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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FIRMS CHOSEN FOR GRAFFITI PIER AND WETLANDS PROJECTS ALONG
PHILADELPHIA WATERFRONT**

The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation has selected two firms to lead planning, design and public engagement portions of two different, high-profile development projects along Philadelphia's growing Delaware River Waterfront

Philadelphia, PA (August 28, 2019) – The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) has announced the selection of two firms to lead the multi-tiered planning and design process for two of the organization's most anticipated development projects in recent years. After reviewing dozens of proposals from local and national firms, DRWC has chosen Studio Zewde (Harlem, New York) for the Port Richmond Waterfront & Graffiti Pier Planning Study project and OLIN (Philadelphia and Los Angeles, California) for the South Philadelphia Wetlands Park project. Both firms are uniquely qualified and bring a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to each project.

Key to the Master Plan for the Central Delaware is the redevelopment and revitalization of six miles of Central Delaware Waterfront in Philadelphia with recommendations for a wide range of improvements, including the development of open space and programming that create a variety of waterfront experiences. DRWC has built new parks, trails and connector street improvements including Race Street Pier, Washington Avenue Pier, Pier 68, Spruce Street Harbor Park, and Cherry Street Pier; Graffiti Pier and the Wetlands Park will be the latest additions to these public spaces along the Waterfront.

These latest planning and design projects, both funded by a grant from the William Penn Foundation, kick off this fall with separate meetings designed to delve into the project goals – including community-supported visions of the proposed public parks – technical analyses, comprehensive timelines, and more. This phase lays the groundwork for the next phase of design and eventual construction of new parks.

“We are pleased with this exciting progress that clearly reflects DRWC's commitment to thoughtful, well-executed projects,” said Judilee Reed, Program Director for Creative Communities at the

William Penn Foundation. “OLIN and Studio Zewde each are well-suited for the multidimensions of reimagined public spaces and waterfront piers.”

DRWC received 12 proposals in response to the RFP for the Wetlands Park project and 21 proposals in response to the Port Richmond/Graffiti Pier RFP. The selected firms were part of a careful review and interview process conducted by DRWC Staff and Board of Directors. Studio Zewde’s proposal included detailed, thoughtful, creative responses to both the technical requirements of the Graffiti Pier project as well as the much-anticipated public engagement process. The firm’s past and current projects include Junto (Venice Biennale), Battery Park Chair (New York, New York), The Living Room Project (Seattle, Washington), and Plank Road Master Plan (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), to name a few. As a company owned by a woman of color, Studio Zewde also reflects DRWC’s commitment to employing diverse vendors across the board in business practices. This is the first project on which Studio Zewde and DRWC are collaborating.

OLIN has worked with DRWC previously on the creation of the Master Plan and projects such as The Barnes Foundation (Philadelphia, PA), Bryant Park (New York, New York), National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden (Washington, D.C.), and US Embassy (London, UK), among others. The firm has won awards from the American Society of Landscape Architects, American Institute of Architects, *Fast Company*, the Building Stone Institute, and more. OLIN’s response to the RFP addressed the many detailed, ecological considerations for the Wetlands Park and took into consideration innovative practices and approaches to the project.

“Our board of directors and planning and development team is excited at the selection of both Studio Zewde and OLIN for the Graffiti Pier and the Wetlands Park projects, respectively, and we’re confident they will bring the level of expertise needed to further establish the Waterfront as a top destination for residents and visitors,” said DRWC President Joe Forkin. “The revitalization of the Central Delaware River Waterfront is moving forward strategically and at a pace that has exceeded our initial expectations.”

ABOUT PIER 18 / GRAFFITI PIER

At the northernmost limits of DRWC’s planning area, the Port Richmond and Olde Richmond neighborhoods – home to the iconic Graffiti Pier – have traditionally been underserved when it comes to Waterfront access. Conrail, a railroad company, has held control over the majority of accessible land in this area but as it began to contemplate the next phase of development for their 150 acres of land and water rights along the waterfront, DRWC entered into conversations about envisioning a transformative public space for neighbors, residents and visitors alike. Subsequently, in the first quarter of 2019, DRWC entered into a memorandum of understanding to acquire approximately six acres of land from Conrail, which includes Pier 18, commonly known as Graffiti Pier. Over the years, street artists have made Graffiti Pier famous as a non-sanctioned destination for artists and visitors from around the globe and the city’s most Instagrammed place.

