

## Fall 2021 Course Summary

[www.citizensplanninginstitute.org](http://www.citizensplanninginstitute.org)

All sessions will use zoom online format.

### Orientation: Welcome to CPI

**September 29**, Wednesday, 6-7:30pm

Congratulations! You've been selected to join the Fall 2021 CPI Cohort, making you one of 660 Citizen Planners in Philadelphia! During this required orientation you'll get to know fellow classmates and review logistics. We'll review course materials and give you a jumpstart on your final project or presentation.

---

### Core Class #1: Introduction to City Planning

**October 6**, Wednesday, 6-8:00pm



**Unit 1: *Neighborhood Planning*** Learn about the history and evolution of planning in Philadelphia and how you can be involved in your neighborhood's plan. A neighborhood plan emerges from a planning process that both engages all stakeholders in the community and reflects a collective vision for the future of that community. Your "Neighborhood Planning Workbook" outlines a DIY approach to doing a neighborhood plan. Another approach is to employ the services of a professional planning firm. Learn about methods of community engagement from a nationally recognized local firm and their experiences working on various Philadelphia neighborhood plans.

Philadelphia neighborhood plans.

**Mindy Watts**, Principal, Interface Studio LLC



**Unit 2:** Positive change starts with a plan. How do Philadelphia's city planners try to make sure that change is 'positive' for everyone? Learn about the role and relationships city planners have with city agencies that have budgets and how they try to balance many conflicting interests in the community, and citywide. We'll use a real-life project to give you practice in wearing different stakeholder hats!

**Nicole Ozdemir**, Senior Planner, Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC)+ other staff planners

**Required reading:** *Introduction to Planning in Philadelphia*- handout to be mailed prior to the first class, along with your *Neighborhood Planning Workbook*.

---

### Core Session #2: Zoning

**October 13**, Wednesday, 6-8:00pm



**Unit 1: *The Zoning Code*.** Understand the reasons why zoning has evolved as an important tool of planning. Zoning regulates land uses and the type, size, and height of buildings. Real projects will be used to demonstrate three methods of zoning "relief" from the zoning code: variances, special exceptions, and zoning remapping. Gain a better understanding of how to navigate the code and what the steps are to learn what can be built on a lot and what approvals a project needs. Learn the limitations of zoning, as well as the elements in the zoning code that help preserve neighborhood character.

**Ian Hegarty**, AICP, Community Planner/Legislation



## Unit 2: Citizen Involvement

As the only elected official in Philadelphia with a planning degree, Councilmember Jamie Gauthier brings a unique perspective on issues such as how citizens can engage in the development process.

This summer, Councilmember Gauthier launched a “Zoning Matters” outreach strategy in her District to hear residents’ thoughts about a **Mixed Income Neighborhoods Overlay** bill, which aims to require that affordable housing be included in new large development projects. As a former active RCO (Registered Community Organization) member, she will also share best practices for mobilizing your community around proposed development projects.

**Councilmember Jamie Gauthier** serves as Chair of the Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development, and the Homeless, and Vice-Chair of the Committee on Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs

### Core Session #3: Real Estate Development:

October 20, Wednesday, 6-8:00pm

#### Understanding and Influencing the Project Cycle

How do real estate developers make decisions and complete projects? Learn about the phases in the real estate development cycle – pre-development, construction, operations, disposition/re-position. Understand how community input influences project progression and the best time to engage developers. Learn about the different approaches taken by market-rate and affordable housing developers.

John’s office is a first point of contact for large developers and will outline the steps to get projects built and the financial constraints all developers face. Angela brings the perspective of affordable housing development. The roles of various stakeholders impacting development will be discussed through a hypothetical housing development project.

The Philadelphia Association of CDCs (PACDC) is a membership association that works to create an equitable city. Kim will answer your questions about CDCs and talk about “Destination Frankford”, a project stimulated by the District planning process. It led to the transformation of a vacant lot into the Frankford Pause Park and the redevelopment of the Daral Building into a community hub. Under Kim’s leadership, the Frankford CDC has become a valuable advocate for the businesses and citizens of Frankford. Kim received the PACDC’s 2016 Rising Star award for her work in Frankford.



**John Mondlak**, Deputy Director of Development Services, Office of Planning and Development

**Angela Steele**, Senior Project Manager, Stone Sherick Consulting Group, Citizen Planner

**Kimberley Washington, Esq.**, Executive Director, Frankford CDC

### Special Topic #1: Construction in Your Neighborhood?

October 27, Wednesday, 6-8:00pm

Neighbors often feel alone when demolition and construction is next to their homes. Hear from two citizen planners who learned through their work advocating and assisting residents living adjacent to construction in multiple Philly neighborhoods. Learn how to find the information, tools, and support neighbors need in order to protect their rights and their homes as informed citizens encountering adjacent construction.



**Venise Whitaker**, Constituent Services Representative, Office of Council President Darrell L. Clarke, Citizen Planner  
**Drew Miller**, Fishtown Neighbors Association, Zoning Committee, Riverwards L&I Coalition, Citizen Planner



Learn what the building code enforcement process looks like from the perspective of the Department of Licenses & Inspections (L&I) and how to spot unsafe building practices that put property and neighbors at risk. You will walk away with “insider tips” on how to submit effective 311 complaints, and how to use the city’s online resources, such as **Atlas**: <https://atlas.phila.gov/> - an application that combines information from multiple City departments and places it at your fingertips.

