Mrs. G. Holmes Perkins," the wife of the University of Pennsylvania's City Planning Program Director, the Maintenance Committee of the Chestnut Hill

Development Group catalogued local ordinances, land covenants and legal constraints that restricted residential property owners’ participation in the Parking Foundation’s easement program.\textsuperscript{22} What dis-incentivized contribution to and cooperation with a land trust, financed by community and corporate philanthropy? Laying blame on exclusionary zoning, the Maintenance Committee of the Chestnut Hill Development Group called for collective action against restrictive covenants on economic grounds rather than the racial grounds of ongoing litigation and legislation.

Mid-century midwives of CHDG’s maintenance regimes echoed the calls of wealthy urbanites across the country that lamented the degradation of pocket parks, the development of parking garages and the demise of picturesque streetscapes.\textsuperscript{23} Vacancy abounded in storefronts, parking lots and open space in spite of, or rather because of, the abundance of ownership, governorship and stewardship restrictions in Old Philadelphia (Figure 2.4). The Chestnut Hill Local, Germantown Courier and other community-produced periodicals with city-wide circulation and, in some cases, regional reach, tracked blight and blacks as well as deterioration

\textsuperscript{22} “Lots Improved,” Germantown Courier, 12 October 1958, 1; “Then and Now,” Germantown Crier, 4 October 1958.

and development on a weekly basis. A three-part series, published in the spring of 1958, captured the refrain:

“These two pictures present a good example of what Chestnut Hill is now, and what it might be if we are not careful. On the left is a recently remodeled home. It is pleasant to look and to have as a neighbor. On the right is the old police station, a disgrace to the community. It is a prime case of neglect. Many of the nice homes in the area could look like this in a decade if we are not careful.”

Regularly engaging with these withering comparisons and windshield surveys, readers of Chestnut Hill Local, Germantown Courier and other local periodicals with subscribers throughout the region came to see the covenants of Old Philadelphia as restricting real estate maintenance and to seek the removal of ‘restrictive covenants’ from their landscape.25

Figure 2.4. Property degradation in Chestnut Hill, as depicted in Chestnut Hill Local. “Before & After,” CHL, 1958.

24 Ibid.

25 Quite extensive, the American history of restrictive covenants is spatial, social, cultural, legal, geographical. This reading of railroad real estate draws insights from David Freund, Colored Property: State policy and white racial politics in suburban America (University of Chicago Press, 2010); Jeffrey Gonda, Unjust Deeds: The Restrictive Covenant Cases and the Making of the Civil Rights Movement (UNC Press, 2015); Ann Durkin Keating, Building Chicago: Suburban Developers and the Creation of a Divided Metropolis (Urbana: University of Illinois, 2002).
The Racialized Rise of Railbanking

Restrictive covenants of all kinds sheltered venerated stock (people and property) of Old Philadelphia from the cascading risks of postwar renewal and redlining. Most covenants encountered by prospective owners and developers of property in Old Philadelphia dated to the 1870s, when railroad barons and other industrialists built townhomes in Center City and suburban estates near the City Line.\(^{26}\) The homesteads of railroad executives subdivided farm land around colonial homes into lots large enough to house a multitude of multi-family properties built between 1880 and 1940 by corporate lessees—housing cooperatives, home developers, and the real estate departments of railroad companies (Figure 2.5).\(^{27}\) Each estate held its own easement policy, with some assigning land maintenance to subletters and subcontractors such as Richardson Dilworth, who resided in one of its transit-oriented development communities in the 1950s.\(^{28}\) Others, most infamously the Houston Estate, allowed only their own asset managers (e.g. the Woodward Real Estate Company) to assess and redress the risks and responsibilities of governorship.\(^{29}\) Extant boundaries between these open and closed


\(^{27}\) For an overview, see David Contosta, *Suburb in the City: Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, 1850-1990* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1992);


sociotechnical systems of “racial capitalism”—what historians David Freund, Gerald Frug, Colin Gordon and Destin Jenkins call the "legal technology of exclusion" blurred, however, as railroad companies, their concessionaries, abutting land owners and leaseholders invested in benefit corporations such as the Chestnut Hill Parking Foundation.³⁰

Figure 2.5. Multi-family dwellings built near St. Martins Station were owned by mutual associations and benevolent associations under contract with the Real Estate Company of the Woodward Estate. Map of the Woodward Real Estate Company. 1961. St. Martins Stations Grounds Committee, Inc. Papers, Chestnut Hill Historical Society

Not coincidentally, friends of the railroad industry took aim at restrictive covenants just as federal lawmakers began uprooting their legal and actuarial underpinnings. Used by community builders both public and private, individual and institutional since the American Revolution, restrictive covenants dictated property ownership and occupancy by race, gender, class, nationality, disability and religion until a Supreme Court ruling of 1948.\(^{31}\) The Supreme Court did not outlaw discrimination out-right, however; its color-blind concessions to economic inequality let stand longstanding local and state laws concerning governorship (e.g. loan and lease documents) and stewardship (e.g. living wills and trusts) of public property and private assets.\(^{32}\) As litigators and legislators outlawed gendered guarantors and other so-called “social securities” from residential and commercial property transactions, public utility commissions exempted railroad companies from these real estate regulations.\(^{33}\) Not even the equal protection provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964—or critical amendments that followed in 1968—mandated equitable asset distribution amongst lessees and licensees of the railroad companies.\(^{34}\)

More than just open space within the Old Philadelphia neighborhood of Chestnut Hill, the Morgan Tract between Reading Railroad and Philadelphia Gas Company rights-of-way


\(^{32}\) Gounda, *Unjust Deeds*.


epitomized real estate no longer protected from black infiltration and white flight by the prejudicial covenants, lending laws and zoning ordinances (Figure 2.6). When Temple University trustees purchased most of the tract from the estate of a Philadelphia & Reading Railroad executive in 1953, they planned to relocate their North Philadelphia campus to bucolic tracts abutting railroad tracks staged for sale to Reading Company in 1948 (Figure 2.7). The university’s preliminary plans incited so much divestment from the declining inner-city district it occupied that then-mayor Joseph Clark, with the support of the City Council and City Solicitor, incentivized the university to build a suburban campus for urban education in ‘open space’ the Redevelopment Authority produced through ‘slum clearance’ and ‘urban renewal.’

Temple University sought to sell all 68 acres of the Morgan Tract in 1956, to a cornucopia of private, public and nonprofit corporations (e.g. an out-of-town developer and the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation). Faced with some of the same struggles faced by railroad companies, Temple University trustees authorized the Chestnut Hill Community Association to cultivate land concessions for target buyers and conserve the sale-ready condition of their most promising prospects for profit. But, Maintenance Committees of the Chestnut Hill Community Association lacked the right to work on other parcels pursuant to restrictive covenants of the Morgan family, namely those tracts sold them in 1948 by the

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35 Interstate Commerce Commission, Docket No. 16275. Application of Reading and the Chestnut Hill Railroad Company, authorizing the merger of the properties of the latter into those of the former, as consistent with the public interest (3 November 1948). Reading Company Legal Department Records, Acc. 1520, Box 1137, Hagley Library and Museum (hereafter Hagley), Wilmington, DE. The Reading Company liquidated the Chestnut Hill RR Company—a stock block—but not the equity it thereby gained in the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad Company.


Philadelphia & Reading RR Co. (a majority of company stock) to Reading Company. In other words, the Chestnut Hill Community Association required the right to work on rights-of-way.

Figure 2.6. Aerial Photograph of the Morgan Tract, 1956. Slide Collection, 2005, Chestnut Hill Historical Society.

Figure 2.7. Morgan Tract, mowed and pruned by the Maintenance Committees of the Chestnut Hill Community Association. 1956. Slide Collection, Chestnut Hill Historical Society
The resilience of restrictive covenants paradoxically integrated self-interested “Chestnut Hillers” into civil society. Hundreds turned out for a community hearing on the convents constricting commuters in the community from taking care of the Morgan Tract once possession of the property and thus easements therein transferred from Temple to out-of-towners (Figure 2.8). At least a dozen residents of Chestnut Hill held on to their shares of the Philadelphia & Reading RR Company, when several trustees of the corporation (e.g. the Morgans) sold their stake in the industry—and the Chestnut Hill community— to Reading Company trustees in 1948. 38 Although Philadelphians composed just a sliver of the shareholders that controlled Reading Company and its competitor, Pennsylvania RR Co., Chestnut Hillers alone held some of the multi-national corporation’s most valuable real estate in cooperative, community and corporate trusts. 39

Figure 2.8. Chestnut Hill Local, 22 May 1958, Courtesy of Chestnut Hill Historical Society

38 ICC, Docket No. 16275, Ibid.

The Morgan Tract Debacle: Risks and Rewards of Corporate Benevolence

The “Morgan Tract Debacle,” one of several controversies over restrictive covenants in Philadelphia during the late 1950s, demonstrates the bevy of benefit corporations based in Chestnut Hill extracted public transportation benefits from property owners profiting on their privilege and prejudice. By 1960, homeowners and business owners of Old Philadelphia enclaves—from Chestnut Hill and Spruce Hill along the City Line to Society Hill in Center City—had begun to pay dues, provide philanthropic contributions or proffer land donations to the benefit corporations that proclaimed to protect commuter facilities from pernicious proprietors of railroad real estate.\textsuperscript{40} Robust and resilient, these community-based institutions and initiatives took of actions to protest what they considered pernicious protections.\textsuperscript{41} Led by directors of the Citizens Council on City Planning, each of these grassroots organizations blossomed, in a matter of months, into philanthropic-backed public benefit corporations—community land trusts, development corporations and conservancies, in particular.

In May of 1958, Chestnut Hillers combined their financial and human resources to leverage new owners of the Morgan Tract into placing their property in the trust of Chestnut Hill’s Community Land Corporation. J. Pennington Strauss and John Bodine, Officers of the Chestnut Hill Community Association, chartered the Chestnut Hill Community Land

\textsuperscript{40} Based on a review of local periodicals, plus publications and correspondence in the following archival collections: Series III: Old Philadelphia Development Corporation, Richardson Dilworth Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; The Chestnut Hill Local Collection of the Chestnut Hill Development Corporation, Chestnut Hill Historical Society; Chestnut Hill Community Association Records, Chestnut Hill Historical Society; “Colonial Germantown, Inc.” Germantown Historical Society; Records of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, Department of Records, City of Philadelphia; Germantown Community Council Collection, Temple University Urban Archives; and the Lower Merion Historical Society.

\textsuperscript{41} Contasta, “Quasi-Government in Chestnut Hill.” Meanwhile, the Chestnut Hill Development Group surveyed railroad tracts between commercialized parcels and residential property—cataloguing their conditions, collaborating with station superintendents on clean-up initiatives, lending resources to neglectful concessionaires and leasing land the real estate trusts that managed their railroad easements.
Corporation to engage, on Temple University’s behalf, in negotiations with Morgan Tract developers and ensure the community had a representative in the real estate marketplace going forward. As trustees of the community land trust, Strauss and Bodine received authorization from 600 Chestnut Hill Community Association members on May 7, 1958 to sign a 25-year covenant agreement between the Chestnut Hill Community Land Corporation and Morgan Tract developer Summit Construction Co., a subdivision of New York-based Atlantic Realty Associates. The covenant would allow for the construction of 1152 apartment units and a shopping center of up to 75,000 square feet in floor area on 11 acres fronting the Reading Railroad (instead of the 3000 units and more than 200,000 square feet of commercial space originally proposed). After five years, the CHCA Board of Directors could approve a 10,000-square foot expansion of the center to second story construction with occupancy limited to professional offices, or allow 50-65 more residential constructions that “young people needed.” CHCA ultimately (in 1974) agreed to the latter—a decision accompanied by $75,000 cash settlement in accordance with the covenant CHCA signed in 1958.

Known colloquially within and beyond Chestnut Hill as the “Morgan Tract Ordinance,” the incorporation of non-residential uses into the expansive homesteads of deceased industrialists eventually fell to the City Council. Bill No. 1244, a specific rezoning request, authorized conversion of a class A (low-density) residential tract into class 2 (medium-density) commercial space, and Bill No. 1977 authorized conversion of a single-family property into a combination of

43 Ibid.
44 “Huge Meeting Decides Fate of Morgan Tract,” Chestnut Hill Local, 22 May 1958, 1.
high- and low-density residential spaces (class A & C). Until these two bills for inclusionary zoning passed in 1960, the Chestnut Hill Community Association negotiated directly with developers to lease land lease to the Association’s Maintenance Committee. J.P. Strauss—a “professional citizen” at the helm of the Chestnut Hill Community Association—and other neighborhood stewards finally earned the legal right to preserve a “community resource”—even because of “a selfish interest in the preservation of [one’s] own property value, both financial and aesthetic.” Effectively, the agreement yielded medium-density, low-income ‘garden apartments’ in walking distance of a historic railroad station and laid the foundation for cooperation between communities and corporations invested in their materialization.

The spatiality of these developments confused advocates of urban conservation that presumed Chestnut Hillers would use their outsized influence over City Hall to preserve existing physical and the cultural landscapes, protect their residents, and prevent the creation of new communities. Discontent home and business owners throughout Philadelphia’s 22nd Ward, joined Walter Morley, vice-chairman of 22nd Ward’s Committee on Municipal Development and Zoning for, in criticizing the expert judgment of Chestnut Hillers. “Why should a shopping center be placed in this, the last fine residential area in the 22nd ward?” A shopping center, he added, would generate traffic that would in turn necessitate expansion or realignment of the area’s roadways. John Gelsz, another Municipal Development and Zoning Committee member

49 Ibid, 4.
shared the anxieties of public hearing respondents, for whom the “main fear [was] that the residential character of that fine area will be completely destroyed…regardless of which would be built first—the shopping center or the apartments.”\(^{50}\)

Other complainants reportedly objected to the tax burden that a new town in town of approximately 3000 residents would place on neighborhood schools, nearby hospitals, municipal utilities, emergency and social services, and, last but not least, the historic Reading Railroad station located just 464 feet from the proposed building complex.\(^{51}\) However, most respondents joined leadership of the 22nd Ward (the voting district within which Chestnut Hill and suburbs of the city fell) in criticizing the Chestnut Hill Community Association “for failing to give sufficient notice to the public of its negotiations with the developers of the Morgan Tract” two years earlier, when it commissioned aerial reconnaissance of the area from local photographer Peter Gilcrest (Figure 2.9 and Figure 2.10).\(^{52}\)

![Figure 2.9. Morgan Tract, as developed in the 1960s into “Chestnut Village Apartments.” Rights-of-way of the Reading Railroad’s Chestnut Hill Branch and the Philadelphia Gas Company bracket the site. Open Street Maps.](image)

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\(^{50}\) “Morgan Tract Plans Protested, Council Unit Will Inspect Site,” *Germantown Courier*, July 31, 1958, 1

\(^{51}\) Ibid.

\(^{52}\) Ibid.
Philadelphia’s transportation and land use planners defended the Chestnut Hill Community Association (CHCA) even as the City Council chided the organization for evading its consent of restrictive covenants. Various members of the City Council’s Committee on Municipal Development and Zoning were critical of the CHCA—Summit Covenants, insisting, “Such negotiations had been entered into before seeking Council’s assistance.”

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53 The covenants held. In June 6, 1974, developer David P. Casani wanted to build 54 units (which he was legally allowed to do by right) behind the Morgan House, which was eventually razed to make room for the townhomes. Community Association representatives opposed Casani’s variance for an additional 10 homes. If Casani built 54 units, he would pay the CHCA $40,000. If they let him build 64 units, (Casani claimed he would lose money if he only built 54 units), he would pay the CHCA a $75,000 cash settlement. Intermingled amidst the power politics was a lawsuit that was eventually settled. “There’s a need for housing here,” the article quoted then Chestnut Hill Parking Foundation president Robert Glendinning (who was also Chestnut Grove’s selling agent) as saying. “Only five or six houses are on the market, and three or four are more than $100,000.” Lou Manicinelli, “The Morgan Tract: A Land Deal that Mobilized a Community,” *Chestnut Hill Local*, 7 June 2011,
CHCA’s board members concurred, but insisted on public interest as well as public benefit in “legally binding covenants wherein the community of Chestnut Hill was the beneficiary.”

Bluntly describing the organization’s political capital, the CHCA board member reported,

“We controlled City Hall…We had the Mayor, the Councilman and a great deal of representatives in City Hall at that time. Frankly, we said, ‘if you don’t listen to us, Summit, we’re going to destroy you in City Hall. You haven’t a chance in the world.’ It was a pure bluff hand. Playing poker, we bluffed him. We said, ‘you don’t have a chance of getting this thing through unless you cooperate. He said, ‘OK. I’ll cooperate.’”

Members of the Urban Traffic and Transportation Board also “Council support for these bills,” citing “legal necessities to final settlement of the Morgan Tract problem,” ambiguously defined. For John Rannells, Asst. Executive Director of the Urban Traffic and Transportation Board (UTTB), “zoning ordinances ma[de] possible [the] performance of agreements arduously hammered out for the development of the Morgan Tract.” Concession came not only in the form of 1,250 units and about 50,000 square feet of commercial space opposite the Reading Railroad tracks, but also an origin-destination survey for Chestnut Hill—the first neighborhood-scale transportation study in Philadelphia.

At the behest of the Chestnut Hill Community Land Company, Inc., dozens of Chestnut Hillers dictated traffic counts on street corners or discussed travel challenges in living rooms in October of 1958. Chestnut Hillers of every expertise and experience, age and gender played a role in a mobility and land use survey that Chestnut Hill Community Land Corporation and its


54 Manicinelli, “The Morgan Tract,” 3
56 Ibid.
57 “Huge Meeting Decides Fate of Morgan Tract,” Chestnut Hill Local, 22 May 1958, 1
consultant heralded as “the first to use local recruits, the first Do-it-Yourself O.D., so to speak.” 58

John W. Bodine and others at the helm of the community land trust at this time, supervised field work by a “small army of some 30 to 40 interested Chestnut Hillers” at a distance. The Land Corporation commissioned technical assistance and oversight from the University of Pennsylvania’s Department of City Planning; Mr. Richard Overmeyer of the Chestnut Hill Community Association’s Land Use Planning Committee; Mr. Jesse Nalle, a planning consultant based in Chestnut Hill; and other nongovernmental authorities on transportation. 59 Aptly named the “Chestnut Hill Traffic O.D.,” all-consuming operations of the Chestnut Hill Community Land Corporation in 1958 overshadowed “Operation Northwest,” the first demonstration of public-private partnership in “self-protection” that Philadelphia’s Urban Traffic and Transportation Board and railroad companies launched (Figure 2.11).

Figure 2.11. The community land trust’s ‘Sponsored content’ in Chestnut Hill Local concerning the Origin-Destination Survey it co-sponsored. Chestnut Hill Local (1958)

58 Ellen Newbold, Chestnut Hill Community Land Corporation, Inc. “What is a Traffic O.D.?” Chestnut Hill Local,

59 Ibid.
Executive directors of Philadelphia’s Urban Traffic and Transportation Board capitalized on community investment in traffic research and transit-oriented development. UTTB had already proposed a partnership between private transportation companies and public benefit corporations that hinged on restrictive “covenants and conditions” Philadelphia’s Service Standards Board. These “emergency control” tools assured the Philadelphia Transportation Company fulfilled the terms of purchase-of-service contracts of the Service Standards Board. In exchange for PTC’s patrons exclusively disembarking at city-designated stations along Chestnut Hill branches of the Reading and Pennsylvania Railroad branches, the railroad companies discounted fares for all patrons boarding at any station along these branches (*Figure 2.12 and Figure 2.13*).61

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60 Draft agreement, attached to W.W. Patchell, VP, PRR to Richardson Dilworth, 11 June 1958, A-4401: Municipal Developments, RDA, PCA

Fine print in the prospectus landed both railroad companies in court, however. Pennsylvania Railroad company defended its decision to offset anticipated losses with parking fees at its railroad stations, while Reading Company’s legal counsel defended its decision to lease stations to concessionaires willing to ramp up station management for the anticipated increased in customers. Speaking for the Pennsy, Laurence Cushmore, Jr. cheekily reminded the justices, “people have been parking on railroad property since time immemorial and that simply changing from non-paid parking to paid parking does not alter the status.” The Judge ruled in favor of cash-strapped commuters by declaring the companies’ “profit-making ventures” beyond the business of common carriers, defined as “owning or holding land, leasehold or freeholds…either directly or indirectly…necessary to the conduct of its business of common carrier.” By eliminating the revenue that railroad companies had committed to “Operation Northwest,” the Court of Common Pleas also curtailed shared land tenure—a key element of the “experimental program of low-cost integrated commuter services”—to just the six months and six stations within the City of Philadelphia.

In lieu of Chestnut Hill land donations, PRR and RDG’s highest value and highest volume spaces, both railroad companies enabled UTTB to evaluate the credibility of the traffic survey that Chestnut Hill Community Land Corporation and the Chestnut Hill Development Group co-sponsored. Reading (RDG) and Pennsylvania Railroad Company (PRR) co-sponsored a meta-study of mobility by Marketers Research Service, Inc., the local accounting firm that

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64 “Council Slates Early Hearing for Rail Bills,” *Germantown Courier* (18 September 1958): 1; “Council Expected to Approve 6-Month Commuter Trial Today,” *Germantown Courier* (9 December 1958);
UTTB contracted years earlier when it sought to render “Center City Commuter Connections.” The consultants met their subjects in the offices of the Chestnut Hill Development Group, not the streets of Chestnut Hill, for the Group had already reviewed and represented the work of Chestnut Hillers in a systematic, albeit graphic form. The Chestnut Hill Development Group had not displaced Chestnut Hill Community Land Corporation, the sponsor of the survey, or discredited the Chestnut Hill Community Association and other civic bodies that contributed manpower and a women’s persuasion to the traffic count. Rather, the Chestnut Hill Development Group incorporated the knowledge of citizens that strived to protect profit, specifically the private equity of public transportation operators.

The conspicuous absence of Chestnut Hill’s 600+ transit-oriented land development advocates from the Group’s meeting of the minds slowly occurred to Technical Directors of UTTB. In their executive summary of Marketers Research Service’s report on “Operation Northwest,” Robert B. Mitchell and Chester Rapkin recognized that the Chestnut Hill O.D. survey not only diverged from the norm of traffic surveys but also the routes of community researchers. Mrs. McClusky, Ella Wolf, and E. Floens Rivenus—a few of few-dozen elderly women trained by the Chestnut Hill Development Group to conducted “home-interview surveys” -- tracked down the origins and destinations of drivers “over pot luck dinner” discussions about why they routinely “passed a perfectly good train station with parking” while

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66 “Origin and Destination Survey in Graphic Form,” Chestnut Hill Local (25 August 1959), 5;

67 “Volunteers to Man Traffic Survey Stations Late This Month,” Chestnut Hill Local (9 October 1958).
driving to Center City (Figure 2.14).68 Plowed parking lots, pruned platforms, pot-hole-free walkways, and other hard-fought public benefits that women of the Wissahickon Garden Club secured for Wyndmoor Station through informal and intimate encounters with their neighbors and strangers ironically underwent depreciation amongst Chestnut Hillers as the City marketed community exchanges as part and parcel to the experience and enterprise of low-cost commuting (Figure 2.15).

Figure 2.14. Women reportedly performed most of the traffic counts. Chestnut Hill Local (6 November 1958), 1

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Figure 2.15. “Operation Northwest” advertisement for the 1958 holiday season highlights the low-cost of “Operation Northwest” rides, rather than high-value that Chestnut Hillers and their neighbors placed on traffic research and transport planning. *Germantown Courier* (11 December 1958)

Disdain for the methodology of public benefit corporations—community covenants with commercial developers—superseded, at least temporarily, growing distrust of the City’s own methods of securing space for transit-oriented development. Although urban discourse and developments attended to affluent communities undergoing physical degradation or economic decline, City Councilmen rarely provided assistance beyond their attendance at community meetings and corporate benefits.\(^{69}\) From ward captains to the mayor, Democratic leadership of

\(^{69}\) A “double-talk” phenomenon explored by Osman in *The Invention of Brownstone Brooklyn*; and “Affordable Housing in New York,” The Museum of the City of New York, January 2016.
Philadelphia (and its peers) treated “conservation leadership areas, that is, areas just beginning to face blight” as self-correcting species in a sea of far more endangered ones. “We didn’t enter into the picture in the past,” the Ward’s captain admitted to the regional readership of *Chestnut Hill Herald* in 1960, “because we respected the situation as a community problem.” Reflecting further on covenants secured by savvy directors of the Citizens Council on City Planning, city officials simply acknowledged “we were shocked with the final outcome” of their campaign against restrictive covenants and compelled to “look at this”— the Morgan Tract Ordinance that is—“and see how it affects the [city] as a whole.” The Ordinance earned the endorsement of Councilman at Large Henry W. Sawyer II, however, and his appeal across Philadelphia’s streetcar suburbs ushered it through committees concerned with the preponderance of policies granting further advantage to affluent Old Philadelphia.

Philadelphia’s transportation planners not only recognized inequity in their Operations, but defended it. Philadelphia’s City Solicitor David Berger and UTTB Executive Director John A. Bailey toured the region, speaking particularly to legal communities that might shape the outcome of a case against “Operation Northwest” before the Court of Common Pleas in 1960. Before the Greater Philadelphia Movement, Bailey contended, “The City Council showed courage in providing the funds for this very interesting experiment because it serves Chestnut Hill, an above-average income section.” He encouraged critics to treat the resourcefulness of its

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71 “Morgan Tract Plans Protested, Council Unit Will Inspect Site,” *Germantown Courier*, July 31, 1958, 1

72 “Morgan Tract Plans Protested, Council Unit Will Inspect Site,” *Germantown Courier*, July 31, 1958, 13

73 John A. Bailey, Executive Director, Urban Traffic and Transportation Board, Philadelphia, “Transportation in the Philadelphia metropolitan region,” 19 June 1959, p. 6, 11, UTTB, Box 2221, RDA, PCA.
research site as a rare opportunity to measure the “true cost of commuting” regardless of their agreement with the position taken by his Urban Traffic and Transportation Board:

“Had we decided that those people [Chestnut Hillers] were to come downtown by freeways with a parking garage near their destination, it would cost much more...[than] 9 cents per ride (for the first six months). Assuming that ninety percent of the cost of the freeway is paid for by taxes levied on the user, and the City contributes only 10% of the cost of freeways, you will find that the subsidy per trip to the center city by freeway is nineteen cents. But the cost of parking facilities, between four to six thousand dollars per car stall in the central core, requires no income of $1.28 per stall or eighty-five cents per rider per day. At this price, some government subsidy will be necessary. But the average payment in the core today is about ninety cents per car, or sixty cents per person, leaving 25-cents per person per day as the subsidy for parking. We find that the city, paying for only 10% of the highway cost, would have to spend 63 cents per person round trip to the central business district if everyone now entering by rail had to be accommodated on freeways. These assumptions are rough but no apology need be made for the conclusions: ...Should the region be foolish enough to forget its rail system and decide to go to an all-automobile system, hundreds of millions of dollars will have to be added to these figures for a reasonably adequate system.”

In case the barrage of facts and figures obscured the point, Bailey made sure to inform his audiences that “We don’t call this a subsidy because we were purchasing the added service from the railroad by paying them their out-of-pocket costs (perhaps a fine distinction).” City Council still begged to differ, deciding to suspend financing of UTTB operations until the Court of Common Pleas ruled on the legality of lending municipal authority to landed elites.

The legal battle between City Hall and the City Council shone a spotlight on municipal reliance on benevolent associations and benefit corporations to balance out public-private partnerships in transportation. The City of Philadelphia’s Law Department insisted the City did not violate Article IX, Section 7 of the Pennsylvania Constitution, which declares the City

74 Ibid.
75 Ibid.
76 John Kohn, Asst. City Solicitor, to James H. J. Tate, President, City Council, 8 October 1958, UTTB, Box 2221, RDA, PCA.
77 For example, Amy Davidson, “Mitt’s Forty-Seven Percent Problem,” New Yorker (18 September 2012), 1-5.
Council “shall not authorize any…city…to obtain or appropriate money for, or loan its credit to, any corporation,” and the Court of Common Pleas agreed “the Supreme Court had decided….that where a municipal appropriation is made to aid a corporation and the purpose for which [a contribution] was made is reasonable and not foreign to the material interests and general prosperity of the municipality, the appropriation is neither beyond the power of the City Council to make nor contrary to the Constitution…It is beyond question that the maintenance of an efficient system of public transportation is a proper, and indeed, a vital municipal function.”

Even with such fervent legal support, UTTB’s articles of incorporation for a Passenger Service Improvement Corporation (PSIC) of Philadelphia moved through the legal channels of the City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County’s Court of Common Pleas, the state Public Utility Commission and chambers of the U.S. Congress at a glacial pace—so slowly that spatial production outlined in restrictive covenants for the Morgan Tract and other corridors and corners of the city calcified before PSIC could incorporate them into its own operations.

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78 “Formal Opinion No. 234, Re: Ordinances Nos. 2468 and 2469,” 8 October 1958. [authorizing the City to enter into agreements with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company and the Reading Company for the rendering of certain services not now provided by the railroads and appropriating a maximum of $160,000 in payment of these services.”] UTTB, Box 2221, RDA, PCA.

Richardson Dilworth, the mayor of Philadelphia between 1954 and 1962, nearly completed his tenure as mayor and president of the American Municipal Association, before the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation (PSIC) charter was signed by the city as well as railroad, bus and trolley companies. But, PRR’s VP of Special Services set the terms of ‘joint development,’ requiring financial guarantees of various kinds—out-of-pocket service fees, investment and insurance reimbursements and debt service. The Council specifically rejected these terms of service, agreeing only to pay PRR a monthly fee of $20,500,000 for six months, in exchange for PRR underwriting nonprofit corporations that assumed responsibility for and risks of real estate reclamation and redevelopment or ridership recruitment and retention. Because of the “The Morgan Tract Debacle” that transpired during Philadelphia’s six-month “Operation Northwest,” the City Council permitted Mayor Dilworth’s administration to charter only a limited liability corporation that could hold and manage assets (e.g. building and rolling stock), amortize investments or otherwise underwrite the transit-oriented development projects that nonprofits were undertaking indiscriminately and inequitably across the city. And to this corporation, PSIC, Philadelphia’s City Council begrudgingly relinquished city resources and revenue just to assess and address how nonprofits could become capable and credible of undertaking transit-oriented research or underwriting transit-oriented redevelopment. In essence, the City Council authorized PSIC to perfect the “research corporation” model that the Citizens Council of City Planning represented.

Lease contracts that Philadelphia’s City Solicitor negotiated with PRR and RDG between

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80 W.W. Pattchell, VP, PRR to Mayor Richardson Dilworth, 11 June 1958; Agreement between PRR and the City of Philadelphia, “Operation Northwest,” 17 June 1958. UTTB, Box 500, RDA, PCA.

81 PSIC Negotiating Committee Session, 10 August 1960, UTTB, Box 2221, RDA, PCA
1958 and 1960 covered ridership recruitment from outer-borough zones, rider retention in inner-city zones and redevelopment of the railroad companies’ un-zoned real estate across the region. Each “zone” yielded to the city “included all land, facilities, and appurtenances appurtenant to the tracks indicated, including assignable portions of the supporting and overhead structures, turnouts to the clearance points, and of the catenary systems.”

While the City boasted it alone could amortize railroad investments, PRR’s Vice President of Special Operations W.W. Patchell considered tract and track leases of the city of Philadelphia both provisional and experimental. To protect its shareholders from its leaseholder, Patchell insisted:

“If [the] City desires during the period of this test or pilot operation that PRR make any improvements, additions or betterments in or to any of PRR property and facilities involved in these Chestnut Hill Operations, the City shall:

1) Pay the cost thereof…within 30 days after termination of this test or pilot operation

2) Give written notice to PRR of any improvements, additions or betterments which it desires to have removed and returned to the City, and the City shall pay PRR for the cost thereof within 15 days of [request]…

3) In the event of failure of the City [to do so], the improvements, additions or betterments remaining upon the property of PRR shall be deemed to be abandoned by the City and shall become the property of PRR, for PRR either to leave in place or remove and scrap…

…If the improvements, additions or betterments are left in place, the City agrees that no taxes shall thereafter be assessed against [them].”

Even if the city met these terms, Patchell would continue to allow amortization by any “NPC—nonprofit corporation [that] pays railroads for investment in parking facilities and assume costs

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of operating parking lots and the expenses of future improvements.” In other words, the railroad companies remained committed throughout the 1950s to off-loading tracks, tracts and termini to any governing body, public or private, that subsidized the unprofitable passenger services that state regulators required they still provide to Greater Philadelphia patrons.

City funds sunk literally into station-grounds of Northwest and Northeast Philadelphia. PRR’s Real Estate Division first sold land holdings around Torresdale Station, one of only four commuter rail termini within city limits, to a mixture of public benefit corporations and for-profit private companies. PRR set aside the largest parcel south of the tracks, for the 100-unit townhouse complex. Korman Corporation, a profitable and prolific developer of condominiums on public land, proposed to remediate as well as redevelopment a site long abandoned the Philadelphia Water Company subsidiary that operated the Torresdale Filter Plant (Figure 2.16). The state highway department, which needed land for Interstate 95, subsequently seized the industrialized landscape north of the tracks (Figure 2.17). Not by coincidence, the City of Philadelphia received the remaining flood-prone land, conveying part to the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation and the rest—a historic station-house (the superintendent dwelling) and station-grounds separating them—to the Philadelphia Parking Company, a public


85 Bristol Daily Courier, 21 July 1958, p. 17

86 Penn Center, a high-rise complex of commercial buildings under construction at mid-century in place of its glorious downtown terminus for commutation traffic (Broad Street Station) and far less glamorous rail yards, dwarfed these transactions in the Far Northeast section of Philadelphia—and many others in northwest Philadelphia. The thinking behind them, profit generation and debt reduction, remains the same, however. On the sale and redevelopment of downtown railroad parcels, see Guian McKee, "Blue Sky Boys, Professional Citizens, and Knights-in-Shining-Money: Philadelphia's Penn Center Project and the Constraints of Private Development." Journal of Planning History 6, no. 1 (2007): 48-80.
benefit corporation jointly controlled by the city’s Department of Streets and Department of Public Property (Figure 2.18).87

Figure 2.16. Pennsylvania Railroad’s holdings in Torresdale, Philadelphia County, Delaware River Flood Plain Maps, Courtesy of the Bucks County Historical Society

Figure 2.17. Interstate 95 alongside PRR tracks through Torresdale, Philadelphia, and Bristol, Bucks County, across the Delaware River tributary. © Apple Maps, Satellite 2015.

Land use plans and capital programs of the Philadelphia Parking Company indicated subprime real estate would still yield revenue generation and, by extension, rent payment. The Philadelphia Parking Company had already secured an appraiser for the property—the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation (OPDC), one of the transit-oriented nonprofit corporations founded by directors of the Citizens Council on City Planning (as discussed in the previous chapter).\textsuperscript{88} OPDC’s Delaware Expressway Committee, which pledged to protect riverfront wharfs, parkland and the River Railroad from demolition and the Delaware Expressway, unsuccessfully ascertained federal highway financing for the expressway cover that Philadelphia pledged to produce on behalf of the Delaware Port Authority. But, the Committee auspiciously assisted the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads in establishing new procedures for cultural

\textsuperscript{88} Capital Improvements Plan of 1959, Re: “Operation Torresdale,” RRDA, PCA.
resources management that reinforced the regulatory role of non-state right-of-way appraisers in rail-to-road conversions.\textsuperscript{89} In 1960 alone, the city invested more than $5 million in parking facilities for the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation, which in turn paid the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation nearly a quarter of a million dollars in revenue for appraising and apportioning real estate that it leased or purchased from railroad companies operating along the city’s Delaware River shoreline.\textsuperscript{90}

The revenue to make these investments and await their maturation came largely from the fees, tariffs and rents that the city charged railroad companies for service acquisition and site abandonment. UT TB’s Executive Director John A. Bailey recalled in August of 1960 that amortization agreements for “substantial new orders for care of parking lots or other new facilities were entered into” immediately following a 25% hike fare increase on April 1\textsuperscript{st} of 1960.\textsuperscript{91} During this period, PRR agreed to lease back, at a cost of $31,690/month, several parcels around Torresdale station that it sold to the city a few years earlier. Also, Reading Company advanced the city $799,000 in rental payments in return for the city including its Fox Chase branch in an electrification plans for the fast-growing Far Northeast section of the city. Reading


\textsuperscript{90} OPDC Committee Minutes, Box 78, Folders 1-5, RD Papers, HSP. Elise Vidler and Amy Yenchik, \textit{OPDC-CPDC: 50 Years Remaking Center City} (Philadelphia: Central Philadelphia Development Corporation, 2006). OPDC later created the Penn’s Landing Corporation (est. 1970), the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Corporation (est. 1978), and most recently, OPDC Center City Foundation (to undertake community philanthropy).

executives found “the density of traffic on this 3.5 mile stretch of the New York short line [was] insufficient to justify this type of system” to directly invest in, but they agreed “to let the people know they would get something new for their added money.”\(^9^2\) In short, the city received past due and premature rent payments for pertinent building stock and rolling stock in exchange for increased managerial control over these mass transit facilities.

The City Council also committed $1.5 million to passenger service improvements that the city undertook in cooperation with both the Pennsylvania RR and Reading RR companies, the Philadelphia Transportation Company and labor unions represented by the AFL-CIO-affiliated National Railway Executives Association. The City Council dictated only $245,000 could be used for new and improved services and appropriated $155,000 for administration and management of “capital improvements.”\(^9^3\) This amount fell far short of the $4 million that Mayor Dilworth’s Traffic and Transportation Board requested and the $969,000 needed to purchase discounted fares for city residents riding just three of the region’s most utilized lines, the Chestnut Hill and Northeast (Montgomery County) and Manayunk/Main Lines of the PRR and Reading Railroads. Add to these fiscal stressors the abandonment of Schuylkill Valley short lines (West Philadelphia to Norristown)— a $7,490/month saving for PRR, according to the city’s consultant Louis T. Klauder, but a loss of over $5000/month in fees to the city.\(^9^4\) The citizenry made up the difference, by buying widely-advertised municipal bonds that financed the city’s

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\(^9^3\) Ibid.

\(^9^4\) “Operation Manayunk,”
capital improvements in commuter rail stations, surrounding grounds and services (*Figure 2.19*).  

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**Figure 2.19.** Bond Referenda Pamphlet, Department of Public Property, 1960. Philadelphia City Archives.

By December of 1960, the City of Philadelphia had purchased and procured enough property holdings to operate a real estate investment trust.  

Casimir Sienkiewicz, chairman of the Corporation’s Board of Directors, was appointed by Mayor Richardson Dilworth to oversee

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95 “Recommendations for PSIC-Railroads-City,” UTTH, Box 2221, RDA, PCA.

96 *Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia* Articles of Incorporation, as approved by the Court of Common Pleas, 5 February 1960. RD, PCA
investment management by eight other representatives of the financial, insurance and real estate sectors in Philadelphia, two representatives of the railroad industry (appointed by the Pennsylvania RR Company and Reading Company presidents), and two appointees of the Railway Labor Executives Association, the lobbyist and collective bargaining agent for AFL-CIO unions. Representatives of the National Railway Executives Association (NREA), a late addition to the corporate charter, demanded to replace meters and meter maids of Auto Parks Inc. and other for-profit parking concessionaires with their own nonprofit regulatory regime of seasoned station-grounds superintendents.\(^9^7\) By July of that year, they had reached an agreement on service and site standards but nothing else, particularly the matter of exclusionary zoning by contract and/or covenant and the exclusivity of Philadelphia’s “lessee operations” on railroad property.\(^9^8\)

PSIC’s Executive Director John A. Baily substantiated their so-called “social enterprise” of park-n-ride production with a public demonstration of their capacity to direct Maintenance-of-Way Employees in the redevelopment, recruitment and retention of operations delegated to concessionaires.\(^9^9\) The demonstration included the installation of low-cost aluminum boxes capped by corrugated tin roofs in place of high-maintenance historic station-houses and the issuance of low-fare tickets to users of city-subsidized parking lots (Figure 2.20 and Figure 2.21). These new passenger shelters sat on concrete or brick platforms, elevated above blacktop lots “without cyclone fencing or the sturdy and expensive lights the city normally puts on its

\(^9^7\) PSIC Charter, Dec 1960. PSIC Principles of Agreement, 1960, RD, PCA.

\(^9^8\) “Agreement,” PSIC, 28 July 1960, RD, PCA.

higher cost lots.”¹⁰⁰ When these architectural and managerial changes proved profitable for the Reading and Pennsylvania Railroad companies, the city scaled up its operation to include commuters traveling to Torresdale station via express buses of the Philadelphia Transportation Company (Figure 2.22). For these riders, “Operation Torresdale” largely amounted to 18 months of un-creative placemaking.

Figure 2.20. Modern Passenger Shelter for Torresdale Station, “Operation Torresdale,” Records of the Richardson Dilworth Administration, Philadelphia City Archives

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.
Figure 2.21. Historic Torresdale Station, 1952 (pre-demolition), Philadelphia City Archives

Figure 2.22. Philadelphia Transportation Company bus chartered by the City of Philadelphia for “Operation Torresdale” in 1959 to close out the negotiations for the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation. Philadelphia City Archives.
The Concessionary Politics of Commuter Rail

Critical endorsements followed these object lessons, from both the Citizens Council on City Planning and the City Council. Modern architectural manifestations of expert authority—not an expansive plot of land for PRR trains and associated transit operators to turn their New York-bound vehicles towards Philadelphia—came to represent the so-called “Torresdale Turnaround” in transportation planning. Public benefit agreements between the city and a number of nonprofit parking concessionaires undercut the position of the National Railway Executives Association. The charter for the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia, provided equal protections to founding partners of PSIC operations, namely the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR), Reading Company (RDG) and the National Railway Executives Association (NREA). But, it promised no equity amongst its signatories—i.e. PRR, RDG, NREA and the bevy of public benefit corporations contracted by PSIC. Collectively, these nonprofits balanced out public-private redevelopment and reclamation of railroad tracks and tracts within city limits. Individually, however, each lacked the authority and leverage to rework the terms of engagement in public-private partnerships.

Moreover, as public benefit corporations such NREA and PSIC gained traction in the New Public Management of transportation infrastructure, minorities lost ground in their fight for equal rights and protection. PSIC could not control the color, creed, or class of railroad labor in the Maintenance-of-Way Employees union and other AFL-CIO-affiliated brotherhoods before the Civil Rights Act passed in 1964. After the law passed, neither uneven divestment from rights-of-way nor unequal reinvestment in rights-of-way constituted a violation of constitutional provisions for equal protection and equal access. In 1960, the right to work on rights of way constituted a privilege that NREA’s middle-class membership of white men strived to sequester.
by prioritizing management over maintenance in the “Operations” of PSIC. The other signatories also baked into their charter their bias towards public benefit corporations with marketable expertise, management experience and, a vested interest in the profitability of railroad companies. Plans and programs of labor enlistment and land expropriation that operated on a track-by-track, station-by-station basis thus constituted legal modes of operating a public transportation enterprise, but this modus operandi effectively violated the concept of equal protections for every class of citizens. Still, in the early 1960s, PSIC presented the only possibility of a dream deferred by railroad companies—the right to work on rights-of-way relegated to maintenance and railway unions that restricted enrollment to racial minorities.

“Suburban discrimination” cases against the railroad companies with which the City of Philadelphia partnered shed light on the legal-political landscape that substantiated the right of the city to rights-of-way, first and foremost. At the heart of reproach lie one important indictment: the city’s Plan and Program of Balanced Transportation counted on both for-profit and nonprofit corporations to be good neighbors. Wouldn’t it have been more prudent for the city to partner with transit operators it already paid to provide regional transport, namely the Philadelphia Transportation Company? Why not reward with subsidies the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company and the Schuylkill Valley Lines, Inc., two transit providers that operated on time and around the clock, thus aiding business operations and employment opportunities? Why not hold referendum votes and City Council hearings on capital improvements to the Broad Street Subway and the arterial streets on which electric and trackless trolleys depended? Wouldn’t it have been more progressive to subsidize mass transit to industrial

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parks of the Far Northeast, corporate parks far beyond the last stations in Northwest Philadelphia, and other employment centers? Most importantly, residents of the region wondered, what if anything, could the city, its consultants and the community learn about rail sites and services, let alone any improvements, in as little as 18 months?

Philadelphia’s defense of ‘suburban discrimination’ against state intrusion might have jeopardized the capital campaign of its Passenger Service Improvement Corporation if not for a fundamental shift in the regulation of railroad real estate investment in 1960. The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission proactively pushed the Pennsylvania Railroad and Reading (RR) Company to conduct a forensic accounting of its public-private partnerships. At first, the PUC board merely questioned the railroad companies' commitment to the public interest as well as profit. Over the course of two weeks, the Board queried: Why didn’t PSIC operations in Northwest and Northeast Philadelphia determine whether surveyed men and women boarded and embarked at the stations listed on their tickets? Did trains, buses, trolleys and subways operated by another company stop closer to their residence or workplace? To what extent and for what purpose did their riders transfer to trolley, subway and bus lines run by their competitors—the Philadelphia Transportation Company, a subsidiary of National City Lines, Inc. that operated mostly in North Philadelphia and its suburbs, and the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company, a family-owned business that served areas south and west of Center City Philadelphia? Why did they ride the train to town at all? Why didn’t their neighbors and colleagues? If fares continued to rise and services continued to decrease in scope and scale, would they continue to ride the rails? What did their ridership cost the companies and what costs did the companies avoid as result of their patronage? When neither Reading Company nor Pennsylvania Railroad Company could answer these questions in its 1961 hearings, railroad
regulators, for the first time in decades, denied their requests to downsize commutation sites and services.