Studio Zewde has been tasked with analyzing the physical integrity of the pier and providing recommendations to DRWC about the feasibility of its use as a public space. The firm will create a

comprehensive community engagement plan and process that reaches the numerous stakeholder groups – artists, near neighbors, the general public – that have used and visited the space. The goal is to retain the creative spirit and cultural value of Graffiti Pier, using the technical investigations and community input to inform how much of the existing structure and artwork can or should remain. At the conclusion of the study, Studio Zewde will provide a bound report that includes a community-supported vision for the future of the site that DRWC will then leverage for further investment in final design and eventual construction of the new public park.

"Graffiti Pier is an icon and a dynamic, actively used and celebrated cultural resource – whose stories, meanings, and cultural production shall continue to thrive in the next evolution of the site," said Sara Zewde, Founding Principal of Studio Zewde. "We are honored to lead a design process that values the continued cultural impact of Graffiti Pier and the people whose stories are embedded here today."

In addition to the public park transformation, DRWC envisions the potential of this parcel of land to extend the Delaware River Trail – a continuous, multimodal trail linking the southern and northern portions of the Central Delaware Waterfront – and link the site to future trail infrastructure with other partners and collaborators.

ABOUT WETLANDS PARK

Another key recommendation in the Master Plan is the establishment of a "wetlands park", stretching between a series of abandoned finger piers along the river, south of Washington Avenue. The South Philadelphia Wetlands Park project will focus on the area just south of the base of Tasker Street through Pier 70 Boulevard, encompassing Piers 64, 67, 68, and 70. There has been consistent loss or erosion of wetland habitats in the Delaware River Estuary over the last twenty-five years and this project attempts to offset this trend in the urbanized Upper Estuary. In addition, the project further advances DRWC's goal to create safe, clean and attractive re-connections to neighborhoods that have been cut off from the Waterfront.

"We're honored to be collaborating with DRWC once again on this critical piece of the Master Plan for the Central Delaware," said OLIN CEO and President Lucinda Sanders, who will lead the design. "This project offers an unparalleled opportunity to engage neighbors in meaningful ways, to reinvigorate and protect an endangered habitat, and to create a space for every citizen to become a steward of their environment. We envision access to wild beauty for all: a place where Philadelphians can immerse themselves in the very ecology that sustains the planet and its inhabitants."

The concurrent goals of establishing an ecological park that preserves and enhances existing natural assets while creating adequate public access that isn't invasive to the habitat means OLIN will take a nuanced approach to evaluating the site, creating the design, and engaging with various stakeholders, including neighbors, City offices, and other interested groups. This park will also function as part of the city's and region's larger climate change and sea level rise (SLR) mitigation

strategies. At the conclusion of this phase, OLIN will submit a bound report summarizing the feasibility level planning as well as a detailed drawing set suitable for preliminary permitting.

ABOUT STUDIO ZWEDE

Studio Zewde is a landscape architecture, urban design, and public art practice based in Harlem, New York City. The studio's work is lauded for its design methodology that syncs site interpretation and narrative with a dedication to the craft of construction. The firm's employees have multi-disciplinary backgrounds in landscape architecture, architecture, city planning, urban design, sociology, statistics, community organizing, and public art. Studio Zewde is devoted to creating enduring places where people belong.

ABOUT OLIN

OLIN creates distinguished landscapes and urban designs worldwide. Our work is predicated upon social engagement, craft, detail, materiality and timelessness. Our appreciation of the urban environment is paramount. We love cities. We celebrate their complexities, contradictions and constraints. We believe in their continued evolution and enjoy collaboratively shaping the way they look and function.

ABOUT WILLIAM PENN FOUNDATION

The William Penn Foundation, founded in 1945 by Otto and Phoebe Haas, is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the Greater Philadelphia region through efforts that increase educational opportunities for children from low-income families, ensure a sustainable environment, foster creativity that enhances civic life, and advance philanthropy in the Philadelphia region. The Foundation's assets exceed \$2.3 billion as of December 31, 2018.

ABOUT DELAWARE RIVER WATERFRONT CORPORATION

DRWC is a 501(c)(3) created in January 2009, exclusively for the benefit of the City of Philadelphia and its citizens. The fundamental purpose of DRWC is to design, develop, program and maintain public amenities such as permanent and seasonal parks, trails, and streetscape improvements to transform the waterfront into a vibrant destination for recreational, cultural, and commercial activities for the residents and visitors of Philadelphia as is consistent with the goals of the Master Plan for Central Delaware. Daily programming throughout the entire year is changing the way Philadelphians see and converse about the waterfront, and is helping to create spaces and communities that connect residents and visitors to the waterfront. Visit delawareriverwaterfront.com for more information.

Photos are available to press.

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