

### Spruce Hill Community Vision

The Spruce Hill Community Trust contracted with a professional planner, Jennifer Hurley, to conduct a limited planning process for the Spruce Hill neighborhood in conjunction with the city's mapping and re-zoning of lower southwest-Philadelphia in the Spring of 2013. Two public meetings with around 150 participants over the two sessions produced a working "vision statement" and a set of principles to help guide future community development. The Spruce Hill Community Association board met with the Spruce Hill Trust members to discuss the results, and after some suggested refinements produced the following document that the association board formally adopted unanimously at its meeting on October 8, 2013. This "Vision Statement and Placemaking Principles" document is designed as a guide for future discussions on development within the Spruce Hill community. It represents the broad consensus of a diverse neighborhood on issues of urban density, residential and commercial usage and location, architecture and scale, greening and neighborhood landscaping, parking and transportation, and the necessity for quality public schooling. Every issue and/or project that comes before the community should be considered without prejudice, and should not be submitted to an absolute reading of this document; rather, the stated principles enunciated in the document should help guide any discussion in giving fair recognition to the thinking and aspirations of the residents who make up our community.

Spruce Hill is a thriving, diverse, urban neighborhood where people live, work, learn, shop, dine, and play. Families and people of all ages and backgrounds enjoy the safe, active community life enabled by our variety of public spaces. New walkable development in character with our historic buildings and streets continues to add life to the neighborhood. Trees and landscaping add to the beauty of our neighborhood. Green development and infrastructure contributes to environmental sustainability. We take care of our public spaces and private buildings. Local schools and institutions enrich the neighborhood with quality programs and services. Our neighborhood works together in cooperation with nearby neighborhoods, institutions, universities, hospitals, and community organizations to improve the quality of life for everyone.

### Spruce Hill Neighborhood Placemaking Principles

- *An Urban Neighborhood with a Vibrant Street Life* – Development in Spruce Hill should reflect its identity as an urban **neighborhood**, with an intimate character combined with vibrant urban life. The high rises of downtown and the low-slung buildings and parking lots of suburbia do not reflect the character of Spruce Hill. Mixed-use and commercial streets at a human scale complement dense residential streets.
- *Mix of Walkable Uses* – Spruce Hill should include a mix of housing sizes, types, and costs. Higher density housing should be located closer to campuses and on mixed-use corridors with commercial development, with single- and two-family housing concentrated on neighborhood streets. Neighborhood-serving retail and mixed-use and commercial corridors should support diverse, small-scale businesses.
- *Walkable Streets with Transit and Bike Facilities* – Private buildings shape the public realm. Buildings should relate to the street and sidewalk in a way that creates high-quality public space with the feeling of “outdoor rooms”. Streets and sidewalks should be designed to include pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit in a safe, comfortable, accessible way. Streets should not be too wide.
- *Low-Impact Parking* – Parking should be provided in a way that minimizes its visual impact, including on-street parking, structured parking, and surface parking lots with adequate screening and landscaping. Parking lots should not separate buildings from the sidewalk and street. Excessive expanses of pavement should be discouraged.

- ***Traditional and New*** – Historic buildings should be preserved and new infill development should blend with the historic character and scale.
- ***Public Space*** – Public spaces of all kinds (streets, sidewalks, plazas, parks, playgrounds, parklets) should provide venues for community interaction for all ages.
- ***Visual Appeal*** – All elements of the built environment in Spruce Hill should be visually appealing, reflected in well-designed architecture, quality materials, and design details.
- ***Trees, Landscaping, and Green Amenities*** – Public and private spaces should include mature trees, lush plantings, and environmentally beneficial design features.
- ***Maintenance and Cleanliness*** – Buildings, landscaping, and public spaces should be clean and well-maintained. Infrastructure and building design should consider ongoing maintenance needs.
- ***Neighborhood Schools*** – Residents in Spruce Hill should have access to a variety of good quality schools, including neighborhood public schools.
- ***Neighborhood Cooperation*** – The neighborhood benefits from the interconnected residents, businesses, organizations, universities, and institutions that call Spruce Hill and nearby neighborhoods home. Ongoing interaction and cooperation should give all elements of the community a voice.