Pa.'s Public Utility Commissioners also charged the City of Philadelphia with structuring new purchase-of-service and lease contracts in such a way that all signatories acted strategically but none performed strategic planning. For instance, neither the city nor the railroad companies had yet to systematically collect data on the cost of contracting with Philadelphia or any other city that agreed to invest in sites and services no longer profitable for the companies to own and/or operate. Without knowing "avoidable costs" for each train line—recurring expenses such as insurance or wages that the railroad companies could avoid with abandonment—contracts yielding inequitable site and service provisions remained, by law, "allowable costs." Resigned to regulate the sites and services of each railroad district but reticent to arbitrate research operations and operation research, the PUC found itself at the epicenter of a growing legal question: should 'separate but equal' railroad sites and services operate within the same district? Henceforth, PA Public Utility Commissioners wrote in their summary judgment, the railroad companies' future "purchase-of-service agreements" with the City of Philadelphia would be evaluated for their fairness to users throughout the "Philadelphia Division" based on data the commissioners collected from other state commissioners equally concerned with the proliferation of pilot programs, demonstration projects and other provisional frameworks for operational change.

Not one complainant on the PUC docket prior to its 1960 ruling provided incontrovertible evidence of spatial injustice but cases brought before the P.A. PUC's counterparts in New Jersey

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102 Bailey to Dilworth, Memo: PUC Cost Study [Pa Utility Commission sent letter to Philadelphia officials regarding their role in a 1958 cost allocation study—one of many contract matters taken up by the PUC in 1960-61.

103 Ibid.
and New York revealed a pattern of bias against older manufacturing suburbs and exurban bedroom communities of the Northeast. PUC commissioners offered no instructions or suggestions for how to rebuff allegations of discriminatory transit-oriented development or prove bias in business operations. Instead, PA commissioners issued a warning to railroad company executives and their consultants that ‘expert witnesses’ to declining back-to-the-city movements would not compel PUCs to tip the scales of justice in their favor. “Questionable actions” on the part of railroad companies, especially differentiation in fares and site improvements across the same service area (e.g. Greater Philadelphia), required legal justification for ‘separate but equal’ fare structures and service infrastructure.

The complainants hadn’t won yet, but neither would the railroad companies and their stockholders, underwriters and investors. If public accounting of back-to-the-city movements continued to fall short of demonstrating commensurate sites and services, the Pa. Public Utility Commission threatened to revoke its earlier accounting allowances, most notably a 1958 decision to treat patrons of experimental service programs (e.g. provisional fare discounts) as customers not citizens. Pa. PUC resolved the service and facility improvements a part of operations research made citizens using them customers. In other words, patrons of innovation in public utility operations relinquished their rights to contest injustice if the inequities were justifiable by the corporations, cities and customers prototyping or incubating said untested improvements.

104 Ibid. Pa. PUC v. Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Docket #: 16796, and Mayor Richardson to David E. Sandel (Levittown, PA), Dilworth, 28 December 1960, and David E. Sandel (Philadelphia Evening Bulletin) to Mayor Richardson Dilworth, 18 November 1960, Box—PSIC, RDA, PCA. While the Commission’s records at the PA State Archives offer some insights into their perspective on a variety of matters, their commitment to civil rights in the broadest can be gleaned from cases involving the Reading Company and/or the Pennsylvania between 1950 and 1980. See, Reading Company Law Department Records, Hagley.
The timing of this decision, the early 1960s, made the commissioners appear far more radical as regulators than the transcripts of their proceedings and their records more broadly substantiate.\textsuperscript{105} The decision against the Pennsylvania Railroad, Reading Railroad and Baltimore & Ohio companies came after the federal government had committed capital investment in the housing markets and transport systems of inner- and outer-ring suburbs through the Housing Act of 1954 and the Highway Act of 1956. Under the latter, depreciated transit villages and distressed manufacturing towns of Pennsylvania became apt sides for interstate highway construction and a plethora of residential and commercial subdivisions. Pennsylvania utility commissioners expressed little intention to take a stand against the redevelopment of Middle America around the automobile. Instead, it followed precedents set by Public Utility Commissions in Maryland and New Jersey, which endorsed and encouraged mergers between public transportation companies and partnerships between them and public transportation authorities in advance of mass suburbanization, decentralization and deindustrialization. The Pa. Public Utility Commission’s summary judgments of 1960 applied this concept of critical infrastructure protection to purchase-of-service contracts signed by PRR and RDG with the City of Philadelphia.\textsuperscript{106}

The city, to be clear, did not give up on the prospect of critical infrastructure protection via purchase-of-service agreements. Instead, PSIC's President Casimir Sienkiewicz attempted to compensate for the city's own compromised position vis-a-vis civil society in the marketplace for

\textsuperscript{105} Notes, Amicus Briefs, Exhibits, Testimony and Rulings in the PUC Case # 17412 (Pa. PUC v. Pennsylvania Railroad Co.), # 17413 (a. PUC vs. Reading Company), # 17368 (Township of Cheltenham vs. Reading Company), #17369 (Township of Abington vs. Reading Company), #17371 (Daniel T. Costello vs. Reading Company and Pennsylvania Railroad Company, #17428 (County of Delaware vs. Pennsylvania RR Co.), Acc: 630, 641, 642, 644, Box 11, Pennsylvania Railroad Company, TUA;

\textsuperscript{106} Jay H. Eiseman, presided over the proceedings and issued the preliminary ruling on May 12, 1960, and final judgment in December 1960.
Given the city could not acquire critical infrastructure at will, it relied upon the railroad companies to reserve their right-of-way on its behalf and then lease these lands to the city’s Passenger Service Improvement Corporation when it purchased services. Just as the boards of Pennsylvania Railroad Co. and Reading Company focused on their fiduciary responsibilities to their investors and shareholders, Sienkiewicz explained in a radio interview on July 25, 1961, so too was the PSIC Board preoccupied with “Operations” that expanded the city’s share of the marketplace for rolling stock and building stock of vital importance to metropolitan mobility. In a rare joint appearance, PSIC Board members and their suburban county commissioners ultimately joined Sienkiewicz in his defense of purchase-of-service agreements. These instruments sufficiently governed leases and lease-back arrangements. Still, the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation protagonists and partners cast these legal technologies as the critical infrastructure for reducing rail commuter fares and railroad company debt while raising rail ridership and railroad revenue.

107 Mayor Richardson Dilworth, PSIC Report to the City Council, 1961.

108 For promulgation of the “Philadelphia Plan,” see, “City-Run Trains Are Proposed,” Railway Age, July 20, 1959; Casimir A. Sienkiewicz, PSIC Board chairman, to PSIC Board of Directors, July 25, 1961 [Transcript attached re: Sienkiewicz’s appearance on the “Philadelphia Spotlight” program hosted by WCAU Radio on Sunday August 13 to discuss PSIC Operations]. For criticism, see “The Future of Our City Depends on Moving People not Vehicles: Help Yourself…Help Your City…Save Your Money…Ride,” a poster designed by Victor Gruen for the Niagara Frontier Transit System, Inc., attached to a letter from Niagara Frontier Transit System, Inc. VP of Public Relations to Mayor Richardson Dilworth, July 26, 1961; Paul Gange were, Reading Company President, to Mayor Richardson Dilworth, October 30, 1961 [re: reception by state officials], PSIC folder, RDA, PCA
CHAPTER 3
The Metropolitics of Municipal Incorporation

In 1967, the U.S. Secretary for Housing and Home Finance (HHFA) and the Director of HHFA’s Office of Transportation appeared across the country as well as the pages of newspapers, magazines and journals heralding "New Hope for America's Cities."¹ In their stump speeches and think-pieces about the local metropolitan authorities that would launch "mass transportation demonstrations" in the coming year, Secretary Weaver and Director Smerk enumerated "joint development" of housing open to households of every race and highways restricted to high-occupancy vehicles.² These pamphlets and publicity offer few details, however, about the “passenger service improvements” that Weaver and Smerk heralded with equal pomp and circumstance just six years earlier.³ Weaver and Smerk reported the aggregate costs of artifacts covered partially by Mass Transportation Demonstration grants from the HHFA, but these publications steered clear of reporting progress to such an extent that they raised concerns about the local initiatives they funded. In particular, congressmen across the political spectrum wondered whether these initiatives reconstituted old patterns of public enterprise or cultivated new public management practices.⁴

Pennsylvania's legislature took a particular interest in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact (SEPACT), seeking for one of the five county solicitors apart of this

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¹ George M. Smerk, “New Hope for America’s Cities,” Business Reports, 1967


³ Ibid.

intergovernmental body to explain its internal operating procedures and “Operations” it
governed. What financing and funds did it receive? Who managed and monitored their
investments? Who benefited from their inquiries and interventions? And what outcomes did
investors and donors expect from their “Operations”? When no county solicitor agreed to testify
before a bi-partisan state congressional committee, the latter tasked the Pa. PUC with an
investigative report on SEPACT, its donors and investors, operators and agents. Legislators
evidently found what they were looking for—prejudice in purchase-of-service agreements, land
tenure and conveyance contracts, labor procurement and payment invoices, revenue-sharing
provisions and real estate redevelopment projects. Before the end of 1964, the state created its
own Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) to takeover SEPACT
"Operations" and by mid-1965, much of SEPACT’s staff joined other local bodies with federal
backing in the archives of postwar devolution.

Under what conditions and for what reasons did the Southeastern Pennsylvania
Transportation Compact (SEPACK) gain federal financing then lose legitimacy as a federalist
enterprise? In hindsight, legislators for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania merely weighed in
on a wide-ranging campaign by state legislators to disband the HHFA's Office of Transportation
and discredit its most "reliable operators" as prosaic and their Operations as “prejudicial.”
HHFA acknowledged at the outset that its Mass Transportation Demonstration grant recipients
held questionable assumptions, unrealistic goals, ambiguous measures and ineffective metrics.

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5 Edward A. Harvey to Mayor James Tate, May 7, 1965, PSIC folder, JTA files, PCA
6 Pa. PUC review of SEPACT, 1960-1961, Acc. #1520: Reading Company Legal Department Files, Box 1137,
Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE (hereafter Hagley).
7 Quoted in PSIC President Casimir Sienkiewicz to Mayor Richardson Dilworth, Memorandum relating to PSIC to
be discussed with Mayor Richardson Dilworth, July 31, 1961. PSIC Folder, RDA, PCA
8 Report of the Presidential Commission on Intergovernmental Cooperation (Washington: GPO, 1961). See also,
Nonetheless, federal housing authorities cleared the way, politically and legally, for these metropolitan transportation authorities to produce and preside over new state spaces for public-private partnership: railroad trains, tracks and tracts.9

This chapter shows the HHFA-sponsored Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact (SEAPACT) not only capitalized on community philanthropy and corporate benevolence towards commuter rail operations but also commercialized the investments of these nonprofit corporations. Designed to reinvigorate not replace by-gone commuter clubs, SEAPACT’s passenger service improvement programs consumed less than 5% of the federal funds it received between 1961 and 1971—$4.67 million annually.10 However, commuter parking lots within vacant commercial plots and other marginal investments in the infrastructure of “planned communities” such as Eastwick and Levittown cost SEAPACT its most precious resource: the credit-worthiness of its managing agent, the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia (PSIC). Building on metropolitan studies of municipal retrenchment, this chapter

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9 Preliminary research, generously supported by the Hagley Center for Business, Technology and Society, revealed HHFA supported a half dozen transportation compacts in the 1960s. Only pamphlets and project reports prepared by or for these organizations (e.g. by produced by the organizations appear to remain. From this literature review, particularly a close reading of documents prepared by Gruen and Associates, Inc., Alan M. Voorhees and Associates, and Wallace, Roberts, Todd, Inc. in the 1960s, I conclude only the Niagara Frontier Transit District Corporation (NFTD) shared organizational and programmatic objectives with the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia. NFTD reports were ascertained from legal counsel for the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority through Freedom of Information Act Requests District throughout 2012 and 2013.

10 PSIC, SEAPACT I Report. Prepared for the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency, 1961. I, however, have found No tax or sale records exist for parcels "conveyed" between parties to the purchase-of-serve agreement since PSIC's "SEAPACT" operations revolved around railroad-owned and railroad-adjacent parcels--often plots of negligible cost and neglected condition that the railroad companies too eagerly released.
illuminates the role of back-to-the-city movements—suburban ridership and urban resistance—in withering municipal management of metropolitan transportation. 11

Underwriting the Urbanization of Suburban Transportation

In December of 1960, Mayor Richardson Dilworth hedged the City Council, Court of Common Pleas, the Pa. Public Utility Commission and the State Supreme Court would rule Philadelphia’s neighboring counties and municipalities had the right to procure PSIC services, lease PSIC facilities and/or finance PSIC projects. On the campaign trail in Philadelphia suburbs, Dilworth cited success cases of park-n-ride station development in cooperation with the nonprofit corporations of suburban communities such as Chestnut Hill Parking Foundation and Old Philadelphia Development Corporation. To representatives of these towns, which controlled legislative, judicial and regulatory braches of Pennsylvania’s government, Dilworth reported “a very small amount of money, placed in small-scaled parking improvements, station lot sprucing up, and even station relocation” had revitalized unused urban spaces open only to infill development.12 With “low-cost land, in open, urbanizing country,” he explained, “the city can afford the opportunity to meet traffic demand generated by the improved schedules and reduced fares” it negotiated with commuter rail and bus operators. Albeit credible and compelling, these narratives of suburban autonomy within city limits failed to convince the staunchest critics—congressmen that represented auto-centric South Jersey and Southeastern Pennsylvania.

11 Concessions and concessionaires are fixtures of “commons law” but also common space and consensual strategies of spatial production. amongst urban and suburban, progressive and conservative constituencies, was common throughout Greater Philadelphia in the 1950s due to market forces of the transportation industry, marketization of municipal policymaking and the neo-liberalization of minority communities. A study of rights-of-way in the civil rights era has yet to be written, but Andrew Wiese, “We Shall Independent Be’: African American Place Making and the Struggle to Claim Space in the United States (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2008), proffers the cultural-legal framework for such an investigation.

12 Ibid.
communities and senators that chaired congressional committees on Commerce, Public Works and Housing—that PSIC, a nonprofit corporation controlled by the city of Philadelphia and its labor, land and operational partners, deserved the right to reap revenue directly from suburban redevelopment, retention and recruitment.13

Dilworth’s position, however untenable with Pennsylvania and New Jersey legislators, enjoyed broader support, as evidenced by the final report of the Presidential Commission on Intergovernmental Cooperation (1962), and, more importantly, support deep in the federal government, particularly the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA).14 Dilworth and fellow members of the Transportation and Land Use Committees of the Commission (e.g. chairman of the Bay Area Rapid Transit District and director of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority), shared concern about state rights to govern metropolitan matters. Of particular concern was whether municipal corporations could participate in metropolitan marketplaces through compacts, consortia and corporations unbound by municipal limits on operation, management, amortization and compensation.15 Unlike members of the American Municipal Association (AMA), which cast Congress as antagonistic towards local control of the commuter rail crisis, AMA president Mayor Richardson Dilworth of Philadelphia and his Commission colleagues considered congressional opposition to an “urban renewal bill for mass

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15 Ibid, 25.
transit” key to congressional approval for suburban development of city-rooted corporations vested in passenger improvement.\textsuperscript{16}

Secretary Weaver called on these Commission members to draft provisions of the Housing Act in 1961 that would foster cooperation between municipal redevelopment authorities and metropolitan transportation authorities. To garner support from congressional districts of the pacific northwest, southwestern and southeastern United States, where buses not railways and subways transported the masses across suburbanized city-regions, Dilworth et. al. proposed Congress charter an Office of Transportation in the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency with the statutory power and administrative autonomy to underwrite the suburbanization of railroad real estate regardless. Citing the work product of Philadelphia’s Passenger Service Improvement Corporation, the Commission’s final report explained:

“The long drought of commuter rail and other services has robbed most railroads of the capital resources with which to make such normal adjustments, and even funds for bare maintenance are often non-existent. One way to meet this dilemma has been applied recently in the Philadelphia region, whereby the station ground is leased to a reliable operator who will pave the spaces and pay the costs of the facility through a parking fee of 25 cents charged to all users. This method has merit for many situations, but when relied on solely, and applied to all local stations, it can create new difficulties while leaving unresolved many problems.”\textsuperscript{17}

Southern democrats and West Coast republicans still considered the lease-back program an aid package for city transit.

Robert Weaver, the U.S. Secretary of Housing and Home Finance, anticipated and heeded off opposition to local control of ‘regional transportation authority’ with a pitch for federal oversight of local development corporations outside city limits. Whereas the Urban Renewal

\textsuperscript{16} Richardson Dilworth, President of the American Municipal Association. Remarks before the U.S. Senate Committee on Housing (1960). Transcript, Box “PSIC,” Richardson Dilworth Administration, Philadelphia City Archives.

\textsuperscript{17} Final Report of the Presidential Commission on Intergovernmental Cooperation, 35.
Administration oversaw the appropriation and application of Housing Act funds by Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority and its peers, the HHFA sought to supervise the same amongst a growing crop of development authorities entrusted by suburban counties with Title VII of the Housing Act of 1961—infill development and growth management of open space.¹⁸ Robert Weaver, testified before Senate Committees on Housing Finance, Commerce, Urban Renewal and Public Works in 1960 to the need for technical assistance, not just financial aid, to county commissions, inter-county compacts, regionalist corporations entrusted with the “space aspects of mass transportation facilities improvement.”¹⁹ When Senator Williams of New Jersey questioned why a series of hearings on “this mass transportation problem that the big cities, primarily the big cities, have,” Weaver hitched “the orderly development of our metropolitan areas” to the governmentality of "urban mass transportation authorities."²⁰ The latter would mismanage transportation-land use connections without direction from conservationists, Weaver reportedly claimed in cooperation with four conservation organizations that provided evidence of their operations thus far.²¹ Weaver answered with a felicitous representation of the HHFA: a federal administration charged with directing infill development and fleshing out regional


transportation compacts and metropolitan transportation commissions before they become obdurate, obstinate intergovernmental regional authorities.

Secretary Weaver’s political maneuvers successfully secured earmarks in the Housing Act of 1961 for a federal Office of Transportation. Federal monies came with the mandate to demonstrate mass transportation’s role in suburban home development compared to that of highways in urban housing redevelopment.\textsuperscript{22} The Housing Act of 1961, as initially drafted, authorized the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency “to demonstrate mass transit” counted amongst the vital systems of both suburbs and cities by issuing demonstration grants to metropolitan transportation authorities. The land reserves of large towns and land revenue of denser boroughs were “needed to ensure mass transit is a very, very vital part…of the way in which housing and community development would mature as time goes on.” He later admitted, however, “there has not yet been any determination as to what that further action should be.”\textsuperscript{23} The open-endedness of ‘open space’ policy at the start of the 1960s played a key role in the House of Representatives passing the Federal Housing Act of 1961, for it allowed Senators to craft a capital program for mass transportation improvements that armed regional planning commissions and development corporations of various kinds—the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact, the Washington Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, the Bay Area Rapid Transit District and the Trans-Hudson Corporation—to shape settlement and direct

\textsuperscript{22} On the highways-housing connection, see Raymond Mohl, “Planned Destruction: The Interstates and Central City Housing,” in \textit{From Tenements to the Taylor Homes: In Search of an Urban Housing Policy in 20\textsuperscript{th} Century America}, 226-245;

development in industrial and commercial suburbs undergoing radical socio-spatial change (growth and shrinkage).  

HHFA Secretary Weaver insisted on diversity in the disbursement of funds and discretion in the selection of demonstrations. However, its planning grants and development loans went only so far, geographically and temporally. The Housing Act of 1961 financed, through loans and grants, capital improvements to suburban transportation sites and services on an analytical basis; if counties collectively agreed to undertake a comprehensive study of transportation and land usage over 3 years, the HHFA would finance acquisition, rehabilitation and redevelopment of distressed but critical infrastructure for residential mobility and job accessibility. Even still, direct financing of private rail operations and equipment was not authorized. Instead, Section 303 of the Housing Act of 1961 offered to offset ridership losses of transit operators with revenue gained from federally-financed and federally-insured redevelopment of their rights-of-way, reduced interstate tariff payments, and other privileges of participating in the ridership recruitment and retention demonstrations of intergovernmental bodies. Receipt of these investments, which critics and champions bundled under the broad label “public subsidies” come the 1970s, required a public benefit corporation. In other words, the prescriptive Housing Act

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27 Report to the President by Emergency Board No. 204, appointed by Executive Order 11694, dated January 2, 1972, pursuant to section 10 of the Railway Labor Act, as amended, to investigate the dispute between the Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation and certain of its employees represented by the Brotherhood Railway Carmen
of 1961 incentivized local governments to outsource their operations of regional rail revitalization to intergovernmental compacts and government corporations capable of privatizing mass transportation management and maintenance.

Once the Federal Highway Act of 1962 passed, HHFA's Mass Transportation Demonstration grants (MTD) also required comprehensive, cooperative and continual ("3C") planning of metropolitan transportation. State highway departments had been performed these operations on behalf of MTD grant recipients in accordance with the terms of federal financial aid and technical assistance to regional transportation research and development. The Detroit Area Transportation Study (1953), the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS), the Boston Area Transportation Study (1959-1961), the Niagara Frontier Transportation Study and the Penn Jersey Study (PJ Study, 1957-1970), to name a few, provided in-kind aid to proprietors of HHFA’s mass transportation demonstration grants. The City of Philadelphia eschewed cooperation with the Penn Jersey Study team in the 1960s after Robert B. Mitchell handed over its direction to Henry Fagin of the Regional Plan Association. But suburban counties surrounding Philadelphia banked on the PJ Study team—and, its traffic engineering and transport analytics consultants—to manage the growth of Philadelphia’s Passenger Service Improvement Corporation as well as automobile-driven sprawl.

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28 Ibid. See also Schrag, Great Society Subway, chapter 1, for a case study of the federal-metropolitan dynamics from the perspective of metropolitan transportation authorities (Baltimore-Washington).

29 DATS, CATS, BATS, PJ Study pamphlets in the Vertical Files of the Hagley Museum and Library and the Loeb Library, Harvard University. See also, reports on the

**Groundwork for Growth**

Well versed in Weaver's regionalist agenda, PSIC's Executive Director John A. Bailey and Mayor Richardson Dilworth informed HHFA administrators on May 4, 1961 that Greater Philadelphia had several different metropolitan entities, but only one navigated the metropolitics of regional rail revitalization. Bailey insisted only the "civic-minded men" that PSIC was enlisting in its Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact (SE Pact) could be counted on to help the region’s “homebuilders, residents and planners make decisions favorable to the future of [railroad] facilities.”

Bailey wagered citizens of the region would also "commit their communities, i.e. in buying or building houses or apartments, decisions on car ownership or two cars per family, zoning, etc.” along the rail lines “[when] their quality is improved and their life assured” by PSIC’s SEPACT operations. PSIC pledged to use “diverse methods of improvement, promotion, operation and maintenance of parking lots and stations.”

Lending credibility to the “Philadelphia Plan” of public-private partnership, organizers of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA), the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) and the Toronto Rapid Transit District already clamored for a place on PSIC’s staff. By 1962, industry insiders claimed PSIC had successfully positioned itself, if not SEPACT

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32 Richardson Dilworth, to Robert Weaver, 8 September 1961, with SEPACT Charter attached. CF Papers, Box 2, Folder 5, TUUA.

Operations, as a research and development resource for those metropolitan transportation authorities that wanted to learn from the past while planning future systems.\footnote{William J. McKenna, ‘‘Operation Commuter’: The Suburbanization of Railroad Commuter Traffic by Philadelphia,” \textit{Public Utilities Fortnightly} (6 December 1962): 835-844.}

The U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency’s Office of Transportation underwrote Philadelphia’s “SEPACT Operations” region-wide, but only provisionally, indirectly and incrementally at first. Soon after the Housing Act of 1961 passed, HHFA awarded PSIC only a 2.9 million grant to purchase new electric cars it planned to lease to the Pennsylvania Railroad (which arrived in late 1962, months after PSIC launched its SEPACT "Operations"), and to refurbish diesel rail cars already leased to Reading Company.\footnote{Mayor Richardson Dilworth to James M. Symes, Chairman of the Board of the Pennsylvania Railroad, 24 March 1961. \textit{Conversely}, the Chicago Transit Authority \textit{immediately} received a grant for its “Skokie Swift” project and Massachusetts’s Mass Transportation Commission \textit{immediately} received aid for reduced fares and increased service on the Old Colony Line (a regional railway). Along Congress defined a regional transportation authority as a council of governmental officials in charge of extending public transit facilities and operations to new communities in a statistically measured standard metropolitan area. See, Mayor Richardson Dilworth to David Berger, City Solicitor, City of Philadelphia, 22 March 1961, RDA, PCA.} HHFA administrators required PSIC to undertake strategic planning on behalf of SEPACT before it agreed to grant a “mass transportation demonstration” grant under Section 303 of the Housing Act of 1961, however.\footnote{Theodore O. Rogers, Chairman of the Board, Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact to Robert C. Weaver, Administrator, U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency, 4 May 1962, Application for a Commuter Transportation Demonstration Grant, pursuant to Section 303 of the Housing Act of 1961.} Whereas the City of Philadelphia could share a century-old track record of transit vehicle procurement and train station preservation with Secretary Weaver, PSIC’s record of acquisition, rehabilitation and replacement of rolling and building stock—including, stations, shelters and other edifices employed in transit service provision or transit vehicle maintenance—had yet to unfold. In short, PSIC had yet to prove it could operationalize improvements to transit sites and service before federal authorities entrusted it to operate as a metropolitan transit authority.
Furthermore, the HHFA limited its involvement—and liability—to capital improvements in the physical plant of mass transportation operators and owners. Abandonment and deterioration of these stationary and mobile spaces most resembled the properties HHFA already helped to insure and improve. The Housing and Home Finance Agency required recipients of HHFA planning grants, loans and subsidies to partner with private developers in the provision of mixed-income and scattered-site housing. Subsidy programs for both sectors were designed to attract private investors, developers and owners. Section 221(d)(3) provided below-market loans to nonprofits, limited dividend corporations, or limited equity cooperatives for the construction of modest housing for lower-middle-income households, while providing grants to public-private partnerships in limited dividend/limited liability ventures in the conservation of urban mass transportation facilities and services.\(^37\) In the latter two cases, the subsidy would be split between the landlord/developer, who bore a somewhat higher risk in land development than their public and social sector partners. PSIC focused its April 1962 application to the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency and its announcements of "Operations" to come on ridership recruitment and real estate redevelopment along the Main Lines of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company or Reading Company.\(^38\)

Pressured by railroad executives to secure county, state or federal subsidies by the end of 1960 fiscal year, John A. Bailey quickly incorporated community-based organizations into its


\(^{38}\) PSIC, Application for “Operation Levittown,” submitted to the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency, October 1961, RDA, PCA
park-n-ride project plans as early as July 1960. Addendums to PSIC’s Purchase-of-service agreements with the railroad companies assigned parcels for parking to community-based organizations that agreed to manage park-n-ride lots produced by PSIC within their leaseholds. The Manayunk-Roxborough Community Association, the Levittown Commuter Club, the Lower Merion Civic Council, the Rydal-Meadowbrook Neighborhood Associations and the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation co-operated new parking facilities designed to house new riders enticed by low fares and frequent service (Figure 3.1). With nongovernmental organizations and governmental officials in the City of Philadelphia pledging to offset $80,000-$100,000 in capital improvements for each station used by PSIC patrons, the Dilworth Administration performed the groundwork it considered critical to secure federal financing for suburban rider solicitation, railroad subsidization and real estate development under the PSIC-SEPACT brand (Figure 3.2).

39 Bailey to Dilworth, Dilworth to Symes, PRR, 16 June 1961; Agreements with the Pennsylvania RR Company and the Reading Company, 22 July 1960; RDA, PCA

40 Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact, Progress Reports No. 1-5, to the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency on Commuter Rail Demonstration Project No. PA-MTD-1. Specific contract terms found in, Old Philadelphia Development Corporation President to Mayor Richardson Dilworth (at his private law office), November 1962, Folder: Old Philadelphia Development Corporation, Richardson Dilworth Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
Figure 3.1. Park-n-Ride plans for Conshohocken Station, to serve traffic from the prospective interchange between Pennsylvania Turnpike extension (I-475) and the Schuylkill Expressway (I-695) in West Conshohocken, Montgomery County, PA. Philadelphia City Archives.
Figure 3.2. Summary of Station Parking Improvement Program ultimately undertaken outside Philadelphia city limits by the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation on behalf of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact. *SEPACT I* (1965).
While the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency financed physical planning and development, it left promotion of placemaking to the City of Philadelphia and its citizenry. The City Council provided PSIC an additional $80,000 for marketing and promotion of PSIC’s pending Operations in Montgomery, Bucks and Delaware County. PSIC initially used the funding to purchase radio airtime. A radio commercial captured the tone of these advertisements:

“Hi, Bill. What are you doing on the train?”

“Are you kidding? Who can afford to drive to Philadelphia since they put in these low fares?”

“I know what you mean. The new parking lot’s break, too. I understand that at some of the stations you don’t even pay a quarter for parking anyre. And how do you like these new cars? Pretty smooth, huh? Boy, there the greatest, really fat on the pick-up. I heard they’re putting new silverliners on all of the Operation lines. But you know, Bill, even without those new cars it’s still a far better deal than driving. I mean with the new schedules and lower fares.”

“Yeah, it’s a wonder to me that anybody drives into town these days.”

“That’s for sure, especially during the winter months when the highways are more hazardous.”

Announcer: “If you drive to and from Philadelphia, next time make it a point to try the train. You’re sure to like the improved service on the PSIC and SEPACT Operation Routes on both the Pennsy and the Reading and you’ll save money too!”

Attempting to manage expectations while raising them, verbal advertisements echoed the visual representation of PSIC-SEPACT Operations: clean, comfortable, convenient, communal and affordable (Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.4).

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Figure 3.3 (top) and Figure 3.4 (bottom). Front and back of a SEPACT advertisement for “Operation” lines, printed in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* and more localized periodicals (e.g. *Main Line Times* and *Levittown Times*), but not, from my review, in the *Philadelphia Tribune*, the periodical purchased primarily by African-Americans in the region during the 1960s.
As commuters railed against the commercials, PSIC outsourced advertising to an expert in public opinion research and popular media marketing. The firm confirmed “listeners tended to react negative to these commercials,” but insisted “commercials cannot be evaluated in terms of whether listeners are entertained” or whether they changed the mindset of riders that viewed railroads—not just specific rail cars or conditions—as “worse than Victorian.”\(^\text{42}\) SEPACT commercials, he noted, “generally conceded to express salient themes, while failing to meet their communications objective: 1) the commercials lacked credibility in that they described desired train service but service that was inconsistent with the listeners’ experiences (e.g. sites and services not yet available); and 2) the commercials failed to support fare and schedule promises with specific information listeners felt they wanted” such as which lines carried the new Silverliner cars and where free parking was located.\(^\text{43}\) Commuters in focus groups aptly put public opinion on rolling stock, “What happens if you hear that and you never get to see one of those Silverliners; this could ruin any possibility of enticing them in. The advertising is premature.”\(^\text{44}\) Without the resources to buy more of these modern rail cars, PSIC could do little to speed the delivery of amenities most wanted by the border-line rail/auto users that PSIC projected would become SEPACT riders: the homemakers, teenagers and other “discretionary trip takers” that make modal choices based on quality and quantity of riding to their regular destinations.

Conversely, condemnation of parking provisions focused on access to lots, scale of lots and the cost of parking at lots. PSIC and its marketing consultants presupposed presumed they

\(^{42}\) Ibid, p. 46.
\(^{43}\) Ibid, 40-41, 43-44.
\(^{44}\) Ibid, 43.
could quickly address these matters with well-designed transit maps (*Figure 3.5* and *Figure 3.6*). “Those who make regular trips to the city between the same points cite physical reasons for their current modal preferences,” PSIC reported to the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency in 1963.\(^4^5\) The only positive refrain of focus group commentary indeed centered on the brand that PSIC physically built up through billboards and brochures posted at SEPACT parking lots:

“That PSIC-SEPACT credit line is good. It tells you who’s doing this, who it is that’s fighting for you. So they’ve done a good job on the lines they’ve been on. Oh, yes, definitely, I would never think of using the railroad before they changed the service and reduced fares it’s nice to see and know somebody is on your side.”\(^4^6\)

HHFA administrators concurred that SEPACT should continue “building identity for the public agency” with physical infrastructure. Federal officials also noted “there is little specific awareness of SEPACT…and some understandable confusion created by the existence of three agencies”—PSIC, SEPACT and SEPTA, the metropolitan transportation authority under development and in the news in 1963.\(^4^7\) To do so, SEPACT sought statutory powers of the Port Authority of New York’s Trans-Hudson Corporation—a public benefit corporations with the power to purchase land and labor in transit-friendly municipalities and well as communities controlled by auto-centric county commissioners (*Figure 3.7*).

\(^4^5\) Ibid, 55.
\(^4^6\) Ibid.
\(^4^7\) Ibid, 59.
Figures 3.5 (left) and Figure 3.6 (right). “Exhibits” of the SEPACT Transit Map consultants proposed PSIC adopt (left) vs. PSIC’s original representational system of text, line and color, not shown (right). The oversized map folds out to include identifiable symbols for different transit modes (rail, bus, walking) and attractions such as a shopping centers and amusement parks. Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact, *SEPACT II* (1965), Final Report to the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency for PA-MTD-1.

Figure 3.7. A conceptual but cartographic representation of transit operations in midtown Manhattan for which Port Authority of New York and its Trans-Hudson Corporation requested HHFA funding. *SEPACT II* (1965).
A Compact without a Pact

Suburbanites—in both the federal government and local governance—derailed Philadelphia’s brand strategy for SEPACT and the charter on which it was based. Shared widely, via radio broadcasts, town hall meetings and county-wide periodicals, their reservations about PSIC’s appraisal, acquisition and assembly of private property in suburban Philadelphia warrant enumeration. Viewpoints varied by county, and even then, consensus amongst the residents of these counties differed depending upon their proximity to and dependency on the city for economic and cultural activity. The urban geography of suburban constituents, particularly the contentious politics of consensus amongst them, constrained how and where PSIC gained a footing in this fraught landscape. PSIC garnered a place in suburban space nonetheless.

Montgomery County citizens noted that SEPACT lacked a true Board of Directors, with fiduciary responsibilities to participating parties “in proportion to financial contribution to operations.” Without such a board to govern urban transit services, the citizenry rightly concluded, “Philadelphia will remain the dominant political force in operation and management.” The organizational framework at the time, whereby the City of Philadelphia paid for its deputies to perform specific duties on behalf of PSIC, also did not offer “adequate safeguards against subjugation to partisan politics,” as far as a consultant to the Montgomery county commissioners (and their peers in Massachusetts) were concerned. Moreover,

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49 Ibid, 10.

consultants found these politics to blame for “stalled efforts to recruit and sustain a technically competent PSIC staff”—a clear indictment that PSIC’s interim Executive Director John A. Bailey had not denounced his permanent appointment to the SE Pact Action Committee of PSIC’s executive board until January 1962. PSIC’s contractual agreements with the railroads only further complicated these organizational matters for their design failed, from Commissioners’ perspective, to encourage “effective management, efficiency in operation or skill in designing and maintaining attractive service.” The absence of cost controls and efficiency incentives in purchase-of-service agreements between PSIC, railroad corporations, community/commuters associations, and trolley and bus companies not only favored the “less efficient operator” but also, by their account, allowed less effective and ethical operators to run roughshod over “PSIC partners.”

Montgomery County Commissioners keenly observed SE Pact’s preference to cooperate with publicly-traded corporations rather than family businesses. Unlike the latter, publicly-traded corporations disclosed conflicts of interests in the marketplace with shareholders, and had to survey, market, acquire, rehabilitate, manage and maintain and market properties in the best interest of their shareholders (including debtors). These disclosure documents revealed the revenue-sharing and debt service provisions of SE Pact’s purchase-of-service contracts, both of which privileged railroad company debtors, contractors, concessionaires and labor unions regulated by Philadelphia’s Service Standards Board. Furthermore, SE Pact counted on a municipal corporation (PSIC) to procure properties, private organizations funded by municipal contracts for community development services, and nonprofit organizations managed and

51 Ibid.

52 John A. Bailey, PSIC, to Mayor James H.J. Tate, 14 November 1962. Records of the James Tate Administration (hereafter JHJT), PCA.
financed by individual citizens and charitable corporations to chart a viable landscape of
development. But, the procurement of profitable places for public investment—amongst other
prospective needs of the PSIC—fell well outside the fiduciary responsibilities of CHDG, OPDC
and other nonprofit corporations with which Philadelphia had built a relationship. Rightfully so,
county commissioners in turn questioned whether PSIC could function as a managing agent for
SEPACT if it depended on non-state actors to guard its own interests in SEPACT “Operations.”

Montgomery County commissioners and solicitors nonetheless joined their Bucks County
and Chester County counterparts in PSIC’s cacophony of clients and concessionaires under the
auspices of a Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact. Why would suburban elites
entangle themselves in the “Operations” of a city they distrusted? The impending implosion of a
vital suburban transport operator offers one explanation for commitment from cautious
commissioners. Just a few months earlier, in July of 1962, the City Solicitor Harold Kohn
informed legal counsel for each transit operator in the region that it would disband its Service
Standards Board, which had exercised regulatory jurisdiction over the Philadelphia
Transportation Company under their agreement of July 1, 1957. PTC had not, all of a sudden,
come around after “innumerable conferences and discussions over the years regarding service
standards, and...what constitutes a needed improvement.” Rather, the city had come to the
conclusion that PSIC more ably performed the primary responsibility of the Service standards
Board—resource allocation. PSIC, the Office of City Solicitor explained, would enable the City

53 John A. Bailey, SEPACT Secretary, to Mayor James Tate, SEPACT Board Member, “Confidential: Disclosure
Statement,” 10 October 1962. JHJT, PCA

54 Ibid.

55 Minutes of the Meeting of the Service Standards Board, May 19, 1960, Box of General Files—Office of the
Mayor, RDA, PCA

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“...to solve these problems [and] to eliminate the necessity of appealing to the PUC and the courts.” At the same time, PSIC would “help [PTC] fulfill its obligations under the law as a public utility and do so in a manner to make profits.” 56 In his decision to suspend the city’s Service Standards Board, Kohn recognized regulatory capture could occur more consistently and nimbly through annual contracts and anachronistic concessions than courts and commissions.

With this decision, Philadelphia’s City Solicitor David Berger effectively challenged his counterparts in surrounding counties to commission their own regulatory bodies, compete for premium purchase-of-service contracts with PTC, or contract with PTC (and other transport companies) collectively under the SEPACT charter. The Service Standards Board had “final jurisdiction over changes to the [PTC] routes, extension of routes, establishment of new routes and abandonment of existing routes” within the city and beyond city limits. 57 Also, the SSB also retained power to “be the agency by which service would be improved, [and] headed by an impartial, neutral, unbiased person.” 58 The agency had proved effective thus far at exercising judgment of which the county solicitors approved of. But none, Berger noted in that May meeting with the PTC, raised in a court of law “the question of the legality of any decision which it might render.” Berger, then Assistant Solicitor of the City of Philadelphia, evidently disagreed with growing suspicion that a purchase-of-service agreement insufficiently provided the legal basis for Philadelphia’s jurisdiction over passenger services rendered in and beyond its borders. He insisted, in fact, that “we are beyond the point where ‘service standards’ means simply how

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56 Louis T. Lauder, the engineering consultant raised this matter of too much municipal control over the “emergency control board” with the Urban Traffic and Transportation Board’s chairman, Charles Frazier, shortly after becoming the City’s representative on the Service Standards Board. Lauder to Frazier, December 12, 1958, Frazier Papers, UTTB Folder, TUA.

57 Service Standards Board, Case No. 9, Air Conditioning of Buses, Stanley D. Forsythe, chairman, Louis T. Lauder, City of Philadelphia Representative; Hawley S. Simpson, PTC Representative. May 19, 1960.

58 Ibid.
much headway there is between vehicles,” or whether public accommodation includes air conditioning and heat. The entire apparatus of accommodating the movement of people and goods through the city could not fall on legal counsel of the city alone, however; the Mayor’s Advisory Committee on PTC Negotiations reached an agreement with suburban county commissioners in August of 1960.59

Figure 3.8. PTC express bus drops passengers at Torresdale Station, Torresdale, Philadelphia, as part of a purchase-of-service agreement reached in 1962. Philadelphia City Archives.

Throughout negotiations for a new PTC purchase-of-services agreement in 1962, Philadelphia pressured neighboring counties to cooperate or compete with Passenger Service

59 William Goldman, chairman of the Mayor’s Advisory Committee on PTC Negotiations, to William Wilcox, Executive Director, Greater Philadelphia Movement, August 29, 1960.
Improvement Corporation if it wasn’t going to contract the municipal corporation to manage all of its service and site improvements. Philadelphia sponsored “Operation Northeast” and “Operation Torresdale”—two intra-city operations already linked to suburban transit—to confirm their assumptions about suburban participation in the city’s Operations held true (Figure 3.8). 30% of new riders on Reading and Pennsylvania Railroad lines in 1962 were former PTC passengers, Opinion Research Corporation concluded from interviews with women aboard Reading Company trains. The survey implied the other 70% or somewhere close (given the 3% margin reported) had abandoned other transit enterprises and highway facilities that served the region. As the President of the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company and Montgomery County commissioners noted, the survey favored riders residing in one quadrant of the city-region served by railroad lines that stopped at Reading Terminal or North Philadelphia. The Montgomery County Planning Commission came to their defense, issuing a statement that questioned the validity of these calculations given the survey results excluded “other and unreported” data, i.e. their own survey results. Nevertheless, the survey formed the basis for a new Philadelphia-PTC contract whereby the Philadelphia Transportation Company diverted (not just delivered) streetcar and bus passengers exclusively to railroad stations apart of Philadelphia’s or, more accurately, PSIC’s SEPACT “Operations” in the years to come.

PSIC’s revenue-sharing agreement with PTC was not exclusive; still it disadvantaged PTC’s competitors—family-owned transit enterprises and the municipalities that relied on rental

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60 Bailey to Dilworth, Dec 22 1959, PSIC Box 2221, RDA, PCA

61 PSIC Program: Diversion of PTC Passengers to Subsidized Railroads, Report no. 62-506; prepared for the Planning Department, May 25, 1962. RDA, Box 2221, PCA

62 “Agreement with the Philadelphia Transportation Company—Operation Northwest—Operation Northeast—Operation Fox Chase—Operation Manayunk—Operation Torresdale—Operation Mainline. 1961. RDA, Box 2221, PCA. In return, the city of Philadelphia would share revenue earned from these diversions with PTC shareholders and trustees.
payments from them. As Montgomery County commissioners predicted, “grave dangers inherent in permitting a large commercial operation” to operate exclusively or primarily within public space, endangered PSIC’s partnership with other users of Philadelphia’s subway tunnels, railroad bridges and electrified thoroughfares. By denying Schuylkill Valley Lines and Red Arrow Lines of the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company (PSTC) their “rightful place” at railroad terminals in Center City and railroad termini at the City Line (e.g. Torresdale, Manayunk), the city and its municipal corporation discriminated against Montgomery and Delaware County families that owned these companies or relied on their services.

Evidence of inequity was readily available from County Planning Commissions and the Public Utility Commission, which fielded complaints constantly from suburb-city commuters. The latter lamented being compelled “to cross the P&W tracks to the PRR line, which cost only 45-cents and the rider is more likely to get a seat”—all because Philadelphia wouldn’t lease the Market-Frankford Subway connecting Delaware County to Center City Philadelphia to all transit operators. And those customers that avoided the risk of a rail collision by walking around 69th Street Terminal in Upper Darby to the PRR entrance, paid more than their fair share in fares, an additional 39-cents with tokens or 40-cents cash. Located a distance from “this haven for patronage and politicking,” Buck Commissioners hedged, that perhaps the other counties benefited from Philadelphia’s exclusive contract practice: the rental payments of streetcar, trolley and bus companies remained within county coffers since these companies’ patrons embarked and

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64 Ibid, Transcripts, 26 October 1962 (Radnor).

disembarked on county roads. The Bucks County Planning Commission stood alone in its support of PTC exclusivity, the “passenger service improvements” it would bring to the region and the profitability that Philadelphia promised it would bring regional rail operators. But, it also agreed to mobilize other counties to stand up for rights-of-way faced with reclamation by the state transportation authority that Delaware County commissioners preferred.

Come October 1962, representatives from all but one county served by the Philadelphia Transportation Company agreed to participate in PSIC Operations. Each set aside the possibility of "patronage and politicking" they anticipated would emerge from the partnership “in order to gather information” on whether new ridership would arise in new towns if old rail sites and services improved. Montgomery, Buck and Chester counties approved "localized" partnerships with "builders and developers of new homes and apartments," essentially Park-n-Ride patron providers, while Delaware County revisited past plans for PSIC—SEPACT to regulate the suburban developers subsidized by the Housing Act of 1961. Senator Joseph Clark, Mayor Richardson Dilworth’s predecessor, once endorsed this approach to local control, but the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania refrained from revising its constitution to extend home rule to county commissions and commissioners. In short, PSIC’s executive directors served as SEPACT’s “managing agent” in hostile territory and proving grounds when it set out, in the fall of 1962, to demonstrate the marketability of mass transportation beyond city limits.