**William Fernandez**, Director of Audits & Investigations, L&I

## Special Topic #2: Let’s Talk Trash

**November 3, Wednesday, 6-8:00pm**

If you’re dealing with constant litter in your neighborhood, this class is for you. Plastic bags are one of the most littered items in Philadelphia and cannot be recycled through the City’s curbside recycling program. Starting in October 2021, businesses are prohibited from providing single-use plastic bags and paper bags that don’t meet requirements. We’ll use the plastic bag-ban as an opportunity to investigate the issue of trash and introduce concepts of the circular economy; an economic system that seeks to save our planet.

Supported through Mural Arts’ Environmental Justice Department, **Trash Academy** operates on the belief that those who are most impacted by environmental challenges are the ones who must be at the forefront of crafting solutions. Trash Academy develops, tests, and shares fun, interactive points of entry like games and teach-ins that communicate knowledge and complicate the issue of trash. Trash Academy has set a goal to see all of Philadelphia’s diverse communities take action to promote reusable bags.



**Circular Philadelphia** works to promote smart policy, innovation, and action to transform Philadelphia’s linear economy to an efficient and resilient circular economy of the future. What’s a circular economy? Instead of the “make, take and trash” system that has defined the 20th century, a circular economy reuses materials as long as possible, shares resources, designs out waste, and regenerates natural systems. It reimagines the old system as a continuous loop that transforms how we

design, make, and use everything.

**Ron Whyte**, Mural Arts, Trash Academy

**Youth Representative**, Trash Academy

**Nic Esposito**, Circular Philadelphia

## Special Topic #3: Accessing Vacant Land

**November 10, Wednesday, 6-8:00pm**

There are opportunities and challenges around reclaiming and preserving vacant land for community-driven green spaces in Philadelphia. This class highlights two programs that are having a transformative impact to counter the loss of potential community shared spaces to real estate development. High-quality green spaces are an environmental justice and public health issue.

Jefferson University’s “**Park in a Truck**” program delivers park-building tools to communities using a truck, but the program also gives communities the opportunity to design, maintain and build their own park. Trained neighborhood youth ambassadors learn how to grow plants, maintain the space and organize activities. A pilot project, begun in Mantua in 2019, is nearly finished.

**Neighborhood Gardens Trust (NGT)** works to acquire and preserve community gardens and shared open spaces, working closely with city of Philadelphia, nonprofits partners, community groups, and developers. Although there are many thriving community gardens stewarded by residents across the city, upwards of 200 gardens are threatened by insecure land tenure. In this session, you will gain a closeup view of various land assembly strategies, including financial and legal tools that make urban open space land protection possible.



**Kimberlee Douglas**, Director + Professor, Landscape Architecture Program, Lab for Urban and Social Innovation, Thomas Jefferson University, College of Architecture + the Built Environment  
**Jenny Greenberg**, Exec. Director, Neighborhood Gardens Trust  
**Gwen Morris**, Mantua Civic Association

**Jasmin Velez**, Community Outreach Coordinator, Esperanza, and Board Member of Neighborhood Gardens Trust

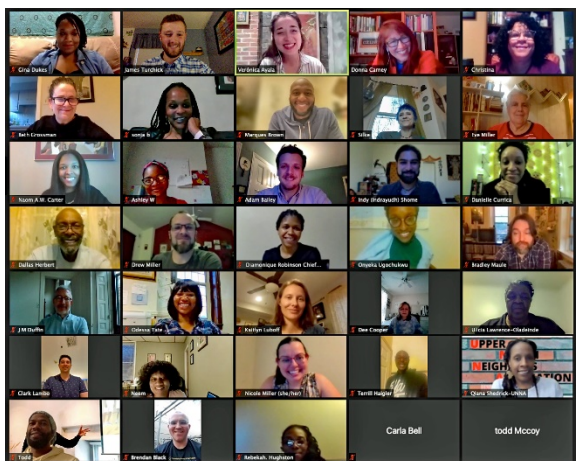
## Presentations Workshop

November 17, Wednesday, 6-9pm

### Final Presentations

Give a 5-minute presentation on a project that you or your organization is working on, or a dream project. Receive feedback from your fellow CPI participants and professional city planners. This meets the **final paper or presentation** requirement.

This is a low-stress way to get public speaking practice and have a networking opportunity with your classmates and professional city planners! *Attendance is optional.*



### Additional Course Info:

The Fall session marks the 22nd course of CPI (and the **third** time we will be online.) We’ll make these classes as interactive and engaging as we can. Those accepted to Fall session will receive more information about our online hub for between class conversations. Classes will be held in Zoom.

To learn more about the instructors for each class, go the CPI website, “Course Info” page.  
<http://citizensplanninginstitute.org>

**HOLD THE DATE!**

**CPI Happy Hour:**

**Wednesday, September 22: 5:00-7:00pm**

***The Lawn at Loveluck, 1599 JFK Blvd***

***For Fall 2021 participants and Citizen Planners and Instructors  
from all previous classes***

