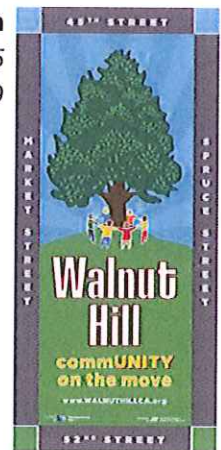




**Spruce Hill Community Association**  
257 S 45th Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104

**Walnut Hill Community Association**  
P.O. Box 9145  
Philadelphia, PA 19139

**Garden Court Community Association**  
P.O. Box 16654  
Philadelphia, PA 19139



August 8, 2017

Mayor James Kenney  
City Hall, Office 215  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Re: 4601 Market Street

Dear Mayor Kenney:

As community groups representing West Philadelphia residents and neighborhoods, we are writing on behalf of our respective boards to express how upset and disappointed we are with the City of Philadelphia's recent decision to pull the police headquarters redevelopment project from 4601 Market Street. We would be remiss if we stood by idly while such decisions are made affecting our neighborhoods, our city services, and our tax dollars.

Not all community members were excited about the original proposal to move police headquarters and other City offices to the old Provident Mutual Life Insurance Building. The City worked hard to build significant community support, with Councilwoman Blackwell and other key community stakeholders leading the way. After years of planning, community engagement, and new investment, the vast majority of community members embraced the reuse of this "white elephant" property and looked forward to the positive impact it would have on the surrounding communities. And then it was gone – without any regard for community engagement, neighborhood revitalization, or prudent tax dollar spending. Our community deserves better.

With your Rebuild proposal and other initiatives you have emphasized your stated goal to prioritize investing in the city's neighborhoods, not just in its downtown. Many supported your run for office for that very reason. That is why your decision to pull one of the city's largest infrastructure investments out of West Philadelphia neighborhoods and into Center City is so stunning. Our concern here is not to rebut explanations for this move, or to assess the supposed hostility of some to setting up shop in West Philadelphia. What we are concerned about, and what we feel ALL Philadelphians should be upset about, is how this decision was made and implemented. Much planning, and more than \$50 million in taxpayer money, already went into the proposed move of police headquarters to 46th and Market. Perhaps your comment in PlanPhilly, February 2016, said it best when referencing Rebuild: "A lot of times, city projects in the past have gone the way of politics and the way of other things and you never get the value you intended to get."

We are realists. We understand that the City opted for a Center City location in partnership with a private developer, instead of continuing a transformative neighborhood revitalization project. That doesn't mean that we don't have the right to be heard or that we should be ignored. So here are some key points we ask you and city officials to consider and act upon:

- the City should make good on its commitment to redevelop 4601 Market Street in a timely manner and not leave it vacant and abandoned indefinitely;
- the community must be engaged in the process and not left in the dark about decisions,

- progress, and timelines;
- strategic consideration should be given to the new reuse of the property, its likelihood for sustainability, and its positive impact on the surrounding communities;
  - the City should consider the safety implications of leaving the property vacant in the interim, and any future development should incorporate public safety enhancements such as improved lighting, given the property's size and proximity to a major public transit station;
  - any new property owner/developer should be held accountable to elements of the original redevelopment plan, such as local hiring, minority contracting, and incorporation of public space elements into the property's overhaul.

We do not pretend to speak for all West Philadelphians. We have joined together in drafting this statement as a way of registering our frustration and disappointment as citizens of this city and representatives of our respective community associations. Yes, we are dismayed by the abandonment of the police headquarters project in West Philadelphia. Yet we maintain the hope and the expectation that our Mayor and City Council will live up to their stated purpose to represent ALL Philadelphians and not just those with outsized political and financial influence. Above all, we feel that our elected officials, led by you, owe this community an opportunity to discuss in a public forum how we got where we are and where we can expect to go from here. Progress at 46th and Market is going to necessitate concrete planning, honest discussion, and lots of good will. We West Philadelphians are ready to begin.

Sincerely,



Eric Santoro  
President  
SHCA



Margaret Livingston  
President  
WHCA



Maurice Jones  
President  
GCCA

CC:

Jannie Blackwell - Councilwoman, City Council 3rd District

Vincent Hughes - Senator, State Senate 7th District

Anne Fadullon - Director, Department of Planning and Development