66 John A. Bailey, Executive Director, UTTB, to Mayor Dilworth, Dec 22, 1959
67 SEPACT Agreement, 8 December 1962, JHJT, PCA.
The Search for “Friends of” PSIC-SEPACT

Between 1962 and 1965, SEPACT “Operations” took place primarily in shrinking, industrialized wedges and corridors of the region: rights-of-way between 30 and 40 feet wide. Too narrow to accommodate a highway without condemnation of other lands, many of these parcels could be found in bedroom communities growing into "new towns" as a result of residential and commercial sprawl in open space, and industrial suburbs helmed in by brownfields, read reports of the prolific Montgomery County and Bucks County Planning Commissions from the time.69 In the “first-class townships,” municipalities with home rule charters and zoning ordinances, "most potential customers are interested in the size of the lot, the construction, and other factors pertaining directly to the home itself.” PSIC’s SEPACT Action Team still wagered, “a large number are equally concerned with community conveniences, such as transportation.”70 Soon after announcing its plans for park-n-ride development along five cross-county railroad lines, PSIC-SEPACT executives began working with HHFA-subsidized developers of suburban land to make and market service and site improvements that would mobilize municipalities or their constituents to compel the conscription of county commissioners.71

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70 As belatedly reported to the public, PSIC-SEPACT, News Release, August 11, 1965, JHJT, PCA

71 The Montgomery County Planning Commission, 1960). In anticipation of financial aid and technical assistance for subway extension into Philadelphia’s surrounding suburbs, Philadelphia's Department of Public Property had gathered information about the commuting clubs of Montgomery, Bucks and Delaware county residents. See, John
On what basis and to what extent did PSIC—SEPACT executives consider suburban developers and/or suburban municipalities partners in their “Operation”? What contribution did either ultimately make to the marketability of PSIC—SEPACT “Operations”? The following section explores the geopolitics of public trust in private bodies, specifically the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation and the railroad companies and rail labor lobbies with which they cooperated. In Montgomery County, the most transit-accessible of all of Philadelphia’s surrounding counties, commercial developers enabled PSIC-SEPACT to route their Operations through the treacherous landscape of public and private land trusts in Greater Philadelphia (Figure 3.9). In doing so, I argue, neither PSIC nor SEPACT board members—city and county officials—earned the trust of commuters. The latter had already tied their fortune and the future of regional rail to property rights and civil rights movement of the political right and left, which afforded them the land tenure and labor terms their municipalities proved unable to secure.72

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72 Ibid.
The commercialization of railroad towns traversed by either the West Trenton RR (jointly owned and operated the PRR and the Reading as the “New York Short Line” or “New York Bypass”) afforded PSIC the first of many object lessons in public-private partnership along the crabgrass frontier of Greater Philadelphia. In May 15, 1952, Philadelphia’s Board of Adjustments zoned open space in Somerton, particularly the Forest Hills section that bordered Montgomery County for subdivision into religiously segregated subdivisions for upwardly mobile Jewish, Catholic and Asian populations (Figure 3.10). Over the next decade, a shopping center large enough to hold two department stores, Wannamaker’s and Gimbel’s, plus condominiums and

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73 CCCP Board Meeting Minutes, 17 Sept 1952, URB-I0/III, Charles Frazier Papers, TUUA. See also, “Final Section of Somerton,” Philadelphia Inquirer (20 May 1983); 82;
office buildings consumed open space around Forest Hills station (*Figure 3.11*). Little land remained around this station for passenger service improvements come 1962. After a few meetings with Gimbel’s, Wannamaker’s and Strawbridge & Clothier, which had bought the farm land around Forest Hill station, PSIC secured a tentative agreement with these department stores to expand their footprints to the Reading RR Company’s right-of-way (the triangular parcel in *Figure 3.10*) and lease these additional parcels to PSIC for SEPACT Operations, i.e. commuter or paratransit parking.⁷⁴

![Figure 3.10. Residential and commercial development separating Somerton Station and the Montgomery and Bucks County lines (1/2 mile away). Philadelphia Land Use Map, 1962, Plate 11C-2. Map Collection, Free Library of Pennsylvania.](image)

⁷⁴ Barbara Kilgue, Somerton Civic Club to Mayor James Tate, 6 September 1962, JTA, Box 514, PSIC, PCA
Banking on benevolence, PSIC—SEPACT failed at first to recognize right-of-way redevelopment in city-suburbs required politicking and patronage with suburbs outside city limits. These commercial operators already arranged to contract with trackless trolleys and electrified buses of Montgomery County, which planned to purchase track-adjacent tracts in the city for the purpose of shuttling patrons of the railroads and retailers between shopping centers, train platforms and condominium complexes.\(^75\) PSIC-SEPACT’s passenger improvement plan for Forest Hills Station included a trail along the PRR tracks exclusively (for Somerton’s Sabbath-observing Jewish residents and other pedestrians) plus parking spaces for Montgomery

County commuters using their own car. Nonetheless, it violated the community-benefit agreements and “public benefit covenants” that the department store owners signed with Montgomery County municipalities, particularly those designed to benefit local business.\textsuperscript{76}

Effectively, Philadelphia department store owners seeking suburban sites outside the city structured their land development practices around the suburban counties, making space, if and where they could, for spatial production by the City of Philadelphia only after county contractors like trolley and bus companies were served.

The pedestrian-friendly development solution that Mayor Richardson Dilworth first proposed to the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency in 1961 shifted in scale and scope from a progressive “kiss-n-ride” park-let to a conventional “park-n-ride lot” through negotiations for land between owners and operators of commercial enterprises around the station.\textsuperscript{77} Drafted by community associations, commuter clubs, businessmen’s associations and garden clubs, zoning codes of Montgomery County generally valued public investment in the infrastructure of their private enterprises. The Abington Township code requires, for example:

> “Such regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan, and designed to lessen congestion in the streets, to secure safety from fire, panic, and other dangers, to promote health and general welfare, to provide adequate light and air and to prevent the overcrowding of land, to avoid undue concentration of population, to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements. Such regulations shall be made with a reasonable consideration, among other things, to the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses, and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout such township.”\textsuperscript{78}


\textsuperscript{77} SEPACT and the HHFA, Report #11, Contract #MTD-4: Appraisal of Operations North Penn-Hatboro and Levittown, Two Years after their Inception, May 1965.

\textsuperscript{78} Delaware Valley Regional Planning Council, Montgomery County Shopping Centers (Philadelphia: DVRPC, June 2005).
Municipalities with home rule charters decided whether to apply the code consistently or capriciously, impulsively or sparingly, as the state legislature designed “First Class Township” zoning and building codes. Municipal officials of Abington, Jenkintown and Elkins Park, where commercial developers sought to build even larger suburban outposts for downtown store owners, decided to hold land developers to postwar standards of transit-oriented development in automobiles: town squares in sprawling townships.

Commuter clubs and community associations of Abington, Jenkintown and Elkins Park feared further “spot zoning” once PSIC announced its partnership with the owner/operators of shopping centers throughout the West Trenton RR corridor. Stretching from Springfield Township in Montgomery County to Bensalem Township in Bucks County, the industrialized corridor cut through streetcar suburbs with declining political capital with Montgomery County commissioners. Now designated a Transit Revitalization Investment District by the Montgomery County Planning Commission and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, land alongside the railway was once held in a single trust governed by the freeholders of Abington Township, a housing association and a country club proprietor (Figure 3.12). 79 Reading Company's retraction of railroad easements on this land in 1950 brought both the Rydal Improvement Association and the Meadowbrook Improvement Association before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission as Complainants (Plaintiffs), then again in 1953 to protest against unmanned stations. 80

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Losing both of these cases the Rydal-Meadowbrook Civic Association joined forces to contest purchase-of-service agreements between Philadelphia and the Reading Company. Public utility commissioners approved the easement's eradication and county commissioners subsequently rezoned land for redevelopment. Both decisions reinforced inequities between manned stations for PSIC—SEPACT "Operations" on commercial properties like the Bustleton-Somerton Shopping Center and unmanned but operational stations at the center of residential subdivisions such as Baederwood. Even after pointing out these disparities, the neighborhood associations lost. But, their contestation of commercial land holders carried on informally as a 'culture war' between the city’s passenger improvement corporations and suburban neighborhood improvement associations.

Figure 3.12. A 2013 Parcel Map for the Transit Revitalization Investment District around Abington Township’s Noble Station. Abington Township, PA.

The Noble-Meadowbrook Civic Association and the Rydal Community Association, both of which formed in the early 20th century to finance infrastructure improvements, predictably led the campaign against the expansion of PSIC “Operations” north of suburbs within the city (e.g.
Chestnut Hill and Somerton). Their organizations litigiously protected against public utility property conversion and parking facility production in the Old York Road corridor where Reading Railroad Company long-ago located its rail yards and junctions.\(^{81}\) Then apart of Reading's New York District, the West Trenton train line traversing this area served as the backbone of industry in southeastern Philadelphia from the mid-19\(^{th}\) century to the mid-20\(^{th}\) century, when U.S. Steel located its Fairless plant just north of Reading Company’s Fairless Hills Junction (Figure 3.13). Station-grounds along the line remained as integral to ‘back-to-the-city movements’ within Montgomery and Buck County as they do today, as residents continue to demand that county commissioners redress this corridor’s ‘transit blight.’\(^{82}\)

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\(^{81}\) Noble-Meadowbrook Civic Association and Melrose Park Neighborhood Association, past and present. 40 years after the Noble Improvement Association formed in 1910, the community remained oriented towards infrastructure investments. From the outset, infrastructure improvement absorbed the organization’s political agenda: “In line with methods adopted by numerous other suburban villages, Noble citizens have organized the Noble Improvement Association of Abington Township. The membership already includes many prominent Philadelphians who have homes in this suburb…The primal objects of the association are the same as in other suburban villages, the procuring of better street lighting facilities, better railway service and improved highways and sidewalks.” Noteworthy, the community employed race and economic restrictive covenants to maintain its transit orientation. A 1954 advertisement for new housing construction on Old York Road at Noble Station heralded “an established community of fine homes and people; Carefully restricted to keep it that way; Electric trains and subway-bus service at tract entrance; Excellent shopping center at Jenkintown; Abington Township preferred school system; Home sales from $15000 to $8000.”

York Road corridor civic associations had become such litigious actors in the transportation industry and real estate market by 1960 that commercial developers attempted to ban them from litigation. Noble-Rydal Corporation and Baerderwood Inc., commercial developers that purchased land between Reading RR tracks and station access roads during the 1930s, sought for the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to enjoin "the Rydal-Meadowbrook Civic Association, its officers, directors, servants and agents," from appealing building permit approvals or "persuading any other person to bring any action which would impede the granting of build permits" on the land in question.83 Summary judgments in their favor by county courts recognized the exhaustion and expense of litigation felt by Noble-Rydal and Baerderwood Inc.,

but appeals court judges and ultimately the State Supreme Court artfully dismissed cases against the civic activism as wishful thinking:

"It is, of course, hornbook law that equity may take cognizance of a controversy in order to prevent repeated litigation of the same issue, but we are of the opinion that this is not controversy where this jurisdictional basis is appropriate. What is the nature of the litigation that plaintiff [Beaderwood Center, Inc.] is desirous of averting? Actually it is not litigation which defendants might independently initiate, but rather appeals from the grant of building permits taken by defendants as parties who consider themselves "aggrieved…by an decision of the administrative officer" …The litigiousness of which appellant complains is in reality limited by the number of building permits for which application is made by plaintiff itself or its grantees…As building designs and proposed business uses vary with the unlimited ingenuity of architects and business men, no single decree can possibly comprehend the variety of building permit issues which might arise in the future. The prayed-for decree enjoining an attack on 'the granting of building permits, in respect to buildings to be erected an any time hereafter on any land' encompassing the 30 acres owned by plaintiff, the 20 owned by Wanamaker and the 5 owned by Van Scriver, would require a reading of the future beyond the mortal powers of any court." 84

The civic associations' lawsuits against the shopping centers’ developers continue to this day, for the latter succeeded, at least, in compelling state metropolitan transportation authorities to incorporate a restrictive covenant into leases that precludes commercial development unrelated to the business of transportation from the right-of-way. 85

Ever the charismatic commissioner of public and private investment, PSIC Board chairman Casimir Sienkiewicz attempted to assuage the concerns of community conservationists in Montgomery county with noncommercial plans for commuter rail patron recruitment and patron retention. The fiscal health of PSIC-SEPACT banked on the cooperation of Montgomery County Commissioners, which would have to change county laws governing public leases of private land for their “Operations” to move forward as planned. PSIC-SEPACT had budgeted for the cost of “freeing lots” from commercial bondage and freeing suburban commuters from their begrudging

84 Beaderwood Center, Inc. v. Putney, 390 Pa. 53 Supreme Court of PA (1957).

85 Minutes of Regular Board Meeting, SEPTA—Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (26 June 2014).
bond with parking concessionaires, not residents' resistance to commercial buy-in to commuter operations.\textsuperscript{86} PSIC President Sienkiewicz advised county commissioners it could "free" park-n-ride lots from railroad concessionaires and parking passes beyond the means of ex-urban middle-class households, but only if industrial, residential, commercial and agricultural land owners freely turned over their real estate to PSIC for redevelopment.\textsuperscript{87} Sienkiewicz was familiar with the land banking movement as head of real estate finance for the National Resources Planning Board's Conservation Bureau in the late 1940s, then Central-Penn Bank (a community bank) in the 1950s, and the preservation movement in his hometown of Doyleston, PA (Montgomery County seat).\textsuperscript{88} To drum up interest amongst real estate or land trustees for PSIC-SEPACT partnership, Sienkiewicz participated in a two-hour debated on network television—the Allen Scott Show, a popular weekend news broadcast—with Mayor Richardson Dilworth and Bill Rafsky, the Director of Philadelphia's Redevelopment Authority, plus vocal critics, namely Elkins Wetherhill, a Montgomery County commissioner, and Edwin H. Folk, a Delaware County Commissioner.\textsuperscript{89}

PSIC and SEPACT executives failed to convince Montgomery County residents that the city, for once, might save the suburbs from disinvestment.\textsuperscript{90} Although PSIC-SEPACT officials magnanimously agreed to abide by their land transfer terms (as they had done for Reading

\begin{footnotesize}
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    \item \textsuperscript{87} Casimir Sienkiewicz, PSIC, to Costello, Montgomery County Planning Commission, 2 January 1963, JTA, Box 514, PCA. In a meeting with county commissioners, PSIC President Sienkiewicz proposed to "free" park-n-ride lots from railroad concessionaires and parking passes beyond the means of ex-urban middle-class households.
    \item \textsuperscript{88} Casimir Sienkiewicz, “Obituary,” Penn Magazine (Spring 1991), 12-3.
    \item \textsuperscript{89} John A. Bailey, PSIC, to Mayor James Tate, November 14, 1962, PSIC folder, JTA, PCA
    \item \textsuperscript{90} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
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Company and Pennsylvania Railroad Co.), land offers came in from only costly sources: a trackless trolley company that sought a license to operate in public lots, advertisers who sought the captive audiences of awaiting passengers, feeder bus companies for commuters who left the ‘family car’ at home, and, of course, department stores.91 Not until winter of 1962, could PSIC’s SEPACT Operations finally take place on a private parcel outside city limits.

PSIC-SEPACT Operations proceeded in partnership with producers of architecture for automobility. Strawbridge and Clothier agreed to expand by 50% the square footage of its department store on Old York Rd, adjacent to Reading RR’s Noble Station. Wannamaker’s offered to double the size of its parking deck such that it connected Meadowbrook Station to the mall that Wannamaker’s anchored. Lastly, Gimbel’s agreed to cede spaces within the parking lot it already built around Jenkintown Station (Figure 3.14 and Figure 3.15).92

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91 PSIC, Report to the City Council, October 1961, Frazier Papers, UTTB, Box 2, Folder 3.

92 Ibid.
Figure 3.14 (left). “You’ll applaud ample parking for 1500 cars, the convenience of the nearby Reading Noble Station,” reads a Strawbridge and Clothier advertisement marketing mass consumerism at the intersection of the Reading Railroad and one of the region’s most traffic-laden road, County Route 516. *Philadelphia Inquirer* (22 February 1958), B13

Figure 3.15 (right). Advertisements for “Wannamaker Park” subdivision of the Beaderwood Estate acknowledged most new homebuyers in the area were ex-Philadelphians not ex-urbanites. The company’s developer constructed twin condominiums like the two-family homes advertised in *Philadelphia Inquirer* (22 February 1958), D4.

Each of these edifices allowed PSIC to tout at once the modernity and historicity of passenger improvements. Strawbridge and Clothier’s, for instance, insisted “the beauty of the outside architecture [‘landscape architecture’ of] would be retained” as the store built an “enlarged store...[with] the latest in modern décor,” particularly lighting and fuss-free plantings along pedestrian pathways.93 However, these concrete parking deck designs limited their modern

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93 Wanamakers Ad, *Philadelphia Inquirer* (22 February 1958), B13,
provisions to lower levels, where shoppers parked, while leaving “historic features” of the commuter corridor—stone stations, macadam platforms and wooden benches—to undergo further weathering. In short, PSIC’s partnership with the suburban branches of downtown department stores paradoxically represented ‘back-to-the-city movements’ in the region’s past and auto-centric movements within the suburbs as the region’s, future.

Commuter clubs and their municipal representatives creatively contested PSIC’s projects in Montgomery County. On civil rights grounds, land owners of historic properties next to Noble Station defended deeds with restrictive covenants that opposed any commercialization of the spaces they shared with the railroad companies (Figure 3.16). One of the most liberal of these landowners—Horace Mann Lippincott, President of the Cheltenham Historical Commission—decried the decrease in open space overseers that parkland-to-parking lot conversions wrought. He and other members of the Rydal-Meadowbrook Civic Association claimed that erasure of natural environments along the Reading ROW constituted a "taking" of property rights possessed by the easement grantor—the owner of his house in the late 19th century and subsequent owners to which the deed passed. Again, commuter collectives lost their cases, because the Public Utility Commissioners found Reading Company effectively abandoned these lots—and its easements—when it removed its superintendents from these landscapes and passenger services at these stations along the West Trenton Branch between 1950 and 1953.

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95 Ibid.

96 Abington Township; Putney v. Abington Twp, 176 Pa. Superior Court 463 (1954)
Figure 3.16. A triangular plot acquired by Wannamaker’s in Abington Township includes a small parking lot for commuters using Noble Station. Across the tracks lies a kiss-n-ride lot, allotted in the public easement terms of private property owners abutting the Reading RR tracks. Apple Maps, 2015.

Melrose Park Improvement Association (MPIA) and the Rydal-Meadowbrook Civic Association (RMCA) joined their township solicitors in constructing a case against Noble-Rydal Corporation, the developer of department store structures that continues to construct controversial spaces within the railways of Montgomery County. MPIA, which formed in the late 1940s to protect “unincorporated areas” from unplanned development, shuttered its doors after legal counsel for Abington Township and Cheltenham Township unsuccessfully protested park-n-ride projects on the grounds that they took land necessary to meet “fair housing” court

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97 Noble-Rydal Corporation is currently involved in land use and development controversies at Noble Station. The Corporation granted SEPTA an easement for shared use of the driveway that provides vehicular access to the Noble Passenger Station in Abington Township, Montgomery County. In 1973, one of SEPTA’s predecessors—North Philadelphia Railroad—sold property adjacent to the station to Noble-Rydal Corporation and Noble-Rydal Associates, L.P., which collectively controlled the Beaderwood property. The deed corresponding to the sale issued SEPTA a permanent easement to Noble-Rydal for the entire driveway and reserved designated parking spaces to SEPTA during specified times of the day. But, Noble-Rydal also granted B&K Industries, Inc., a 97-year easement to the driveway for its operations, two years later. Conflict between SEPTA and B&K was not resolved until 2014, when SEPTA granted Noble-Rydal an easement on its property for it to realign the Noble Station access road in such a way that the operations of SEPTA and B&K would not interfere.
orders for these first-class townships. The injunctions—or mandates for “non-racially restrictive covenants,” in postwar parlance—required both to include, with each ‘open space’ released for private development, a permit for housing constructions void of the restrictive deed covenants carried by much of the housing stock in Pennsylvania’s First Class [inner-ring] Townships. However unsuccessful, commuters and communities that made the case for “suburban discrimination” cogged the political machine of parking space production across Montgomery County and bogged down PSIC-SEPACT Operations in the legal matters of Greater Philadelphia’s most transit-friendly municipalities.

Recidivism in ridership throughout the municipalities of lower Montgomery County in the early 1960s led PSIC to double down on development in neighboring townships and counties. When John Wanamaker canceled plans to build a parking garage exclusively for railroads patrons at Reading Company's Jenkintown Juncture, PSIC secured another shopping proprietor—Sears Roebeck. Sears not only pledged to build a subway station for Montgomery County patrons, it “adopted a site within the city,” specifically open space within the Far Northeast section of Philadelphia under its historic clocktower building (Figure 3.17). Service cutbacks, maintenance deferment and ridership decline on the Broad Street Subway kept the railroad companies from connecting their services to this station, as originally planned, via the busiest roadway in the city—Roosevelt Boulevard. Quite the opposite occurred; Reading Company requested and received permission to curtail services to Fern Rock and Olney—


99 Ibid.


101 Ibid.
regional rail stations within walking distance of existing Broad Street subway stations a mile south. Philadelphia’s vision of building multimodal transportation centers in suburban communities failed at launch and appeared doomed by devolving authority over capital improvement to transportation. But, the possibility of public-private partnership in land and labor reclamation remained viable in “new towns”—suburban communities under development by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority and private developers working outside city limits.

Figure 3.17. Sears Roebuck Building, Roosevelt Boulevard and Adams Ave, NE Philadelphia, 1954. Ultimately built into the hill side of the building, the subway entrance was invisible from the street. Philadelphia City Records.

Race, Regionalism and Republicanism in the Right-of-Way

Along Darby Creek, Philadelphia’s southwestern border with industrial suburbs of Delaware County, the black Philadelphians of Eastwick gathered in 1960 to discuss the Passenger Service

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Improvement Corporation’s plans for SEPACT “Operations.”¹⁰³ Low-cost, high-frequency train service to connect Eastwick, a historically black community on the urban fringe of South Philadelphia, with industrial employment centers further south in Delaware County topped the agenda of this meeting and others concerning transit “Operations” south of South Street.¹⁰⁴ The connection—a dedicated right-of-way for short-haul transportation—already existed, but it served several transportation companies operating passenger and freight services in the southwestern quadrant of Philadelphia and neighboring townships of Delaware County (Figure 3.18).¹⁰⁵ What right did a municipal corporation of Philadelphia County have to join the commons of private companies? Would it co-op and control the corridor once it commissioned and managed service along it? Would its service contractors hold exclusive rights to operate in this corridor? Would purchase-of-service agreements incorporate or terminate labor contracts for maintenance of the right-of-way—a major source of employment for residents of Eastwick and Delaware County? What recourse did residents and non-residents of Philadelphia have to deny PSIC access to this space? And, under what conditions could PSIC construct its own space of operation in competition with those held in common by private transportation companies? Suburban Philadelphians, particularly the economically depressed yet independent black community of Eastwick, raised critical questions about PSIC’s rights and responsibility to rework landscapes of labor and capital in suburbs within city limits.

¹⁰³ Chester Rapkin, “Appendix: Eastwick,” UTTB Reports, RDA, PCA.


¹⁰⁵ Ultimately, Philadelphia purchased exclusive rights to the corridor, and licensed SEPTA to operate its rapid transit services along this corridor. Construction of the Philadelphia International Airport, at the southern terminus of this line, provided the financial impetus for this development. See,
"Operation Media," the PSIC’s answer to the Pennsylvania’s Public Utility Commission mandate for separate but equal public investment in private transport, paradoxically ignored the
claims of suburban disenfranchisement that gave rise to it. PSIC not only needed proprietors of property shared by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Red Arrow Lines and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad company to permit PSIC operations, but also for them to extend these permissions to “a reliable operator” of municipal parking lots. The latter would “pave the spaces and pay the costs of the facility” in addition to its own license fees and lease payments,” Philadelphia’s Urban Traffic and Transportation Board explained in its Capital Program of 1960, in exchange for revenue (estimated at 25 cents/user) to be gained from commuters capitalizing on PSIC’s discounts tickets for their suburb-city commute.\footnote{Ibid.} Allowing a concessionaire “a small profit each year (perhaps $300,000) in [its] attempt to convert rail ROW,” the capital plan further explained, “the purpose is to give the company a clear title to truck easements that can be sold to the highway department.” Albeit provisional and conditional, PSIC’s projected rights-of-way between Media, Philadelphia and Upper Darby (the Delaware County seat) called for a public easement from private property owners.\footnote{UTTB Capital program, 1960.}

Much to the dismay of republicans living in Philadelphia and neighboring boroughs of Delaware County, the lease-sharing agreement also granted the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority (PRA) exclusive rights to siting, design and construction of commuter parking. Moreover, the only transportation plan for its 2,506-acre “Urban Renewal Area” in Eastwick—had already been assigned to Constantine Doxiadis (of Greece) and other critically acclaimed regional planners and urban designers.\footnote{Drew Pearson, “Is Planning Communistic?” The Evening Times (Sayre, PA), 24 October 1963, 4. At the same time, Philadelphia City Solicitor attempted to distance the remarks of Director John A. Bailey from similar statements from the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, which claimed to incorporate southwestern Philadelphia residents into “New Eastwick” but appeared to expropriate the property of Eastwick residents and annex lands whose jurisdiction remained in dispute. See,} As such, PSIC’s project became an integral part of the

\footnote{Ibid.}
largest “city within a city” underwritten by the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency as of 1960.  

Black republicans of Eastwick—and the working-class communities they represented—especially rejected their transactional role in PSIC “Operations.” No public hearings or other formal methods of public participation formed a part of PSIC’s plans to extend low-cost commuter fares and high-frequency service to underserved suburbs in the city and underdeveloped areas of southwestern Philadelphia bordering Delaware County. Community leaders met with PSIC directors in 1961, however, to discuss what they considered the "easily discerned and selfish interests" of PSIC to involuntarily conscript black conservatives into Philadelphia’s Democratic politics. Appealing to black voices of decline amongst Delaware County’s otherwise “silent majority” of blue-collar conservatives, democratic candidates for mayor of Philadelphia (James Tate) indeed touted in 1962 that PSIC’s integration of rail-road,  

109 “URA Grants Big Loan for Phila. Project,” Standard-Sentinel (Hazelton, PA), 11 July 1958. The Federal Urban Renewal Administration granted a $54,654,660 loan and $22,392,000 grant to Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority for redevelopment of the land adjacent to the Philadelphia International Airport. The project included 11,000 new housing units, commercial centers, public utility installations, an industrial park and, an overall site plan designed to segregate traffic bound for Philadelphia International Airport from local traffic and distance new homes from the military bases and airport facilities located in Eastwick. Investigative reports of community complaints about sinking houses, a polluted water supply and street flooding ultimately found the city failed to build non-transportation infrastructure on the 2000 acres of private property from which it evicted 8,636 people. The other 500 or so acres went to private contractors such as Korman Corporation, who built only housing. Samantha Melamed, “City Seeks End to Troubled, 60-year Eastwick Urban Renewal Effort,” Philadelphia Inquirer, 17 October 2015.  

110 “Officials Are Divided on Delaware County Joining Rail Compact,” The Philadelphia Inquirer, May 16, 1962, p. 1, 9. Then as now, southwestern Pennsylvania found more in common with Delaware County than other communities of Philadelphia. On southwestern PA, see “Southwest Philadelphia,” City Paper, 10 January 2016, 61. The City Paper notes “Some think of Southwest Philadelphia as flyover country - given its proximity to Philly International Airport. It's a complicated area with a mix of industrial gray (Sun Oil's refineries, auto-part shops), residential neighborhoods (Kingsessing and Eastwick, home of Philly's highest numbered street, the fightin' 90th) and surprising greenery (Tinicum, [John Bartram]'s Garden). Its rough boundaries are the Schuylkill Paver to the east, Island Avenue to the south and Cobbs Creek to the west. The swath between Baltimore Avenue and the R3 tracks is the subject of a border dispute with West Philly, so for our purposes, the railway separates Southwest Philly from its closest neighbor.
bus-train system would “break the white noose around Philadelphia.” PSIC’s Executive Director also presented low-cost and high-frequency trains as critical infrastructure for the upward and outward mobility of railroad laborers living in industrial suburbs, many of whom but not all of whom identified as African-American at the time. Director John A. Bailey even showed its support for railroad proposals of Eastwick Community Association, which proposed construction of a rail line to Philadelphia International Airport along the existing rights-of-way as opposed to clearing neighborhoods for an East Coast highway (I-95) to serve light industry around Philadelphia international airport (enlarged in 1953) and the Penrose Industrial District across the Schuylkill River. PSIC banked, in other words, on black Republicans getting on board with PSIC’s platform.

Delaware County constituents rejected Philadelphia’s growing outreach to conservative blacks. Many representatives of civic associations, chambers of commerce and citizen’s councils implicated PSIC in the racial injustices it promised to uproot. Each wrote off PSIC’s purchase-of-service agreements for Operation Media as "unsound" economic policy for industrial suburbs broadly and condemned the city’s propensity for "breathing life into a dead horse," the railroad that denied service to them that is. Speaking for the proverbial “dead horse” in this case, the VP of Special Services for Pennsylvania Railroad Company insisted that his company’s partnership with the City of Philadelphia evidenced its commitment to improve its services and


to insure the “doorstep of integration…will not be destroyed.”\textsuperscript{114} Director Patchell recognized “unfair advantage would develop if some competitors—the Reading Company, the Pennsylvania Railroad company, the Philadelphia Transportation Company and the Red Arrow Lines, Inc.—opted out of passenger service improvements.” Still he lambasted Merritt H. Taylor, Jr., president of Red Arrow Lines, Inc., for joining a businessmen's association of southwestern Philadelphia and fourteen Delaware County townships in arguing PSIC was "nothing but socialistic" and as such "would rob patrons of the Red Arrow Lines.”\textsuperscript{115}

Delaware County constituents of Red Arrow services questioned, perhaps rightfully so, whether Philadelphia’s compacts coveted suburban commuters enough to accommodate restrictive covenants in their Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact. A community organization representative called PSIC’s entire program "an unconscionable tax burden" for those property owners that granted easements to specific public utility companies, not all companies seeking to operate transportation or telecommunications along the southwesterly right-of-way. Others, including the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Philadelphia, respected the fact that "Suburban transportation is not a railroad problem but a public problem.” They remained unconvinced, however, that Philadelphia’s public corporation (PSIC) differed greatly from publicly traded corporations (e.g PRR) if it would purchase exorbitantly priced easements from prejudicial private property owners of southwestern Philadelphia to meet the PUC mandate.\textsuperscript{116} If we disregard as poker-playing threats any statements of probability of complete abandonment," John H. Dempster of the Chamber warned skeptics of private divestment from

\textsuperscript{114} Walter Patchell, VP of Special Services, Pennsylvania Railroad Company, “Remarks in Delaware County,” PSIC/SEPACT, Acc. #: Records of the PRR VP of Special Services, Hagley Museum and Library

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{116} “Officials Are Divided on Delaware County Joining Rail Compact,” The Philadelphia Inquirer, May 16, 1962, 9
public transportation, "the resulting discrimination would be the county's own doing and lead to disadvantages to the entire region as well as to itself."\textsuperscript{117} Two months later, Delaware County commissioners informed Philadelphia's City Solicitor and its counterparts that they would not join the "Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact" but it would also not derail the creation of "commuter connections" in other communities throughout the region.

Delaware County stands out in Greater Philadelphia politics for its conservatism but, commuters living and working there circa 1960 shared skepticism for PSIC with more liberal Bucks County. Philadelphia’s construction of passenger boarding and disembarking facilities along cross-county arteries such as Island Ave required permission from the one trolley company that possessed the right-of-way through the properties of light manufacturing companies clustered around Philadelphia International Airport—Red Arrow Lines, Inc., (\textit{Figure 3.19}). Easements allotted to Red Arrow Lines, Inc. included reversion and reclamtion provisions, whereby the municipalities that originally authorized the easements retained their right to reclaim, regulate and/or release them to another party.

In its short period of progressive leadership in the early 1920s, Philadelphia joined “Main Line suburbs” of Montgomery County such as Radnor, Merion as well as Delaware County’s college towns in establishing municipal protections against powerful public utility companies. The decision eventually benefitted Philadelphia; Red Arrow Line’s ROWs in Eastwick reverted to the City of Philadelphia in 1971, when the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) acquired the Red Arrow Lines and the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia (hostile takeovers that receive further attention in the following chapter). In the meantime, however, PSIC banked on public and private partners—the

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid, 1.
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Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, PRR and Korman Corporation—to set aside prime property for the Eastwick-Airport Line *(Figure 3.20).*

![Figure 3.19. Island Ave trolley tracks and the City of Philadelphia’s ROW through Eastwick. © Google Maps, 2016.](image1)

Figure 3.19. Island Ave trolley tracks and the City of Philadelphia’s ROW through Eastwick. © Google Maps, 2016.

![Figure 3.20. Philadelphia’s “New Eastwick” right-of-way. The original route for service to Eastwick followed the “Amtrak” labeled line towards Newark, Delaware (coded dark blue). The revised route, marked as “Regional Rail,” followed the Darby Creek and major boulevard connecting the creek to an estuary. Along the latter leg, Philadelphia ultimately located Eastwick station (marked with a red pin), about a ¼ mile from a terminus of Red Arrow trolley service (in green). Open Street Maps. 2016.](image2)

Figure 3.20. Philadelphia’s “New Eastwick” right-of-way. The original route for service to Eastwick followed the “Amtrak” labeled line towards Newark, Delaware (coded dark blue). The revised route, marked as “Regional Rail,” followed the Darby Creek and major boulevard connecting the creek to an estuary. Along the latter leg, Philadelphia ultimately located Eastwick station (marked with a red pin), about a ¼ mile from a terminus of Red Arrow trolley service (in green). Open Street Maps. 2016.

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Philadelphia’s “Eastwick Line,” a railroad right-of-way exclusively for transit service to this facility and the Eastwick town center, eventually earned a grant from the federal government in 1962. HHFA granted aid to Philadelphia only on the premise that the rail line rapidly transport passengers from terminal-to-terminal—that is, between the 30th Street terminus of Pennsylvania Railroad’s Main Line service, western suburbs and the new terminal at Philadelphia International Airport. Although the rail line was to cross over well-patronized trolley tracks and highly trafficked thoroughfares, it could make no stops at these intersections (Figures 3.21, 3.22 and 3.22). Many of these missed encounters occurred within city limits, yet Philadelphia lacked the power to permit station construction at these nodes of metropolitan mobility. With each missed encounter came a missed opportunity for economic development, and for Eastwick homeowners and business owners, another reason to build political capital within communities and constituencies better served by transportation, namely Delaware County towns traversed by the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company and the Philadelphia Transportation Company.

Figure 3.21. Eastwick Station accommodates only vehicular access (car and bus). Its suburban location also allowed for SEPTA (the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority) to offer extensive commuter parking. However, the station site—just before the interchange of county, state and interstate roadways—requires commuters park across a busy road from the setback station. Google Maps, 2016.
Figure 3.22. Woman and child crossing the SEPTA “Eastwick/Airport Line” ROW at-grade via 58th Street, SW Phila. Google Maps, 2016.

Figure 3.23. Instead of constructing Eastwick Station at the Island Ave trolley terminus and turnabout, Philadelphia located it a mile from that commercialized site at S. 84th Street, a residential access road. Apple Maps, 2016.
The out-migration of industrial companies from Eastwick not only depopulated southwestern Philadelphia County area but also densified largely undeveloped areas of Delaware, Montgomery and Bucks Counties. Working-class households subsequently followed these and other companies from southeastern Philadelphia, increasing the burden on Delaware County commuters to use PSIC trains if they wanted to retain any rail services. The Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority reportedly relocated some of the industrial companies “forced out of Eastwick,” according to Montgomery and Bucks County newspapers. Bucks, Delaware, Chester and Montgomery County municipalities responded to population increases by granting ‘open space’ to developers that agreed to build suburban outposts for urban communities, both black and white, industrial and commercial. African-American households looking for their “blue heaven” outside of city limits found a home in ‘fair-housing’ subdivisions of land lying between the Reading Company’s West Trenton Branch and Pennsylvania RR Company’s Trenton By-Pass, and work in factories and stores that opened in Bucks and Montgomery County during the early 1960s. By the time the Civil Rights Act passed in 1964, black enclaves within white suburbia—Trevose (Bucks County), Tinicum and Eddystone (Delaware County), Chester (Chester County) and Norristown (Montgomery County)— sprawled across the low-lying, low-grossing lands of Philadelphia’s suburbs.

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123 In the case of Montgomery County, see Piggot, W. Benjamin, and W. Benjamin Pigott. "The" Problem" of the black middle class: Morris Milgram's Concord Park and residential integration in Philadelphia's postwar suburbs."
The in-migration of minorities and manufacturers from Philadelphia and Delaware County paradoxically propelled partnership between PSIC and Montgomery and Bucks County. “Public Transportation in Montgomery County”—an 83-page long study commissioned by the latter, communicated their shared concern for the “necessity of saving the remaining rail commuter lines…not just for the benefit of the areas involved, but for outlying sections of the county whose taxes and facilities are or will be affected.”124 Whereas right-wing Delaware County Courier decried consideration of a city-county compact, Montgomery County Commissioners commissioned a prolific transportation planning consultant to evaluate PSIC’s public-private partnerships and partners.125 Upon reading the report, which studied suburban rail fare structures, inter-suburban commuting patterns, and feeder-bus networks, County Commissioners mustered praise for the City of Philadelphia and held out hope for its Passenger Service Improvement Corporation. “It is easy to be critical of [their] efforts, ignoring the tremendous amount of work and skill which has gone into what has actually been accomplished,” Commissioners admitted; “it has ‘broken the ice’ and thereby has made the suburbs’ problems a much easier solution.”126 Commissioners declared “the suburbs should not join PSIC as it now stands” (emphasis original), but by enumerating both the opportunities and

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125 Ibid.
the challenges of their densifying yet deindustrializing counties, left the door wide open for joint development projects down the line.\textsuperscript{127}

\textbf{Learning from Levittown}

The suburban politics of urban power played out across county lines without derailing Philadelphia Plan for regional rail reinvestment in no small part to the low fares and frequent service that the Housing and Home Finance Agency funded between October 1962 and November 1965 at a cost of $3.6 million, then the Department of Cultural Affairs for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for five additional years.\textsuperscript{128} Of these efforts to raise ridership on both sides of the City Line, “Operation Levittown” stands out for its scale and scope: recruitment of a 40,000-person community at a cost of $420,000 per 14 months.\textsuperscript{129} Levittown, a massive residential subdivision, which infamous housing developers Levitt \& Sons, Inc. built between 1952 and 1962 over three townships of Bucks County, epitomized the mass-production of suburban homes and \textit{mass} marketing to suburban households in the postwar period.\textsuperscript{130} Levitt \& Sons planned for their property to accommodate 40,000 households, and screened each of them

\textsuperscript{127} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{129} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{130} On the mass production and mass marketing of Levittown, see Kelly, Barbara M. \textit{Expanding the American Dream: Building and Rebuilding Levittown} (Albany: SUNY Press, 1993); Henderson, Harry. ”The mass-produced suburbs.” \textit{Harpers} 207 (1953): 25-32;
to ensure they were headed by white men employed by U.S. Steel’s Fairless Steel, nearby industrial plants such as Metal Industries, or other companies in Bucks County's growing the commercial distribution economy.$^{131}$ Access to Levittown already existed via two highways and two railways, the Reading Company’s West Trenton Line. Nevertheless, at the request and behest of the Levitt Brothers, the Pennsylvania Railroad built a new station on its interstate Northeast Corridor line at one end of the only through-road through Levittown (Figure 3.24).

Figure 3.24. Levittown Parkway—RR axis, at Levittown Station, 1953. Bucks County Free Library.

$^{131}$ Kelley, Expanding the American Dream; Dianne Harris, ed. Second Suburb: Levittown, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010).
Key to the Levitt brothers’ vision of a mixed-income community, multi-modal transportation from Levittown to Philadelphia, Trenton and New York City underscored the affordability and accessibility of middle-class life that Levitt & Bros. marketed. PSIC still set out in 1962 to determine if the residents of Levittown and other “new communities” would choose new rail facilities like Levittown Station on the Pennsylvania Railroad's Main Line to New York over older ones such as historic stations along the Reading Railroad's West Trenton Branch. Based on these insights into Levittowners' "commuter culture," PSIC piloted its ‘sites and services’ model of suburban mobilization in a semi-radial area delimited by the PRR's Levittown Station and the Reading's Lansdale Station. "Operation Hatboro-Lansdale" tested Levittowners' desire for transit-oriented services at their commuter sites, while "Operation Levittown" queried whether Levittowners valued the more frequent service available on a Main Line. Billed as independent "experiments," both "Operations" compelled Levittowners to commit to a service provider and the provisions each agreed to offer in the purchase-of-service agreements with PSIC for SEPACT operations.

Commuters turned their routine commute into resistance against inequitable services and impugnable spaces at PRR and RDG stations in their Bucks and Montgomery County communities in interim. 400 members of the Levittown Commuters Club traveled 13.5 miles by caravan along congested Interstate 95 to Torresdale Station, the last station within Philadelphia city limits on the Pennsylvania Railroad’s Northeast Corridor line, along the same route it traveled in protest since 1955.\textsuperscript{132} Rather than accommodate poor maintenance, inconvenient

access and higher fares at PRR’s Levittown station, Montgomery County Transportation Committee members living adjacent to stations along Reading Railroad’s West Trenton Branch joined their suburban neighbors in boarding trains leaving Fox Chase station, over 10 miles away from their homes. Hundreds took advantage of bus-train transfers—so much so that travelers riding the “Mid-City Express” from Levittown and Torresdale connections made up the majority of subway, trolley or bus transfers at North Philadelphia Station. There, the Levittown Commuters Club and members of the Montgomery County Transportation Committee, a nongovernmental coalition of commuter clubs and community associations, raised ridership from Fox Chase Station by 300% and Torresdale Station by 125%—and the number of cars parked under Interstate 95/Delaware Expressway across the tracks from Torresdale station (Figure 3.25). 133 Raising ridership on PRR’s Main Lines by only 26% to just under 500,000 passengers for the year, compared to 42% increases on the Reading Company's Main Line, “Operation Levittown” qualified as a successful limited liability enterprise of transit-oriented development in the short term. But, PSIC fielded claims that the city was "robbing Peter to pay Paul” soon after SEPACT I—the recruitment phase—concluded, PSIC was using PTC profits to pay the railroad companies for transfer discounts to suburban riders and the amortization of parking fees and development costs at Torresdale station.

133 PSIC Rail Operations, Passenger Volume, September—December 1962, JHJT, PCA.
Figure 3.25. Cars parked under the Delaware Expressway, where it passes over the river separating Philadelphia and Bucks County. 1962. Philadelphia City Archives

SEPACT II—the redevelopment phase of “Operation Levittown” that followed commuter recruitment—banked, literally and analytically, on social enterprises of infill development. The city reverted to its reliance on community improvement associations for station-grounds governance when PSIC planners progressed to Phase III of its SEPACT Operations, maintenance. To justify station maintenance as passenger improvement, PSIC explained to HHFA officials that SEPACT Operations could not attract motorists back to trains without producing attractive parking lots. PSIC listed many reasons for why so many stations—24 by PSIC’s count—“generally were not being maintained adequately”:

"Parking charges had been initiated by the railroads in prior years in order to bolster revenues and, in some cases, to deter non-commuters from using the lots. At the same time, the railroads had given indication of unwillingness or inability to improve or expand

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134 PSIC experimented with servicing communities outside city limits under “Operation Manayunk,” whereby it offered patrons the “Operation” fare when they boarded at stations in the towns of Bala Cynwd, Wynnewfield. Even with riders from these towns included, “Operation Manayunk” rose by only 19% during its first year. See PSIC Expenses, 1960-1964: Memoranda of Accounts to Be Paid by Nonprofit Corporation as Referred to in ‘Principles of Agreement."
station parking facilities on their own. In a few instances, they had closed parts of their lots to save maintaining them and when possible had sold or leased the land for other purposes."

Stations in the city's northwestern quadrant, where the railroad companies had leased nearly all of their stations to civic bodies by 1962, anchored “Operation Levittown” in suburban communities, specifically an undisclosed "organization of local riders" later revealed to be the Levittown Commuter Club.\textsuperscript{135}

Levittowners had already reported poor station-upkeep to PSIC. Prior to the start of operations, the Levittown Commuters Club informed PSIC directors that “one way to meet this dilemma" lie within their authority: lease-back terms, specifically "provisions for parking concessionaires already applied recently in the Philadelphia region."\textsuperscript{136} Initially, John A. Bailey declined to extend this option to the operators of Bucks County lots, conceding “[it] has merit for many situations” while claiming "it can create new difficulties while leaving unresolved many problems."\textsuperscript{137} Although its "neighbors rely on solely" the commuters that used the station and the community that surrounded it for capital improvements to rail infrastructure, "this method of maintenance could not be applied to all local stations, especially new communities."\textsuperscript{138}

135 More than likely, the organization of local riders to which Dilworth refers is the Lower Merion Civic Council, which financially supported and politically substantiated the proprietary position taken by the Merion Station / Wynnewood Station Grounds Committee in 1958. This was the first commuter-run, community-based organization that PRR granted a lease and license to landscape its station-grounds.

136 Bailey, Executive Director, PSIC, to Mayor James Tate, 19 Dec 1962, RDA, PCA.

137 Ibid.

138 Dilworth to the Northeast Civic Council and Somerton Community Association, 1961
organization of the local riders.\textsuperscript{139} Unlike surrounding suburbs where zoning ordinances had just passed, Dilworth opined, a small window existed for the PSIC to “test whether a notable difference in the appearance of [a] station and thus the attitudes of the regular riders” depends on its managing agent in new communities like Levittown.\textsuperscript{140} In 1965, Levittowners received the opportunity to serve as receivers of federally-financed land improvements that extended their physical and cultural landscape.

Levittown followed a well-traveled path of activism in lower Bucks County. Since 1952, the owners of large, lush lots on Levittown’s northwestern border had taken up stewardship of open space within their conservative, affluent town of Middleton and vacant land adjacent to the Reading Company tracks that ran through or alongside these tracts. Socio-spatial practices of ecological encroachment, which historian Christopher Seller describes as the seeds of environmental injustice in suburban America, literally grounded early Levittown homeowners in the nation's burgeoning open space movement.\textsuperscript{141} While land covenants of the Levitt Brothers controlled the color of its purchasers, Levittowners’ conservancies committed purchasers to cultures of care (\textit{Figure 3.26}).\textsuperscript{142} Throughout open spaces of Bucks County, the conservancies planted non-native floral, regardless of the cost of maintenance, pushed for public funds to pay

\textsuperscript{139} City of Philadelphia on behalf of the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation, “Application for Levittown Operation,” 1961, p. 8; PSIC folder, RDA, PCA.

\textsuperscript{140} \textit{SEPACT I: Operation Levittown} (SEPACT, 1962); PSIC, \textit{Capital Projections, 1963-1966} (1966). PSIC-Railroad contracts totaled $1,728,000: The Reading Company received $834,000 and the PRR received $964,000 as part of this purchase-of-service contract. PSIC’s total budge included $70,00 of promotion and advertising, $352,000 for SEPACT service fees and $200,000 for new services and improvements.

