



**CONTACT:**  
Emma Fried-Cassorla  
(O): (215) 629-3218  
(C): (215) 313-5582  
[efried-cassorla@drwc.org](mailto:efried-cassorla@drwc.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -**

**CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON PIER PARK AT WASHINGTON AVENUE GREEN IN SOUTH PHILADELPHIA**

*Mayor Michael A. Nutter, the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation and local leaders break ground on new park at site of Philadelphia's immigration station and the nation's first Navy Yard*

PHILADELPHIA, PA (October 31, 2013) – The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) hosted an official groundbreaking ceremony for the development of a pier park at Washington Avenue Green. Mayor Michael A. Nutter; Alan Greenberger, Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development; Lauren Imgrund, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; Dr. James Moylan, President of Pennsport Civic Association; and Tom Corcoran, President of DRWC, officially opened the site for construction, expected to be completed in summer, 2014. When opened, it will be an expansion of the first dedicated waterfront public space in South Philadelphia, Washington Avenue Green.

Mayor Michael A. Nutter said, "This park reflects the best of Philadelphia's past by honoring an important historic site, as well as its future, by focusing on features like on public access, sustainability and green construction. When the park opens, you'll begin to see the framework of the master plan coming together. It's another sign we're moving forward with our plan to redevelop the entirety of the City's portion of the Delaware River Waterfront.

The pier park is designed to reflect the natural state of the current pier and honor its evolving role on the waterfront, providing the following features to visitors:

- Panoramic views of the Delaware River, Center City and the Benjamin Franklin and Walt Whitman bridges
- An on-grade path allowing visitors to reach the tip of the pier and touch the water
- An elevated boardwalk allowing visitors to pass over wetland habitat below
- Striking public art by artist Jody Pinto titled "Land Buoy," a 55' spire that responds to both the wind and sun. Acting as a beacon and an invitation, the land buoy recalls the pier's history as Philadelphia's immigration station.
- Ecological enhancements including intertidal and riparian plantings, and innovative stabilization methods
- Sensitivity to the historical context by repurposing some of the materials of the site (both natural and man-made) into new park elements, including furnishings and a gateway arch at the intersection of Columbus Boulevard and Washington Avenue announcing the entry point to the park.
- Interpretive signage relating the site's history as the nation's first navy yard and [an immigration station](#) where over 1 million people entered the US.



Thomas Corcoran, President of DRWC said, “Four years since our founding and two years since our master plan was approved, we at DRWC are proud to have reached the threshold of realizing a pier park here at Washington Avenue, with another expected to be opened at Pier 68 next year. These parks will frame a beautiful wetlands area that will bring South Philadelphia much needed green space and spur development on adjacent parcels.”

The design for Pier 53 at Washington Avenue Green was developed as a design-build project by Applied Ecological Services (AES) in conjunction with Langan Engineering and Neshaminy Constructors after several rounds of civic engagement. The pier will be an extension of Washington Avenue Green, a public space created on the Delaware in 2010 to serve as the northern anchor of a wetlands park and recreational trail system which will run south to Pier 70 (adjacent to Walmart/Super Fresh). Washington Avenue Green has already attracted a stewardship group, the [Friends of Washington Avenue Green](#), focused on maintaining and expanding the park.

The park construction will cost \$2.15 million and include all desired elements – including the boardwalk and public artwork – in one phase of construction. It will be funded through DRWC capital funds and grants from the William Penn Foundation and the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

#### **About DRWC:**

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 and manage the central Delaware River waterfront in Philadelphia. DRWC is transforming the waterfront into a vibrant destination for recreational, cultural, and commercial activities for the residents and visitors of Philadelphia. For more information, please visit [www.delawareriverwaterfront.com](http://www.delawareriverwaterfront.com).

# # #