

Comm Tech Q & A

1. Hi, may you provide an estimated value associated with this project?

No.

2. Will you be keeping a plan holders list on this?

We will post a list of attendees from the prebid meeting on our website.

3. Finally, may you provide the approximate SF?

Per the RFP (Section 2 Introduction and Description of the Project Site) the building is approximately 67,000 square feet.

4. Will it be necessitated that developers must secure a letter of support from the community?

The RFP (Pg. 9 – Community Engagement) states that “Applicants are encouraged to seek local community input for their plans and share their Proposals with community-based organizations before responding to this RFP.” In addition, if a project triggers the need for a zoning change, or triggers Civic Design Review (CDR), a letter from the Registered Community Organization (RCO) is required as part of the process. Both of these projects will almost certainly require rezoning, and therefore will require an RCO letter prior to their zoning approval.

5. Will the community be provided the opportunity to participate on the review committee and selection process?

We do intend to review proposals with the Steering Committee, which includes community representatives. Further, the RFP (Pg. 4 – Public Presentation and Public Comment Period) states as follows:

“Applicants must be prepared to formally present their Proposals to the community. Following the submission date, PRA will organize a community meeting at which shortlisted Applicants will be required to publicly present their plans as part of this application process. After this meeting, PRA will post the final Proposals on its website for an open public comment period.”

We believe that this process will provide for significant opportunity for the community to ask questions, comment, and participate in the review process. However, since this property is owned by the School District, ultimately the final decision rests with the Board of Education.

6. Further define “Urbanism” as referenced in the 5th paragraph on page 7 of the RFP.

The RFP says, “Proposals should have a strong sense of urbanism and high-quality and environmentally-friendly design focused on bringing long term value to the community.” We used this word to encourage design that is high-quality and appropriate to a city context;

however, we understand that it also has negative connotations in certain circumstances, and we will consider this point when drafting future RFPs. We appreciate this feedback.

7. Rather than low income senior housing, perhaps a much better use for the building would be a mixed-use facility that houses educational programs to prepare Philadelphia residents to compete for 26,000 jobs anticipated by the \$7 billion expansion of PHL along with small businesses and organizations to provide goods and services to Eastwick residents, nearby hotel occupants, and visitors of the Refuge and other area attractions?

We believe that the language in the Lower Eastwick Public Land Strategy, which is reflected in the RFP, entirely supports these concepts and in no way limits the reuse to senior housing. The RFP (Pg. 7 – Use Program) provides for three potential reuses, “Community centered institutional or educational reuse; Housing, including affordable and/or senior units; Workforce/skills training for youth and adults.” Further the RFP quotes the Land Strategy as follows:

“The former Comm Tech School should be reused. ... Future use should incorporate a community meeting space, as one is lacking in the neighborhood. As a mix of housing, community meeting space, and specialized services - as proposed by community members - Comm Tech could become the valuable community resource long sought after by Eastwick residents.”

8. It is quite apparent that the City’s interpretation of the Community’s vision is inaccurate.

We respectfully disagree; we feel that the recommendations of the Land Strategy and the language in the RFP are in line with the community vision and proposed development concepts expressed.

9. We feel that it in the best interest of all parties that this RFP be postponed allowing adequate time for a meeting.

We understand that individuals still have concerns; however, as mentioned we recently concluded a two-year community engagement process with numerous public meetings, guided by the Steering Committee which includes community representatives. We held a Steering Committee meeting on March 12, 2019 to review the recommendations of the Land Strategy in advance of drafting RFPs for these sites. Following that we had a meeting, at the request of Eastwick Friends and Neighbors, at our office on May 20, 2019 to discuss EFNC’s concerns in advance of these RFPs. Finally, we shared the full text of the RFPs with the Steering Committee over email and invited comments several weeks ahead of their issuance.

We feel that we have provided ample opportunities to meet and discuss concerns prior to the release of these RFPs. In addition, we have a policy that once RFPs have been posted publicly, we do not meet with community groups or individuals as it may provide an unfair advantage to any bidders whom those individuals or groups may be part of or support. We do look forward to engaging community members as discussed above after the RFP closes and responses are received.