\textsuperscript{141} Richard Brewer, \textit{Conservancy: The Land Trusts Movement in America} (Lebanon, NH: Dartmouth College, 2003).

for park management and tree planting, and played a pivotal role in the planning commissions of Bucks and Montgomery County, which took up growth management nearly a decade before such controls gained traction in the northeast corridor let alone the nation.\textsuperscript{143} After selling enough plots to make a profit on its developments, Levitt Brothers bequeathed common spaces—streets, parks, playgrounds, wooded areas and parking lots—to Levittown homeowners via the charitable trust of Levitt Brothers, Inc.\textsuperscript{144} Evermore an influential actor in the planning sector of postwar Philadelphia, the mere expectation that Levitt Brothers would enact their right to entrust private property purchasers with public space preservation at once assured homebuyers of their property values and insured Levitt Brothers acquired private financing for construction and federal mortgage insurance.

Figure 3.26. Lawn care in Levittown in the 1960s. “Building the Suburban Dream” exhibition of the PA State Museum. Temple University Urban Archives.


\textsuperscript{144} Richard Longstreth, “The Levitts, Mass-Produced Houses and Community Planning in Mid-Twentieth Century,” Second Suburb, 123-174.
As self-elected trustees of these real estate trusts, Levittowners offered citizenry living beyond their borders a vessel for various limited liability investments, particularly "seed monies" for landscape management and maintenance.\(^{145}\) In the 1960s, small donations rarely resulted in land trusts, which removed recalcitrant landscapes from the real estate marketplace, and in more recent, urban cases, returned them ready for reinvestment.\(^{146}\) But, land trusts under development throughout Greater Philadelphia in the 1960s brokered land transfers on behalf of SEPACT, siphoning portions for themselves on a limited-term basis. A boon for leaders of the burgeoning land trust community in the counties surrounding Philadelphia, PSIC solicited no fees for this operation, preferring to be paid in parcel donations or property maintenance from all parking concessionnaires and park conservancies, individual property owners and public institutions. PSIC-SEPACT helped community land proprietors to resist rapacious redevelopment authorities and realtors that encroached upon the land they reclaimed as their own.

Lawn care amongst Levittowners living in New York is legendary, but the landscape preservation practices of Pennsylvania's Levittowners mobilized community conservationists across the Northeast Corridor to invest in land trusts.\(^{147}\) When the solutions that PSIC’s President and Directors settled on—“enlargement and improvement” of existing lots and "freeing" parking lot users from parking charges—drained Levittowners’ resources for physical deterioration and fiscal distress, the Torresdale Civic Association, an active member of the Citizens Council on

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\(^{146}\) Ibid. See also, Lawson, *City Bountiful*, on urban land trusts in particular.

\(^{147}\) Christopher Sellers, “Suburban nature, class and environmentalism in Levittown,” in *Second Suburb*, 281-313. The ‘open space’ preservation efforts of Levittowners in particular galvanized the residents of older ‘bourgeois suburbs’ in the northeast corridor such as Forest Hills, Queens, NY and Radnor, PA. See also, Leo M. Janas, “A Tale of Two Suburbs: Zoning, Transportation and their Impact on 20th Century Wellesley, Massachusetts, and Radnor, Pennsylvania,” Temple University, 1997; Diss. on Scatter-Site Housing in Queens, New York.
City Planning, took up stewardship of the hardscapes produced for "Operations Torresdale" / “Operation Levittown.” The Association had previously reported public safety issues such as pot holes and public nuisances such as a lack of shade for users of these otherwise vacant spaces. Involving no land acquisition just property expropriation or public easement, the Association’s improvements to 24 lots apart of “Operation Levittown” yielded only a net operating cost of $28,035.91 over 3 years, 1962-1965.

Revenues collected at pay lots located on ex-urban station grounds along the suburban fringe (e.g. Levittown) more than covered the expense of "freeing lots" throughout the streetcar suburbs in Philadelphia (e.g. Torresdale) of parking meters and litter. Financing stopped there, at spatial production, however. In its final report to HHFA administrators in 1965, PSIC admitted "the demonstration did not provide funds for land acquisition nor was any agreement reached with the railroads, before the start of the program, as to the responsibility for payment at the conclusion of the project for any residual value of improvements made on their land." PSIC only operated “where lots had been leased and produced income for the railroads”—enough to entice continued cooperation from the railroads but not enough to ensure "no loss of income would be sustained" by the maintainers of the lots and landscapes: Levittown commuters. In other words, PSIC—SEPACT Operations relied on the continued cooperation of middle-class men and women to make them operative, manageable and sustainable over the long-term.

As less and less was spent on passenger service and site improvements in Levittown and neighboring suburbs, the glossy, gleeful image of “Operation Levittown” drew down (Figure

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149 SEPACT II: Operation Levittown, Hatboro, Lansdale (Philadelphia: SEPACT, 1970); SEPACT III: Operation Reading (Philadelphia: SEPACT, 1971);
150 Ibid, 13.
3.27). Joseph M. Cagno, chairman of the Levittown Commuter Club, told the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in 1965 that approximately 500 of Levittown’s 40,000 residents that normally boarded PRR trains could and would drive to and from work in Philadelphia if the management of maintenance continued to fall to its membership. More than 75 of these regular commuters planned to boycott rail travel by driving their automobiles to work at the same time. Boycotters agreed to line up their cars at 6:45 am in the 6000-car parking lot across from Levittown Station, drive as a processional with vehicle placards that called for "Better Operators for Operation Levittown." Anyone who wished to participate but did not own a car of his own was supplied free transportation to and from his job on the day of protest via his neighbors. Using the *Philadelphia Inquirer* as its bully pulpit, the President of Levittown's Commuter Club even threatened to file a petition with the Public Utility Commission regarding provisions the Club deemed unfit for their membership and the wider community. Neither Levittowners nor a growing number of protestants in the City of Philadelphia derailed SEPACT from operating as a metropolitan transportation authority. But, suburban warriors against urban standards of care for their cultural landscapes prevented SEPACT from becoming the state transportation authority.

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152 Operation Levittown caravan protest. Levittown Digital Collection, PA State Museum
Figure 3.27. “Operation Levittown” kicked off with a “band, bigwigs, and ‘queen’—Miss Bucks County.” 49 trains per week at a 46% discount at a cost of $3.6 million in funds from the U.S Housing and Home Finance Agency. *Levittown Times* (1962)

**Conclusion**

This chapter explored the urbanization of suburban space and suburbanization of urban space in the interest of regional rail revitalization. While large-scale restructuring of Penn Central such as the demolition of Penn Station in New York City precipitated public outcry for preservation of railroad architecture, small-scale actions for large-scale change—an inset parking lot or a bus turnaround—precipitated big problems for metropolitan transportation advocates within the small staffs and equally limited budgets and authority of the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation, a municipal corporation, and SEPACT, a compact of neighboring county bound by their consensus and contentious politics. As this chapter has shown through case study of local and federalist state building, conscription into commuter rail operations, occurred within and beyond city limits.
The operational space of PSIC functioned in the formative years of a Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority as an anchor institution, for better or worse. Urban scholarship on anchor institutions leaves much to be said about the how nonprofit companies that acquire, hold, manage or maintain land for the city and its suburbs shape municipal power in metropolitan marketplaces. The latter typically organize and operationalize civic participation and participatory planning, transcending silos of inquiry and sectors of intervention to form a complex multi-faceted landscapes of proprietors and profiteers.\footnote{Guian McKee, “Health-care Policy as Urban Policy: Hospitals and Community Development in the PostIndustrial City,” IDEAs Working Paper Series, 2010; Meghan Ehlenz, “Anchoring Communities: The Impact of University Interventions on Neighborhood Revitalization,” Ph.D. thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2010;} They may even incentivize actors in this network—community developers, city planners, county commissioners, corporate boards and congressional bodies—to invest in these physical, cultural and spatial landscapes. In this case, just such affirmative action took place. Commercial land developers, community land cooperatives, city councils and county planning commissions, plus congressional chambers at both the state and federal level contributed to the consensual space of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact.

Suburban autonomy from institutions anchored in urban politics, namely Philadelphia’s Passenger Service Improvement Corporation, continued to contest back-to-the-city movements. Service abandonment along the Reading Company’s West Trenton Branch followed SEPACT’s “Operation Levittown,” which favored the: Pennsylvania RR Co.’s railroad line to Bucks County’s Levittown; Red Arrow Lines of the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company, which operated profitably in the Eastwick section of Philadelphia and points further southwest in Delaware County, posted its first losses in 1965 and put its staunchly republican leadership in the position to demand subsidies comparable to competitors partnered with Philadelphia’s
Passenger Service Improvement Corporation; and, even the most protected of those partners, the Philadelphia Transportation Company, discontinued some of its trolley and bus company services in railroad towns between Philadelphia and the Montgomery County seat.\textsuperscript{154} Tallied up, commuter service losses in the suburbs appear to out-pace that of the city, where PSIC controlled commuter rail operations more exclusively in the early sixties. But, a wider lens of analysis, one that incorporates the political and cultural geography of inner-rings suburbs (e.g. Eastwick, Somerton) and the political economy of city-county cooperation in new towns farther afield (e.g. Levittown), reveals two sides of the same tracks: urban dependency on suburban warriors and suburban dependency on urban warriors. Paradoxically, “Park-n-ride,” the demobilization of one mode of movement for the sake of mobilizing another—accurately captures this intersectionality.

A dead tree near St. Martins Station in northwest Philadelphia fell on a commuter’s car in 1960. The owner of the car parked daily at a meter licensed to Auto Parks, Inc. by the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR), but he sought damages from James T. Nathans, a nearby resident, not the PRR or the City of Philadelphia. Liability remained in question for two years, since the city had not incorporated the street where the parking space was located and the tree was rooted on PRR property outside Auto Park’s leasehold. The PRR ultimately assumed responsibility for damages that occurred within its property lines, but only after litigious debate with this lessee over the physical extent of its rights and responsibilities for land maintenance. In the meantime, the number of dying trees on PRR’s property line seemed to underscore the fact that the boundary between public and private space had been eroding for some time.¹ A full decade of boundary work, to be exact, passed before the difference between private property of public utility and public space of private utility became clear to the Nathans, their neighbors, and the citizenry of cities and suburbs served by commuter rail.

What made the boundary between public, private, and common space so porous, and so contested, in the 1970s? Who benefited from and furthered this boundary’s erosion? Who suffered as a result? The Nathans found answers to these questions in a solicitation for contributions to the St. Martins Station Grounds Committee (est. 1962), a “blue-chip band of commuters” intent on reinforcing and, when necessary, restructuring the maintenance work of PRR’s station

attendants. At their first meeting on PRR’s inbound train platform in 1961, the St. Martins Station Grounds Committee espoused only to labor leisurely over infrastructure disinvestment they witnessed there. But, by 1962, when the City of Philadelphia received federal funding to redress private divestment from public transportation property and personnel, at least a dozen community-based organizations collectively managed riskscapes of railroad reinvestment.

Whereas the last chapter focused on the lack of local and federal support for Philadelphia’s Passenger Service Improvement Corporation (PSIC, 1960-1970) at its launch, this chapter explores community engagement and corporate investment in private transportation after the U.S. Housing and Urban Development’s Office of Transportation began underwriting its operations. This decade of railroad bankruptcies or some other form of rail restructuring indelibly shaped how benefit corporations and benevolent associations—the recipients of land grants or easements and receivers of labor concessions and guarantees—preserved private equity in public transportation. The following case studies of PSIC’s “Operations” in northwest Philadelphia demonstrate white-collar businessmen only ceded and seeded space for blue-collar brotherhoods of the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia along rail banks not in railbanking—railroad land banking.


The Right to Work on Rights-of-Way

By the time the St. Martins Station Grounds Committee formed in the fall of 1962, suburban neighborhood improvement associations and cost-conscious railway executives had already established legal parameters, accounting protocols, design standards, and social norms for preservation of the Pennsylvania Railroad’s Main Line. At public utility commission hearings in 1950, the civic leaders of garden cities and industrial suburbs solicited reinvestment in sprawling station-grounds and storied station-houses that housed post offices, a more active public utility at the time.\(^4\) Such legal tactics proved fruitful in the case of Lower Merion Township, which arranged (outside of court) for PRR to treat Wynnewood Station as a "community facility."\(^5\) The same arrangement eluded stations that long served two dying utilities: short-haul passenger operations (commuter rail) and short-haul freight movement (local delivery services). Although passenger and freight sidings of these stations remained reputable cultural landscapes, they no longer operated as critical infrastructure for daily back-to-the-city movements.

St. Martins Station Grounds, a residence and workplace of railway attendants, epitomized the intractability of cultural landscapes at the crossroads of deindustrialization and decentralization (Figure 4.1). Most of Philadelphia’s gentry no longer used this Pennsylvania Railroad station or any of the four other commuter rail stations located less than a mile from it in


\(^5\) Lower Merion Civic Council shared its license to care for PRR’s Wynnewood Station as it would other “community facilities” with the St. Martin Station Grounds Committee. See SMSGC Papers, Box 1, CHHS.
Chestnut Hill, a streetcar suburb within the city limits (*Figure 4.2*). Instead they chose to move with Mayor Richardson Dilworth to Society Hill, a collection of renovated colonial townhouses downtown, or to commute by carpool along the newly constructed (yet always congested) Schuylkill Expressway to law offices, hospitals, and courthouses in Center City Philadelphia. Having grown skeptical of its capacity to retain the remaining commuters, whose patronage supported the upkeep of railways, the PRR looked to sell off the land parcel-by-parcel along with all other peripheral properties, before the Interstate Highway Act of 1956 went into effect. Time was not the only factor; the federal legislation, which subsidized 90 percent of the cost of freeway construction, enabled free commuting by car in the Philadelphia tri-state area and similar metropolitan regions, and emboldened carpoolers to pool their resources into conservancies that would care for rights-of-way on which their communities depended.

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6 Philadelphia’s postwar “gentry” here refers to familial estates owning real estate, railways, and banks for multiple generations and also newly moneyed real estate developers, builders, lenders, insurers, realtors, appraisers, regulators, and lawyers. See Carolyn T. Adams., *From the Outside In*, introduction.


8 The railway conservancies examined by the author include the West Mount Airy Neighbors Association (hereafter WMAN) Railroad Improvement Committee; Allen Lane Station Committee, Inc.; St. Martins Station Grounds Committee, Inc.; and the Chestnut Hill Community Association Maintenance Committees. The Volvo Research and Education Foundation provided financial support for this archival research in local historical societies. Members of the Urban History Association, the International Association for the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility, and Harvard’s Transforming Urban Transport Project research team provided critical feedback in October 2014.
Figure 4.1. St. Martins Station, a workplace and a stop on the journey to work, with freight tracks and siding used in 1909 by homebuilders such as clients of modernist architect Robert Todd and homeowners like Frederick Taylor, the eponymous developer of industrial labor management techniques known as Taylorism. John McArthur Harris Slide Collection, Chestnut Hill Historical Society

Figure 4.2. Third from the left (due north), Pennsylvania Railroad Company’s St. Martins Station grounds lies within just a half-dozen blocks of its neighbor (Highland Station), which is even closer to its neighbor, the termini of the Chestnut Hill Branch of PRR’s Main Line. Three additional station-grounds lie to the south (to the right) in West Mount Airy, and another set of six stations lie to the east along the Reading RR Co.’s Chestnut Hill Branch. (Map by author, made in ESRI 10.3 with the City of Philadelphia Land Use Base Map (2015) and land data extracted from archival records of the Chestnut Hill Historical Society and the Germantown Historical Society)
Federal reclassification of suburban rail stations in urban areas came at a time when PRR president James Symes sought public aid—both financial and political in nature. The postwar boom in car ownership and truck transport wrought fiscal distress that only deregulation or subsidization could remedy, Symes argued before a U.S. Senate committee on transportation in January 1958.\(^9\) A few months later, Philadelphia mayor Richardson Dilworth would similarly testify to the physical deterioration and economic decline of railroad suburbs.\(^10\) Both the company’s and the city’s appeals to Congress for public financing of facilities management failed to materialize in the comprehensive Community Facilities legislation they proposed, but the Housing Act of 1961 appropriated funds for research and development of sustainable railroad properties throughout the Rustbelt. Within this R&D framework and with regional resilience as the objective, PRR’s vice president for special operations authorized PRR’s real estate managers to partner with entrepreneurial community-based organizations of Greater Philadelphia and their enterprising counterparts throughout the northeastern and midwestern United States.\(^11\)

Of course, land concessions to community-based organizations came with conditions, namely, the maintenance of cultural, managerial, and physical landscapes that had long protected the place of railroads in the public domain. A license to work on the aging buildings and lush

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\(^10\) “Summary of Mayor Dilworth’s Testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on Housing, May 14, 1958,” box 3781, Records of the Richardson Dilworth Administration, Philadelphia City Archives (hereafter RDA, PCA).

grounds owned by PRR’s Real Estate Division enjoined the signatories in a joint venture of regulating landscapes and landscapers. The licensing agreements that PRR signed with four of Philadelphia’s railway conservancies in the early 1960s reveal that these legal documents often left space for both parties to relegate specific spaces and spatial practices within their purview to third parties. The latter could include numerous subcontractors, from landscapers and architects to security and union apprentices; each of these did, in fact, work on behalf of a railway conservancy in Greater Philadelphia during the postwar period.\textsuperscript{12} The costs associated with outsourcing (particularly, of liability insurance and contractual fees) incentivized most of these conservancies to mobilize labor from within their own ranks or join up with block clean-up groups already engaged in the laborious tasks of landscape preservation. As these organizations later became a part of community gardening councils or community development corporations, their political strategies underwent critical evaluation by both activists and academics.\textsuperscript{13} Far less is known about the power and politics of those community-based organizations that took up the political work of railway conservancy but passed on the financial liabilities and physical labor to others with experience in asset and facilities management, namely veteran railroad station superintendents and stewards.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{12} The railway conservancies examined by the author include the West Mount Airy Neighbors Association (hereafter WMAN) Railroad Improvement Committee; Allen Lane Station Committee, Inc.; St. Martins Station Grounds Committee, Inc.; and the Chestnut Hill Community Association Maintenance Committees. The Volvo Research and Education Foundation provided financial support for this archival research in local historical societies. Members of the Urban History Association, the International Association for the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility, and Harvard’s Transforming Urban Transport Project research team provided critical feedback in October 2014.


\textsuperscript{14} Chestnut Hill stations served as parkland and community gardens for nearby residents throughout the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. See, for example Charles Mulford Robinson, \textit{Suburban Station Grounds} (Boston: Boston & Albany Railroad, 1905), quoted in Stilgoe, “The Railroad Stilgoe,” 65-66. On community engagement with these sites in the 1950s, see
SMSG’s claims to rail rights-of-way through Chestnut Hill stood on shaky ground—that is, the less-than-perfect track record of railway personnel in charge of PSIC operations. After decades of community approval, the maintenance-of-way practices and personnel of Sam Hill, superintendent of PRR’s Chestnut Hill stations, had come under scrutiny.\textsuperscript{15} To govern the grounds around St. Martins Station, the superintendent had mobilized businesses, residents, and political and civic bodies that could insure PRR station-grounds at once anchored Chestnut Hill remained an “extension of the home atmosphere.”\textsuperscript{16} In 1960, for example, Hill commissioned the wives of Chestnut Hill Development Group (CHDG) members to dig up weeds, clear debris, and plant seeds around Chestnut Hill stations once a season. Such “women’s work” occurred frequently enough to aid in the economic development of their husbands’ businesses but not so often as to displace or delegitimize the work of Maintenance-of-Way employees under Hill’s supervision. Led by “Mrs. G. Homes Perkins,” the wife of University of Pennsylvania’s city planning director, CHDG’s Maintenance Committee first surveyed station grounds and located vacant lots in need of its care. They prescribed “soft control” for plots covered with cars but lacking pavement, shade trees, and curbs. These and other improvements went to protect parked cars from the elements and separate them from pedestrians, patrons, and personnel.\textsuperscript{17} In spite of

\textsuperscript{15} For an example of correspondence received by Sam Hill citing specific complaints and recommendations, see Allston Jenkins and J. Albert Fleitas to Sam Hill, Chestnut Hill Station, PRR, April 13, 1962. SMSGC papers, CHHS.


Hill’s efforts to reign in overgrown stations with grading machines and gardening tools, seasoned laborers and housewives, governmental authorities such as the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation (PSIC) mistook his former home and garden at St. Martins station for a vacant lot—a prime place for commuter parking spaces.18

Instead of replacing Hill as superintendent, the St. Martins Station Grounds Committee expected to partner with PRR’s consummate company man.19 Although only one member of the SMSGC lived close enough to St. Martins Station to have witnessed the managerial work that Hill had undertaken there throughout each day, its five members and hundreds of early supporters joined the Germantown Courier and the Chestnut Hill Local in colorfully recalling Hill’s tenure as a proprietor of petunias, parking, patrons, and personnel.20 St. Martins Station users interpreted his moving up to PRR’s Chestnut Hill terminus (and up the PRR corporate ladder) in 1958 as a regrettable but well-deserved maneuver away from the destabilized grounds on which his station-house stood. A farewell party thrown by the Chestnut Hill Community Association and Chestnut Hill Historical Society brought hundreds to the station-grounds to celebrate Hill and lament Downtown St. Martins’ by-gone days of fiscal security and profitable productivity. As Chestnut Hillers celebrated the fact that Hill, a trusted member of their community in spite of his company’s divestment from conservation operations, would gain more say over PRR real estate, they lamented that his replacement would lack both the financial and


19 The committee expressed its subsidiary position to the PRR in all of its initial solicitations for financial support from community members but later drop explicit references to the “Pennsy.” Around the same time, it dropped “Grounds” from its name to indicate it had taken responsibility for the entire station area (house and surrounding grounds). See SMSGC papers, boxes 1 and 2, CHHS.

20 See, for example, “Development Group Members Discuss New Improvements,” Chestnut Hill Local, June 9, 1960.
social capital to keep buildings and landscapes at Chestnut Hill’s doorstep “in good and attractive order.”

Friends of the St. Martins superintendent met a year later at the home of Allston Jenkins, within view from St. Martins Station, to form a conservancy that incorporated citizens, commuters, contractors and the community into right-of-way maintenance and management without infringing upon existing organized labor. By 1960, Allston Jenkins, a St. Martins homeowner that founded Philadelphia Conservationists, Inc. and presided over National Lands Trust, recognized the value of philanthropic support to reclaim neglected grounds from dysfunctional public-private partnerships. He surmised, however, that novice conservationists alone could manage inquiries and mobilize public and private disinvestment at station-grounds measuring just over an acre. Notably, SMSGC shied away from incorporating as a nonprofit within the State of Pennsylvania throughout most of its tenure, even though doing so would have given its donors tax exemptions. Preferring a grassroots form and egalitarian mode of collective

21 Jenkins and Fleitas to Hill. SMSGC papers, box 1, CHHS.


23 Natural Lands Trust was founded in 1953 as the Philadelphia Conservationists, Inc., by a group of birdwatchers who wanted to protect what is now the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge, a tidal freshwater marsh in Tinicum Township, Pennsylvania. Led by Allston Jenkins, a local accountant who was new to birding when he founded the organization, The Philadelphia Conservationists achieved their goal of protecting the Tinicum Marsh from being filled with sediment dredged from nearby waterways by the following year. Allston Jenkins (1903-1994) became Natural Land Trust’s first president and executive director, and was an active member within the organization until his death. As the Philadelphia Conservationists worked to preserve land up and down the East Coast and beyond, they turned the land that they preserved over to government agencies and other non-profits. In 1959, the organization created its first nature preserve. The Sharp's Woods Preserve[5] in Chester County, Pennsylvania, had 28 acres, and is still owned and stewarded by the organization today. In 1961, The Philadelphia Conservationists reestablished themselves as Natural Lands Trust, Inc. to permanently own and preserve the land that came under their care. The same year, Natural Lands Trust received its first donation of land, now the Willisbrook Preserve in Willistown Township, Pennsylvania.
action, the organization refused to elect executive leadership or accept limited liability for the actions of those commissioned to act on its behalf. Nevertheless, the process of removing “penciled writing on the walls” and repairing the “revolting tunnel underneath the railroad tracks” enrolled Jenkins and fellow station-grounds stewards in institutionally, politically, and legally complex forms of conservancy.24

Epistemic boundaries preoccupied the St. Martins Station Grounds Committee from the start, as members set out to differentiate their stewardship of maintenance-of-way employees’ workplaces from the work of superintendents. The first of many self-deprecating solicitations by the committee in 1962 called on recipients to “become a charter contributor to the only known organization devoted to grass cutting and weed pulling in Ye Old Greene Countrie Towne” and offered no criticism of railroad property or personnel.25 To make sure that recipients of flyers and mailings saw the roles they played on station-grounds as complementary to the work of superintendents and their staff, donation request forms concluded, “Join us. This will be fun!”26 SMSGC explained to naysayers (only a few of which wrote to the committee) that superintendents determined which operations on station grounds counted as productive and profitable; they discerned which concessions put the railroad companies at risk and which rendered rewards.27 Stewardship at a critical distance from superintendents, who invited constructive criticism and volunteerism, behooved community members seeking more distributed governance of PRR stations.

24 See Jenkins and Fleitas to Hill, SMSGC papers, box 1, CHHS.

25 SMSGC Solicitations, 1962. SMSGC papers, box 1, CHHS.

26 Ibid.

27 SMSGC to James F. Nathans, April 24, 1962. SMSGC papers, box 1, CHHS.
Although the St. Martins collective relied on a superintendent’s knowledge, they also banked on local contractors working alongside maintenance crews under the superintendent’s supervision and under contract with his RR labor union. It is here, into the weeds of work-orders, that the lawyers, accountants and architects of the St. Martins Collective invested all of its sweat equity and financial capital. Where and with whom non-union contractors and union labor-apprentices turned over soil, dug up dead trees, cleared away railroad debris, created flower beds, potted plants, and cut the grass followed no set rules. SMSGC presumed the landscape would govern the division of labor, but then found themselves intolerant of the work-arounds that unskilled workers devised when working along contractors with specialized experience. They turned to garden clubs—Friends of the Wissahickon and Olde Country Greene Towne Garden Club—for workforce development and direction.\(^{28}\) SMSGC, in short, relied primarily on “friends” of green space—not necessarily friends of theirs—to assess and redress land mismanagement.

Their regulatory actions yielded not only prompt repairs and dutiful contingent labor but also hundreds of small donations (on the order of $5 to $25) throughout the year from appreciative members of Wissahickon watershed users and stewards.\(^{29}\) Despite pleas for Friends of the Wissahickon and St. Martins Station Grounds Committee to merge and consolidate their resources, SMSGC proceeds went exclusively towards St. Martins Station contractors’ fees (including liability insurance, as well as materials, tools, and labor costs), leaving little resources for promotion, publicity or philanthropy.\(^{30}\) The committee’s revenue still repeatedly fell short of

\(^{28}\) SMSGC to McClusky, Wissahickon Garden Club, SMSGC papers, box 1, CHHS.

\(^{29}\) Accounts and Ledgers, 1962-1972, SMSGC papers, Box 1, CHHS

\(^{30}\) St. Martins Station Grounds Committee, Ledger of Donations. SMSGC papers, box 1, CHHS.
its expenses, leading Jenkins to ask the Chestnut Hill Community Association and Chestnut Hill Development Group to make up the difference with donations to the Community and Maintenance Funds that each amassed.\textsuperscript{31} Even amid the recession of the early 1980s, the committee still held steadfastly to its only inviolable principle—to enable, not embody, the right to work on the right of way.\textsuperscript{32}

A license to conserve St. Martins Station Grounds proved critical to the committee’s work. As a “licensee” of PRR property, SMSGC acquired the same property rights and responsibilities granted to Auto Parks, Inc. To both, the PRR extended “a mere personal license or privilege” to construct and deconstruct the built environment around St. Martins Station. Whereas Auto Parks agreed to grade, pave, and protect lots, the committee requested and received “permission to landscape, beautify, and/or use for garden purposes ALL THAT CERTAIN AREA situated in the vicinity and adjacent to St. Martins Passenger Station” (caps original).\textsuperscript{33} Such an ambiguous license to prescribe work on station-grounds offered both risks and opportunities for an organization that looked to redefine what took place on station-grounds. For-profit Auto Parks, Inc., which paved open spaces, and the nonprofit St. Martins Station Grounds Committee, which preserved open space, occupied different places on the PRR balance sheets but shared space on PRR station grounds. This arrangement incentivized the SMSGC to perform husbandry on hardscapes, and Auto Parks, Inc. to indemnify infrastructure for SMSGC’s

\textsuperscript{31} Balance Sheets. SMSGC papers, box 2, CHHS.

\textsuperscript{32} The recession of the early 1980s imperiled the government corporations in charge of PRR stations (CONRAIL and AMTRAK), thereby increasing the scope of work that SMSGC could undertake and underwrite and effectively hastening railroad reorganization. See “St. Martins Station Renovation Fundraising Campaign,” brochure, n.d. SMSGC papers, box 2, CHHS. See also, Mark H. Rose, Bruce E. Seely, and Paul F. Barrett, The Best Transportation System in the World: Railroads, Trucks, Airlines and American Public Policy in the Twentieth Century (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2006), chapter 9.

\textsuperscript{33} Capitalization original. License Agreement between Pennsylvania Railroad and St. Martins Station Grounds Committee, April 1, 1962. SMSGC papers, box 1, CHHS.
green economy. A spatial arrangement between Auto Parks and SMSGC, without a legal agreement between the two parties, allowed both to abdicate mutual responsibility toward one another in the course of safeguarding their concessions. Only the ethics of proprietors in St. Martins—that certain area of Chestnut Hill known for its housing cooperatives, tenants associations, and long-term lessees—insured the stewards of Hill’s legacy profited from and protected the rent-paying, revenue-generating concessionaire, and the latter returned the favor.\footnote{Bauman, \textit{Public Housing, Race and Renewal} (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), chapters 1 and 2.}

The language of this agreement also evaded three important questions: What constituted “THAT CERTAIN AREA” for which the SMSGC could claim rights and responsibilities? Just the platforms, a surveilled area that had long reassured Philadelphians, who flocked to St. Martins to live in historic homes within a quarter-mile of train stations, of safe travels to and from Center City Philadelphia for work and leisure district? Who else was allowed to use or occupy, landscape or beautify, these areas? More than a century after annexation by the City of Philadelphia, the \textit{Germantown Courier} and \textit{Chestnut Hill Local} editorialized, arrival at St. Martins Station in 1962 still functioned as the doorstep into Chestnut Hill—a garden city within the city, where “quasi-governmental” neighborhood improvement associations had extended the city’s grid of streets, sewers, electricity, and water infrastructure without municipal aid or approvals.\footnote{“Our Railroad Heritage,” A joint issue of the \textit{Germantown Courier} and the \textit{Chestnut Hill Local}; Contosta, \textit{Suburb in the City}, 260–62.} And, what recourse did the committee have to regulate or remediate the actions of third parties, such as the leaseholder Auto Parks, Inc. or the station agent overseeing the entire area? The map originally attached to the St. Martins Station Grounds Committee’s license provided no clear answer to these questions, as it only indicated as off-limits the land leased by Auto Parks, a house to be leased to a station agent, and the 10-foot clearance area on either side.
of the track. After the committee began its operations, it continued to negotiate the limits and liabilities of its right to work on gaps in property management at a distance from contracted labor.\textsuperscript{36}

**Reworking Rights-of-Way**

PSIC "Operations" of open space expropriation threatened to uproot the seeds of cooperative stewardship that the St. Martins Station Grounds Committee had sown. In a letter dated August 30, 1962, Philadelphia’s managing director John A. Bailey informed the committee that much of the land surrounding St. Martins Station—both PRR property and adjoining estates—would be added to the city plan in “a legal action [that did] not require physical changes.”\textsuperscript{37} Bailey’s letter did not explain how the city intended to make public ways out of private space without changing the physical properties of land leased by concessionaires (Auto Parks) and conservancies (SMSGC). Instead he offered platitudes to SMSGC for its “willingness to do something” about the condition of station-grounds. Bailey’s praise for “actions such as [theirs], where a group of citizens decide that they will take an active part in the management of [a station] which they use,”\textsuperscript{38} proved premature: PSIC’s plans to extend public streets and public parking regulations to private ways of access to St. Martins Station incited Allston Jenkin and his peers to produce visual records of their stewardship and distribute them widely (Figure 4.3).\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{36} Jenkins and Fleitas to Hill, SMSGC papers, box 1, CHHS.

\textsuperscript{37} John A. Bailey, PSIC, to Allston Jenkins, April 19, 1962. SMSGC papers, CHHS.

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.

Figure 4.3. St. Martin Station Grounds Committee profiled in the Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine (28 February 1965) for landscaping around a station built in 1887 for the PRR’s Chestnut Hill line. In 1965, it was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. John J. Cunliffe, non-railroad employees. Chestnut Hill Historical Society.

Not by chance, the St. Martins Station Grounds Committee published its work plan in the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin just as public reinvestment in the city’s privately held rail rights-of-way gained political and physical traction. SMSGC’s publicity enticed George and Charles Woodward, trustees of Chestnut Hill’s largest real estate trust, to partner with the railway conservancy in its defense of communal property rights. On May 17, 1962, Charles Woodward informed Allston Jenkins of his plans to contest the city’s expropriation of common spaces for
tenants of his family’s estate.\footnote{George Woodward to Allston Jenkins, May 17, 1962. SMSGC papers, CHHS} Whereas PSIC envisioned a 60-foot-wide parkway through luxury rental housing would protect commuters’ cars from impropriety on the part of tipsy commuters, neighborhood youth, and Auto Parks, Inc., Woodward proposed the city’s consulting engineers extend Seminole Street, a public way, into spaces under SCSGC’s governorship. Expecting the committee to approve of his endorsement, Woodward admitted “one serious defect in [the] proposed plan”: “it would probably destroy the three or four buttonwood trees” that marked the boundary between parking and plantings on St. Martins Station-Grounds (Figure 4.4). Merely saving the trees would not be a sufficient intervention, Woodward warned, because neither the city nor the PRR agreed to accept liability for damages that tree branches and roots might cause to cars.\footnote{Ibid.} Surely, a man whose letterhead called on others “to be a CONservationist,” Woodward wagered, could produce “a trick plan” that preserved both husbandry and homesteads from a “pernicious” city plan in the name of “passenger service improvements.”\footnote{Ibid.} On this point, Woodward and the SMSGC ultimately disagreed.
The SMSGC lamented the loss of shade trees, but it also took issue with ceding its land grant before exhausting the power of that privilege. If the committee accepted how Woodward redistributed railroad property to the city, concessionaires, conservancies, and citizens, it would forestall and potentially prohibit work as yet unimagined as part and parcel of PRR property. Renewed annually, SMSGC’s and Auto Park’s licenses could outlive the tenure of PSIC operations, which Philadelphia’s City Council reassessed every six to twelve months. By
contrast, the PRR’s partnership with the City was precarious.\textsuperscript{43} Although it signed on to “Operation Northwest,” PSIC’s effort to make rail transportation affordable and accessible to the masses moving to Philadelphia’s crabgrass frontier, PRR colloquially referred to it as “Operation Beaver”—a tongue-and-cheek critique of the marginal returns that they expected from public investments and interventions.\textsuperscript{44}

SMSGC shared the PRR’s skepticism of public enterprise protecting patrons of commuter rail from private disinvestment. Unwilling to consent to a repudiation of their own regulatory regime, SMSGC’s Allston Jenkins informed the PSIC and Woodward in September 1962 that it would approve only one change to land it leased: return to an estate plan when public, private, \textit{and} philanthropic sectors of governance prevailed on PRR property.\textsuperscript{45} The conservancy’s appeal to the past appeared regressive to PSIC directors, as it returned land to a family wealthy enough in the 1880s to provide the PRR with the land and the financial resources needed to construct a Main Line branch through its Chestnut Hill land holdings. But the SMSGC had also proved progressive in its task-force organization, impromptu collectivism, and entrepreneurial governance. The conservancy ceded its land concession to the only institution vested in conserving space for superintendents of the right-of-way: the Woodward Real Estate Company (managing agent of the Woodward Estate). Knowingly, the SMSGC chose estate geography, which upheld socio-spatial conditions to which it subscribed, over a new geography of the state that would uproot those foundations.

\textsuperscript{43} See correspondence between PRR division engineer E. E. Zacharias, Jr., PRR board chairman Stuart T. Sanders, and chairmen of the WMAN Railroad Improvement Committee; for example, E. E. Zacharias to James O. Scott, March 20, 1964. WMAN collection, series II, box 4, TUA.

\textsuperscript{44} Reference to “Operation Beaver” made in Letter from PRR District Engineer Zaccharias to WMAN Committee…

\textsuperscript{45} Allston Jenkins, SMSGC, to John A. Bailey, PSIC, September 29, 1962. Henry Houston Estate Papers, Estate Ledgers, 1938, 1940, 1951, CHHS.
Through over a half-century-old land covenants and property management principles, the Woodwards not only preserved the cultural landscape of St. Martins but also conserved the place of railway executives within it. Paved private ways on Woodward property provided vehicles and pedestrians access to St. Martins Station where PRR personnel like Hill supervised drop-offs and pick-ups—not just commuters engaged in a kiss before a ride but also homeowners picking up consumer goods from downtown department stores and small business owners ordering raw materials from Pennsylvania’s Dutch country.\textsuperscript{46} Although public use of private ways denied “complete legal frontages to [a George Woodward, Inc.] triple-house” (a three-family dwelling), blue-chip tenants such as the aforementioned Nathans family shared liability for operations taking place at their doorstep with Superintendent Sam Hill, whom they were assured kept the grounds free of litter, debris, and hazards.\textsuperscript{47} Converting private ways on Woodward property or PRR property into public space would rupture the cooperative form of ownership that both the Woodwards and PRR required their lessees to maintain. PSIC could and would remedy this rupture. In 1962, it successfully acquired a public easement from the Woodward estate and the PRR that allowed for SMSGC to preserve socio-spatial junctures throughout the St. Martins Station-Grounds (\textit{Figure 4.5}).\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{46} St. Martins Station Restoration Project, n.d. (post-1980), box 2, SMSGC, CHHS

\textsuperscript{47} James F. Nathans to PRR Real Estate Department, April 11, 1962, SMSGC, CHHS

\textsuperscript{48} Woodward to Bailey, 12 February 1961, RDA, Box 500, PSIC, PCA; Bailey to Woodward, 23 March 1961, RDA, Box 500, PSIC, PCA
The PSIC’s compromised position vis-à-vis St. Martins Station Grounds Committee and the growing number of its peers at once stoked the fury and grounded the fears of a budding body politic preoccupied with just how the city’s investments in suburban commutation would make back-to-the-city movements materialize. As early as October 11, 1962, city councilmen refused to appropriate an additional $1 million requested by the city architect to “simply remodel 25 commuter stations” into public transportation sites.49 “Are we going into the railroad business? First we buy cars and now we’re restoring stations?” asked one councilman. Another lamented, “We’re now subsidizing the railroads to about $2M a year. How much further must we go?”50 These men were not known to be fiscal conservatives or even stingy with public funds for private


50 Ibid.
enterprise; they had just appropriated several million dollars for the electrification of the Reading Company’s only commuter rail line still operating on steam power within city limits (the Fox Chase line) and had procured twelve new train cars for the Pennsylvania Railroad (Figure 4.6). Restoration work for Reading’s existing train cars at the city’s expense included repair and repainting of interior surfaces, reupholstered seats and seatbacks, new electrical systems, enhanced interior lighting, safety glass, and exterior repainting.51 In other words, Philadelphia’s elected bodies invested heavily in suburban back-to-the-city movements throughout the 1960s, without any agreement on which urban spaces and stewards constituted critical infrastructure for suburban mobilization. 52

Figure 4.6. New Multiple-Unit Train, manufactured by Philadelphia-based Budd Company, purchased in the fall of 1961 by the City of Philadelphia, then leased to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company (and after a trial period of 6 months), to Reading Company as well. Advertisement, Richardson Dilworth Administration, Philadelphia Department of Records

51 “Memorandum with Respect to Negotiations which Will Need to Be Conducted within the Next Few Weeks between Railroads and PSIC”; Appendix to “Application of PSIC for a Loan for Purchase of Twelve Rail Diesel Cars,” PSIC Agreement Negotiating Committee Minutes, August 1960. Records of the Richardson Dilworth Administration, box 2222, PCA.

The Respectability Politics of Radical Railway Conservancies

The Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia struggled further to find its footing in suburban Philadelphia even as the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) Company's Real Estate Department stopped limiting "lessee operations" to landscape preservationists and land trusts. In an interview with the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin in October 1962, the head of PRR's Real Estate Department rolled out the welcome mat for more radical socio-cultural, spatial practices from conservative civic groups, community associations and commuter clubs—regardless of whether these "civic-minded laymen" cared to manage property or personnel in cooperation with the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation. While PRR relied on the latter to purchase its services and paid down its debts, their purchases—fare discounts, faster trains, frequent service, etc.—came nowhere near covering the company's building maintenance and land management costs. To readers of the city's leading Sunday magazine, the PRR made clear that conservancies were becoming an integral part of the business of operating a railroad and that any organization interested in fixing the railroad crisis had a responsibility as well as a right to reclaim rights-of-way.

The multi-spread magazine article on railroad station groups not only promoted conservancy as active citizenship, it normalized informal, intermittent work on institutional workplaces. The article primarily propagated the "RR Fix-Up" activities that neighborhood and community associations, commuter rail attendants and station-house tenants had begun to perform. PRR promoted and privileged stewards that quickly abandoned make-shift actions such as weather-permitted clean-up days for more corporatized forms of community conservation, e.g. licensed

and bonded repair of station-houses and station-grounds (*Figure 4.7*). From the outset, West Mount Airy Neighbors and Spruce Hill Community Association organized non-unionized labor to consistently work-around the work-orders of railroad attendants. By the time the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation garnered federal aid for its “Operations” in West Mount Airy and Spruce Hill, suburban enclaves of urban wealth, these organizations had popularized conservancy as an act of community development and operationalized the community development movement in service of commuter mobilization. In doing so, West Mount Airy Neighbors branded themselves “friends” of a regional rail-centered future without brandishing themselves stewards of the city’s railroading past.

![Figure 4.7](image)

*Figure 4.7. West Mount Airy Neighbors adopted an ecumenical approach to conservancy, call on a diversity of civic bodies (individual and institutional) to clean up Allen Lane, Carpenter and Upsal stations. “Workers come in all shapes and sizes. You, your family and your neighbors are all the right sizes and shapes.” WMAN Collection, Temple University Urban Archives.*

West Mount Airy Neighbors became "friends" of railroad stations after becoming "foes" of the railroad companies. The remarkably similar condition of railroad stations and surrounding
grounds in West Mount Airy facilitated consensus amongst households and businesses of marked diversity, both in terms of their socioeconomic features and their built environment.\textsuperscript{54} In the early 1950s, housing stock in the neighborhood ranged from historically prestigious pre-Revolutionary War farmhouses to nineteenth century summer estates, from elegant early twentieth century row houses and twins to privately commissioned modern homes constructed before and during WWII. Among its owner-occupied homes, the neighborhood was made up of 29% row houses, 41% twins and 30% single-family houses, most built pre-war but some built in the split-level style of postwar subdivisions. This rich variety of housing stock attracted a wide range of people to the community, most of whom rode the rails routinely, regardless of whether the city offered fare discounts and frequent service.\textsuperscript{55}

*Philadelphia Tribune*, the African-American owned periodical, regularly reported on the mobility of Mount Airy’s black elite.\textsuperscript{56} For West Mount Airy's black physicians and judges, lawyers and business owners, race relations specialists and longtime activists, acclaimed jazz musicians and established members of the financial, insurance and real estate (FIRE) industries, back-to-the-city movements stretched beyond workplaces and rush hours of the central business district.\textsuperscript{57} Some West Mount Airy’s Christian black capitalists received training from a Home

\textsuperscript{54} Perkis, *Making Good Neighbors*, chapter 3.


\textsuperscript{56} *Philadelphia Tribune*, October 1958-December 1960; On the sociocultural consequences of this newspaper’s lifestyle reports on West Mount Airy residents to its largely low-income, African-American readership, see Perkiss, Chapter 4, esp. p. 69.

\textsuperscript{57} The African American population in West Mount Airy spanned the spectrum of middle-class status, but the median income of these families still fell below the median for white families living in the neighborhood. According to the 1960 census, the median income for black families was $6323 compared with $4,248 among African Americans in Philadelphia, and $5782 amongst West Mount residents. In West Mount Airy, 22.7% of African Americans were categorized as professional or technical works, compared with 4.7% of black Americans in the city and 9.4% of Philadelphia residents as a whole. In West Mount Airy, 76.5% of black families owned their own homes, compared with 42.9% of the black population across the city and 58.7% of Philadelphia residents overall. West Mount Airy saw turnover in the years that followed, but after tumultuous years at the start of the 1950s, real
Improvement Center that the Spruce Hill Community Association and the West Philadelphia Corporation staffed with private developers willing to assist residents with “all matters of home repair, improvement and maintenance…without cost and commercial promotions.”\(^{58}\) Others participated in the governing board meetings of West Philadelphia’s burgeoning urban hospital and university networks, or the community development corporations of historic black churches in South and North Philadelphia. Well-educated and well-heeled, Mount Airy's political leadership participated in events hosted by cultural institutions, charitable trusts and community associations that subscribed to the anti-suburbanization slogan of the National Council for Good Cities, “Improve, Don’t Move.”\(^{59}\) Their behavior was so consistently ambivalent towards fare changes that Philadelphia's Urban Traffic and Transportation Board considered it a model for a new community it was building in South Philadelphia.\(^{60}\)

Religious and cultural movements of West Mount Airy residents misled directors of the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation as well. When the City of Philadelphia dispatched Marketers Research Service Inc. to West Mount Airy in 1958, it expected the liberal-leaning community to co-sign on "Operations" of the burgeoning Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia. However, Chestnut Hill's West Mount Airy neighbors preferred restrictions on real estate-oriented ridership plans and rejected redevelopment-oriented

\(^{58}\) Memorandum attached to the brochure brought back from The Spruce Hill Home Improvement Center (sponsored by the West Philadelphia Corporation in cooperation with the Spruce Hill Community Association). West Mount Airy Neighbors Records (hereafter WMAN), Pamphlet Collection, Temple University Urban Archives (hereafter TUUA).

\(^{59}\) *The Spruce Hill Home Improvement Center*, cover. Ibid.

revitalization programs for regional rail, which grounded white flight at the city line instead of preventing it from taking off in the first place. During the 6-month survey response period of Marketers Research Service’s survey, West Mount Airy Neighbors led surveyors to see them as political heavyweights in station operations not just "statistical weights" in origin-destination surveys. Manipulating market research with black capitalism, the reform-minded middle-class neighborhood association joined other cities in a small but important national movement of the civil rights era that mobilized “black capitalism” as a market for private buses, trolleys and railroad.

Clearly underestimated, West Mount Airy Neighbors played a particularly critical part in the battle against discriminatory bus, trolley and train operations in postwar Philadelphia. WMAN had not yet been founded in the mid-1940s when African-Americans campaigned for racial and gender equity in public transit employment and public transit investment—triggering calls for a “Philadelphia Plan” of workforce integration in Cleveland, Chicago, Newark and South Africa (Figure 4.8).61 Employment opportunities claimed by black men seeking to bring a "family wage" back home to their majority-minority neighborhoods inspired middle-class minorities living amongst white households to seeking an alternative transport mode to the family car.62 During the late 1950s, black men and women of West Mount Airy staked a claim over the vehicles of suburban Philadelphia’s racial integration: express buses of the Philadelphia


Transportation Company and its competitor, the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company, plus modern commuter rail cars sponsored by the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation. Rather than fight for seats on city trolleys and subways, West Mount Airy Neighbors fought for their rightful place amongst commuter clubs invested in railroad operations.

West Mount Airy Neighbors made space for upwardly-mobile racial and religious minorities in railroad “Operations” incorporated or initiated by the Passenger Service

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Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia. One of its leaders, George Schemer believed that the group could function as a localized version of the National Urban League, offering a sense of stability in an era of social, residential and cultural transformation through rehabilitation of good stock already in the neighborhood and those bodies en route.\textsuperscript{65} The scale and frequency of WMAN recruitment of prospective West Mount Airy property purchasers and station patrons required paratransit at a scale the organization was unable to sponsor. The Founding Board conversed with only 50 families seeking new housing in 1960 during one of the longest Pennsylvania Railroad strikes (six weeks), struggling to guide neighbor visits of upwardly and outwardly mobile black riders of the railroad in the years that followed. As Schermer, explained to fellow Board Members of the Philadelphia Human Relations Commission in 1960, "the amount of busing it would have taken would be beyond belief; Instead, we did it with moving vans."\textsuperscript{66} This outreach experience showed WMAN's president that racial integration of the West Mount Airy neighborhood and inclusion in Pennsylvania Railroad ridership required the same strategy: retention of white riders of the railways serving West Mount Airy.

WMAN turned to “snow birds”—railroad industry lingo for riders of every race that were induced by unfavorable weather conditions or other events (e.g. bus strike) to ride the rails. Many west Mount Airy residents "simply wanted to go about their day-to-day lives and feel assured that their community would remain stable," WMAN’s president George Schemer acknowledged in earlier communications with the organization’s 358 members. But, even apathetic community members agreed to support PSIC “Operations” that helped WMAN reach its objective: "an integrated solution to community problems with an eye towards greatest mutual

\textsuperscript{65} Perkiss, pp. 49-50

\textsuperscript{66} Perkis, 49, no. 1
benefit, including real estate and zoning initiatives, school and educational reform, public
relations and information, organization membership and corporate finance.” With careful
scripting and coded conversations—the method of conscription used in interviews with
prospective buyers—WMAN Inc. slowly convinced those in the neighborhood that did not
consider themselves to be integrationists to donate directly to the RR Fix-Up Committee—not to
WMAN’s general fund.67

Executive leadership of West Mount Airy Neighbors relied on the community's many
legal authorities to gain the trust and garner the philanthropy of their neighborhood’s “silent
majority.”68 When Donald Scott, a law partner experienced in concessionary contracts and
environmental law, took the helm of WMAN’s Fix-Up Committee, WMAN added new members
and found existing members excited to take on the most egregious violator of the property rights
of West Mount Airy Neighbors: Pennsylvania RR Company, and its partners, the Passenger
Service Improvement Corporation and the Philadelphia Transportation Company. In 1962, Mrs.
J.P. Berry and her dozens of other WMAN members donated large amounts of landscaping
equipment and appurtenances such as twelve $10 planters and demanded receipts for their
sizeable philanthropic contributions.69 Between 1964 and 1966, many others, some not even
WMAN members, made cash donations one tenth the size (e.g. $10) merely to express their
support.70 Collectively, their donations provided enough funding for the West Mt. Airy
Neighbors Railroad Station Committee to hire a contractor (Thomas F. Galante) for landscape

67 “WMAN Correspondence, Railroad Stations, 1964-66,” Box 4, Acc. # 737: WMAN, TUUA. On scripted and
coded conversations of WMAN committee members, see also Perkiss, p. 50.

68 Here I borrow terminology for a regressive, retreated and revanchist populace popularized by Matthew Lassiter,

69 Mrs. J.P. Berry, Invoice for 12 planters ordered on behalf of West Mount Airy Neighbors, c. 1996

70 WMAN ledger, Contributions, 1962-64, Box 5, Acc. #737: WMAN, TUUA
maintenance and land management—over $1000 per fiscal quarter in 1966 dollars, plus overhead costs like liability insurance.\textsuperscript{71}

An otherwise “silent majority” of the WMAN community, affluent men and women of color spoke out against WMAN’s work to recreate a “majority minority” community. Putting their money where their mouth is, so to speak, these constituents of WMAN’s community conservation policies and practices limited the RR Fix-Up budget to direct donations and kept the committee from stretching the organization's human and capital resources into territory unknown: railways. The RR Committee still handily raised funds from individuals to surveil and acquire control over this territory. Many of these persons may have invested in the civil rights mission of West Mount Airy Neighbors, Inc., but most accompanied their donations with a note indicating they “just wanted to make the stations look pretty for people waiting for trains,” or “didn’t want a visitor’s first impression of West Mount Airy to be a rundown railroad station.”\textsuperscript{72} Whatever their politics, the RR Fix-Up Committee could count on over $600 per solicitation cycle, and received up to $1200 in one season—the spring of 1965.

Rights-of-Way in the Shadow of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

West Mount Airy Neighbors’ affirmative action on racial and religious minorities in railroad ridership built on land use and development activities of WMAN in the early years of neighborhood stabilization. Two founding members of WMAN's RR Committee had participated in "Operation Fix-Up," the city-wide campaign for 'block clean-up' that the Citizens Council on City Planning ran on a community-by-community basis on behalf of the City of Philadelphia

\textsuperscript{71} Agreement between West Mt. Airy Neighbors Association, 11 May 1966, Box 5, Acc. #737: WMAN, TUUA

\textsuperscript{72} WMAN Ledger, 1965-1967, Ibid.
between 1951 and 1954. The others had worked with faith-based organizations of West Mount Airy that coordinated ‘sell your neighborhood’ campaigns, convened focus groups on community development matters, implored existing homeowners to attend public sermons on neighborhood change, and encouraged prospective buyers of ‘high standard’ to purchase homes in the area.

Altogether, the five founding RR Fix-Up Committee members shared over ten years of experience in characterizing racial change in socio-spatial terms.

The civil rights lawyers, judges and policymakers that formed the RR Fix-Up Committee in 1962 also had experience executing community-benefit agreements between financial institutions, small business owners and individual homeowners. Each of the latter agreed to afford racial and religious minorities their “right to the city” north of Greater Philadelphia’s Mason-Dixon Line—the Philadelphia Railroad’s Main Line—by making space for them within West Mount Airy. These "Good Neighbor" agreements ultimately constituted a rule book for prospective investors, insurers, brokers and owners of West Mount Airy real estate, and house rules for those already a part of the community. Claiming the rules still applied to public utility companies, which paid no city taxes on their property holdings but received gratis public resources such as police patrols, the chair of WMAN’s RR Committee informed PRR executives

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73 Perkiss, 18

74 On the West Mount Airy residents that participated in “Sell your neighborhood” campaigns and other soft control methods of the Citizens Council on City Planning, see WMAN Oral History Archive. WMAN Collection, TUA.

75 Aptly called a “white noose” by Philadelphia’s mayor in 1960, the PRR’s main right-of-way not only separated largely white neighborhoods of Northwest and Northeast Philadelphia such as East and West Mount Airy from North Philadelphia, the home base of Philadelphia’s black power movement and the epicenter of deindustrialization. It also transported primarily white suburbanites to Center City Philadelphia without stopping in neighborhoods of North Philadelphia, since PRR eliminated passenger service within the inner city after its 25% fare hike in 1958. The 5:45pm express train from PRR’s Suburban Station or 30th Street Station offered few sights or sites of diversity, in other words, unless commuters took the train to its first stop: one of West Mount Airy’s four stations.

on multiple occasions between 1964 and 1966 of its intentions to recognize Pennsylvania
Railroad's right-of-way as real estate in arrears to the city and it tax-paying citizens.\footnote{WMANA Acc. 737, Box 4, Folder 25: Correspondence, RR Stations, 1964-66, TUA}

Worth noting, the RR Fix-Up Committee held its meeting in the homes of its founding
members. All five lived along the neighborhood’s northwestern border with the Wissahickon
watershed and Fairmount Park, the same area in which most of WMAN's earliest members
resided and where 50\% of West Mount Airy’s newest residents found homes.\footnote{Founding documents of WMAN RR Committees cross-referenced with the contents of Rory Kramer, “What is on the Other Side of the Tracks? A Spatial Examination of Neighborhood Boundaries and Segregation (PhD diss. University of Pennsylvania. 2012}} According to
historians Rory Kramer and Abigail Perkiss, wealthier white families generally called these
blocks home, and, through homeowners associations, assured they would not see their first black
or Jewish neighbors until the late 1960s. With much invested in the stability and status of the
neighborhood, these residents likely joined West Mount Airy Neighbors to preserve the
economic, social and cultural viability of the community as much as a commitment to interracial
urban living that early members of West Mount Airy's espoused upon electing their first black
president, Matthew J. Bullock, in 1961. African American transplants to the area in the second
half of the 1960s settled in 28 of the neighborhood’s other forty-one residential blocks. Their
investment in stations-grounds only grew as the physical and organizational center of integration
efforts moved from Lincoln-Pelham corridor where the ‘silent majority’ long resided to the 28
blocks that increasingly housed a “majority minority” population.

Scott and the rest of his committee nevertheless imagined a micro-economy of critical
infrastructure protection would emerge from the operations it budgeted.\footnote{Donald C. Scott to H.H. Vaughan, Regional Manager, PRR, 20 Aug 1963, WMANA Acc. 737, Box 4, Folder 25: Correspondence, RR Stations, 1964-66, TUA} The committee's
aesthetic prescriptions for cultural landscape maintenance materialized most fully when residents offered up their time as donations. Taking the form of observation and surveillance rather than manual labor or other forms of sweat equity, the philanthropy of residents living along Allen Lane, Carpenter Lane and other integrated streets of West Mount Airy would have surprised sociologist Chester Rapkin. In 1958, he reported to administrators and management consultants of the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency that “white communities work with their black brethren to prevent blight.”80 Yet, racial diversity escaped reporting on the “people of all sizes and ages” that showed up for the first biennial clean-up day that the RR Fix-Up Committee organized in the spring of 1962.

The Committee's coded communications, which decidedly steer clear of any demographic language, may have deterred buttoned-up black families from tending to residential turnover on Allen Lane or working alongside elderly white couples on station grounds. However, the historical geography of donations to WMAN’s RR Fix Up Committee (Figure 4.9) these families still contributed financially to neighborhood stabilization. In short, community-wide stewardship on annual clean-up days differed in color as well as substance from the regulatory operations which the Committee undertook regularly.

Middle-class African Americans of West Mount Airy appear to have preferred the pen and the law over rakes and lawn mowers—tools of the trade for both railway and community conservationists (Figure 4.10). Largely a symbolic act, annual clean-up days reinforced the Committee's rootedness in the community, which espoused hands-on stewardship, and offered the Committee an opportunity to demonstrate and dictate its tacit knowledge of the landscape. The husbandry of committee members, their neighbors and their wives and children also demonstrated how diverse (and unskilled) the workforce of railroad companies could be, if the unions they contracted with (e.g. the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees) opened their ranks to persons of color.  

The “track records” of community members, which WMAN determined by documenting fall and spring turnout and turnover, tools and time to clear debris, dig up tree trunks, trim brush and other maintenance operations, created a base line upon which WMAN measured AFL-CIO grounds crew that worked on RR property as well.  

Relying on their progressive peers to perform these operations as it directed, the Committee made known its

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more conservative and concerted effort to produce a landscape worthy of partnerships between the public and the private sector, the upwardly mobile and the rooted.

The civic responsibility and fiduciary duties of each RR Fix-Up Team varied by station but altogether they demonstrated conservancies could weed out persons or proprietors that did not belong in the weeds of work-orders. The Upsal Station team orchestrated clean-up days from April to October, while those in East and West Mount Airy arranged for youth, recidivists and the mentally ill to perform routine maintenance of the station-grounds under neighborhood watch programs. A few tenants of apartment-houses adjacent to Allen Lane stations met monthly with couples renting rooms in station-houses to discuss how the Brotherhood of Maintenance-of-Way Employees repaired stations, removed hazards, and rebuilt dilapidated structures. At Carpenter Station, PRR superintendents corresponded with them about parking lot usage, city plans, and other service improvements promised and/or performed by the present purveyor of public transportation. Complicating claims of “bowling alone” before the phrase became commonplace in the 1990s, this diverse population developed a “public accounting” of which landscapes and laborers warranted substantial rehabilitation in spite of railroad companies’ fiscal distress.83

**Racial Reform & Regime Change in Railway Reclamation**

WMAN's RR Committee attended fastidiously and formally to the condition of every station in West Mount Airy. The RR Committee communicated directly with the Chairman of the Board of the Pennsylvania Railroad and the district engineers, superintendents and special

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services managers that PRR executives tasked with its complaints. Eclipsing fair housing petitions and housing code violations that WMAN's Real Estate Committee filed with local and state officials, the RR Fix-Up Committee fielded and filtered commuter and community communication much like a city's Department of Licenses and Inspections—with the object of law enforcement.  

Correspondence exchanged between PRR Chairman Stuart T. Saunders, the head of PRR's Real Estate Department and Donald Scott, the environmental lawyer that WMAN’s RR Committees from 1962 to 1965, fostered informality in infrastructural politics that might otherwise follow legal language. Scott attempted to trade on intimacy and ingratiation. In 1966, he sought a license to building maintenance as well as land management for all of the stations in West Mount Airy. Revealing his valuation of stewardship was purely financial, Saunders replied:

“Legally, a license such as was tendered to you for One Dollar annually, does two things: It releases the railroad from claims which might arise from railroad employees working on or about the property; and prevents payment of wage claims to our employees whose contract covers this type of maintenance. …In this connection, I extend my personal thanks to your group for their maintenance.”

Scott and WMAN membership “ha[d] in mind not only the cleaning up of the grounds and shrubbery,” however; mailings, posters and advertisements in community newsletters promised WMAN would manage “also the painting of the stations and the repairing of curb[s], walks, fences, drains, etc.” Reneging on its pledge to preservationists and integrationists, the RR Fix-Up Committee regrouped in 1966 under a new name, the RR Stations Improvement Subcommittee, and new management, the Executive Director of WMAN.

84 A plethora of communication between Donald Scott and his successor James Monteith and Stuart T. Saunders, PRR Chairman and President, fills WMAN, Acc. 737, Box 4, Folder 23: Correspondence: RR Stations, 1964-1966, TUUA

85 Stuart T. Saunders, PRR Chairman of the Board to John C. Keller, RR Station Committee Chiarman, 16 Aug 1966, WMANA Acc. 737, Box 4, Folder 25: Correspondence, RR Stations, 1964-66, TUA
A change in mission and tone accompanied new leadership. The executive director of WMAN, Ruth Steele, brought her experience as deputy director of the U.S. Office of Equal Opportunity in Philadelphia to bear on communications between the station committee and PRR executives. One of her first interventions in “enforcement” roped in city officials as well railroad executives:

“For the past 4 years the West Airy Neighbors has taken on the responsibility of maintaining the grounds of the Pennsylvania RR Stations in our community: Allen Lane, Carpenter and Upsal. We are concerned about the appearance of these stations but we are particularly worried about the condition of the bridge over the tracks at Allen Lane, which I understand is railroad property but is inspected by your department. Since this bridge is along a main route to the Houston School just one half block away, we urge you to have the bridge inspected and order the Pennsylvania RR to repair it. Not only is the bridge rusty, but it is completely worn through in spots and could crumble under a child’s weight.”

Tellingly, Philadelphia’s Director of Licenses and Inspections kicked the issue back to WMAN, claiming that “more pressure from WMAN might be useful in getting compliance” and pleading, on behalf of “the large number of youngsters using that route on their way to and from school,” “would you please write him and, if necessary, call to see that the bridge is repaired before school opens in the fall?”

Steele, the first female in WMAN’s leadership and second African-American to hold the position of Executive Director, later openly expressed her disgust with correspondents who expected her to mother all the children of West Mount Airy. At the time, however, she begrudgingly complied with the city’s request. In return, the PRR’s Special Agent in Charge of

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86 Ruth Steele to RR Committee, April 1969 [Draft letter to the City of Philadelphia’s Department of Licenses and Inspections] WMAN Collection, Series II, Box 4, TUUA

87 Director of Licenses and Inspections to James Montieth, 1 May 1967, WMAN Collection, Series II, Box 4, TUUA

88 Ruth Steele, Executive Secretary and President of WMAN, 1962-1974, WMAN Oral History Collection, Germantown Historical Society.
infrastructure improvements confirmed Allen Lane Bridge had been in the badly deteriorated condition she reported and promptly repaired the bridge within 60 days.⁸⁹

Ruth Steele proudly stood amongst a growing constituency of West Mount Airy that had grown frustrated with WMAN’s newfound responsibility: community policing based on ‘broken windows’ theory without actually fixing broken windows.⁹⁰ Comfortable with confrontation, Steele insisted WMAN committees take action to resolve small infractions on the part of PRR Maintenance-of-Way Employees and require PRR to undertake large-scale improvements that involved many different disciplines—planning, engineering, management, maintenance. Steel tasked John Keller with coordination of the finer details, while she tackled the gap between complaint, citation and conservation.⁹¹ Keller consistently struggled to garner compliance from the PRR on both ancillary menaces and critical liability issues—from a complaint about pot holes in the driveway to Carpenter Station to a platform railing completely rusted through to ground level. Donald Scott, she noted to Scott’s successor as Chairman of the WMAN’s RR Fix-Up activities, “was able to do something similar by pointing out the possibility of someone suing the PRR for injuries.” Keller, who lacked the legal background of his predecessor, took an alternate route: documentation of disinvestment to make their case before the Public Utility Commission.

Keller, who failed to establish a chummy relationship with PRR executives, took advantage of the distributive governance system those executives had built up and relied on.

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⁸⁹ Marty C. Noone, Special Agent, PRR, to John Keller, 24 Aug 1967, WMAN Collection, Series II, Box 3, TUUA


⁹¹ Ruth Steele, Executive Secretary and President of WMAN, 1962-1974, WMAN Oral History Collection, Germantown Historical Society.
Instead of threatening law suits, he tested the legal boundaries and actuarial limits of public utility regulation over WMAN’s leasehold. While he planned on hiring contractors to cut the grass and keep the hedges trimmed at Allen Lane, Carpenter Lane and Upsal Stations, he had not anticipated finding trees so seriously damaged by insects that the landscaping company WMAN employed was not equipped to take care of them.\(^92\) His request for the PRR to dispatch its professional tree surgeon went unanswered, making Keller question whether the PRR employed anyone with the techniques and tools to keep its rights-of-way safe or relied on “outside professionals” for these operations as well. Hedging the PRR employed the latter on an ad hoc or emergency basis, he made arrangements for the spraying of these trees after PRR’s station-grounds engineer for Greater Philadelphia agreed to WMAN’s “cooperation in [the] effort to maintain attractive stations that we can all be proud of.”\(^93\) In other cases, Keller took silence—not rejection, disapproval or refutation—in response to clearly projected and posted lessee operations as implicit license to address them. In other words, by strategically encouraging mission creep, Keller acted on growing frustration with PRR’s deference to corporate shareholders and indifference to community concerns.

Mission creep exposed WMAN’s own liabilities—its reliance on husbandry and horticulture even though their preservation problems warranted planning professionals. “A complication in our grounds maintenance program has occurred,” Keller reported to PRR Division Engineer William Glavin in August 1966; “we had never contracted with our grounds

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\(^92\) Keller, Chairman, WMANA, to Glavin, Div. Engineer, PRR, 24 May 1966, WMANA Acc. 737, Box 4, Folder 25: Correspondence, RR Stations, 1964-66, TUA

\(^93\) Letter, PRR Chairman of the Board to John C. Keller, Chairman, 16 Aug 1966, WMANA Acc. 737, Box 4, Folder 25: Correspondence, RR Stations, 1964-66, TUA
keeper to cut the west bank of the Allen Lane Station.”94 To remedy the situation, Keller requested to expand monthly maintenance of the grounds into a “long range shrub and tree planting program to further control and enhance the grounds” that would require PRR renegotiate its labor contracts for the station.95 When Keller received no response to his April request to expand its labor force, he commissioned members of WMAN’s youth empowerment program—two boys for each station—to work from 10am to 3pm with an hour lunch break at a cost of 200 to 400 donations of $5-$10. To the dismay of both WMAN members and their neighbors, the public utility commission and the city planning commission, Keller allocated work-hours, assigned work-abouts and arranged payment to non-unionized workers with disregard for the equal employment opportunity commission rules and regulations on apprenticeship and the public utility law governing workforce development.96

The Maintenance of Maintenance Regimes

WMAN’s expanding epistemic scope hit its geopolitical limits before legal and liability boundaries. The WMAN membership voted on April 14, 1969 to “change its dealings with the Penn Central,” tasking some of its most progressive members to work on “methods of confrontation.”97 The community decided “that WMAN as a corporation had no interest whatever in the Pennsylvania Railroad’s commuter services as they relate to maintenance of schedules and rolling stock,” announcing its decision to boycott “Operations” of the Passenger

94 Keller to Gavin, 24 May 1966, Ibid. WMANA, TUUA

95 W. Glavin, Div. Engineer, PRR, to John C. Keller, Chairman, WMANA, 9 June 1966, WMANA Acc. 737, Box 4, Folder 25: Correspondence, RR Stations, 1964-66, TUUA

96 Keller, Chairman, WMANA, to Glavin, Div. Engineer, PRR, 24 May 1966, WMANA Acc. 737, Box 4, Folder 25: Correspondence, RR Stations, 1964-66, TUUA

97 Ruth Steele to RR Committee, April 1969 Memorandum. WMANA, TUUA.
Service Improvement Corporation that the Penn Central performed as part of purchase-of-service agreements. Furthermore, WMAN’s membership elected to “perform no additional maintenance tasks for the railroad” in order “to force the railroad to act as any responsible land owner in West Mount Airy.” It hoped to proceed along this contentious path in unison with other community associations dealing with the same largesse on the part of the Penn Central leadership, however, “a joint effort to force the railroad to comply with all the terms of its franchise in all respects” fell flat when faced with the fact that WMAN’s RR Committee differed in expertise, experience and ethics with other station committees and conservancies at work on rights-of-way in the region.

West Mount Airy Neighbors, Inc. had long turned down opportunities to scale up its operations and teach others its modus operandi. In the history of community-based organizations, where leaders work exclusively for, with and in the communities that gave birth to them, maneuvers around neighborliness amongst West Mount Airy neighbors are not unusual.98 The PA Public Utility Commission sought for WMAN—the largest and most lucrative of Philadelphia’s railway conservancies—to form alliances that would enable it serve as a clearinghouse or “anchor institution” for community stewards concerned about the safety of railroad stations and grounds.99 In 1969, Pa. PUC invited WMAN President Ruth Steele to send a representative of WMAN’s RR Committee to its hearings on the pending bankruptcy of Penn Central, leaving ambiguous whether RR Committee chairman would testify as a plaintiff, witness or exhibit. Accordingly, the RR Station Committee of West Mount Airy Neighbors, Inc. planned


99 The PUC’s acknowledgement not endorsement of these conservancies’ activities first came in a Letter from the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission to the Railroad Station Committee of the WMAN, June 3, 1969, Box 9, RR Stations: 1968-1970, Acc. #373 WMAN, TUUA.
to defend their record of asset management and their capacity to serve as a receiver of Penn Central real estate. WMAN prepared exhibits of landscape and labor maintenance that showcased the role of laypeople in limiting the liabilities to private transport operations such as collapsing platforms, raising funding for major station renovations and structural repairs, and managing the process of making crumbling overpasses, treacherous pathways and unlit parking lots safe for patrons. But, WMAN never had a chance to recount its fiduciary duties, civic responsibilities and aesthetic standards, or relay the landscape preservation practices of a half-dozen other stewards of Philadelphia stations and grounds to the Public Utility Commission. Pa. PUC hearings, which convened just before Penn Central announced its plans to file for bankruptcy in December of 1969, turned into a referendum on railroad company receiverships wherein both the commissioners and the conservancies criticized the railroads for banking on railbanking to raise ridership regionally.

Local television and radio networks captured the contentious consensus, but focused exclusively on contestation between commissioners and conservancies. News anchors interviewed stakeholders in the matter under the banner “Contests of the Year.” For editors of The Chestnut Hill Local, “the appealing David and Goliath quality about it,” gave everyone a stake in the politics and performativity of public utility proceedings not just their outcome. WMAN’s own RR station stewards appeared on the show to lambast deferred maintenance, encouraging news anchors to conclude “the disgraceful, wretched neglect of railroad property will return if WMAN and Chestnut Hill [were] to follow the example of Gladwyne.” Managed by the Lower Merion Civic Council since 1958, Gladwyne Station stood in shambles as a

100 James Monteith to Ruth Steele, 1 May 1970: Memorandum: Meeting with the Chestnut Hill Community Association.

101 “Contests of the Year,” Chestnut Hill Local (December 1969).
testament to what could happen if the other conservancies discontinued their efforts “to make twice a day visitations to the station something more than a hasty trip through the slums.”

Media spin aside, the pundits predicted accurately that “...[A] decision to force Penn Central [receiver] to assume its responsibility in maintaining its station properties could have repercussions far beyond Mt. Airy.” Indeed, “funds raised to shake the railroad management into assuming their responsibility in the first place” had already begun to supplant other forms of private equity in public transportation and skew public funding for private enterprises.

Although the provisional and precarious condition of railway conservancies concerned public utility commissioners, they issued no rules to govern their role in regional transportation planning and policymaking. Instead, it ruled on the expertise, experience and equity that private proprietors of public utilities must obtain before leasing land within a right-of-way. PA public utility commissioners evidently set a threshold that WMAN and other organizations based in northwest Philadelphia could meet; West Mount Airy Neighbors and their counterparts in Chestnut Hill, received five-year leases from the magnanimous chairman of the board of Penn Central, Stuart Saunders, while Chestnut Hill Community Association and their East Mount Airy Neighbors renewed their leases with Reading Company. Due to start January 1, 1970, when Penn Central planned to file for bankruptcy, the leases matched the scope and scale of “lessee operations” on railroad property in the long sixties: ridership recruitment, retention and

102 Ibid.
104 Leases issued/renewed in 1970 are no longer available, but limited liability insurance contracts for the terms of leases remain in the WMAN Collection, Series II, Box 4, TUUA; EMAN Collection, TUUA, CHCA Collection, CHHS; and reports of the leases appear in the Chestnut Hill Local, December 1969-October 1970, Chestnut Hill Historical Society; and Germantown Courier, December 1969-December 1971, Germantown Historical Society.
diversification as well as real estate redevelopment, rehabilitation and reclamation. The new leaseholds no longer left rules of engagement with public transportation authorities and public benefit corporations ambiguous, however. The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commissioners expected a Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority would, in due time, assume the rights and responsibilities of community-based organizations and community-bound conservancies. Until then, PUC held railway leaseholders responsible for patronage of the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia and any governmental or nongovernmental organization for which it served as a managing agent.

Even in PSIC’s final year of operations, 1970-1971, WMAN and its counterparts struggled to keep their promise to public utility commissioners and, by extension, minorities seeking entry into the union of Maintenance-of-Way Employees that PSIC employed. Philadelphia's most disenfranchised laborers—men and women of color the right to (re)work rights-of-way—found receivers of their labor contracts (e.g. conservancies and community associations) color-blind to colorism in contract labor. The Philadelphia Tribune, an African-American-owned newspaper, rejoiced that a dream deferred by railroad companies and concessionaires in the business of restricting racial minorities to select spaces of maintenance and management might come to fruition once PSIC "Operations" concluded, or the state stepped back in—whichever came first. Yet, PSIC’s most profitable partner in public transportation preservation—the Pennsylvania RR Company/Penn Central Co.—continued, through bankruptcy

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105 Stuart Saunders, Penn Central Board chairman, to WMAN RR Committee President, James Monteith, November 1969 re: lease renewal and payment.

106 PSIC, Report to the City Council, October 1961, Frazier Papers, UTTCB, Box 2, Folder 3.

even, to insure the social enterprise of racial and economic equity remained in the hands of nonprofit corporations that maintained regimes of racial capitalism.

Socio-spatial borders separating public utilities and private space began eroding long before communitarian, collectivist and corporatist practices of conservancy took root in Philadelphia during the 1960s. Unregulated yet regularized, nonprofit yet monetized, informal yet formalized, railbanking gained legitimacy and legal authority as the need to gentrify station-grounds and grounds-keeping grew. Men and women of any race with the resources to mobilize post-industrial “green labor” tended to demobilize the industrial labor of blue-collar and colored brotherhoods. Leaseholds of West Mount Airy Neighbors, St. Martins Station Grounds Committee and their peers throughout Greater Philadelphia lent leverage over labor and landscapes that only public utility commissions and private utility companies controlled. the right to rectify, reinforce, or repress the right to work on rights-of-way thus relied, I’ve argued in this chapter, on collective action in the interest of commuters and cities with mobility and movements at risk.
CHAPTER 5

A Region in Transition: State Receivership of Railbanking Rites

Region at Risk (1996), a key resource for planners of transportation, housing and land use earned its authors and publisher critical acclaim for comprehensive yet deep analysis of how three decades of retrenchment from urban reinvestment reshaped the northeast.¹ The Regional Plan Association’s exposition of neglect and recovery broke new epistemic grounds in urban research amongst nongovernmental organizations, but the thesis was familiar to state authorities and non-state bodies consulted by the authors of Pennjerdel: Region in Transition (1964).² The Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Delaware Metropolitan Project, a consortium of nongovernmental organizations, published the report in hopes of shaping the statutes to govern the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) under development in 1964.³ According to a Region in Transition, the writing on the wall—fire sales of land and air rights, fare increases, service abandonment, station neglect, bankruptcy filings and conservancy contracts—clearly spelled the end of an era, when railroad trustees trusted the City of Philadelphia (and its counterparts across the country) to raise ridership and revitalize real estate. Pennjerdel: Region in Transition failed to yield the autonomous state authority that experts supposed would expose and expunge the exigencies of regional rail.

¹ Robert D. Yaro, A Region at Risk: The Third Regional Plan for the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Metropolitan Area (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1996);
“Operation Reading,” an “experiment in regional rail restructuring” that cost the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact (SEPACT) $4.7 million over 18-months alone, muffled the distress signal and muddied the waters for emergency response. To no avail, the city of Philadelphia had campaigned in the 1950s for a state transportation authority with police powers comparable to Philadelphia’s emergency control board—the Service Standards Board. A decade later, early advocates’ vision of a regulatory body to facilitate the sound development and democratization of private transit had yet to materialize. State legislators instead established a “Transit Authority for Southeastern Pennsylvania” with the power to procure sites and services of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact and the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation like any other concessionaire of nonprofit, governmental bodies. By their account, PSIC and SEPACT “Operations” only mitigated the “commuter crisis” in the City of Philadelphia and surrounding counties in a set time and place. In essence, these “Operations” fell short of demonstrating metropolitan transportation authorities required the police powers of the state and/or the financing flexibility of public benefit corporations to manage multi-modal operations and mobilize multi-sector funding.

As railroad companies serving Greater Philadelphia commuters began in 1968 to file for bankruptcy, PSIC executives and SEPACT’s Board—two representatives from Philadelphia, six from the participating three counties, two from labor lobbies and two from transport industry—enjoyed newfound respectability and responsibility. Between 1970, when Congress first provided emergency aid to Penn Central Transportation Company, and 1971, when Reading (RR) Company entered bankruptcy proceedings, SEPTA and its peers in the acquisition and

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4 Appendix II: Brief Summary of Proposed Metropolitan Transportation Authorities Act, UTTB Weekly Reports to the Office of Mayor Dilworth, RDA, PCA.

disposition of rail assets and liabilities, rigorously revisited a long-simmering question. Who should and could engage in the role of emergency manager that federal authorities increasingly but begrudgingly realized municipalities were unable to undertake? This chapter explores state power vis-a-vis municipal corporations and metropolitan capitalism in railbanking—adaptive reuse of railroad real estate to (pre)serve this space for public utilities.6

‘Bringing the State Back In’

Today, a token-laden, transfer between regional rail lines and city subways currently operated by SEPTA makes it hard to imagine it once epitomized innovation in national governance of regional recovery. Chartered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 1964 with bi-partisan support, SEPTA fulfilled then-Governor William W. Scranton’s campaign promise of New Public Management (“NPM in PA!”).7 Wharton Business School faculty seized the opportunity to practice neoliberal theories of public enterprise, and, ironically, clamored for John A. Bailey, SEPTA’s chief of staff, to appoint its alumni to SEPTA’s expanding divisional directorships. Bailey, a Wharton alum with decades of experience in the transit industry, brought together two diverging worlds in his remaining years as the Chief of Staff for managing agents of SEPTA. One world revolved around paper, bank notes specifically, and one concerned property—rolling stock, building stock and the stock options long granted to vested railway executives.8 Together these global leaders in management consulting and local veterans of

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operations research conducted the nation’s first valuation of real estate charged to a regional transportation authority and began to operationalize its prospectus for marketing existing mass transit services and monetizing existing transportation sites.  

Distributed amidst the bankruptcy proceedings of Penn Central and Reading Company in the winter of 1971, SEPTA’s *Commuter Rail Improvement Plan* represented the regional transportation authority as *the authority* on how to physically redevelop, economically restructure railways throughout the region. To transport academics and administrators, this presentation of knowledge produced under SEPTA’s direction represented emergency management as a state enterprise and SEPTA as the proper form of state power to actualize it. The plan amounted to economic restructuring, redistribution and redevelopment of an investment portfolio that preserves only limited liability and redeemable assets. Likewise, the railroad industry’s leading periodical, *Railway Age*, endorsed SEPTA as an emergent model for the “new federalism” of emergency preparedness.

*Railway Age* branded SEPTA a “new force for federalism” but SEPTA had not yet espoused or exerted its rights as a state transportation authority. In its first 7 years of existence, SEPTA’s 11-person Board of Directors, led by the Emeritus Chief Executive Officer of

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10 See especially, Market Study—SEPACT III: Demonstration Program, preface.


Philadelphia’s Federal Bank, limited its debts to loans that it could pay back after development and maximized its assets, particularly trackage, that could be removed at a date when it ceased to operate commuter rail.\(^{13}\) In its emphasis on labor procurement not land acquisition, cost reduction not service recovery, SEPTA cast a narrowed net than SEPECT, a 10-person consortium of county commissioners and city solicitors with federal and county funding for “Operations” of rail ‘research and development.’ SEPTA assumed neither the risks nor the rewards of such inquiries and interventions likely because SEPECT had undertaken recovery without legal responsibilities for any liabilities its research and development generated. To upstage SEPACT operations, SEPTA merely recast SEPACT as an endangered public body in need of emergency management.

Confined to governance, SEPTA connected and consolidated multiple modes of transportation exclusively through purchase-of-service agreements and public-private partnerships. Its charter allowed for it to operate mass transit only as a "managing agent" of another organization such as the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact or as an "emergency manager" of corporations in fiscal distress.\(^{14}\) Numerous operators of public transit would fall under these provisions: Philadelphia's Philadelphia Service Improvement Corporation, Penn Central, Reading Company, the PRR-RDG Seashore Lines, the Railroad Company of Central Jersey and CONRAIL.\(^{15}\) In keeping with the 'limited liability' agreements it signed with railroad companies in its first five years, SEPTA sparingly used its police powers to expropriate

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\(^{14}\) Ed. Harvey, to Mayor James Tate, June 2, 1966, Records of the James Tate Administration (JTA), PCA.

or expunge regional rail owners, operators, managers or maintainers, or for that matter, the architecture and infrastructure in their charge.

Initial financing for SEPTA also assured it would operate as an operatic public body—singing the praises of plans drawn up by its predecessors and peers. Legislators granted SEPTA a third of its projected capital improvements budget of $168.9 million for a nine-year period (1966-1975), but allocated no annual state subsidies to cover its contracts with service providers and facility proprietors. The state government agreed only to provide "operating support on a temporary basis, providing the program is so designed to eventually eliminate the need for state financed operating support." SEPTA could request funding for individual projects or programs, but only if SEPTA preemptively secured a revolving source of revenue to make that facility or service self-sustaining. Without sustainable sources of financial support such as a revolving tax or toll fund, SEPTA initially lacked (and arguably still lacks) the financial and administrative autonomy to operate as an authority on transportation in Greater Philadelphia comparable to "metropolitan transportation authorities" across the country.

Fiscal conservatives that constrained SEPTA’s budget failed to curb its appetite for adopting nearly-abandoned real estate for experiments in revenue-sharing. SEPTA employed its statutory authority to reclaim, reassemble and restructure land wherever PSIC had failed to acquire land and trust—the Schuylkill Valley, Delaware County and Center City. SEPTA subsidized a third set of SEPACT “Operations,” focused on the respectability as well as the

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16 SEPTA Bill, Draft. SEPTA Folders, RDA, PCA;
17 Ibid, pp. 1-2; See also, SEPTA Railroad Program: Planning Assumptions, Exhibit IV, p 1.
revenue of regional rail ridership. “Operation Reading”, as SEPTA colloquially and officially called SEPACT’s third set of “Operations” throughout their tenure (1965 to 1971), proved no more or less successful than previous operations. Thus, at their conclusion, SEPTA liquidated PSIC and purchased its assets (and liabilities and debts).

SEPTA board members primarily backed the authority’s praxis of systematizing service providers and site proprietors. Rather than treat Greater Philadelphia’s profitable private transport operators as worthy receivers of restructured railroad industry assets, SEPTA notified them of its plans to buy out their debtors, a costly acquisition strategy for a cash-strapped, fledging quasi-governmental body. Legal maneuvers, legislative directives and regulatory rulings enabled SEPTA to reclaim rights-of-way from for-profit corporations and other nongovernmental bodies in the 1970s. First, SEPTA undertook emergency management of SEPACT and, within a couple of years, ownership of several railway companies in distress: the Philadelphia Transportation Company, the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company, the Philadelphia & Germantown Railroad (Reading Company's Chestnut Hill Branch), the Germantown-Chestnut Hill Railroad (Pennsylvania Railroad's Chestnut Hill Branch), Schuylkill Valley Lines, Inc. (Reading Company's light-rail transit lines in Montgomery County) and the Central Jersey Railroad Company (Reading Company's West Trenton Branch), to name the most significant (Figure 5.1). Several unexpected events of the 1970s besides the railroad company bankruptcies, which most transportation industry experts forecasted, compelled SEPTA to build consensus with the remaining rail companies, concessionaires and conservancies on how to operate as their chief authority on regional rail recovery and resilience.

19 SEPTA Annual Reports, 1970-1974. SEPTA Records, #2123, Hagley
Buy-in after Bankruptcy

Federalist bodies at every level of government structured the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority as federal funding for bankrupt providers of mass transportation underwent restructuring. Under the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, the Philadelphia's Passenger Service Improvement Corporation (PSIC) and SEPACT lost their eligibility to receive federal aid such as the mass transportation demonstration grants they had managed since 1962. Citing a change in public priorities, Congress closed the Office of Transportation in the Housing and Home Finance Agency in 1964 and created an Urban Mass Transportation Administration to administer grants and loans to state transportation authorities engaged in regional planning and the regionalization of railroad infrastructure (rolling stock and building stock).\(^{20}\) When the U.S.

Department of Housing and Urban Development reported on the recipients of its aid between 1964 and 1967, it could classify all of its 246 Urban Transportation Demonstration Projects as one of three types: (1) innovations in service and operating techniques; (2) technological advances in transit equipment; and (3) system management, marketing, and miscellaneous.\textsuperscript{21} The project recipients represented every part of the country, but only a handful of engineering consultants and contractors prepared project reports. In short, UMTA grants funded technology, both fixed and mobile, physical and intellectual, in Greater Philadelphia at a time when other financial resources for regional rail reinvestment receded.

Rebuking local-initiated operations of metropolitan mass transit revitalization, Congress disbanded the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency's Office of Transportation in 1967, when it created the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and then authorized only the U.S. Department of Transportation, created by Congress in 1970, to grant technical and financial assistance to state transportation authorities. HHFA's proactive application of public hearing and professional review requirements to its projects of mass transportation planning made some congressmen question the agency's priorities, but its proceduralism played a small part in its demise. Most disconcerting for congressmen, HHFA's Office of Transportation entrusted grant management to municipal corporations (e.g. the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia) with public enterprises of transportation innovation.\textsuperscript{22} The U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency had not only been funding only locally-initiated operations of metropolitan mass transit revitalization prior to the passage of Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964. It also had relied on local initiative to guide its grant program's agenda. The Urban Mass Transportation Act

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{22} HHFA Annual Report, 1967. SEPTA Records, Acc. #: 2123, Hagley
of 1964, which would have reduced federal aid and local authority if approved as initially
drafted, gave the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) the power to
initiate demonstrations of its own, and established no limits on its financial participation in local
projects that reinforced or extended these operations.

Throughout their tenure over transportation aid, federal housing and urban development
policymakers veered little from giving patterns they established after the 1961 Housing Act.
According to one HUD transportation administrator, the federal government still favored projects
initiated, and paid in part, by local authorities. Thomas H. Floyd Jr., Director of the
Transportation Division for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development personally
reminded previous Mass Transportation Demonstration grant recipients and administrators of
these changes:

"The Federal share has been increased for only two kinds of projects: 1) those dealing
with transportation problems of the poor; or 2) those being conducted by public or private
institutions of higher learning which are strictly research projects." 23

Nevertheless, grants for the actual operation of transit services continued for "regular
demonstrations" until 1967, with the federal government footing two-thirds of the bill.

Dissolution of PSIC affected many workforces employed in its “Operations.” SEPTA,
with its focus on recruiting riders to rapid transit, addressed divestment from only one division of
labor in its formative years: operators of the buses, trolleys and subway trains that fed riders to
multimodal transportation centers. Neglect of remaining PSIC property and personnel not only
increased legal challenges to SEPTA’s Operations, but also compelled SEPTA’s board to create
loop-holes for risky and controversial land and labor transactions. In fact, SEPTA’s charter left

23 Thomas H. Floyd, Jr., Acting Director, HHFA Office of Transportation, to George M. Smerk, 22 September 1967,
regarding UMTA demonstration grant policy. SEPTA Folder, RDA, PCA
them responsible for a wide variety of critical infrastructure protection practices: facilities management, property surveillance, landscape preservation, safety inspection, crime prevention, building restoration, workforce development, and service quality control. Railroad unions in turn relied on the intermittent and provisional operations of railroad conservancies and concessionaires to keep them and their apprentices employed in the transportation sector.

Perhaps in fear of regional authority, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania ensured SEPTA diverged in its dependency from prospective peers. The consultants that Philadelphia hired from the Bay Area, where a metropolitan transit district was under consideration, planned for the transit authority to construct a tunnel between two railroad terminals in Center City as well as commercial and residential properties overhead. Epitomized by the Holland and Lincoln Tunnel projects of the Port Authority of New York, federal funding for these constructions flowed to port and bridge authorities constructing high-cost, high-maintenance infrastructure for buses. With nowhere to park but below new buildings they were developing, the buses required new terminals where trains terminated. In short, critical infrastructure for standardization and consolidation of regional transit took a back seat to physical planning for interstate commerce facilities as federal administrators empowered state bodies to manage metropolitan mass transportation.

The image of out-of-state journeys to work in the multi-state Delaware Valley region sank, at least temporarily, the partners that railroad companies preferred to entrust with their

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25 Philadelphia poached developers of the San Francisco Bay Area’s metropolitan transit district in 1956 by funding to a new urban research center that would become a leading think tank in the region. The Institute for Urban Studies. See UTTB document

26 On criticism of Port Authority’s GWB Bus terminal, see Jameson Doig, Empire on the Hudson: The Port of New York Authority. See also, Graham and Greenberg, Crisis Cities, chapter 1.
economic recovery. James M. Symes, the President of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, lent support for the enterprise, expertise and ethics of public authorities—public-chartered private bodies responsible for developing sites or operations on a self-sustaining basis. As early as October of 1957 he advised Mayor Richardson Dilworth that "while most people do not like to hear about 'authorities,' I do not believe—with the many conflicting interests involved in two cities, two states and hundreds of surrounding communities—we will obtain any real action on a fully integrated plan without it." Leveling with the mayor, Symes insisted, "We need planning and action—by experts clothed with authority and held responsible for their activities. 'Opera' organizations can do the 'singing' to help bring this about, but that is about as far as they can go." Only after Congress passed the Mass Transportation Act of 1964 did the Mayor of Philadelphia, by then James J. Tate, campaign for a Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA). And even then, his proposal inserted "Buy local" provisions and other procurement restrictions designed to ensure strategic partnerships between Philadelphia’s companies and communities (e.g. Budd Company, rail car manufacturer) continued.

SEPTA’s limited authority focused favorably in communities of North Philadelphia, where its short-term actions for long-term change traveled farthest. Purchasing debt and debt-ridden real estate from PTC and PTSC in 1970, the height of their rally, SEPTA gained responsibility for rail terminals and tracks on the brink of collapse, station grounds in violation of public utility laws, railroad labor contracts in dispute and land leases undergoing litigation. But it also received veritable community assets, rehabilitated rolling stock and even the reputable name under which PTSC had operated its rapid rail and bus transit lines to much popular demand and

27 James Symes, PRR President, to Mayor Richardson Dilworth, October 25, 1957, General Files, 1957-1958, RDA, PCA
28 Edward A. Harvey, PSIC Executive Director, to Mayor James Tate, May 7, 1962, PSIC, JHJT, PCA
profitable since 1936. The Philadelphia Transportation Company (PTC), a subsidiary of the
publicly traded National City Lines, Inc., and the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation
Company, a family-owned business that made the beloved Red Arrow Lines synonymous with
bullet trains and rapid bus transit, yielded only after raising revenue and rising in stock value—the worst case scenario in a hostile takeover. SEPTA emerged from these 1968 and 1970 sales with few allies as well as few resources.

A Red Arrow-decorated silver train of the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation
Company rolled into 69th Street Terminal for the last time in December 1970. After 36 years, and
several overtures for the sale of his company to private and public transport providers, A. Merritt
Taylor sold his family-owned business of trackless trolleys and high-speed rail to the
Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) for $13.5 million. Unlike the
other urban and suburban transportation companies that collapsed in 1970 under ballooning debt,
declining patronage and overwhelming competition from automobiles, the Philadelphia
Suburban Transportation Company (PSTC) still held profitable rail service and valuable real
estate, namely the Red Arrow Lines. Moreover, the company’s reputation for reliability
remained intact; dependability and steadfastness remained the image of the Company in local
periodicals and industry reports alike even as the company struggled to continue making mass
transit profitable and affordable.

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30 SEPTA, SEPTA Capital and Operating Programs, 1970-1977, McLaughlin Files, Box 1, PCA
31 PTSC Agreement with SEPTA, A-4426: Mayor’s Files, JHJT, PCA;
32 Phillip Fine, “Expert Urges Help for Rail and Bus Lines: Red Arrow President Sees Place for Both in Equal Partnership,” Evening Bulletin (11 June 1962);
Merritt Taylor purchased a vast network of streetcars, trolley tracks, railways and train yards from the Philadelphia and Western Railroad Company in 1948 with every intention of becoming the mass transit provider for southeastern Pennsylvania. The robust system that P&W had developed between West Philadelphia’s commercial centers, streetcar suburbs of Montgomery County and transit villages of Delaware County included exclusive access to three railways into Philadelphia from the surrounding suburbs. Electrified with a ‘third rail’ like New York subways, these rapid transit lines turned a profit in 1950 thanks in large part to the aerodynamically designed transit vehicles that ran nearly around the clock along them. Labelled “Liberty Liners” by PTSC President Merritt Taylor, the red and white trains traversed 13.7 miles between Upper Darby, the Delaware County seat, and Norristown, the Montgomery County seat, every 15 minutes in both directions. 34-cents afforded riders coffee and tea during the morning rush hour, and, during the evening rush hour, a seat at the rolling neighborhood bar in 1968.

At each terminal, the Red Arrow trolleys from Montgomery County’s borders with Chester, Delaware and Philadelphia counties famously discharged hundreds of passengers in time to transfer to other modes of transportation: PSTC’s High-Speed Line from Norristown to West Philadelphia; local and express bus lines of the Philadelphia Transportation Company (PTC); streetcars and buses of the Schuylkill Valley Lines, Inc.; PTC’s rapid transit service along the City of Philadelphia’s Market Street Elevated; and commuter rail services offered by the Pennsylvania Railroad, Reading Railroad and Baltimore and Ohio Railroad companies. Such


34 Ward Allan Howe, “Speedy Suburban Service,” NYT (19 April 1964), 9;

35 Ibid.
interconnectedness, between PTSC routes and terminals on the one hand and the public and private providers of mass transit, attracted riders but also hampered development of the Red Arrow lines.

Postwar plans to expand the vast Red Arrow Lines toward new commercial centers of Greater Philadelphia—the King of Prussia Mall and the Philadelphia International Airport in particular—never materialized. Merritt Taylor, Jr., President of PTSC, turned down—and publicly tore down—cooperative agreements with the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia, Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority and the Pennsylvania Turnpike while its competitors capitalized on public-private partnerships with these governmental authorities, the City of Philadelphia’s City Transit Division or the State of Pennsylvania’s Department of Highways. While Taylor turned down offers to move the Norristown High-Speed Line into the Schuylkill Expressway median, the Philadelphia Transportation Company and the City of Philadelphia’s Department of Public Property agreed to extend its services along the Market Street Elevated to PSTC’s Upper Darby Terminal. In coordination with Schuylkill Valley Lines, Inc., another trolley and bus operator in suburbs to the northwest of Philadelphia, led PTSC to convert its Montgomery County streetcars into trackless trolleys and run express bus service from Norristown’s 69th Street Terminal along the Schuylkill Expressway and Penn Turnpike. But, just four years after PTSC began its bus services, the Pennsylvania Railroad and Reading Railroad received subsidies in return for their participation in “Operations” of the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia.

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36 John A. Bailey to Mayor James Tate, “Confidential” Letter, 19 December 1962: “His pitch was that PTC, which carried so many more riders, should receive a city subsidy and that there should be a totally integrated system…There are, of course, conflicts between PTSC trains and PTC and the PUC is permitting more…PTC seems willing to operate loss leaders (i.e. the short-distance riders support them and the other very long trips….It would be better if future PTC agreements could make it profitable to the company to conform to city desires.”
In spite of losses, from which PTSC never recovered, Taylor steadfastly eschewed partnership with PSIC or participation in SE Pact operations.\(^{37}\)

Figure 5.2. President of Red Arrow Lines Merritt H. Taylor Jr., of Haverford, chats with Brandon Barrington a regular Liberty Liner rider traveling from Bryn Mawr to Norristown. February 1, 1970. *Philadelphia Inquirer*

Ideologically opposed to private equity in public property, the Taylor family shrewdly reinvested in the republican electorate that promoted and protected property rights (*Figure 5.2*). When the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company gained control of the Philadelphia & Western ROW in 1946, it acquired landmarks of local transportation history—and kept existing maintainers of these building and landscapes employed in their renovation. Gutting P&W’s

historic structures not its sociopolitical infrastructure, the company renovated stationary and mobile architecture of the region’s industrial suburbs (*Figure 5.3*). Waiting areas and transit cars underwent renovations that reduced staff but left replaced interior amenities and external ornamentation like leather sofas and newsstands with modern editions. Seemingly small and spotty, the investments that Merritt Taylor, Jr. made in the old P&W railways and rail yards substantiated his case against SEPTA specifically and state control of regional revitalization more broadly.

![Image of 69th Street Terminal](69thStreetTerminal.jpg)

*Figure 5.3. 69th Street Terminal, during the Red Arrow labor strike that followed SEPTA takeover. *Delaware County Daily Times* (5 April 1973): 10*

“60 Minutes,” the television news magazine, opened with a speeding bullet on August 18th of 1971. A “bullet train” roared into the 69th Street terminal of the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company’s Red Arrow Lines every fifteen minutes, the news anchors reported to
a national audience unaware of the difference between Red Arrow Lines, Inc. and SEPTA’s Red Arrow Division. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority attempted to duplicate the company’s around the clock, high-speed service with a drink and smile, but determined after just six months that other costs proved more pressing.\(^ {38} \) For instance, a three-story terminal built by the P&W’s Home Owners Association in Downtown Norristown proved costly to preserve because of its spaciousness—which allowed for a restaurant, a lunch counter, a barber shop, a passenger waiting room, a ticket office, and the offices of P&W management. In 1950, Merritt Taylor had the station’s interior renovated to house the rank-and-file of the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company. The exterior had continued to degrade, posing a menace to economic development along 69\(^{th} \) Street. Repairs to 69\(^{th} \) Street looked more pressing, but the recidivism of riders from Red Arrow Lines in the first year of SEPTA ownership compelled the SEPTA Board to bring back the high maintenance bar cars in short order (\textit{Figure 5.4}).\(^ {39} \) In short, purchase of the Red Arrows Lines at once legitimized SEPTA as a bona fide regional transportation authority and undermined its capacity to operate regional rail rapid transit


\(^ {39} \) “Red Arrow Bar Cars Make Splash,” \textit{Philadelphia Inquirer} (23 January 1972): 19,
Non-state State Building: The Urban Coalition of SEPTA

Paratransit providers paradoxically strengthened the state’s praxis of regionalization and reclamation. Often treated as a contemporary phenomenon, paratransit figured greatly in planning practice, both public and private, professional and pedagogical, in Philadelphia at the time.40 Transportation planning for state-sponsored nonprofit organizations overflowed the halls of the School of Design at the University of Pennsylvania and conference rooms of the Citizens Council on City Planning.41 Tasked with assessing whether “parasitic” actions would obstruct “normal operations,” SEPTA's Rail Contract Division consultant Louis T. Klauder reported to skeptical board members that he happened upon ephemeral, situational, intelligent and

40 On the praxis, as practiced in Philadelphia and by private institutions based there during the postwar period, On the history of the praxis, see Emily Talen, “DIY Urbanism: A History,” Journal of Planning History; and Special Issue: DIY Urbanism; and Cathy Lang Ho, “Spontaneous Interventions: Design Actions for the Common Good,” Architect, August 2012.

41 Chris Klemek, Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal, p. 242-43.
idiosyncratic actions within the transportation sector such as informal feeder services (e.g. jitneys) and grade crossing guards (a spin on school crossing guard duties), plus a vast number of other small-scale operations of poverty-stricken populations. Still a fluid concept with racial undertones in 1970, the term “paratransit” shortly thereafter gained official meaning as nimble, individuated, actuated, attenuated, but above all, responsive forms of movement that address “spatial mismatch” between public transportation provisions and prospective patrons of those services.

Paratransit did not depend on “disruptive technologies,” just unauthorized operators of transit vehicles manufactured by Philadelphia-based Budd Company or Detroit-based Greyhound, Inc., which shared the global transit vehicle marketplace since World War II. Just after SEPTA relaunched “Operation Reading” in 1966 with funding from Pennsylvania’s Department of Community Affairs, the Urban Coalition, Inc., began transporting African-American men and women from North Philadelphia to corporate campuses in Montgomery County on Greyhound vans sponsored by the ex-urban corporations and the inner-city community of North Philadelphia. Supported by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the community development corporation was known amongst city, state and


44 I draw here on the meaning of the term in transportation research, which characterizes applications of science and technology that rupture an obdurate socio-technical order. See, for example, Richard Baker, et. al. Disruptive Technologies and Transportation: Final Report. Texas A&M Transportation Institute, PRC 15-45 F, June 9016.

45 Guian McKee, The Problem of Jobs, 229
federal officials for its “black enterprises” of manpower development. These feeder services formed part of a larger initiative—“Operation Industrialization”—whereby black women and men trained in post-industrial trades at consumer product plants and distribution centers of Johnson & Jonson, Procter & Gamble and other multi-national corporations (Figure 5.5).46 Encircling Philadelphia to the north, these new corporate campuses filled the only remaining open spaces in Philadelphia's inner-ring suburbs following the wave of commercialization—a wave that SEPACT and PSIC facilitated in the early 1960s. Park-n-Ride "Operations" that parked railroad patrons on commercial properties along the city’s crabgrass frontier paved the way for pastoral capitalism—specifically, corporate campuses for those very same commuters.47

Figure 5.5. “Operation Industrialization” of the Urban Coalition, Inc. from The Problem of Jobs (University of Pennsylvania Press)

46 Ibid.

The Urban Coalition, Inc.’s transport operations revolved around the few multinational employers that included “Operation Industrialization” participants in their own professional development programs for people of color.\(^{48}\) Likely to control incorporation of its program participants and the image of its program more broadly, Coalition leadership freely served as a managing agent of these affirmative action programs for companies that had just begun them.\(^{49}\) Authorized by companies, African-American pupils passed into municipalities long hostile to black bodies crossing their borders and Urban Coalition, Inc. vans passed as personalized transport for a vulnerable class of employees.\(^{50}\) The Coalition keenly headed off backlash from municipalities by opening up its vehicles for equal employment opportunities to non-white persons and ex-urban patrons. To do so, the organization agreed to deliver anyone from Reading Company’s unmanned stations in North Philadelphia and Montgomery County—Fern Rock, Tabor and Oak Lane, and stations along Reading’s West Trenton Branch—to the gates of Fortune 500 corporations (Figure 5.6).\(^{51}\) In doing so, Urban Coalition, Inc. earned contracts with the state transportation authority to actualize the affirmative action policy of its financier, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s Department of Community Affairs.

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\(^{48}\) Interview by author, 27 November 2014, with two participants in Johnson and Johnson’s professional development program for persons of color during the 1970s, when it became a rotation program for African-American hires. The interview subjects (one the supervisor for the other after their rotation) requested anonymity, to protect their professional identity and employment history. One has died since the interview, and one continues to earn a pension from J&J. Both worked within the distribution plants in Montgomery County, where the program began with Urban Coalition, Inc.

\(^{49}\) Rabig, The Business of Black Power.

\(^{50}\) Interview with Managing Director, participant in Johnson and Johnson’s Affirmative Action program, 1971-1972. 24 July 2013.

\(^{51}\) Interview with Distribution Manager, participant in Johnson and Johnson’s Affirmative Action program, 1968-1974. 10 July 2014
Figure 5.6. Self-Described “Black Professionals exiting a SEPTA Train Shuttle, which offered 'reverse commute' service from North Philadelphia Station to Montgomery County on a trial basis in the 1970s. DOCUMERICA Program, 1972-1977, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
Urban coalition, Inc. strategically performed its trial run during the bankruptcy proceedings of Pennsylvania Railroad and Reading Company in 1970 and 1971. These extended events allowed the coalition to recast the community-based organizations transporting workers amidst uncertainty as cooperative, concessionary and above all, critical to the region's post-industrial survival.\(^{52}\) No announcement or advertisement appeared in *Glenside News* or other high-circulation periodicals in the corporate corridor, just the *Philadelphia Tribune*. Philadelphia’s only African-American owned and operated newspaper put North Philadelphians on notice that the community development corporation in charge of Model Cities initiatives such as the renovation of Broad Street subway terminal was “moving on up” to suburban transport sites.\(^{53}\)

The bankruptcy proceedings, which ran until April of 1976, gave existing clients of "Operation Industrialization."—and those the Urban Coalition, Inc. hoped to procure—an unexpectedly lengthy opportunity to assess its role in metropolitan mobility and relation to metropolitan transportation authorities.\(^{54}\) Several praised SEPTA's Office of Public Affairs for accounting for their productivity needs by covering the proverbial "last mile" in the journey to work during a period of immobility and inaccessibility.\(^{55}\) Others spoke on behalf of their employees, who came to expect services during the strike they had grown unaccustomed to

\(^{52}\) Ibid.


\(^{55}\) Guian McKee, *The Problem of Jobs: Liberalism, Race and Deindustrialization in Philadelphia* (U of Chicago Press, 2008), pp. 29, 229-235. It is worth noting that the ‘colored’ communities of North Philadelphia had already built up a legacy of transit-oriented activism, literally standing up for the racial integration of inner-city transit operations and transport construction since the start of WWII.
during normal operating periods.\textsuperscript{56} Companies with plants in North Philadelphia questioned why their workplaces had been excluded, blasting SEPTA for disregard of loyal patrons to its "Operations."\textsuperscript{57} In this respect, SEPTA earned credibility as well as credit for trespassers—unsanctioned public transport vehicles, blacks in violation of social codes for 'white space,' and unemployed urban residents in suburban employment markets.

SEPTA's unexpected brush with the burgeoning field of paratransit empowered the organization’s metropolitan planning prowess but dulled its police powers. SEPTA's staff treated themselves as facilitators or “front men” for both multinational corporations and multiethnic community development corporations vested in accessibility of employment centers region-wide.\textsuperscript{58} The opportunity to service all wedges and corridors of employment in the region never materialized. The jitneys that Urban Coalition, Inc. operated revitalized Reading Company’s West Trenton Branch station-grounds without adding ridership to Reading Company, thereby putting the leaseholds of Montgomery County’s litigious, liberal civic associations in jeopardy. To keep both the Urban Coalition and the Noble-Meadowbrook Civic Association out of court, SEPTA invited them to co-operate “Operation Opportunity,” the regional transportation authority’s own affirmative action program for rehabilitation of Reading Viaduct, the infrastructure of all commuter rail operating just north of the city in Montgomery County.\textsuperscript{59}

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, stations along the elevated railroad between Reading Terminal in Center City Philadelphia and Montgomery County and Bucks County

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{58} SEPTA, “Operation Reading” Station and Parking Improvement Study, 1966.

\textsuperscript{59} SEPTA, Reading Rail Demonstration Grant Application, draft, 11 March 1965.
termini exclusively served “Operation Reading,” SEPTA’s federally-funded program abating abandonment of Reading Company real estate, employees and service areas.

From the start of Reading Company’s court-ordered receivership in 1971, SEPTA misread cues for emergency management from federal agencies. SEPTA’s Rail Contract Division projected the U.S. Department of Transportation, which administered the Emergency Rail Services Act, to renew any service purchase package that put Reading Company employees back to work. SEPTA declared the Urban Coalition, Inc. its "managing agent" of affirmative actions in a 1971 application for another urban mass transportation demonstration grant and placed priority on maximum participation of the region’s potentially unemployed rather than maximal revenue generation for Reading Company.\(^{60}\) The multimodal feeder bus network that SEPTA and the Urban Coalition devised garnered approval and investment from a five-county board, which approved inclusion of “Operation Opportunity” in SEPTA's Capital Program for 1970-1977—the projected tenure of Reading Company receivership.\(^{61}\) Paradoxically, the very fact that paratransit became one of many disaster preparedness plans of the associative state, precluded the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority from receiving federal aid earmarked for transferable knowledge and transformative action.\(^{62}\)

Throwing the baby out with the bath water, USDOT's procurement protocols precluded SEPTA from establishing an identity in the transport marketplace at the very moment metropolitan immobility and inaccessibility warranted strategic planning and entrepreneurial

\(^{60}\) SEPTA, Application for UMTA Grant for “Operation Reading,” prepared for the U.S. Department of Transportation, Urban Mass Transportation Administration, 1968


partnerships. In 1970, SEPTA had yet to earn the trust of bankruptcy court judges responsible for the disposition of Penn Central assets, or even the endorsement of Richardson Dilworth, the Philadelphia mayor that returned to the practice of contract law as a court-appointed trustee of Reading Company during its receivership. Instead, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority received one of the $500,000 preservation planning grants dispensed under the auspices of the Emergency Rail Services Act of 1970.\textsuperscript{63} The planning grant afforded SEPTA the opportunity to develop a \textit{Plan and Program for Regional Rail Revitalization}, but only to foster the revitalization of multi-modal transportation centers. The grant and its grantors—the U.S. Department of Transportation and the National Endowment for the Arts—fell short of aiding SEPTA in its efforts to procure design and development services needed to optimize the services it performed at rail stations, terminals and yards and operationalize cooperative communities along the way.

Moreover, local partners of metropolitan transportation authorities had prepared for the disaster of deindustrialization while SEPTA and its peers braced for extreme weather events. In the span of one year, Hurricanes Irene and equally vociferous Nor’easters deluged coastal infrastructure for trans-continental transportation in the Delaware Valley. While port authorities throughout the Mississippi Delta and Gulf region took heat from the Army Corps of Engineers for faulty canal systems after Hurricane Betsy, the Delaware River and Hudson River port and bridge authorities came under fire from the Interstate Commerce Commission for the frail foundations of railroad tunnels and viaducts that carried Northeast Corridor trains.\textsuperscript{64} Still, these

\textsuperscript{63} SEPTA Regional Rail Revitalization Program, 1972. SEPTA Records, Ron Degraw Collection, Hagley.

critiques of state transportation authorities paled in comparison to the assaults that metropolitan planning organizations of northeastern and Midwestern states experienced in 1974, as Congress heard testimony from local and federal, state and non-state authorities in transportation regarding their inability to curtail the “catastrophe of commuter rail.” The survival of public-private partnerships, congressmen learned, depended on the preservation of private and public space on which these companies built their cooperative enterprises.66

The Diversity of Federalism and the Federalization of Diversity

Pennsylvania’s public utility commissions authorized rightsizing—the abandonment and auctions of railroad company real estate under the auspices of planned shrinkage—to address skepticism of state control. While public housing commissioners released public housing developers and managers of their responsibility to repair their buildings, public utility commissioners relegated concessionaires, communities and conservancies to care for damaged and degraded properties unfit for inclusion in state-subsidized operations. Commissioners of housing and transportation property first found common ground in the late 1960s, as the Pennsylvania Railroad began selling off its properties to its creditors, who, by no coincidence,

65 Congressional hearings covered extensively in Matthew Hiner, “Nationalization and Deregulation.” See also, Abandonment rules proposed,” Railway Age 175, no. 23 (9 Dec 1974): 18.


had been underwriters and developers of middle-income housing in northeastern and Midwestern cities. As early as 1958, public utility commissioners agreed to allow any governmental body—including metropolitan transportation authorities (e.g. SEPTA) and interstate transportation corporations (e.g. Trans-Hudson Corp.)—to abate railroad bankruptcies through this and other methods of acquiring the land and air development rights of railroad companies. Come 1970, when the behemoth Penn Central filed for bankruptcy, these abandonment rules remained available but largely inactivated.

SEPTA had developed a capital program for the 1970s, but had yet to take over development sites and services from transport companies in distress. PSIC—the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia—and SEPACT—the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact—had yet to sell off their holdings (e.g. new rail cars) and remunerate residual financing in 1973. Both remained in operation until they completed a five-year audit of regional rail operations that the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency funded between 1962 and 1965. Members of both the PSIC and SEPACT Boards agreed to dissolution

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69 On the rights-of-way of railroad companies and their right to transfer their privileges to a variety of partners, see Jose Gomez Ibanez, *Regulating Infrastructure: Monopoly, Contracts and Discretion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

70 Ibid.


72 Mayor Frank Rizzo and City Solicitor Martin Weinberg, Philadelphia, to George J. Craig, Secretary of Action Committee, SEPACT, 1 October 1973; McLaughlin Files, Records of Frank L. Rizzo Administration (hereafter FLR), PCA
of their organizations in October 1972, but neither had undertaken the disposition of land, labor and procurement and personnel contracts a year later.\footnote{George J. Craig, Secretary, SEPACT, to Mayor Frank Rizzo, 29 December 1972, FLR, PCA} In the interim, one developed plans for a tunnel connecting Reading (Company) Terminal and the Suburban Station (terminal) of Pennsylvania RR Company, while the other (PSIC) assessed railroad holdings that remained attractive for reinvestment in spite of ridership recidivism.\footnote{SEPACT, SEPACT II: Final Report of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact, with the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation of Philadelphia, 1965.} The Penn-Jersey Transportation Study Team busied itself with a comprehensive plan for the Penn-Jersey region—the only document required for it to receive and redistribute federal aid to metropolitan transit and housing developers as a ‘Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.’\footnote{Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Comprehensive Plan for the Greater Philadelphia Region (Philadelphia: DVRPC, 1970). On the transportation policymaking responsibilities of metropolitan planning organizations circa 1970, see Mark Rose, “The Interstates and the Cities: The U.S. Department of Transportation and the Freeway Revolt, 1966-1973,” Journal of Policy History 20, no. 2 (2008): 193-226.} Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA) proceeded with procurement of contractors and tenants for Philadelphia’s own Port Authority Bus Terminal, as well as plans to incorporate the Reading—Pennsylvania Seashore Lines into the rail rapid transit system it built and managed on behalf of the cities of Philadelphia and Camden.\footnote{“Rail Renaissance Seen in 70s,” Asbury Park Press (29 December 1969): 3.}

Even still, SEPTA lagged behind its counterparts in capitalizing on the liberalization praxis of public utility commissioners in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. While bi-state authorities like the Trans-Hudson Corporation of New York solicited approval from their state regulators for inventive acquisition and development financing, SEPTA sought authorization, from federal district judges and the Interstate Commerce Commission, to invoke grandfather clauses in existing contracts with companies in charge of decommissioned services or declining commuter
rail stations, yards, and parking facilities. For instance, in 1967 SEPTA sought to acquire PTC for $54 million based on an obscure option in PSIC and SEPACT purchase-of-service agreements to invoke tariff and lease terms in place between the City and PTC shareholders since 1907. Injunctions against the railroad companies for breach of contract forced them to the bargaining table, where SEPTA negotiated the exchange of projected services for 58 new rail cars (purchased by SEPTA from Philadelphia-based Budd Company for $17.4 million). Lawsuits and associated fees and payments greatly cost SEPTA, depleting its coffers to such an extent that SEPTA solicited emergency assistance from the state and its federal representatives at the end of 1973, to meet its $27 million shortfall in payroll, purchase-of-service agreements and lease payments.

Lost in legal avenues to resolve intractable state legislatures, protracted federal court proceedings, and debilitating debt service, SEPTA needed federal and local aid to stay in business through 1971. In the spring of 1970, the City provided SEPTA a bridge loan to cover operating costs for services the city already purchased from SEPTA (a municipal bond that insured SEPTA closed its transaction with PTC in 1968); in return, the city annually received $6.5 million in rent—cash or credit—from SEPTA for the subways it used, streets it leased and

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78 Philadelphia/SEPTA/Red Arrow fight proved far more protracted. See for example, “Red Arrow Presidents Backs Plan for Merger with PTC,” Delaware County Times, 4 Jan 1967, 18;


80 James C. McConnon, chairman, SEPTA, to Governor Milton Shapp, Congressman Jack Seltzer, Senator Henry Cianfrani, 8 June 1973, McCaughlin Files, FLR, PCA.

81 Mayor Frank Rizzo and L. Stolz, SEPTA Board Member, “SEPTA Legal Fees,” 11 June 1973, McCaughlin, FLR, PCA
other city-owned structures on which SEPTA operated railcars. SEPTA’s chairman James C. McConnon countered with an offer to share $8 million in rail rapid transit companies over four years, if he received, in writing, “an assurance that the city would not oppose before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, which has sole jurisdiction, any fare increases.” SEPTA’s capacity to pay the city hinged on fare raises, it claimed, given remuneration from railroad companies in receivership would prove protracted. Neither set of terms appeased the city’s own appointees to the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation. They vetoed state complicity in the fiscal stress of commuters, while the majority of representatives for Philadelphia’s surrounding counties overturned their veto and supported SEPTA’s Special Counsel for contract disputes in negotiating municipal subsidies, state finance and federal aid.

SEPTA lost an avid labor, land and civil rights advocate in state and federal courts to the White House in late 1968, when William T. Coleman, SEPTA’s Special Counsel, began the first of many presidential advisor positions that led to his appointment as U.S. Secretary of Transportation in 1974. Coleman first became an adjunct member of presidential cabinets in

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82 Harry J. Karafin and E.J. Hussie, “Deal for 2nd Fare Rise is Price of Contract,” Philadelphia Inquirer (18 Jan 1967): 1; Neil K. Fischer, “SEPTA will Forget about a Fare Increase if City Will Forget about Rent,” Philadelphia Inquirer (25 July 1970), 8. Two years later, SEPTA held the city ransom: David. N. Phillips, the Acting General Manager of SEPTA, appealed to state court judges that the authority’s tariffs, rent and other fees not regulated by the PUC “should be waived by Philadelphia in the interest of lower fares and better service to the public. They should make that contribution in the interest of better transportation here,” he concluded.

83 “Transit Merger Backed,” Delaware County Times (4 Jan 1967), 1;

84 “Tate Called Key to ‘Secret agreement’ with Railroads,” Delaware County Times (14 April 1967): 1.

85 Ibid.

1959, when he served on President Eisenhower’s Commission on Employment Policy, and continued to serve on a variety of economic policy councils and emergency presidential commissions until Congress confirmed his post within the cabinet of President Gerald Ford in 1975. Between 1970 and 1975, Coleman aided staff of U.S. Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe in assembling the industry advisors that would form, upon congressional confirmation in 1974, the United States Railway Association.87 One of his most important actions within beltway politics involved advocacy for northeast railways as a member of President Nixon’s Commission on Productivity and the Economic Policy Board of President Ford.88 According to legal scholars, his counsel on limited liability in the transportation industry persuaded Secretary Volpe (1969-1972) to advocate for federal investment in the rail industry before the 1972 hurricane season devastated the assets of railroad companies in coastal cities. In short, Coleman’s advocacy for local subsidization of regional economies mirrored his work within Greater Philadelphia on behalf of SEPTA’s for-profit and nonprofit partners.

Emergency Aid to Emergent Authorities

Amendments to the Emergency Rail Services Act (ESA) of 1970 vindicated Coleman’s campaign for federally-insured investments in northeastern railroad companies and real estate. Not to be confused with ‘assured investment’ in the nation’s only economically productive railroad facilities, insurance for investors in Main Lines and branches of the Northeast Corridor

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abdicated state transportation authorities of critical infrastructure protection. Passage of the Act in 1970 allowed for any governmental or nongovernmental body to buy equity in railroad companies without approval from the Interstate Commerce Commission “in the case of an actual or anticipated cessation of essential transportation services by any railroad.”

In accordance with ERSA, the U.S. Department of Transportation also could serve as a guarantor for any stock purchased—the same role that mortgage insurance issued by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) played in the private market for select residential building stock.

Court-appointed trustees of Penn Central, which serviced the entire Rustbelt, requested and received almost all of the $125 million in emergency loan grantees that Congress authorized on December 10th of 1970. In order “to keep the nation’s largest railroad running through March 31st” at least, Congress and President Nixon agreed to increase nearly ten-fold the treasury of Penn Central of January 1971 ($18 million). ESRA funds served their purpose, but not as congressmen expected. Instead of using proceeds from certificate sales to execute payroll payments, or make rental and tariff payments required of the railroad companies under purchase-of-service agreements with northeast cities and Midwestern states, Penn Central used funds raised through stock certificate sales to underwrite transfers of land and air rights in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Delaware, Maryland and Washington, D.C.. Stock certificate holders quickly became another set of trustees for building

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stock of critical importance to passenger service provision in the region as Penn Central sold rights-of-way to “first creditors” with a “federal guarantee” of debt relief. The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and a number of Attorney Generals opened investigations into these transactions, but ultimately found Penn Central trustees had only keenly navigated a loop-hole in federal legislation.

Land and air development rights sold by Penn Central Transportation Company in 1971 exposed short-comings in preservation and transportation laws passed in the wake of railroad station-ground sales to commercial developers in the mid-1960s. In spite of the doomsday tales that city leaders told, senior congressmen from Oregon to Maryland agreed only on how to “save unused stations” and “serviceable terminals,” particularly the most “magnificent structures worth saving from the wrecker’s ball.” Congressional representatives for coastal cities and the industrial heartland, where terminal facilities concentrated, failed to win over fiscal conservatives, let alone so-called Dixiecrats across the auto-centric Sunbelt. Amidst protests from the likes of Jane Jacobs and Phillip Johnson, the press crying foul, and city councils drafting preservation laws, Stuart Saunders and the rest of Penn Central’s leadership proceeded with demolition of “Pennsylvania Stations” in New York City, Boston, Pittsburgh and elsewhere


95 Hines, Conrail, 102-125.
In the late 1960s, the downtown superblocks on which “Penn Stations” once sat transformed into commercial centers, where transportation users connected with consumer goods and each other underground (Figure 5.8). Meanwhile, Penn Central made plans to sell generously-sized stations in more gritty surroundings to community colleges and hospitals (fig. 6). Penn Central, in its 2 years of existence, wreaked havoc on central cities in ways still unaccounted.

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97 “Pennsy Set to Sell Air Rights over Two City Stations,” Philadelphia Inquirer (17 May 1971): 3

98 Unfortunately, urban histories of Penn Central or other railroad companies are nonexistent. The closest to a critical examination of the industry’s urban (dis)investments during the postwar period can be found in Elihu Rubin, Insuring the City, which focuses on the underwriter of railway redevelopment invested in downtown commerce.
The Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 (RPSA), which created the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (AMTRAK), abdicated state transportation authorities of the responsibility to intervene in the disposition and demolition of Penn Central terminals. Drafters of the bill envisioned the federal government would underwrite and incentivize preservation planning on behalf of private transportation authorities undergoing economic and organizational restructuring at the behest of federal bankruptcy courts. Instead, the law authorized AMTRAK to undertake rehabilitation of railways and renovation of real estate in which the federal government had already sunk federal aid, namely rail property in the Northeast Corridor. Aging transport facilities from Massachusetts to Washington, D.C. already collectively served as a laboratory for government-sponsored tests of high speed transportation technology, government-sponsored demonstrations of high-capacity vehicular transport and government-

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100 Rail Passenger Rail Act of 1970.
sponsored expositions of multi-modal transportation systems and spaces.\textsuperscript{101} Proprietors of these sites could gain a boost—amounting to more than $150 million annually—once AMTRAK took over all long-range operations rendered there—from track repair to building renovation.\textsuperscript{102} But, AMTRAK had yet to procure permission from each state within the Northeast Corridor to do so by the end of John A. Volpe’s tenure as U.S. Secretary of Transportation (1969-1972) in December 1972.\textsuperscript{103} ‘State rights’ for which Presidents, Senators and Congressmen campaigned in the early 1970s disallowed AMTRAK from taking over Reading Terminal and other facilities already state-owned, state-leased and in receiverships appointed by state bankruptcy courts and public utility commissions.\textsuperscript{104}

AMTRAK, congressmen learned from testimony in 1973, also lacked the power to restructure the physical and institutional space within which it operated. Limited by the “Metropolitan Districts” that utility commissions established in the late 1960s, AMTRAK deferred and delegated some of its long-term planning operations to state authorities with jurisdiction there. In the Penn-Jersey region, for instance, the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority regulated development and disposition of land within Urban Renewal Areas that


\textsuperscript{103} Hilton, \textit{Amtrak}, 23.

\textsuperscript{104} Hilton, 35-51.
housed commuter rail yards, tracks and stations.\textsuperscript{105} The Delaware River Port Authority rehabilitated interstate bridges on which AMTRAK’s high-speed transportation plans depended.\textsuperscript{106} The Bicentennial Corporation of Philadelphia, a municipal body, and Penn Landing Corporation, a not-for-profit public benefit corporation, orchestrated reactivation of an abandoned River Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad Co. that could serve as a downtown by-pass or express route after the Bicentennial Exposition of 1976.\textsuperscript{107} And, while it worked on these long-term arrangements, AMTRAK relied on SEPTA to purchase passenger services in the short-term from the trustees and lessees of railroad companies in receivership (both Penn Central and Reading Co.). Revenue sharing amongst local, state and federal bodies brought these operators together, but also allowed crisis managers with divergent missions to benefit from AMTRAK’s benevolent shareholders: federal tax payers.

Come 1974, Congress amended the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 to return the profits of AMTRAK’s preservation actions to investors, debtors and creditors. In addition to outlining the disposition of AMTRAK revenue, the 1974 Act appropriated $5 million for proprietors of historic rail terminals across the country.\textsuperscript{108} Distribution of these federal funds to both non-state agents of station restoration and state transportation authorities fell initially to the U.S. Department of Transportation. Its administrators insisted, however, on recipients using the funds for station reclamation, renovation and reuse—operations that SEPTA proved unable to

\textsuperscript{105} Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, \textit{Center City Commuter Connection} (Philadelphia: PRA, 1971).

\textsuperscript{106} Delaware River Port Authority, \textit{Delaware Memorial Bridge Study / Benjamin Franklin Memorial Bridge Study} (Philadelphia: DRPA, 1972).


undertake without assets in its charge or the financial and human resources to carry out asset management. Funding parameters ultimately flowed to projects like AMTRAK’s own success story at the time—“the perfect adaptive use of a railroad station” in New London, CT where a restaurant and gift shop for the city’s Public Information Center and other commercial development financed renovation of the former Penn Central station and surrounding platforms and concourses.¹⁰⁹

USDOT intentionally withheld federal funding from metropolitan transportation authorities without a track record of cultivating commuter connections. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation that President Nixon appointed in 1973 favored funding for intermodal, interstate transportation terminals, even as his staff recognized this type of facility rarely existed. “Facilities which are jointly occupied by different modes and carriers providing competing or connecting services for intercity trips—in addition to local public transportation services” were few and far between, William E. Loftus, Acting Assoc. Administrator of Federal Assistance admitted in a Senate hearing on the implementation of rail-related legislation. He insisted, however, that “interline transfers will be possible at the proposed terminal,” that is the prototypical terminal that USDOT had decided to produce in collaboration with the National Endowment of the Arts and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority.¹¹⁰ To support his office’s plans to remove the guts of Union Station but preserve its precious facades, Loftus explained,

“Such service, in our view, enables a traveler to change mode with little or no waiting time to complete an intercity trip for which he has purchased a single ticket….While it promotes the sharing of facilities by competing carriers, it also requires the existence of


truly connecting service far beyond the physical sharing of a building and parking areas by rail and bus services.”

The U.S. Department of Transportation focused, in other words, on clearing obstacles to AMTRAK’s profitability as a passenger rail operator at the expense of AMTRAK’s operational partners—state transportation authorities hemorrhaging properties and patrons.

Recognizing its own limitations, USDOT delegated the selection of federal aid recipients to stalwarts of the preservation movement. Lobbyists for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) begot many governmental entities, namely the National Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the National Endowment for the Arts, State Historical Commissions and Local Preservation Offices. On its own, the NHPA granted states no rights or responsibilities to govern historic properties of public utility. Recall, from an earlier chapter, that never stopped the Philadelphia Historical Commission from calling on statutory authorities and philanthropic bodies. So too, the next chapter shows, Penn Central and Reading Company receivers and regulators pursued historic protection by protecting those who prevented demolition by neglect.

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111 Ibid, p. 10.

CHAPTER 6:  
The Contentious Politics of Consolidated Rail

The US government’s financial and managerial takeover of the entire freight-passenger rail industry in 1976 constituted the most widely known “bailout” of American industrial cities until the American Recovery Act of 2009.¹ Decried by many, the federalization of freight and passenger rail companies enabled two-thirds of the goods and one-third of the people moving throughout the eastern half of the United States, Canada and Mexico to continue doing so after more than a dozen railroad companies filed for bankruptcy or some other form of debt-reducing reorganization between 1967 and 1974.² The Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1976 outlined a “Final System” of freight and passenger railways that the Consolidated Rail Corporation (CONRAIL), a federally financed for-profit corporation, planned to protect against further divestment, degradation and disintegration of the railroad industry.³ The freight lines included in the Final System stretched across a mega-region once served by the Main Line of multinational railroad companies and their many branches for short-haul services.⁴ Conversely, the only passenger rail lines included in the Final System of CONRAIL lie within “Metropolitan Districts”— sprawling, multi-city-regions undergoing not only depopulation, deindustrialization and decentralization, but also, regionalization at the behest of metropolitan transportation authorities.”⁵

² Crane, Rise from the Wreckage: A Brief History of Conrail (The Newcomen Society of the US, 1998);
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid.
Curiously, the United States Railway Association, an advisory body of the U.S. Congress, enacted and invested in metropolitan transportation authorities throughout the 1970s—a time when the federal government otherwise eschewed intervention in the “urban crisis.” The White House, for instance, declared it wouldn’t save industrial cities from bankruptcy by proxy or by policy, with Presidents Ford and Nixon vetoing many congressional attempts to save urban and suburban communities from bankruptcy (Figure 6.1). President Gerald Ford infamously told mayors of large cities—New York, San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco and New Orleans—and smaller ones—Indianapolis, Cleveland, Scranton, PA, Gary (IN), Newark (NJ) and Lewiston (ME)—to “tighten [their] belts and bite the bullet” in one of many press conferences that culminated in a memorable New York Daily News headline: “Ford to NYC: Drop Dead.” All the while, President Ford’s Secretary of Transportation William Coleman and administrators of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration he supervised assured fellow lawyers from his hometown of Philadelphia, that, “emergency aid for rail services” would not

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preclude their cities from “radical fiscal conservatism.” Any aid they received from the U.S. Department of Transportation would come with prerequisites, namely deregulation of rights-of-way.

Regulatory reform of rights-of-way exposed the receivership role that private and philanthropic organizations had been playing in the governorship of public space in the 1960s. Federal authorizations of and appropriations for metropolitan transportation planning had seeded

Figure 6.1. Mayor Abe Beame holding the New York Daily News, with its infamous headline. NY Daily News Digital Archives


Coleman to Rizzo, [date], Records of the Frank Rizzo Administration (hereafter FRA Records), Philadelphia City Archives (hereafter PCA).
regionalism within state government but also ceded state space to interstate commissions, inter-county compacts and inter-sector partnerships throughout the long sixties. Subsumed within half-century-old public benefit corporations such as the Port Authority of New York and the Regional Plan Association, early iterations of regional governance concealed and cultivated the metropolitan capitalism underwriting trans-county and trans-continental transportation. Private equity in public benefit corporations, such as the Port Authority of New York’s Trans-Hudson Corporation, enabled the regionalists that helmed metropolitan transportation authorities to recast the recovery and restructuring of regional railways as entrepreneurial enterprises of public benefit not the business of public authorities.

Discord in the 1970s over the right of new state bodies to manage and operate metropolitan transportation systems incentivized federal agents of socioeconomic repair to bypass metropolitan bodies.

Federal detours around failed federalism are the focus of this chapter of metropolitan transportation authorities in Greater Philadelphia. Through federalized philanthropy and federal aid, I argue, the U.S. government culled from the cornucopia of community-based organizations...
a corps of anchor institutions on which the U.S. Secretary of Transportation, CONRAIL and state agents could bank on to adopt and apply their civic epistemologies of regional resilience. Federal *stewardship* of regional railways in state *receivership* materialized in the maturation of provisional land trusts—holding companies for community philanthropists, conservationists and preservationists that had made no plans previously to partner with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority or manage the assets and liabilities of any other regional rail operators long-term.¹³

Telling, private and public sector transport managers assembled in 1974 as the United States Railway Association (USRA) to intervene in the land and labor management practices of metropolitan transportation authorities across the country.¹⁴ Unlike the Air Traffic Control Board, this expert advisory board of the federal government survived the very disaster they predicted: progressive loss of private equity and expertise in public transportation as state authorities increasingly banked on nongovernmental organizations.¹⁵ By devolving into a “community development financial institution,” USRA concluded, even the Port Authority of

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¹⁴ Federal intervention in the reorganization and restructuring of railroads mirrors their “meddling” in distributed governance of airwaves and airlines. See, “Which Route to Northeast Reorganization?” *Railway Age* 175, no. 17 (9 Sept 1974): 27.

¹⁵ “Pennsylvania’s Plan for a balanced Eastern rail system, and a critique of the planning approach of the United States Railway Association (Harrisburg, PA: Office of State Planning and Development, 1975);
New York—the jewel of metropolitan transportation authorities—had fallen into fiscal disrepair and organizational disarray.\textsuperscript{16}

To produce “chief resilience officers,” federal agents of metropolitan transportation management extended an unproven yet approved approach to federal policy implementation: ‘block grants.’ These spatialized forms of government appropriations and approval for economic development expose chosen communities and corporations of the state, but also how state transportation authorities determined which cases of designation, (dis)assembly, development and disposition (lease, purchase or abandonment) demonstrated their own trustworthiness.\textsuperscript{17}

Rather than enumerate the tax credits, preservation grants and planning assistance that flowed freely in the 1970s to AMTRAK and CONRAIL, I focus, in this chapter, on financial instruments that afforded emergent social entrepreneurs the fiscal security and the financial literacy to restrict reinvestment in rail infrastructure to resilient properties in their regions.

\section*{The Art of Creating Local-Federal Connections}

The highly contested Regional Rail Reorganization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1973 (4R) authorized the U.S. Department of Transportation to assemble a board of transportation experts to curate credit-worthy AMTRAK property. Established in 1974 as the United States Railway Association, this expert body stood apart from the U.S. Department of Transportation

\textsuperscript{16} Most infamously New York City purchased damaged railroad branches that “metropolitan planning organizations” of the state could, with considerable public and private investment, increase airport accessibility. “At last, A Rail Link (Sort of) to JFK (Kennedy Airport),” \textit{Railway Age} 17 (9 Oct 1978): 61.

(USDOT) but stood with Presidential Advisor William Coleman in his campaign to reorganize the railroad industry around post-industrial economies of metropolitan capitalism. The United States Railway Association received authorization in mid-1973 to develop a prospectus for deregulating rail operations that relied, paradoxically on wide-ranging regulations: the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1968, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the Environmental Protection Act of 1970.

In the Greater Philadelphia area, USRA tested a new appropriations strategy for the public transportation sector. Taking note of how block grants to state redevelopment authorities sustained economic life in pockets of otherwise depressed cities like New York, USRA projected profitable portions of the railroad industry might reemerge as “Model Cities” of federal policy “demonstrations.” Any one of these areas might contain “slack day-to-day equipment, stop gap repair and low employee confidence,” as one of a dozen reporters lamented in 1973, but also “millions of dollars [that] pour in to improve the line[s]” on which these reports were based. Trustees of the Penn Central receivership reported gains in ridership and thus increases in revenue despite “years of massive neglect…[in] the years preceding the state contracts.”

Nevertheless, USRA endorsed “Metropolitan Districts” of railroad companies in receivership—

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20 The extent to which USRA drew on housing and urban development paradigms and rhetoric is unknown. This particular mention appears frequently in USRA’s communications with trustees of the Reading Railroad Receivership, which Richardson Dilworth Papers (RD Papers), Series 6, Box 26, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP).

21 Ibid.
those urban areas where state-financed “mass transportation demonstrations” occurred on a basis of profitability, if not profitable, “cost-plus basis.”

$1.6 billion in federal loan guarantees to USRA plus $558.5 million in outright grants made USRA the most-funded metropolitan planning organization in America but not the biggest benefactor of regional rail reorganization. USRA financed emergency management of “Metropolitan Districts” not operating expenses of these metropolitan transportation authorities. The latter still relied on state subsidies for systems planning, disaster preparedness and other core competencies. The majority of USRA’s budget, ironically, financed its own planning operations, specifically its study of six bankrupt railroad companies. The 20-month planning process was to conclude with abandonment recommendations—possibly “7,000 to 11,000 miles of rail lines out of the 26,000 miles of trackage involved in the seven bankrupt lines” it warned.

Recognizing the panic that its prediction caused, USRA lent $5 million of its budget to “local communities” looking to save some of these abandoned lines or the architecture associated with them. Not every local community with a nostalgic sense of place, profitable plan and good timing or political access would receive aid from NEA. USRA only agreed to match federal grants to “local communities” able to recover at least 30% of the federal government’s losses for line abandonment. Effectively, this perquisite precluded communities not already beneficiaries


of federal investment in the form of Mass Demonstration Grants or Emergency Rail Service
Grants from benefiting from the consolidation of regional rail.

Prospective loan recipients abounded, USRA learned from two surveys conducted by the
National Endowment for the Arts. The National Endowment for the Arts issued a call to action,
in 1974, with a series of reports on railroad stations reused and recycled by private industry,
foundations, individual communities, and local governments.26 The first report of NEA’s
consultant, which catalogued the preservation of historic railroad stations, sparked an enormous
response from people involved in transportation, conservation, real estate development and urban
management and resulted in a second publication on the adaptive use of railroad stations.27 A
conference in July of 1974 unveiled over 500 historic railroad stations and their protectors to
prospective donors: the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the Advisory Council on
Historic Preservation, the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation,
and the U.S. Department of Transportation.28

The second publication, which featured more practical aspects of adaptive use received a
much cooler response from the historic preservation community. Its contents—funding
organizations, market analyses, and federal programs, received a warm welcome from
economists within USRA, however. The success stories that this publication highlighted —
stations repurposed to contribute both economically as well as aesthetically to their surrounding
neighborhoods—exposed inequity in community empowerment and enfranchisement. But, for

26 Educational Facilities Laboratories and the National Endowment for the Arts, Reusing Railroad Stations,
vol. 1 (New York: Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1974).
27 Educational Facilities Laboratories and National Endowment for the Arts, Reusing Railroad Stations, vol. 2 (New
York: Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1975)
University, 2011.
each abandoned station on 25,000+ miles of railway, dozens of stations in Main Line suburbs and “Model Cities” of Philadelphia, New York and New Haven found new life as ‘community facilities.’ The NEA-funded reports in avertedly memorialized urban regimes of capitalist development that protected once-beautiful stations in still-handsome, distressed areas.  

The National Endowment for the Arts increasingly lost responsibility for liberalization of federal transportation authorities. Over the next two presidential terms (Nixon and Reagan), state historical commissions re-appropriated historic preservation aid to community-based organizations already sustaining railroad lines. Rising energy costs, environmental concerns, traffic congestion, and other reasons for disadvantaged in the railroad industry justified grants from Pennsylvania’s Historical Commission and the Department of Cultural Affairs for “rail banking,”—which they described then as economic development of depreciated railroad properties. Whereas the Emergency Rail Services Act of 1970 presented private enterprises of public transportation in the Northeast Corridor as "too big to fail," these implementers of the Passenger Rail Services Act of 1974 devoted assistance to communities making the railroad industry worth federal bailouts. 

The federal government, particularly its for-profit corporation CONRAIL, relied on state historical commissions to vet a wide variety of third sector organizations eligible to receive the preservation planning grants it was discharging. In Philadelphia alone, rail terminals, stations, yards, tracks and tracts in CONRAIL’s charge fell to a) corporate lawyers appointed by bankruptcy court judges to serve as trustees of railroad companies in receivership, b) community

29 Ibid., 12.
development corporations authorized to reuse little-used railroad properties, and c) land trusts approved to restore properties to operation.\textsuperscript{31} Additionally, bankruptcy court judges authorized emergency control boards to develop fiscal and physical recovery plans for damaged railroad sites and services.\textsuperscript{32} Equally diverse preservation projects—from station restoration to rolling stock renovation—emerged from these proprietors.\textsuperscript{33}

Multimodal facilities within the City of Philadelphia fell between the cracks of congressional appropriation and community action.\textsuperscript{34} The Chestnut Hill Station, Fox Chase Station and others reworked in the 1960s by the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation for the City of Philadelphia and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact met state criteria for federal aid but fell short of demonstrating community facilities management. In a rare moment of agreement, both NEA and USDOT administrators of aid to railroad property proprietors had anticipated this fault line would emerge from federal legislation containing two “not necessarily compatible objectives”—“development of intermodal terminals and preservation and the reuse of historic railroad stations.”\textsuperscript{35} Legislative acts combining the two would ensure “neither object [was] achieved in a completely satisfactory manner,” the U.S. Department of Transportation dared to add to testimony by Baltimore Regional Planning Commission members

\textsuperscript{31} Some are listed in the CONRAIL catchment area in SEPTA-CONRAIL Contract, 1976, SEPTA Collection, Hagley, others in the Final System Plan, Reading Company Receivership, Richardson Dilworth Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

\textsuperscript{32} See, also the Reading Receivership Records, Richardson Dilworth Papers (hereafter RD Papers), Historical Society of Pennsylvania (hereafter HSP).


\textsuperscript{34} Amtrak Improvement Act of 1974, Public Law 93-496, sections 1 and 2.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
that senators already dismissed as the musings of “Debbie Downers.” Acknowledging that not enough funds had been budgeted for rail terminal redevelopment and restoration to cover conversions and conservation projects, US Senators reminded railroad owners and operators that legislation insuring northeastern states purchased passenger rail services banked on railroad companies preserving facilities that their services required. In short, the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce—and ultimately the wider congressional body of 1974—reformulated preservation as a fiscal act and fiduciary responsibility of private and public enterprises.

While Congress reigned in the geospatial boundaries of multimodal facilities, the National Endowment for the Arts expanded the epistemic boundaries of a state transportation authority. NEA assistant director McNultey advised USDOT on which “qualified organization (including a government entity) is prepared to develop practicable plans meeting the zoning, land use and other requirements of the applicable State and local jurisdictions.” For NEA, “a qualified nonprofit organization” merely produced “practicable plans.” Apparently drawing from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development’s rulebook for “workable programs,” NEA endorsed “plans proposed for the conversion of [a] terminal” only if they “incorporate[d]…features which reasonably appear likely to attract private investors willing to undertake the implementation of such planned conversion and its subsequent maintenance and operation.” These features included commercial attractions (e.g. food shops, craft stores, restaurants and retail storefronts)” not, NEA’s McNulty added, “civic and cultural centers” such as day care centers, gymnasiums,

36 Preservation and Reuse of Railroad Stations of Historic and Architectural Merit, Hearings, 10-20
37 Hearings to amend the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 to clarify programs for promoting reuse of railroad passenger terminals, and for other purposes”, p. 11
38 Hearings to amend the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 to clarify programs for promoting reuse of railroad passenger terminals, and for other purposes,” 1974, p. 15.
39 Ibid.
libraries, schools and laboratories, theaters, art galleries, dance studios and the like that could be a part of preservation plans for non-terminal facilities. By differentiating the proprietors of ‘commercial facilities’ from that of ‘community facilities,’ NEA directors reopened debate on the commensurability and credibility of nonprofit conservancies and for-profit concessionaires, neighborhood and business improvement associations, community development corporations and economic development corporations, corporate and charitable trusts (Figure 6.2).

Figure 2. Intermodal Terminals throughout Greater Philadelphia, including Chestnut Hill, then charged to the Chestnut Hill Community Association, later under the leasehold of the Chestnut Hill Historical Society, an urban land trust. (SEPTA, Regional Rail Station Improvement Study, Appendix 1: Right-of-Way Upgrading, 1971)

Such bold ultimatums for passenger railroad companies as well as their creditors and clients accompanied threats from the White House to proceed with a leveraged buy-out of the
most profitable lines of railroad business. At the conclusion of the 1974 hearings, committees in both houses of Congress requested the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Office of Technology Assessment review the feasibility of taking over just city sites and intercity services, not city transit services and intercity infrastructure. The Office showed particular interest in one cluster of properties in particular—main lines included in the “Northeast Corridor Improvement Project.” The so-called NEC Project legitimized yet limited AMTRAK, the for-profit American Railroad Company that Congress chartered in 1970, from forming strategic partnerships not pertinent to high-speed transportation through the northeastern states.\textsuperscript{40} Legislatures and congressmen of Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts—excluding Congress, which governed Washington, D.C.—insisted on state rights to AMTRAK revenue generated in their cities.\textsuperscript{41} Still without state support for revenue-sharing five years later, AMTRAK lacked the police powers in 1974 to undertake ‘renewal’ of Boston’s South Station, Union Station in Washington, D.C. and other terminals that housed vital systems for city operations.

\textbf{Redistricting Rail Aid in the Age of Redistributive Authority}

The Amtrak Improvement Act of 1974 allowed the National Endowment for the Arts to address shortcomings. Congress already assigned NEA to administer USRA’s grants to CONRAIL proprietors invested in station reuse and railway recycling. Since 1970, National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), a federally funded but privately managed organization, played a narrow but important role in the transportation industry: to assist USDOT in selecting AMTRAK


\textsuperscript{41} Northeast Corridor Improvement Project. Final Report, Appendix 1: Right-of-Way Upgrades, 1968
terminals warranting preservation and aid in preservation planning. Federal court judges found NEA’s charge—technical assistance to one for-profit company amongst many potential recipients of USDOT aid that it promoted—“technically illegal” in 1973 when it began assessing, for USRA, which rail terminals in receivership should be made ineligible for federal financial aid. In the wake of a district court judge’s ruling in June of 1974, NEA’s responsibilities sprawled. It earned the statutory authority to administer financial aid as well as technical assistance to “all responsible persons to develop plans for the conversion of railroad passenger terminals into commercial, cultural, education and recreational activities centers.” State and local governments, local and regional transportation authorities, common carriers, philanthropic organizations and many others earned eligibility under this new criteria. And by July of 1975, Robert McNulty, Assistant Director of the NEA, had finally responded, with good news, to hundreds of letters he received from municipal officials and private groups seeking aid to “recycle” stations no longer needed for railroad passengers and preserve those still used in spite of their poor conditions.

Not coincidentally, a letter from the Chestnut Hill Historical Society counted amongst a dozen from nonprofit corporations, municipalities, philanthropies and community associations based in Greater Philadelphia. NEA rejected the Society’s application for aid in reconstructing dilapidated Gravers Lane station but recommended it join others with a shared objective: to save Reading Railroad and Pennsylvania Railroad stations designed by acclaimed architect Frank

42 Amtrak Improvement Act of 1974, section 1.
43 Ibid.
44 U.S. Congress, Railroad Passenger Service Act of 1970, Section 303, article 5.
Furness from co-optation, conversion, service curtailment or abandonment by state transportation authorities. Frank Furness designed a half-dozen stations still standing in Northwest Philadelphia in 1974, and the lessees of four said stations had requested philanthropic support and state subsidies for restoration of these historic structures and revitalization of critical infrastructure they still serviced. The historical society declined to join its peers. Instead it sought assistance from two regional philanthropies contributing to the Bicentennial Celebration of “Old Philadelphia.” Nonetheless, the Chestnut Hill Historical Society benefited from governmental and non-governmental aid for other Furness-designed railroad stations that flowed into northwest Philadelphia. By proximity to a protected class of industrial architecture (Figure 6.3 and Figure 6.4) and commensurability to their grassroots proprietors, the Chestnut Hill Historical Society effectively earned protections granted to its West Mount Airy Neighbors and privileges denied to East Mount Airy Neighbors.

46 Susan Detweiler, CHHS, to Richard Bennett, William Penn Foundation, Acc. 1974-83, 1997.333, Box 7: Gravers Lane Station Project Fundraising, CHHS.

47 Ibid.
Figure 3. Allen Lane Station, 1981 [post-restoration]. Chestnut Hill Historical Society.

Figure 4. The dark gray area denotes the “protected space” within which Graver Lane and other Chestnut Hill stations fall; East Mount Airy, the white area cutting into this gray area, contained several Frank Furness stations in 1974 but none formed part of the philanthropic aid package. ESRI 10.3 Map by author.
More than one protected place within metropolitan space had developed in the Penn-Jersey region largely due to the vortex of financial and technical aid that the United States Railway Association, the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and their state counterparts. As nebulous and distended as the institutional landscape of American housing finance, underwriters of fiscal health in the transportation industry belonged to the public, private and philanthropic sectors. Still, ire met organizations engaged in deliberate acts of “crossing” these conventional boundaries, thereby deregulating these spaces of operation. The two largest philanthropies of Greater Philadelphia facilitated transgression but not trespassing, proprietary not progressive pursuit of properties worth preservation. West Mount Airy Neighbors and other conservancies with their backing, SEPTA met them more than half-way. Those without it, such as the Sedgwick Station and Gravers Lane stewards, neither floundered nor flourished. In the absence of philanthropic support, these civic bodies transformed into the conservancies upon which the public and private sector looked favorably. In doing so, they garnered the esteem of SEPTA Rail Contract Division, for which procurement of aid from the very same public and private bodies had become a priority.48

Piloting Partnership in Preservation

What Reading Company trustees termed “a pilot project,” the foundations’ board members deemed critical infrastructure for right-of-way resilience.49 The Philadelphia Partnership agreed in October 1975 to underwrite the restoration of West Mount Airy stations but only as part of a


corridor-wide railscape preservation program. With short-term and long-term funding free of SEPTA’s interference, WMAN Inc. was no longer a grassroots RR committee with credibility and landscaping credentials but rather a full-fledged conservancy vetted and financed by the philanthropic community. Neither the Partnership nor the William Penn Foundation would agree to contribute or cooperate without a commitment from the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, which reserved the right to review and reject proposals for property management and maintenance. WMAN, accordingly, entered into an agreement with Impact Services Corporations, a local developer of the post-industrial workforce and advocate for ‘green economy’ jobs. With approval from the brotherhoods, the foundations, the conservancies, and Conrail trustees, Penn Central’s Superintendent for Suburban Stations (R.A. Donnelly), SEPTA proceeded in November 1974 with its multi-way, nonprofit public-private partnership in the “regionalization” of one Philadelphia rail station.

SEPTA agreed to contribute 1/3 of its federal funds towards WMAN’s workforce development program. WMAN employed the Impact Service Corporation, an arm of the inner-city Philadelphia Environmental Center, while SEPTA solicited funding from the Department of Labor for a demonstration of “green jobs”—an innovative idea, even amidst America’s energy crisis of the mid-1970s. Under contract with labor unions, SEPTA attempted to incorporate the station superintendents and attendants into the partnership—at least to serve as SEPTA’s ‘eyes and ears.’ AFL-CIO, which represented them in collective bargaining, declined at first to participate in the partnership. The agreement between SEPTA and WMAN displaced unionized

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50 ‘SEPTA, Regional Rail Division, Application to the U.S. Department of Transportation for a Environmental Protections Program,’ made in SEPTA, Capital Program, 1970-1977 (1976)

51 Annotations on Draft Agreement for Station Renovations, SEPTA; to James C. McConnon, Chairman of the Board, SEPTA, 2 August 1977, JT, PCA.
contractors by granting all new construction work to workforce development organizations and other bodies apart from the labor market by definition or by principle. Such replacements could prove permanent if “dumming down” construction specifications to a level that amateurs and apprentices could perform became commonplace, labor unions warned.\textsuperscript{52} It still consented, however, to sharing skilled jobs on station-grounds of one Penn Central line and one Reading line, with ex-addicts, ex-offenders as well as gang-prone and unemployed youth in a time of environmental and fiscal crisis. Doing so undermined the long-term employment prospects of building professionals long entitled to and entrusted with reclamation and repair.\textsuperscript{53} Moreover, with his endorsement, WMAN substantiated its burgeoning case for Conrail, to entrust parks and parking, unemployed persons and unionized personnel on station grounds to West Mount Airy Neighbors, Inc. and other community-based organizations that receivers of Penn Central real estate in 1976.\textsuperscript{54}

WMAN, otherwise an anchor institution for a provisional partnership, lacked confidence in the alliance it forged and employed. The organization’s leadership prepared for a return to local giving and stewardship at the inevitable conclusion of their partnership with regional philanthropies and state transportation authorities. The latter, leadership had learned, shared the urban pedagogy of object lessons.

“The Partnership’s interest in this program is two-fold: to enhance the utility of the region’s heavily used commuter rail stations so they are assets to their neighborhoods and, at the same time, to use “supported workers” and outside funds in performing this work which is now

\textsuperscript{52} Ueland and Junker Architects and Planners, Community Meeting Minutes—SEPTA No. 458—Task 4. 27 July 1977; WMAN, Series III, Box 4, TUUA

\textsuperscript{53} Labor Agreement, Allen Lane Station Restoration, 1975. WMAN, Series III, Box 4, TUUA

\textsuperscript{54} Transfer agreements itemized in memorandum attached to Final System Plan (Washington, DC: American Railway Association, 1976), Reading Railroad Receivership, Richardson Dilworth Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
beyond the budgetary capacity of SEPTA and the railroads. “Supported work” is a form of transitional employment for people often deemed unemployable (e.g. Ex-addicts, ex-offenders, youth) who are job-ready and need work experience before entering the mainstream of the economy. The Lower Kensington Environmental Center has a planning grant to develop a local corporation to employ such people and is bidding for a large Labor Department grant to financially back such an enterprise. Station repair is only one of many activities being explored for the new corporation. West Mount Airy Neighbors, a well-organized community group, has already launched a program to help underwrite the repair of the Allen Lane station. The Partnership, a group of business and other community leaders, would be willing to help underwrite this program provided that it is viewed as a demonstration of what might occur elsewhere and provided that SEPTA’s support is assured. The position of the Penn Central and its labor unions are obviously key components to be worked into this proposal. We would hope that they might view this as a worthwhile venture in the public interest and we are certainly open to exploring with them practical ways and means to accomplish our objectives while exploring their operating requirements.\(^{55}\)

WMAN agreed on the vision but not the vehicle for economic development of the transportation sector: labor contracts.

Newspapers, murals, station aesthetics and other reflections of a reversal in the decline of Allen Lane Station and its surrounds carried currency not just gravitas. “The Committee believes,” one solicitation opened, “the most appropriate vehicle for the necessary fund-raising is a print of the station as it should look”—artifacts of volunteerism. “The success of the organization depends on the success of the sale of the print, and the success of the sale will depend on the enthusiasm with which the community responds,” the “pre-Christmas bargain price” of the print did not prevent the organization from turning a profit.\(^{56}\) Sale of the print, which sold for $18 before Christmas and $25 after Christmas, compensated Charles W. Snyder III, who created the limited edition set of signed and numbered prints of the Allen Lane Station. Proceeds also matched the $6000 grant from regional philanthropies for station restoration.


\(^{56}\) C.R. Van de Velde, Pamphlets issued by the Friends of the Allen Lane Station Committee, 1 Nov 1974, WMAN Collection, TUA
Friends of Allen Lane Station openly banked on the rootedness of their neighbors, which had come to include more upwardly mobil households as a result of the City of Philadelphia’s Homesteading Program. With its solicitation of print sales, WMAN leadership shared their prospectus for preservation planning:

"For too long the train stations of West Mount Airy have been grossly neglected. The bankrupt Penn Central is incapable of anything but the barest minimum of maintenance, and past community efforts to improve the situation have been little more than a 'drop-in-the-bucket. It is in response to this situation that West Mount Airy Neighbors has organized the Friends of the Allen Lane Station Committee. It is hoped that the Committee can develop, a viable on-going program of station maintenance and improvement, and that this program can serve as a model for similar programs at the Carpenter Lane and Upsal stations."

Although the solicitations WMAN set to West Mount Airy residents in 1974 presented a regressive vision of the city’s future, capitalization on the independent, albeit, integrated identity of West Mount Airy put it in on the cutting edge of conservancy in the mid-1970s.

WMAN’s leadership may not have wanted to be a part of the safety net, but it welcomed the protections that regional philanthropies offered. John Hass of Rohm & Hass, who chaired the boards of both the Philadelphia Partnership and William Penn Foundation, arranged for the Partnership’s in-house counsel Graham Finney to mediate negotiations between SEPTA’s wage-earning workforce and the unemployed that filled the ranks of Impact Services Development Corporation, WMAN’s work force. Finney committed funds from the two philanthropies he represented under two conditions: all three stations in Mount Airy must be restored to their historic significance under the direction of conservancies where these existed. Rohm & Hass’s


58 Solicitation, Allen Lane Station Restoration Project, WMAN Collection, TUA

director of corporate philanthropy agreed to assist with overhead operating costs of these conservancies, offering one-time payments of $6000 for losses incurred from planning each of SEPTA’s station improvements. This amount fell just short of the $25,000/property price tag of restoration that the President of West Mount Airy Neighbors Association (WMAN) independently requested from foundations in mid-October 1975. But, it more than covered the annual budget of WMAN, which had yet to exceed $15000 in general operating experiences and compensation

Figure 5. Allen Lane Station, 1974, prior to Restoration under the direction of West Mount Airy Neighbors, Inc., at the behest of SEPTA, the William Penn Foundation and the Philadelphia Partnership, with the cooperation of the Impact Services Development Foundation (based in Kensington, Philadelphia), the National Railway Executives Association and the Maintenance-of-Way Employees Union of Philadelphia. Courtesy of Temple University Urban Archives (WMAN Collection)

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60 E.H. Steel, Engineer, Maintenance of Way, to Francis Herold, GM, Impact Services Corporation, 17 Oct 1975, Series II, Box 3, Folder 9, TUUA

61 1 Oct 1975, Van de Velde to John Hass. WMAN Collection, Series II, Box 3, Folder 5, TUUA

Emergency Authorities of Emergency Aid

Amidst bankruptcy proceedings in October 1971, Reading Company’s Manager of Contract Passenger Services met with Marion Dunning, the president of East Mount Airy Neighbors to discuss which of the Company’s responsibilities could be transferred to her organization.63 Chartering a Sedgwick Station Committee to undertake these tasks on behalf of Reading Company receivers, EMAN modeled its operations after that of the St. Martins Stations Ground Committee, with a slight twist. On the one hand, it “hired youth through the Mt. Airy Youth Employment Service to cut the grass, clip the hedges, pick up litter weekly, plant flowers, wee and paint over graffiti on the woodwork of the station building”—superficial treatments for systematic neglect. It also negotiated a unique lease with the Reading Railroad that allowed the Sedgwick Station Committee “to keep the grounds of the station in order,” the usual jurisdictional authority allowed.64 A third lease term—to protect both the station and the surrounding landscape from “risky uses—set it apart from its predecessors, breaking the boundary between stations and surrounding grounds, architecture and landscape, infrastructure and interstitial spaces throughout rail rights-of-way.

Community operations and corporate Operations on station grounds consequently collided, raising liabilities and risks of litigation. A $100,000 landlord and tenant liability policy could cover the organization against potential harm to the youth who mowed and weeded the grounds of the station, but not concessions made by SEPTA, the managing agent contracted by real estate

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63 Letter from H.J. Palmer, Manager of Contract Passenger Service, to Mrs. Marion S. Dunning, EMAN, 8 October 1971, EMAN Collection, TUA

64 Ibid.
managers of CONRAIL and Reading Company receivership. Graffiti clean-up on the station building and streetscape improvements that could affect overhead electricity wires and sidewalks posed costly threats to both Reading Company and ENAM. For insurance coverage of these activities, EMAN drew up plans for ‘boundary work’ by its Sedgwick Station Committee (Figure 6.6). Its chairperson, Marian Ballard sketched not only the boundaries of Reading Company property but also the extents of transit-oriented property around it when seeking authorization for her committee to transform it into an outpost of Fairmount Park. The Park Commission agreed to incorporate the property outlined by Ballard into its Free Tree Program, but recommended its own vision of verdant infrastructural landscapes. Together, the Park Commission and EMAN outlined a new commons wherein commuters and community members might mingle.

![Figure 6.6. Ballard’s sketch for a contractor to redraw for insurance documentation. East Mount Airy Neighbors. 1972](image)

65 F.J. DiBonaventuro, Asst. Manager, Conrail Real Estate Department, to C.R. Van de Velde, 19 April 1977; Sedwick Station Committee Treasurer’s Report, Income Statement 1/1/75 to 5/3/76, WMAN, Series III, Box 4, TUAA.

66 Marian Ballard to Harold Palmer, Passenger Service Manager, Reading Company, 6 August 1975;
Ballard, who had conducted her own landscape survey, counseled the Parks Commission on the complexity of its charge. When the Commission recommended Japanese Cherry trees should be planted every 30 feet around the perimeter of the Reading Company plot, Ballard reminded the Parks Commissioner that “We would not plant the trees close to any overhead wires.” Ballard proposed “safe spaces” between the sidewalk and the street—either unaware of or indifferent to their characterization by horticulturalists and landscape architects. To the latter, trees wedged between the pedestrian and vehicular rights-of-way resided in the “death strip,” where trees experience shortened lifespans due to high exposure to vehicular exhaust. Only a space not technically apart of the station grounds fulfilled the safety and security that EMAN could afford to cover with liability insurance; the possibility of dead trees falling onto live wires posed too much of a risk for EMAN to remunerate. To preserve coverage for others taking care of Sedgwick Station and the parkland around it, EMAN’s leadership reneged on its planting partnership with the Parks Commission in favor of a policing partnership with Reading Company.

Real and imagined neighborhood decline underscored EMAN’s conservatism. Business establishments along Germantown Ave and Stenton Ave between Allens Lane and Washington Lane had already responded favorably to EMAN’s expositions of securitization. One such event, “A Demonstration of Graffiti Removal,” domesticated ‘broken windows’ policing throughout Philadelphia at the time. The female leadership of EMAN walked businessmen through “the

67 Ballard to Harold Palmer, Dir. of Passenger Service, Reading Company, August 6, 1975, Box 2, Folder 4, EMAN, TUUA
68 Ibid.
70 EMAN Liability Insurance Policy, EMAN, Box 2, Folder 4, TUUA
Effectiveness of Anti-Graffiti Protective Coating”: Sedwick Station with its windows open to the summer breeze on June 17th in 1972.\textsuperscript{71} “Finally,” the President of Sedgwick Station Committee, lauded,

“obscenities, ugly property defacements and the senseless vandalized scrawls can now be removed effectively, economically without sandblasting, painting or erecting a new wall! DWR is an outstanding heavy dirty, water rings GRAFFITI STRIPPER for sale, quick and efficient removal of plaints, adhesives, aerosol sprays, markings, inks carbon, compacted grease, etc. from cement, brick, stone, marble, stucco, limestone, metals and similar materials.”\textsuperscript{72}

Sponsored by KRC, manufacturer and distributor of the “Dirty Word Remover” that EMAN employed, anti-graffiti demonstrations during every season (of the year and the organization) sustained a host of other activities organized by Sedgwick Station Committee, Inc.: grounds maintenance, station cleaning, collective bargaining and community policing.

Survival of the station and corporate sponsorship of its revitalization unraveled once EMAN’s 5-year lease to the station came up for renewal in 1976. KRC promised to remove “the scrawl of the wild” from Sedgwick Station, but only at the bulk sale price charged of nonprofits and public agencies seeking to “help preserve the beauty of our cities, our monuments…our statuary.” EMAN agreed to the $13.50/gal rate, but both community members refused to finance the transaction “The committee has been more effective in encouraging the Reading RR to improve the buildings than it has been in mustering community support,” EMAN’s President reminded the Sedgwick Station Committee leadership when it budgeted “Funds [to] be raised by soliciting neighbors of the station and commuters.”\textsuperscript{73} Nevertheless, Sedwick Station Committee revived its 1972 campaign to conscript diverse members of the East Mount Airy community in

\textsuperscript{71} Sedgwick Station Brochures, EMAN, Box 2, Folder 5, TUUA,
\textsuperscript{72} M. Ballard to Sedgwick Neighbors, Inc., EMAN, Box 2, Folder 6, TUUA
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.
their only common ground: right-of-way protection for SEPTA, the newly appointed trustees of Reading Company properties.

To police the Sedgwick Station property, EMAN relied on insiders. Mount Airy Employment Service, a youth employment organization that enlisted the next generation of Mount Airy residents in self-help and community stewardship, performed EMAN groundwork while a group of inner-city unemployables attended to the grounds of West Mount Airy Stations. Perhaps, because of this distinction, members of the Sedgwick Station Committee appeal to West Mount Airy residents for financial support:

“The bankrupt Reading Railroad does not maintain its railroad stations in a satisfactory manner in the view of many concerned neighbors. Nor do the unions allow the Reading to accept volunteer help. East Mount Airy Neighbors entered into a lease agreement with the Reading RR to rent the grounds (not the building, platform, drives or sidewalks) of Sedwick Station for $1.00 a year in order to maintain the grounds ourselves in an attractive fashion, to make the station an asset to our community.

How do we do it? The Sedwick Station Committee of East Mount Airy Neighbors recommends that money be raised from the community to hire neighborhood youth through the Mt. Airy Youth Employment Service to cut the grass, clip the hedge and pick up litter. The following budget indicates that $314 must be raised annually to finance the maintenance and that an additional $260 would be desirable to improve the landscaping at the station.

If you use Sedwick Station or drive post it and have to look at it, won’t you please make a generous contribution towards the costs of maintaining the grounds. It is an investment in the quality of our neighborhood—and will provide jobs for youth in our community.”

Evidently successful, EMAN’s Sedwick Station Committee remained operative throughout Reading Company’s receivership, which ended in December of 1981.

During the holiday season of 1981, Sedwick Station Neighbors joined one of its benefactors, the Friends of the Wissahickon, at a celebration of railroad station restoration in neighboring Chestnut Hill. Nancy Hubby and Shirley Hanson, co-directors of the Chestnut Hill

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74 “An Appeal for Funds for Sedwick Station,” 1972, EMAN Collection, TUA
Historical Society’s Easement Program, chose to restore Gravers Lane Station, a masterpiece of architect Frank Furness slated for service suspension just shy of its 100th anniversary in 1981. Abandonment of the historic station, located a half-mile from the multimodal terminus of CONRAIL’s Chestnut Hill line, never occurred. But the prospect of that event raised concern and capital for the station-house and the homes that surrounded it (Figure 6.7). To protect its railroad easements and the value of the properties that provided them, Hanson and Hubby initially assisted the family that occupied Gravers Lane station in performing operations formally charged to them as tenants of Reading Company since the start of its receivership in 1971: graffiti removal, window replacement, grounds maintenance and station surveillance. Ultimately, however, they undertook strategic partnerships in historic preservation.

![Help restore the Gravers Lane Station](image.png)

Figure 6.7. Chestnut Hill Historical Society, which leased the station and surrounding grounds from Reading Company Receivership between 1976 and 1982, solicited donations for restoration of Gravers Lane Station in 1979. Nancy Hubby Collection, Chestnut Hill Historical Society.

75 “Station Restorer Traces Interest to Great-Grandfather,” Chestnut Hill Local, 9 July 1991; Authorization for Chestnut Hill Historical Society to Restore Gravers Lane Station on the Reading Commuter Line, Resolution, signed by the President of CHHS and the Asst. General Manager of SEPTA [Confidential]; Assurance of Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, U.S. Department of Transportation, Covenant Agreement, n.d. [Confidential]; CONRAIL-CHHS lease agreement, CHHS, 4 May 1974; Declaration of Covenants, signed by Nancy Hubby and J.F. Thomson, CONRAIL, pending signature by chairman of the SEPTA Board, 13 May 1981.
In 1978, the women obtained a license from SEPTA (Conrail’s managing agent) to repair the station, reseed the grounds and rehabilitate stairs and walkways connecting the station to the rail bed (Figure 6.8). A $63,000 Historic Preservation grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior covered procurement responsibilities associated with two covenant agreements. One with the U.S. Mass Transportation Authority ensured the Society’s station maintenance post-restoration proceeding in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964.; the other, with CONRAIL, assured the CHHS Board that it retained the first right of refusal to buy the station, on a lease-to-own
basis, in the event of service abandonment.\textsuperscript{76} By 1981, CHHS President Peter M. Saylor could announce to fellow Chestnut Hillers that the organization had obtained easements from the state transportation authority, covenants with the federal transportation corporation (CONRAIL), but above all, a new education in historic preservation.\textsuperscript{77}

Chestnut Hillers and their neighbors took pride in how much the Gravers Lane restoration project underwrote professionalization of the Chestnut Hill Historical Society. At the outset of their project, Nancy Hubby and Shirley Hanson approached railroad station restoration like the modernist home restoration projects once entrusted to them by the organization’s leadership.\textsuperscript{78} Both the station and the homes housed families with respect for the architecture in which they resided, but the those taking care of Gravers Lane Station worked for SEPTA—the primary lessee of CONRAIL property in Philadelphia come 1977.\textsuperscript{79} As Hanson and Hubby recalled in the summer of 1981, “Our major problem regarded the flagmen: When would they be required, how many were needed, what was their base pay, and who would be responsible for paying for their services?”\textsuperscript{80} For two years, the project architect that CHHS hired on contingency “attempted to get a firm answer to these questions from SEPTA” but it withheld accounting figures until


\textsuperscript{78} Shirley Hanson, Interview by author, 4 August 2016.


\textsuperscript{80} Gravers Lane Railroad Station, Progress Report by the Chestnut Hill Historical Society, 30 July 1981; Performance Agreement Number 37-80 (SEPTA-CHHS Contract), dated 21 May 1981, Box 7, PHMC, 1978-1981, CHHS
CONRAIL transferred its development rights to the conservancy. A sticky covenant—track clearance—called on the architect of restoration to submit his designs to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and receive approval to execute the plans with engineers’ and contractors’ approval.  

All received authorization in 1980, before CONRAIL sold the station to SEPTA, but not before Chestnut Hill Historical Society fell behind on payments to its architect.

All the while, Hubby and Hanson received a crash-course in restoring architecture of an industry that remained present but barely accounted for. Status reports to SEPTA regarding on-site reengineering, construction costs, design specifications, and labor assignments abounded. The project cost $67,071, but administration of the project left CHHS with a $30,000 shortfall.

No amount of prodding by Hanson and Hubby yielded support from SEPTA for these expenses; a federal building grant from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in the amount of $30,000 bailed out the Chestnut Hill Historical Society and saved its few staff members the time they spent applying to dozens of local and national philanthropy. However, the funding failed to cover the estimate for Preservation Work and Restoration Work and Continued Safe Operation and Maintenance that CHHS signed with Hyman Myers, a local preservation consultant. Again, Hubby and Hanson requested for SEPTA to assist them, this time hedging

81 Ibid.


84 Fundraising for operational cost coverage consumes nearly two bankers boxes of the Chestnut Hill Historical Society. From the Rittenhouse Foundation to William Penn Foundation to the Barra Foundation, CHHS solicited assistance from philanthropies of every scale. No solicitation was apparently sent to the City of Philadelphia, however. See, Hubby Collection, Boxes 7 and 8, CHHS.

85 Memorandum: Gravers Lane Station, Scope of Work & Budgetary Estimates, June 1980, Box 7, PHMC, 1978-1981, CHHS;
“this work ‘request’ might be more easily accepted by SEPTA” given outstanding items at Gravers Lane station remained unfinished or untouched and thus obstacles for its engineering division.  

Another rejection prompted the project directors to request “bridge contributions” from the Board of the Chestnut Hill Historical Society. Its four members (which included Nancy Hubby’s husband, the Society President, and Hanson’s husband Robert M. Hanson) contributed about $10,000 in total to assure Myers addressed structural details in lieu of SEPTA’s support. Service to the station continued all the while even though “the railings and steps leading from Gravers Lane to both the incoming and outgoing tracks are dangerously weakened state; riders [were] also missing from these steps… crumbling concrete at the edge of the tracks on the station-site” and the additional “risk that these conditions cause[d].” The true costs of reclaiming regional rail stations remained occult to the federal and state bodies to which CHHS frequently reported, dignifying disinvestment that prompted donation of cash as well as time and labor. Even with Tax Reform, which lent philanthropists the interest-earning benefits of investors and investors the tax-deductible benefits of benevolence, the cost of conservancy exceeded the commitments (if not the capacities) of community stewards.

**Reneging on Redistributive Resilience**

After the Tax Reform Act of 1976 passed, SEPTA refused to underwrite further expansion of the conservation movement in Philadelphia beyond the “historic districts” of railroad stations

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86 Ibid.

87 Williard Detweiler, CHHS, to Matthew Trzepacz, Chief Engineer, SEPTA, 10 September 1981;

88 Ibid.
(Figure 6.9). Instead, it capitalized on the battle cries of community development corporations looking to prove profitable public-private partnerships lie in adaptive reuse projects. In the summer of 1978, SEPTA announced federal appropriations to its Rail Contract Division in the new fiscal year would cover conversion of suburban rail stations and grounds into urban bus terminals. The Division’s director met with the Friends of Allen Lane Station, the Chestnut Hill Historical Society plus other community-based organizations on a line-by-line basis to hear out their concerns about station conditions. But, SEPTA had already concluded its planning process for debilitated stations. Throughout the preceding year, SEPTA dispatched consultants to each station in the region with instructions to account for blight as well as vacancy, vagrancy and other justifications for use of its police powers. In the winter of 1977, Associates of Wilbur Smith and Mark Euland conducted drive-by “windshield surveys” of each station in the region, and determined through these vehicular observations that the design of many historic stations excluded spaces for single-occupancy vehicles to park and streets for multiple-occupancy vehicles (e.g. buses, trackless trolleys) to pick up and drop off passengers. The station renovation plans that resulted from these assessments consisted of new parking lots on parkland; new parking lot lighting and signage; platform and sidewalk extensions to new parking areas; and rehabilitated pedestrian underpasses and overpasses from municipal lots at a short distance from the stations (Figure 6.10)

89 SEPTA, Commuter Rail Improvement Program, August 1978, attached ‘Meeting Minutes’
Figure 6.9. Tulpehocken Station Historic District, listed in 1982 on the National Registry of Historic Places, consisted of well-manicured landscapes and well-maintained historic structures. Courtesy of the Penn-Knox Neighborhood Preservation Council.

Figure 6.10. SEPTA's Park-n-Ride Plan for Washington Lane Station, 1970, as revised in 1977 to include 19 new spaces adjacent to a plot labeled, “demolish existing station building.”. Ron McGrow Collection, Hagley Library.
Past resistance to the destruction of historic resources evidently received no consideration. Smith and Euland literally redrew the battle lines of yesteryear into their blueprints for renovated stations. The same spaces where Philadelphia’s Passenger Service Improvement Corporation failed to incorporate operations of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact into catchment areas and leaseholds of community-based organizations became battlegrounds for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority as well. Westside Neighbors Council, and its neighborhood leaders—stood before stations with elected officials running on platforms for planning reform (Figure 6.11).90 Perhaps in an effort to bridge the gap between what it could afford financially and politically, SEPTA partnered with the Philadelphia City Planning Commission to reevaluate where and how to devote its resources. “If [a] station building is in fair shape and/or has historical or architectural significance,” SEPTA offered reporters, “[our architectural consultants] may recommend that the City Planning Commission recommend it not be demolished.”91 SEPTA still hedged it bets, revealing its distrust that the Commission could help produce profitable and palatable project plans.

90 “Neighbors Nix Parking,” Germantown Courier,

91 Ibid.
SEPTA and the Philadelphia Planning Commission initially selected stations at the center of Main Streets in an effort to meet the financial assistance standards set by both the state Department of Community Affairs and the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. Wilbur Smith and Associates, which redesigned the streets serving these stations, and Ueland and Junker, which provided architectural specifications for joint development, went back to the drawing board in the fall of 1978. By then, SEPTA’s Project Manager for the Commuter Rail Improvement Program, an engineer experienced in construction management, found placards on historic stations declaring conservationists’ intent to undertake full-scale restoration projects in the summer.\textsuperscript{92} Community and economic development corporations under

\textsuperscript{92} Ibid.
city contract recycled expansive railroad station-grounds of SEPTA’s City Division into ‘special assessment districts” (Figure 6.12).  

Privately financed and sanctioned special assessment districts for station renovations jeopardized SEPTA plans in two ways: they gave federal officials reason not to appropriate further funds directly to SEPTA for station restoration and they highlighted the minimalist aesthetic of renovations that SEPTA could produce with federal funds. SEPTA’s Commuter Rail Stations Improvement Program faced increasing competition from conservancies within the region while it competed with other metropolitan transportation authorities to unveil the modernist, multimodal stations that garnered critical acclaim and congressional appropriations. After several drafts, SEPTA crafted a capital plan for 1978-1984 that piggy-backed on property-tax-driven partnerships conceptualized by CONRAIL in 1976 and put aside its Commuter Rail Improvement Study of 1976.  

94 Wilbur Smith and Mark Euland, SEPTA Commuter Rail Improvement Program, final draft, 1977.
Public-private partnerships between SEPTA and for-profit real estate developers in the 1970s reinvigorated both resistance to station-ground commercialization and reclamation of station-grounds by nonprofit concessionaires. In the fall of 1978, the St. Martins Station Grounds Committee, the Chestnut Hill Community Association and the West Mount Airy Neighbors simultaneously launched station restoration projects while they embattled SEPTA over the redevelopment of real estate surrounding these stations. When restoration of Gravers Lane station concluded in 1981, news media praised the conservancies and philanthropies that supported them for fighting the "good fight" against profit-driven partnerships in the reclamation, restoration and recovery of their region’s railways. Moreover, the region’s most prolific reporter on transit in the region presented SEPTA’s ridership retention programs and the protectionist and preservationist practices of railroad lessees as comparable in benefit but incomparable in cost to the public. "They Ride the Rails to Save the Stations," the Philadelphia Inquirer rejoiced, endorsing ridership-generated revenue and rider-generated restoration initiatives without a single representation of mobility or transport besides restored railroad stations (Figure 6.13).

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95 Sarah Schweider, “They Ride the Rails to Save the Stations,” Philadelphia Inquirer, 11 June 1982, 32.
Ridership campaigns of 1977 at once raised philanthropic interests in railroad stations and recast railroad station conservancies as the foundation for resettlement of industrial cities and suburbs in the region. In 1977, the William Penn Foundation extended support for restoration of SEPTA-serviced stations to eight historic structures, again with the stipulation that SEPTA put up 2/3 of the cost of station improvements. This time around it authorized a nonprofit conservancy
to manage the renovations without a workforce of its choice. SEPTA declined the offer and informed the William Penn Foundation’s board that “obstacles presently preventing further work of this type will be resolved soon,” citing as-yet unwritten federal directives and appropriations related to the Regional Rail Reorganization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1976. The so-called “4R Act” alleviated SEPTA of its responsibility to maintain its relationship with maintenance-of-way unions long responsible for managing passenger rail properties. The law also placed responsibilities for transportation management with a Consolidated Rail Corporation chartered by Congress to restore these facilities to profitability or reuse them for revenue-generation of some other form. However, SEPTA remained liable for rail-related labor operations that conflicted with the collective bargaining of rolling stock personnel (e.g. train engineers) inherited by CONRAIL.

SEPTA derailed the station restoration agreements between CONRAIL, William Penn Foundation and conservancies by backing labor rights advocates. In the summer of 1978, Rail Contract Division director Edward Harvey joined the president of the Railway Executives Association in demanding that the Foundation limit its aid to repairs and repairmen already

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96 Gavin, SEPTA to Rohm, William Penn Foundation, 15 October 1977, WMAN Collection, Series IV, Box 1, TUUA

97 Ibid.


99 The SEPTA-CONRAIL contracts of 1976 generated considerable controversy. SEPTA and other regional rail operators arguably received a raw deal to manage properties and personnel contracted by CONRAIL so as to gain “experience and expertise” to takeover both when CONRAIL received authorization from its primary shareholder and investor, the federal government, to abandon them. “4R: Less there than meets the eye?” Railway Age, vol. 177, no. 13 (July 26, 1976), p. 18; See also, SEPTA and CONRAIL: An Audit. 1980. Ron Degraw Papers, Hagley Library.
contracted under purchase-of-service agreements with SEPTA and its predecessors. This single request accomplished dual objectives. Work undertaken on historic stations included architectural acts of reconstruction that required the supervisory expertise and experience of the Brotherhood of Maintenance-of-Way Employees and other union laborers under contract. The foundation’s grant of $75,000 would cover only such work, forcing aesthetic upgrades out of the contract and on to the conservancies working at-will on station beautification. As SEPTA expected, a restoration program consisting solely of utility upgrades, beam replacements and other such structural work violated the terms of its contributors. In other words, SEPTA prevented CONRAIL’s strategic planners from setting precedents of partnership with philanthropists in the Philadelphia region that it might be compelled, politically or otherwise, to follow in the future.

Individuals and institutions that closely followed the rise of West Mount Airy Neighbors, Inc. to regional authority, national notoriety and international acclaim refused to accept the organization’s retrenchment in the late 1970s. Journalists of the Philadelphia Inquirer mobilized small donations from around the city, launching an analog version of contemporary ‘kickstarter campaigns’ with the following ad, on the back cover of its Sunday Magazine in November 24, 1978:

“The Allen Lane railroad station, on Penn Central’s Chestnut Hill line, is shabby, dirty and becoming uglier all the time. So it’s not much different from other Philadelphia area commuter stations. They hope to collect about $4000 for station improvements, and they have the blessings of the Penn Central. The money will be use to repaint the building, replace

100 Harvey, SEPTA Rail Contract Division Director, to Finney, Executive Director, William Penn Foundation, 7 July 1978. Ron Degraw Papers, Hagley Library.
the windows and landscape the neglected grounds. In recent times not much has been done to
care for the aging station. Whenever the weeds on the grounds surrounding the Allen Lane
station grew high enough to constitute an eyesore, a railroad crew comes around to cut them
down. Outside, there is peeling yellow paint. Inside, there is only one room open to the
public. It is small and generally unpleasant. Several of the windows are broken and boarded.
But for all its physical liabilities, the Allen Lane station still carries with it a gentility and
charm, left from the early part of the century.”102

These appeals to the aesthetic sensibilities of historic preservationists proved effective because of
its timing more so than its language. On the eve of the Bicentennial Celebration of 1976, a
yearlong commemoration of the American Republic’s foundations in the City of Philadelphia,
donations to the Allen Lane Station Committee, Inc. nearly doubled the organization’s $4000
target.103

Restorative Regimes on the Rails

Public-private partnerships offered community and corporate philanthropists none of the
protections offered by the Tax Reform Act of 1976. Although liberalization of the tax code
anonimized and normalized private equity in public transportation, the lax code exposed
benefactors and beneficiaries of “maximum feasible participation” in city and state programs of
community action to much more than “limited liability.””104 SEPTA’s Reading Viaduct
Rehabilitation Project, for example, relied (then as now) on a multitude of philanthropy-
dependent nonprofit and nongovernmental proprietors to undertake reclamation, repair or
restoration of rail ties, trestles, and trains.105 However, reconstruction of Reading Viaduct after it
nearly collapsed in 1966 yielded revenue to only one such organization, the Old Philadelphia

103 Van de Velde to the Friends of the Allen Lane Station Committee, October 1975
104 The risks of ‘maximum feasible participation’ in development operations are expertly explored in Rabig, The
Fixers; Hill and Rabig, The Business of Black Power;
105 SEPTA “News Release” No. 7-8200, n.d.
Development Corporation (OPDC) (Figure 6.14). The Department of Cultural Affairs tacked $300,000 for “manpower development corporations” onto the $900,000 and $360,000 and $240,000 grants that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the City of Philadelphia and Reading Company granted SEPTA for rehabilitation of the viaduct. Accordingly, OPDC boasted in 1968 that more than half its annual budget—$300,000 for manpower development plus the $57,000 in donations supporting at-risk workers and endangered infrastructure—came from state authorities on transportation demands.

![Reading Viaduct](image)

Figure 6.14. Reading Viaduct, overgrown and inactive, as it has grown since construction of the Center City Commuter Connection tunnel concluded in 1984. Friends of the Reading Viaduct, Philadelphia, PA.

Community block grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development continued to enjoin land elites and working-class laborers in consortiums and compacts for which only one served as the *parens patraie* of profitability. OPDC’s *Annual Reports* reveal

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“supported workers” under contract to maintain Central Philadelphia properties they had rehabilitated in the 1960s earned an “opportunity” to extend their employment records but not a share of revenue generated by wage labor they performed in the emerging economy of emergency management.108 The corporation’s prioritization of public-private partnerships rendered the young men of Mount Airy Employment Service and Lower Kensington Environmental Center another revenue source—the means by which OPDC executed its contractual responsibilities and shielded itself from the exigencies of new expectations for old operations (grounds maintenance, station repair and service restoration, labor restructuring, roadbed restoration and catenary reconstruction).109

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania State came to bank on OPDC mobilizing manpower and men of power. In 1972, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) requested OPDC revise its decade-old proposal and plan for a railroad tunnel under Market Street and commercialized multimodal terminal facilities above it (Figure 6.15).110 Suburban commuters no longer connected with each other and the city via the Market Street circulars—streetcar loops and carpool lanes constructed around Central Philadelphia by member organizations of the Citizens Council on City or SEPACT. Urban spaces reserved for safe


110 Albert Greenfield, SEPTA Board Member to Richardson Dilworth, OPDC Board Member, 17 April 1972; Albert Greenfield, an OPDC Board Member, submitted the original plan to PRR President James Symes on 15 February 1962; See also,
circulation of suburban workers disappeared, according to a preface by Philadelphia’s mayor Frank Rizzo, because SEPTA “had gone from masses to minorities.”\textsuperscript{111} As historians of postwar Philadelphia have noted in recent publications, mayor Rizzo echoed small and large city mayors in calling on the Nixon and Ford Administrations to provide emergency aid for local modes of minority management.\textsuperscript{112} State regulators of social welfare steadfastly stuck to their proclamations of the early 1970s: cities and their suburbs cooperate with their communities to deal with human and nonhuman relics of the railway age—“an ever-increasing threat…in the face of ever-increasing extensions of urban centers, highways, and residential, commercial, and industrial developments.”\textsuperscript{113}

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\textsuperscript{113} Old Philadelphia Development Corporation, Market Street East Committee, Meeting minutes, 11 February 1969, 11 March 1969, Papers of the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation, Temple University Libraries, Urban Archives, Philadelphia, PA. John Todd, through his firm Wallace, Todd and Roberts, was one of the most prolific players in the redevelopment of defunct infrastructural landscapes during the postwar period. Ironically, both David Wallace and John Todd, were simultaneously active in the historic preservation and modernist housing throughout Philadelphia: Todd served on the board of the St. Martins Station Committee in Chestnut Hill from its founding in 1962 until 1982, and Wallace, served on the board of the Chestnut Hill Development Group.
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Figure 6.15. OPDC, *Annual Report*, 1972, cover. Tunnel tracks connect Central Philadelphia to the economies of its neighbors seamlessly it would appear from the OPDC prospectus

**New Life for the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation**

A critical moment in community development of critical infrastructure protection occurred in 1976, when the Old Philadelphia Development Corporation (OPDC) changed its name and nonprofit tax status under Pennsylvania’s rather liberal tax law to reward private equity in public transportation.\(^{114}\) William Coleman, the first African-American Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation (and a Philadelphia native), declined SEPTA’s application for an $85M in “emergency rail services aid” provision, but not explicitly on racial grounds (*Figure 6.16*). In fact, the lawyer and advocate for non-unionized laborers’ right to work on public projects, concluded the commercial project of inner-city tunnel and terminal construction lacked “transportation benefits” to receive the requested grant.\(^{115}\) The project’s nondescript buildings—office buildings, retail stores, parking garages, condominium developments, restaurants, a museum and a medical center—indeed consumed a disproportionately amount of the federal grant’s budget: $1.3 billion. $331 million in the Market East area financed real estate development

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\(^{114}\) Central Philadelphia Development Corporation, Articles of Incorporation, RDA, Box 73, Folder 4, HSP

U.S. Department of Transportation, “The Center City Commuter Connection, Philadelphia, PA, Agreement between the U.S. Department of Transportation, 12 January 1977, 60-2.6, FLR, PCA
around Reading Terminal; $253 million of redevelopment was completed or underway in other areas served by the tunnel; and $675 million for proposed development in those areas. Very little of the grant financed transportation facilities (Figure 6.17).\footnote{City of Philadelphia, “Development Activities Related to Proposed Rail Commuter Connection,” Report, 28 December 1976, attached to the agreement above.}
Coleman’s staff candidly revealed their interest in SEPTA building its own capacity to undertake complex construction projects of this type and scale without OPDC’s assistance. To be fair, SEPTA’s application and OPDC’s addendum merely mirrored the logic and rhetoric of fiscal conservatism that Secretary Coleman and the rest of President Ford’s Administration espoused throughout their campaign against federal investment in urban crisis management. Not until 1974, however, would the administration succeed at revising the Emergency Rail Services Act of 1970 and the Northeast Corridor Improvement Act of 1970 to reflect SEPTA’s commitment to outsourcing project planning, contract procurement, risk management, plan development and property management. The suite of professional services that SEPTA secured from OPDC at no cost thanks to the nonprofit’s philanthropic Board of Directors epitomized federal policy prescriptions for innovation in inner-city facility management.

OPDC and its peers throughout the Northeast Corridor survived a steep drop-off in private and public investment in commuter rail during this period by operating exclusively as a “receiver” not a “recipient” of federal aid. Whereas the latter expended federal funds through execution of approved projects or programs, receivers redistributed federal funds to “recipients” they approved and accredited to invest in a project, program, place or persons that state and non-state financial institutions otherwise perceived as sub-prime. The division of labor between “professional citizens” of OPDC and the professional staff of SEPTA’s Rail Contract Division finally worked in their favor in 1976, when federal transportation authorities captured, from a regulatory perspective, the legacy of receivership in transportation industry.

The Regional Rail Reorganization and Regulatory Reform (4R) Act of 1976, coupled

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117 Thatcher Longstreth, SEPTA, to William Coleman, 28 December 1976, FLR 60-2,6; James Constantino to Claude Brinegar, 20 June 1973, Office of the Secretary, General Correspondence Files, 1973, General Records of the Department of Transportation, RG 398, National Archives, College Park, MD.
with the Tax Reform Act that Congress passed the same year, afforded CONRAIL the opportunity to cast Old Philadelphia Development Corporation as a metropolitan planning organization with expertise and experience in the transportation sector. The first of these two legislations authorized federal and state transportation authorities to outsource their statutory powers of emergency management to self-described “appraisers” of railroad real estate at-risk of further depopulation, depreciation or disintegration—from the United States Railway Association (transportation lobbyists) and the justices of U.S. Bankruptcy Courts to executive directors of the National Endowment for the Arts and aerial photographers of the National Park Service (Figure 6.18). The second afforded external sources of expertise the authority to enlist non-state bodies in their operations. Consequently, OPDC and others engaged in “public benefit” operations gained the opportunity to develop a track-record, so to speak, of right-of-way appraisal and accreditation with CONRAIL.\textsuperscript{118}

\begin{figure}[h]
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\caption{(left) Aerial Photograph of the North Philadelphia Station area by photographers of the Historic American Engineering Record, U.S. Park Service, on behalf of CONRAIL, 1976. No. 11.407, Hagley Museum and Library Digital Collections.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{118} CONRAIL commissioned updates to the existing Right-of-Way Appraisal Maps of Penn Central and Reading Company, thus grandfathering in the spatial epistemologies of preceding participants in transportation planning and policymaking. CONRAIL Right-of-Way Maps—PRR Valuation Maps, RG-21, I-A-23, vol. 5, Cartography Division, U.S. National Archives.
Come 1978, when congressional representatives of southeastern Pennsylvania had succeeded at securing nearly $105 million in grants from the U.S. Urban Mass Transit Administration for their Center City Commuter Connection tunnel and terminal projects, the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation had already, a) strategized the draw-down in service provision at Reading Terminal and Reading Viaduct—property to be rendered vacant by the tunnel-terminal project; b) solicited and selected a bonded developer of commercial spaces and surfaces throughout the complex, and c) secured financing and insurance for commercial tenants to outfit the bare bones of these structures, including black enterprises and black workforce developers. ¹¹⁹ In doing so, SEPTA fielded few sources of public input or peer review of the tradeoffs their partners made between shareholders, debtors, investors, underwriters, tenants, patrons and personnel of CONRAIL’s active and abandoned spaces. Through litigation and contestation on these procedural points, a geographically and demographically broad coalition nearly derailed the fare increase required for SEPTA to undertake the prescriptions that OPDC outlined. ¹²⁰ After two years of debate, Congress settled on a broader metric a securitization performed by an even narrower measure of credibility: either interim managers of

¹¹⁹ Frank Rizzo and James McConnon to John Volpe, 12 April 1972, City of Philadelphia, Department of Records, City Archives, RG 60-2.6, Administration of Frank L. Rizzo; Jerry Primo to William Costello, 5 May 1972, City of Philadelphia, Department of Records, City Archives, RG 60-2.6, Administration of Frank L. Rizzo; City of Philadelphia, “Amended Application for a Center City Commuter Connection Tunnel as Submitted by the City of Philadelphia,” 10 April 1972, City of Philadelphia, Department of Records, City Archives, RG 60-2.6, Administration of Frank L. Rizzo; Carlos Villarreal to John Volpe, 2 May 1972, Office of the Secretary, General Correspondence, 1967-1972, General Records of the Department of Transportation, RG 398, National Archives, College Park, MD.

¹²⁰ Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and Simpson & Curtin Transportation Engineers, “Philadelphia Center City Commuter Connection: Questions and Answers,” undated, City of Philadelphia. FLR 60.-2.6, PCA.
new public benefits (e.g. trails) or maintainers of old ones (e.g. rails) could be trusted.

The campaign for Center City Commuter Connection funding fundamentally altered SEPTA’s finances and the funding landscape for other regional transit authorities in the Northeast Corridor. Comparable to Boston’s successful procurement of federal highway funds for its “Big Dig,” Philadelphia’s successful bid for the bulk of urban mass transit aid obliterated the prospects of other cities seeking federal assistance from fiscal conservatives. New York City in particular received no public aid from the federal government, just approval to privatize large swaths of real estate in the city for which federal corporations (AMTRAK and CONRAIL) had received public easements in 1970 and 1976 respectively.121 For-profit developers buying up railroad tracks and tracts captured the attention of New York Times reporters in 1977, when the New York Metropolitan Transit Authority revealed its plans to sell development rights concerning West Side rail yards to Trump, Inc., the real estate enterprise of Donald Trump.122

"While the future of passenger rail service remains murky, the storied stations dotting the lines begin to assume independent destinies. As recycled real estate, they range from hot properties to white elephants. Terminally endangered as many are, they are not rarities…Some 40,000 stations were raised in America. About half survive. Some are functional; more rot away miserably in central cities or wistfully at whistle-stops, sleeping at the switch. But at the eleventh hour, help and new ideas are highballing down the track--from teetering railroad companies; federal and local government; preservation societies, sometimes militant; private enterprise and unlikely alliances of all. Even the National Endowment for the Arts turns depot buff with the publication of two inspirational volumes entitled Re-Using Railroad Stations. Re-use and mixed use are the current battle cries, echoing earlier trends."123

For NYT editors, regional transit authorities invested in community economic development had merely jumped on a bandwagon with bonafide preservationists.

122 “Manhattan Yards Sold by Pennsy,” The Sun (30 July 1974);
123 “Old Station, New Look,” New York Times,
Founding directors and donors of Old Philadelphia Development Corporation (OPDC) first acquired the legal right to accept tax-deductible donations for center city commuter connectors in 1956, when, not coincidentally, federal aid for interstate highways began to flood cities. In response to outsized support for road building, railroad companies serving the Northeast Corridor began soliciting and permitting a multitude and diversity of benevolent bodies to invest directly or indirectly in revitalization of their most degraded and depreciated properties—historic buildings and landscapes in the central cities of metropolitan areas. Community development corporations such as OPDC capitalized on the contributions of these community stewards and corporate philanthropists—which took the form of cash in some cases, credit in others, but predominantly property in the 1960s (Figure 6.19).124 Accumulating easements on private property, Old Philadelphia Development Corporation progressively procured private investment in spaces and structures of public utility, particularly greenways and roadways of the city plus railways and waterways of the region. Come 1976, OPDC officially operated as an agent of the local state, facilitating its transition from subsidization of transit services to privatization of transport spaces.

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124 The numerical value of this valuation exceeded $1 million in 1976, according to a Financial Statement that OPDC provided the Bicentennial Corporation that year. OPDC, Memorandum: Bicentennial Corporation Financials. This proclamation was not verified statistically but rather spatially, using property valuations reported in OPDC’s Annual Reports and internal Financial Statements, 1956-1976. Box _____, “OPDC Reports, Richardson Dilworth Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
OPDC’s assistance was just that, not the wholesale buyout that SEPTA planned to undertake in the late 1970s. Amidst its financial difficulties, it had begun the arduous task of assuming responsibility for all aspects of the region’s commuter railroads. Subsidies had ameliorated but not eliminated losses from passenger operations, leaving debt-ridden real estate in dire conditions and patrons without patience for price-hikes.\textsuperscript{125} Reading Co. president Charles Bertrand threatened in September 1971 to shut down commuter service entirely if SEPTA did not assume responsibility for all of it. Philadelphia mayors, directors of the Commonwealth’s Department of Community Affairs, and administrators of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, he claimed, promised, “the good old reliable Reading Railroad will be around forever.”\textsuperscript{126} Bertrand, a trustee of the Reading Company receivership, rebuffed such promises,

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insisting, “Don’t you believe it. We won’t.” But, the definitiveness of such statements carried little weight in a region receptive to bluffs and bailouts multiple times a year, for every mode of transportation.

Critical Infrastructure Protection on the Rails

Throughout its tenure, CONRAIL enlisted local bodies in jolting back to life both jaded constituents of regional rail and the stations for which they reserved awe, disdain, hope and fear. A smattering of legal, legislative and administrative acts entrusted CONRAIL with soliciting community action, specifically the liberalized business of labor and landscape funding federal underwriters of Consolidated Rail Corporation—the U.S. Congress, specifically the United States Railway Association. Legislation signed in 1981 by President Reagan declared CONRAIL free to divest from passenger rail station it had acquired responsibility for in 1976 and invest in entrepreneurial governance of the remaining holdings (Figure 6.20). Between 1981 and 1987, CONRAIL sold some sites to fledging metropolitan transportation authorities like SEPTA but it reserved others for conservancies, companies and cities it trusted to turn a profit. As a result,

127 Ibid. See also Mike Mallowe, “The Black Hole,” Philadelphia Magazine 70, no. 7 (July 1979): 158. SEPTA Collection, Hagley Museum and Library


129 Of these six companies, four served the Philadelphia metropolitan area. Central of NJ transported commuters from shore towns north and south of Camden, NJ until it went bankrupt in 1967. Until 1970, Schuylkill Valley Lines carried people and goods up and down the Schuylkill River, which separated West Philadelphia from the rest of the City of Philadelphia. Even after filing for bankruptcy and going into receivership in 1971, the Reading (RR) Company carried the majority of Philadelphia’s public sector employees from their homes in industrial suburbs of Pennsylvania and New Jersey to Center City Philadelphia. After it filed for bankruptcy in 1970, Penn Central, the largest and oldest rail network in the United States, still played an active role in intercity transport, business travel,
Gravers Lane Station in Philadelphia’s Chestnut Hill neighborhood might undergo restoration at the direction of its receiver, while another station in the same city—Wayne Junction Station—underwent degradation.\textsuperscript{130} CONRAIL need only sell or lease debilitated stations and depreciated viaducts along “short-lines” and Main Lines to municipalities, managers, monitors and maintainers \textit{committed}, by contract, to the prescriptions of congress.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure6.20.png}
\caption{CONRAIL’s holdings in the Delaware Valley after 1984, when it divested from commuter railways in Greater Philadelphia and transfer its contracts to SEPTA, were sold to CSX and Northfolk Southern (NS). Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, AMTRAK and CSX data sets. ESRI ArcGIS 10.3.}
\end{figure}

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international trade and journeys to work within major metropolitan areas of the Northeast Corridor (Philadelphia, New York City, New Haven, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and Boston).
The Northeast Rail Service Act of 1981 thus ruptured the restorative regimes that regulatory reform of the railroad industry wrought. The *New York Times* took notice that the order of protection given CONRAIL also licensed it to release its stations to nongovernmental and governmental bodies without public hearings or public easements.\(^{131}\) Also, none of the half-dozen bills passed between 1974 and 1976 vacated the licenses and leaseholds of conservancies already licensed to labor on these buildings and landscapes; in fact, it incentivized lessees to continue their tax-deductible work, by keeping the facilities they managed and maintained in CONRAIL’s tax-free zones.\(^{132}\) While CONRAIL’s concessions to SEPTA and other metropolitan transportation authorities expose its preservation plans and protocols for critical infrastructure protection, its withholdings—properties leased or sold to other organizations—reveal others also developed epistemologies, expertise and ethics of which CONRAIL executives approved. All of these “receivers” of CONRAIL's responsibilities rejected real estate they deemed unworthy of rehabilitation, redeveloped buildings and landscapes in receivership, released vacant properties to select homesteaders and housing developers, and reserves spaces for the real estate marketplace.\(^{133}\) The federal vision of “Metropolitan Districts” under the provisional control of a state-appointed emergency manager took form around blocks of knowledge not, as predicted by community-based organizations and commissioners of public transportation, around city blocks.

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\(^{132}\) Ibid.

\(^{133}\) “4R: Less there than meets the eye?” Railway Age, vol. 177, no. 13 (July 26, 1976), p. 18
CONCLUSION

The Resilient Third Sector

In the shadow of the 2016 Democratic National Convention, skeptics, critics, foes and Friends of the Rail Park under development in Philadelphia sat next to one another at communal tables installed under the Reading Viaduct to form a beer garden (Figure 7.1).¹ The Historical Society of Pennsylvania outfitted the space with historic photographs of railroad cars and laborers that once traversed this segment of Reading Company’s City Division infrastructure (Figure 7.2). Photographs of the Viaduct in-use more than a half-century earlier reminded admirers of contemporary vegetation that this verdant landscape represents, for some, a loss of by-gone industry and employment. The native plants of this “pop-up garden,” unlike others that award-winning landscape architect Walter Hood designed for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, showcased the ‘urban wild’ cultivated and heralded by new residents of the city that protectors and preservers of the Rail Viaduct Project long projected (Figure 7.3).² Meanwhile, local chefs served up gourmet food and beverages at prices that yielded revenue for Friends of the Rail Park to continue this horticultural tradition in spite of apparent ecological and economic risks.³ In short, partnerships between for-profit companies, nonprofit conservancies and non-

¹ The Reading Viaduct opened June 10, 2016.

² Viaduct Rail Park, 10th & Hamilton (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, 2016); See also www.railviaduct.org. The Rail Viaduct Project is a defunct organization that developed appreciation for the degraded and decommissioned rail viaduct of Reading Company. Its leadership merged with green space advocates and rails-to-trails conservancy members to form Friends of the Rail Park in 2012 (www.therailpark.org).

resident communities was on full display for prospective donors and users of a railway abandoned and adopted many times over by local, state and national transportation corporations as well as community, city and county leaders in greening grey infrastructure (*Figure 7.4*).

![Figure 7.1. The Pop-Up Garden on the eve of its opening June 10, 2016. *PlanPhilly.com*](image1)

![Figure 7.2: Photograph of Reading Railroad rail cars and workers in 1943 that the Historical Society of Pennsylvania installed at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society’s Reading Viaduct Pop-Up Garden in the summer of 2016. Source: The Philadelphia Record Photograph Collection V07](image2)

Figure 7.3. Vegetation on the Reading Viaduct, compared to the industrial surroundings of Callowhill. © Kyle Hill / Friends of the Rail Park
Time and space, culture and capital not necessarily epistemic boundaries separate Friends of Rail Park and the hundreds of railway conservationists, railroad committees and right-of-way concessionaires that preceded them. The underwriting of railway conservancy today—a combination of federal funding, local finance, philanthropic contributions and corporate sponsorship—remains unchanged ontologically since federal government and the philanthropic sector began in 1961 to issue financial aid and technical assistance for railroad station redevelopment, rail service revitalization, ridership recruitment and railbanking. What has changed in the administration of rights-of-way — accreditation and creditors, credibility and creditworthiness—received critical assessment in this dissertation. The financiers of railway conservancy have radically changed since the U.S. Department of Transportation Urban Mass
Transportation Administration (UMTA, est. 1964) disbanded the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA)’s Office of Transportation and took over underwriting for state sponsored projects of regional rail revitalization such as the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact’s “Operation Reading.” UMTA administrators for the Kennedy, Nixon and Ford Administrations (1968-1974) discontinued HHFA’s capital intensive construction program, but kept supporting one of its predecessors’ policy agendas: “maximum feasible participation” in community economic development. Limping along as line items of the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, the National Transportation Act of 1970, and the Emergency Rail Services Act of 1970, public benefit corporations entrusted with private enterprises built a track record of revitalization for which park-n-ride lots in commercial strips, commercialized passenger terminals, overgrown rail-trails and pruned passenger stations in Greater Philadelphia still stand as reminders.

This dissertation’s case studies artifacts of community philanthropy and corporate investment in commuter rail show active citizenship shifted in scale and scope in the postwar period but remained the province of foundation-funded planners, policymakers and preservationists. Ever still, a majority of metropolitan Philadelphia’s postwar populations bore witness to members of their communities participating the provision or protection of “balanced transportation.” Through walking tours and walkabouts to right-of-way policing and railway planning, neighboring bodies—individual and institutional, corporate and collectivist—engaged in technical and tactical forms of civic engagement in commuter rail revitalization.

Commuter rail reinvestment—financial and otherwise—laid the groundwork for community resettlement, by design. Such a lesson was learned in Philadelphia recently, when Friends of the Rail Park campaigned for capital improvements to the Reading Viaduct with
trustees of an existing ‘Neighborhood Improvement District,’ the Center City District. The Center City District, or rather its trustees—the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation (CCCD) and its philanthropic arm, the Center City District Foundation—had raised about 65 percent of the $9 million needed for redevelopment of Reading Viaduct. Friends of Reading Viaduct, which is still owned by Reading Company, received a $3.5 million grant from the state’s Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) to complete the first phase of Rail Park project planning.⁴ Per the terms of the Commonwealth’s Community and Economic Improvement Act of 1998, the city could take over ownership of the park and place it within their Neighborhood Improvement District after the improvements paid for by RACP, CCCD and Friends of the Rail Park concluded.⁵

Long-time residents and businesses of the deindustrialized area around Reading Viaduct protested these terms on two accounts: Center City leadership at the helm of the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority had relegated the Reading Viaduct to the Callowhill Urban Renewal Area since its establishment in 1945, delimiting the rights of community-based organizations

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⁵ Community and Economic Improvement Act—Special Financing Assessments, P.L. 231, No. 32, HB 1788, 24 May 2016, The NID proposed by Councilman Darrel Clark would follow the Community and Economic Improvement Act of 1998 guidelines: "A limited geographic area within a municipality, in which a special assessment is levied on all designated property, other than tax-exempt property, for the purpose of promoting the economic and general welfare of the district and the municipality ... Such districts shall be referred to generally as neighborhood improvement district (NID) and specifically as business improvement district (BID), residential improvement district (RID), industrial improvement district (IID), institutional improvement district (INID) or mixed-use improvement district (MID), depending on the type district established." The Act also describes the powers of the municipal corporation, or Neighborhood Improvement District Municipal Authority (NIDMA), and requires 51 percent of the voting public to prevent its creation. The threshold for establishment is much higher than for a business improvement district or an institutional improvement district, other types of special services/special assessment districts. But, the powers of the NID warrant the supermajority because the municipal corporation entrusted with the NID would have the right to "purchase, own, construct, renovate, develop, operate, rehabilitate, manage, sell and/or dispose of real property," and to "acquire by purchase or lease real or personal property," and to "impose liens on property for the nonpayment of property assessments."
within that area to engage in the concessionary practices of community associations based in neighborhoods near the City Line (e.g. Chestnut Hill, Torresdale); Reading Viaduct already sits within a special assessment district—the Callowhill Industrial Historic District that the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and the National Park Service approved in 2010. Community activists struggled in the 1970s and 1980s, the height of the urban crisis and the commuter crisis, to solicit state funding for transportation enhancements beyond that which the Commonwealth’s Department of Community Affairs stipulated as “rehabilitation of Reading Viaduct” in 1966. Stations abandoned by Reading Company due to “public safety concerns” for passengers and personnel fell outside the scope of the Rehabilitation project but, they did not fall into the care of Callowhill Community Association, which requested to govern the grounds around these buildings and reuse the stations therein (fig. 5). The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, which had rarely used its police powers since its establishment in 1966, enjoined owners of Reading Viaduct—the Reading Company—from dispensing new leaseholds to old structures that SEPTA planned to replace with modern, manageable underground rail infrastructure.

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8 Walsh, Ibid.

9 Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, SEPACK III—“Operation Reading” (1971).
The chapters of this dissertation collectively offer a new history of Old Philadelphia—a spatial, cultural and political history of rights-of-way that civil society has regularly reclaimed from disinvestment, degradation and depreciation. To Callowhill old-timers, who identified then and now as people of color, the Callowhill Historic District represents cooperative ownership of critical infrastructure and advances social justice in critical infrastructure protection. Contemporary plans for a Neighborhood Improvement District (NID), which compel Callowhill property owners to pay a property tax surcharge for railbanking and grounds keeping with the railway, contest the autonomy that this neighborhood begrudgingly acquired from Center City, according to community meeting participants such as the president of the Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation. ¹⁰ “If the Callowhill NID wants to clean up the viaduct, they can roll up their sleeves and get to work. This is unfair, unjust legislation, and it’s definitely taxation without representation,” declared the Corporation’s president Cecilia Yep. For others, A

$80,000 “60-day pilot cleaning program” under the direction of Paul Levy, Executive Director of the Center City District and Chairman of the Board of the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation, signaled a return to the 1960s and 1970s, when Levy and other members of Corporation earned revenue for “demonstrations” of railroad fix-up that other civic bodies—individual and institutional—were criminalized for undertaking (Figures 7.6, 7.7 and 7.8). By many accounts, inner-city communities of color never obtained the privilege to partner with the City of Philadelphia, the Passenger Service Improvement Corporation or the Southeastern Pennsylvania Compact, let alone profit from such partnerships. Under new city ordinances, they would pay—in the form of property taxes—for the eagerness of newcomers to develop a track record of interest to philanthropists and policymakers.

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Figures 7.6, 7.7 and 7.8. Walkabouts, walking tours and clean-up efforts on the Reading Viaduct have been sanctioned by the local state as well as the viaduct’s owner, Reading Company. As recently as 2009, permits from the company and permission from the city (to avoid arrest for trespassing) were not easily acquired by artists of color living in this inner city community of color. Their stylized photographs of the railscape and public art brought attention to the landscape, however. Antonio Navarez, Creative Commons.

Community protection from practitioners and promoters of critical infrastructure protection remains at the heart of the battle over what institutional, political and architectural forms fix fractured railways and the fragmented regions of which they form a constitutive part. Drawing on subaltern theories of conscription and critical race and gender theories of incorporation, the dissertation draws out bodies of knowledge that the public transportation sector, private transport industry and philanthropic trusts once banked on to protect rights-of-way from disinvestment and disintegration amidst retrenchment and recessions. “Fixers” in this case—from railroad concessionaires like Chestnut Hill Parking Foundation and Levittown Commuters Club to railroad company co-signers such as the municipalities and counties that formed the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Compact—ruptured prevailing representations of accreditation, participation and partnership in urban planning. Their actions and activism also compel wholesale rethinking about the architects of formalization, corporatization, capitalization and marketization.
Crabgrass-rooted but not grassroots organized, black and white, republican and democratic, liberal and conservative, expert and novice leaders of suburban stewardship and urban citizenship fixed hardscapes to landscapes, building grounds to underground buildings, parking lots to parklets, tracks to tracts between 1950 and 1985 (*Figure 7.9* and *Figure 7.10*). From one perspective, the contractors employed, consultants commissioned, and corporations created in the course of such concessionary critical infrastructure protection constitute a new norm of private equity in public space and public benefits in private property. Taken in total, however, the abnormal cases of crisis organizing and crisis management in this dissertation, merely point to the marginalization of maintenance as a political philosophy and a strategic planning praxis of those with the means to protect themselves and others from anticipated and unexpected threats, the emergence of state authority over the exigencies of these emergency managers.

![Figure 7.9](PlanPhilly.com)
Improving the Intersectionality of Inter-Sector Urban Studies

Urban scholars have long listed Philadelphia at the top of their list of cities influenced, if not controlled by, private interests. Sam Bass Warner’s canonical account of *The Private City*, first re-centered landed elites of Philadelphia suburbs in revisions of Philadelphia's City Charter in 1951. Indeed, until the next charter revision nearly 40 years later, the city would—and could—execute Home Rule through mayoral advisory boards, municipal corporations directed by mayoral appointees, and nongovernmental organizations deputized by the mayor. However, recent histories of these quasi-public and quasi-private authorities fail to substantiate Warners'

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 thinly-veiled contempt for citizens that shifted the statutory authority of “mobbed up” municipal offices to the mayor’s office, where their legal expertise, management experiences and fiscal ethics could be concentrated. Was centralized governance of distributed authority a product of mayoral control, as Warner contended? Or, did decentralization, deindustrialization and other forms of divestment urban forms of distributed governance that would endure the urban crisis (and commuter crisis) they generated? What services could civil society provide in such a vulnerable state? Who, what and where did they serve? What conditions negated their necessity? In what manner have these members of civil society retained, lost and reclaimed civil rights? What constitutes their rights-of-way in planning, policymaking and preservation? How have they been used and shared—by the public sector, the private sector and civil society? What influence did they have on the physical, legal and economic and political landscapes that gave them form and transformed them? These are but a few concerns raised by this dissertation, a Philadelphia-centered case study of (dis)accreditation and (dis)enfranchisement in the transportation sector.

These questions have long preoccupied urban political economists, sociologists, geographers and historians, pushing urban planning and policy scholars to pick a side: the exploitative powers of the private sector, the expropriation powers of the public sector, or, the emancipatory powers of the philanthropic sector. “First responders”, ready-at-hand to extinguish spatial insecurity and economic instability, have fueled equity amongst incongruous structures of urban space and fanned the flames of inequity amongst the diverse bodies that occupy, use, own and operate them.13 Historically, first responders merely inspected ignition sites and investigated

13 Scholarship on conflagration is extensive, . I draw specifically on the work of Scott Knowles and Kevin Graham, but at this juncture I am drawing conceptually on the critical urban studies of Mindy Fullilove, who argues the ‘healthy communities’ and the fiscal heath of their cities are inextricably linked to arson and other destructive acts of spatial production. On the historiographical and theoretical imperative to extinguish the notion of extinguished threats, see Mindy Fullilove, Urban Alchemy: Restoring Joy in America’s Sorted Out Cities (New York: New Village Press, 2013)
incendiary actions and actors. However, socio-technical systems of smolder—wood-frame constructions, asbestos fire-proofing, predatory insurance, etc.—ignited emergency management of a much broader scale and scope. The kindle and flames that return to walls and apertures of urban space at once conceal and unveil the political economy of community philanthropy and corporate responsibility.

Post-industrial sites of public history, a methodology deployed in the construction of this case study, intimate the value of provisional, temporary and interim proprietors to the historiography of urban America amidst the aftershocks of industrial collapse. Infamously, “The Bronx is Burning” solicited television viewers and U.S. presidents as well as community development corporations to the industrialized borough of New York City. As much attention as the area received then, from journalists, and now, from academics, the event, including how it came to constitute a “state of emergency,” remained out of reach until oral historians spoke to residents, landlords, politicians and planners. Treated symmetrically, each was asked: who responded to acts of arson in the Bronx, and who first took note of bad actors? What was the first response to arson? How did the response change over time and space? What role if any did knowledge of the Bronx play in ways of knowing “The Bronx is burning” and not burnt-out? What did squelching the flames cost? Who demonstrated the fire was extinguished and how? How was credit claimed or attributed for mitigating the threat it posed? Responses that reified the biographies of “disaster experts”—those trusted to delegate the designation of who and what mattered before conflagration and to determine that or those which will matter thereafter—took precedence over those reinforcing the hagiography of first responders. Corporatist forms of community formation, development and conservation that connect stories of insurance fraud, squatting, fire-fighting and freedom fights. In short, the burnt-out Bronx and beleaguered
Philadelphia share intersections when intersectionality guides inquiry into a protracted state of emergency.

Oral histories of white-collar men that revolted against white flight from railways to freeways and untold feminist ‘herstories’ of the white-gloved women that rallied for railways to opportunity framed this investigation of rights of way in the long civil rights era. Purveyed more by suburban white men in positions of power than urban black women from places of poverty, civilian accounts and corporate accounting of rights-of-way at risk of abandonment elicited dismissive responses at the time from public accountants of private divestment and derisive commentary ever since on civil society in Philadelphia. With geographical information systems and cultural geography of the civil rights era, namely journalism and other forms of mass media and community communication, Philadelphia’s gentry kept their back-to-the-city movements literally and figuratively on track as automobility gained traction in the decades preceding and succeeding the railroad industry’s collapse.

Transactional in theory, but concessionary in practice, the third sector has become (or perhaps always was) a third rail in the historiography of preservation, planning, policy and politics. By “third rail,” I mean an electrifying line of inquiry that endangers those you pay too little attention to how it works and why. Defined by legal scholars as shelter from economic, political, environmental and social upheavals, the right-of-way of public utility companies, concessionaires and conservancies has long protected operative bodies from unplanned disintegration and unauthorized disruption both natural and man-made. But, these physical and

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legal landscapes neither protect themselves naturally nor receive protection automatically. Their existence as an attended-to enclosure depends at once on adjudication and abjection, reclamation and rejection. In theory, queer theory that is, human and nonhuman maintainers of right-of-way operate conjunctively as a ‘body politic’ but not necessarily collectively or consensually. Rights-of-way can fall apart at any time or place that their maintainers adjudicate trespassers and interlocutors, friends and foes, leaving only civil unions to reconstitute rights-of-way. Neither self-sufficient nor self-regulated, felicitous or frivolous, rights-of-way embody the risks of rendering civil rights to all constitutional bodies—be they emergent suburban elites seeking city power or revanchist city residents working towards suburban autonomy.

Too little diversity in data on rights-of-way curtails urban theory and history of diverse bodies (individual and institutional) in transportation planning.¹⁵ Not all citizens that treated private property as public space or a community asset could afford to tell their history let alone archive it in diverse media. While Conrail’s records went unprotected from natural elements and man-made destruction, SEPTA’s Board of Directors out-sourced maintenance of 25+ year-old reports to archival institutions and university libraries and other civil institutions not directly related to CONRAIL’s initial public offering in 1986. For the most part, these organizations have attended to SEPTA’s commuter rail plans and properties. Some—particularly the labor

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collectives, preservation alliances and growth coalitions affected by SEPTA’s procurement, planning and preservation decisions—had released their land and discharged their labor to SEPTA. From the Chestnut Hill Historical Society to the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation, each source of knowledge about transportation and land use in Greater Philadelphia narrated unprocessed records of their investments in infrastructural landscapes and requested I produce documentation and procure data from other sources on their behalf. Public history, in this dissertation, supplements the public record of preservationists and protectionists in planning scholarship and underwrites their plans to remedy perceived planning blunders, policy missteps and political expediencies of the past through present-day techniques and technology of critical storytelling.

Fire sales of industrial heritage uncovered out-of-sight, out-of-mind places of on-going critical infrastructure protection. For instance, the initial public offering of Consolidated Rail Corporation in 1987 ‘outed’ queer partners not yet sanctioned by the state to own common property. Fire, unfortunately and fortunately, erased the written record of these transgressions.

In the list of outstanding lessees, licenses and loans, prospective investors in CONRAIL assets found a variety of asset managers: community development corporations, neighborhood

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16 Some of these records are held in Urban Archive at Temple University; others remain in the Germantown and Chestnut Hill Historical Societies.


19 The building in which CONRAIL records were stored in the 1980s was subject to an electrical fire that destroyed nearly all documentation contained therein. See, Hagley Museum and Library, Finding Aid.
conservancies, chambers of commerce and business improvement districts, plus unincorporated, undocumented conservationists that set out at mid-century or earlier to restructure regulatory institutions and rightsize ragged infrastructure for public divestment from private railroads.  

Very few proprietors of CONRAIL’s building stock and rolling stock survive to this day, leaving oral recollections uncorroborated by their protagonists.

Participant observation in rail enthusiasts’ digital curation of railroad records reveals biases in railroad company, consumer and conservation collections on which analysis of gentrification might be based. Only a few of these interactions moved beyond community-board postings to community mapping, for the rudimentary platforms of communications that many railfans employ—Internet 1.0 chat rooms and bulletin boards—delimited inquires into the scale and scope of their expertise and experiences as railway stewards, preservationists and enthusiasts. Born digital, each of these anonymized relationships stretched to the transnational extents of CONRAIL’s property holdings—the American South to Southern Ontario. But, none stretched beyond the safe spaces of digital communication and community from which they sprung. In spite of my assurances and that of the Institutional Review Board, these users of analog social media insisted that their bodies of knowledge could not, in a conventional way, become a primary source of knowledge about critical infrastructure or its protection.

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21 According to legal counsel and records officers of Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority, Maryland Transit Administration and New Jersey Transit Administration, to which I sent Freedom of Information Act requests in November of 2012. Others I identified through newspaper searches stretching from the heyday of CONRAIL sales and leases to the present.
However unconventional and untraceable, rights-of-way of yesteryear can provide critical ways of knowing the right to the city in the post-Civil Rights Era. Down the stairs from the platform, where Amtrak trains drop off business-class passengers at majestic 30th Street Station, huddle token-holding passengers awaiting a break in highway exit ramp traffic to enter the Market-Frankford Elevated (MFE) subway across the way. Rather than leave the 30th Street Station platforms for a bodega, retrieve cash from an ATM machine therein, buy a bottle of water to break the $20 bills received, and finally purchase a roll of tokens from the MFE subway teller that requires exact change, I chose, on a rainy day in the fall of 2011, to seek an alternate route to my destination—the Galleria at Market East Station. To my surprise, I could board one of 8 commuter rail lines to proceed to the Galleria without bothering with rain, tokens, ATM machines or cash for that matter. Market East Station, now called Jefferson Station to reflect Thomas Jefferson University’s sponsorship of station management and maintenance, opened in 1984 with much praise for the private capital that built the station building, the commercial concourses above it and the track platforms and train tunnels built below it. But, public-private partnership in the production of transportation facilities was exactly what Greater Philadelphia’s nonprofit sector, railfans in particular, had been fighting for since the late 1940s.

Amendments to federal rail legislation and administrative directives issued in 1974 flipped the fiscal landscape for regional rail, privileging small-scale actors a part of larger-scale networks of reinvestment and recovery. Philanthropies provided technical and financial assistance to conservancies which performed restoration, rehabilitation and renovation projects on behalf of metropolitan transportation authorities that standardized revitalization and repair of

22 For insight into the renaming of Market East Station, the name given to the station to reflect its centrality to the ‘Market East Urban Renewal Area’ when the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority designated the latter in 1964, see “Next Stop, Jefferson Station! SEPTA Renames Market East Station, SEPTA Press Release, 04 Septembmer 2014, accessed October 14, 2014. http://www.septa.org/media/releases/2014/9-4-14.html
the buildings in their charge. Since the turn of the twentieth century, the transportation industry—and state regulators and replacements—relied on non-state bodies to write the rules, protocols and standards of governmentality, such as the *Blue Book* on interstate highway planning that the American Association of State Highway Officials published annually between 1941 and 1991. Municipal officials and metropolitan commissions have relied ever since on nongovernmental organizations to assemble sociotechnical systems of urban governance, even to its own detriment. In retrospect, regional governance in the case of regional rail returned to the private sector roots of corporate welfare that safeguarded at-risk regions against the failure of metropolitan capitalism only by putting itself at risk (*Figure 7.11*).  

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Figure 7.11. Commuters protest against SEPTA for “racist” fare increases in front of the Mayor’s Office, Philadelphia, 1980. Courtesy of the Encyclopedia of Philadelphia (the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Humanities)
ARCHIVES

Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Cambridge, MA
   Penn Central Transportation Company Records, 1834-1977

Bucks County Historical Society, PA
   Bucks County Planning Commission, Annual Reports, 1951-
   Flood Control Maps (misc.)
   Levittown Times
   Bristol Courier

Chestnut Hill Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA
   St. Martins Station Committee, Inc.
   Nancy Hubby Collection

Delaware County Historical Society, Upper Darby, PA
   Delaware County Times (1/15/1931-12/22/1966)

Free Library of Philadelphia Newspaper Collection, Philadelphia, PA
   City Line News (4/16/1962-3/14/1968)
   Main Line Chronicle (1/6/1955-12/8/1972)
   Main Line Times (1/1939-2/2007)

Germantown Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA
   Germantown Courier
   Germantown Crier / Chronicle (1/1939-6/1978)

Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE
   Harold E. Cox Transportation Collection (Accession # 3158)
   Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company Records (Accession # 1370)
   Ron DeGraw Transit Collection, 1859-2002 (Accession # 2397)
   Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) Records, 1874-1989 (Acc. #: 2123)
   John F. Tucker Transit History Collection, 1895-1992 (Accession #: 2046)
   Pennsylvania Railroad Passenger Operations Records (Acc. #: 1807)
   Pennsylvania Railroad Passenger Operations Records (Acc. #: 1807)
   Reading Company Records, Secretary-Treasurer Files, 1791-1975 (Acc. # 1520)
   Reading Company Records of the Law Department, 1791-1979
   PRR, Engineering Department, Maps and Drawings, 1876-1976

Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA
   Richardson Dilworth Papers, Collection 3112. Series II: Civic Groups and Projects, 1948-1973:
      Old Philadelphia Development Corporation, 1957-1976
   Richardson Dilworth Papers, Collection 3112. Series IV: Governor’s Committee on
      Transportation, 1958/69-1973
   Richardson Dilworth Papers, Collection 3112.Series VI: Reading Railroad Receivership, 1971-74

Lower Merion Historical Society, Lower Merion, PA
Main Line Chronicle (1/6/1955-12/8/1972)
Main Line Times (1/1939-2/2007)
Main Line News

Montgomery County Historical Society, Norristown, PA

Glenside News

Old York Road Historical Society, Abington, PA

Martin Evoy Collection

National Archives II, College Park, MD

RG 21.1 Conrail Railroad Property Transfer Maps (ARC 734702)
RG 398.2 General Records of the Department of Transportation, 1958-1979
RG 207.6.1 Records of the Housing and Home Finance Agency, 1933-1965
RG 399.1 Transportation Maps, Records of the Federal Railroad Administration
RG 399.2 Northeast Corridor Improvement Project Plans, Records of the Federal Railroad Administration

Philadelphia City Archives, Philadelphia, PA

Mayor's Correspondence & Files (60-2), Administration of Joseph Clark, 1951-1955
Mayor's Correspondence & Files (60-3), Administration of Richardson Dilworth, 1956-1962
Mayor's Correspondence & Files (60-5), Administration of James Tate, 1962-1972
Mayor’s Correspondence & Files (60-6), Administration of Joseph Rizzo, 1972-1980
Mayor’s Correspondence & Files (60-7), Administration of William Green, 1980-1984

Radnor Historical Society, Radnor, PA


Temple University Urban Archives, Philadelphia, PA

Pennsylvania Railroad Company Records, Real Estate Department, 1946-1948
Pennsylvania Railroad Company Records, Financial Department, 1946-48
Walter Massey Phillips Collection
Citizens Council on City Planning
Charles Frazier Papers
McDowell Evening Bulletin Collection
Pamphlet Collection
West Mount Airy Neighbors Association Records
East Mount Airy Neighbors Association Records

LIBRARY VERTICLE FILES

Free Library of Philadelphia
Temple University Library
Drexel University Library
Philadelphia University Library
Harvard University Libraries

INDEXED NEWSPAPERS

Philadelphia Inquirer
Philadelphia Bulletin
Philadelphia Tribune
New York Times
Wall Street Journal

PROFESSIONAL AND TRADE JOURNALS

Appraisal (Journal of the Association of Right-of-Way Appraisers)
DIGITAL MEDIA
Greater Philadelphia Geohistory Network, Penn State University
American Archiects & Buildings Project, Athenaeum of Philadelphia
West Philadelphia Landscape Project, MIT Department of Urban Planning
Environmental Justice Map, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Philadelphia Registry of Historic Places and Districts, Pennsylvania Historic Commission

DISSERTATIONS & THES


Heidenreich, Robert. “An Examination of ‘Operation Levittown’ as a Demonstration Program.” Wharton School of Business. MBA Thesis. 1966


_Bibliographic Note: Footnotes rather than Endnotes including published works are employed in this dissertation to facilitate the reading of this dissertation in parts._