

Q&A: The Bellwether District Public Meeting – March 18, 2025

Below is a compilation of questions received, and answers provided, during The Bellwether District's virtual community meeting held on Tuesday, March 18 at 6:00 PM ET. During the meeting, The Bellwether District team provided updates on development, environmental remediation, and community and workforce related efforts.

Note: Questions are transcribed directly as asked.

Q1: Are you aware that the northernmost stormwater basin on the former site is a recognized habitat of a threatened turtle species, the northern red-bellied cooter?

In 2022, The Bellwether District completed a northern red-bellied cooter presence/absence survey. There were no turtles found on the industrial campus and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission ("PFBC") deemed that campus clear. On the innovation campus, we did locate one red-bellied cooter. We then worked with the PFBC to develop a salvage plan. As part of that plan, when we are ready to develop where the turtle is located, we will coordinate with PFBC to ensure we're acting in accordance with the approved plan.

Q2: Do you anticipate any cost concerns due to proposed tariffs or immigration policy?

We are monitoring things closely at the city, state and federal levels. In general, there were inflationary pressures that impacted all businesses in the post-Covid era, and that inflation was especially detrimental to the real estate industry. With that in mind, our focus is on supporting long term policies that will promote economic development while being fiscally responsible.

We have been encouraged by some of the recent policy initiatives that both the City of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth have pursued. For example, Governor Shapiro visited The Bellwether District last year to announce a permit streamlining program that we believe is a responsible way to encourage economic development and job creation. We hope to see the same commonsense approach at all levels of government.

One of the unique positives of our site location is its proximity to critical infrastructure like PhilaPort and the Philadelphia International Airport. Given Philadelphia's strong labor force and our adjacency to a talented workforce with all levels of educational attainment, we believe The Bellwether District is an ideal location for onshoring manufacturing operations and supply chain logistics. Those potential uses can succeed even in an environment where tariff policies are being discussed.

Q3: I noticed that in a lot of these buildings they're going to have a lot of solar panels, and I like the idea of having solar panels. I've been in the solar business myself before. However, one thing concerns me about that, and that is the airport that's nearby and the planes flying in. There may be certain times of the day where the glare from that can literally blind pilots that are coming in for landings, or perhaps even taking off depending on which ramps that they use there. Can someone address that question for me?

We envision having a significant number of solar panels throughout the site, particularly on the industrial campus. As you can imagine, one of the benefits of these large buildings is the amount of rooftop availability for solar.

While we are early on in the process, all solar designs and installations will be pre-approved and coordinated with the airport.

Q4: Are there any tenants yet?

Our first two buildings are being built on a speculative basis, meaning they are being constructed without a confirmed tenant. We have seen an improvement in market conditions over the past few quarters and now more of a groundswell in the last six months.

As a reminder, given the site's history as a refinery, there has been a significant amount of work performed to date simply to get the site development-ready. Our speculative buildings are a proof of concept and a very important part of our tenant marketing efforts. Now that we have vertical construction on-site, which has coincided with an improvement in the market, we have seen a continual increase in tenant interest from dozens of perspective tenants.

We look forward to sharing more information with community members and other stakeholders as soon as tenants are confirmed. For more information, follow us on social media and attend our future community meetings.

Q5: When and where are the community engagement meetings held, as it relates to the strategic community engagement plan? And are they open to the public?

We hold a number of in-person and virtual meetings throughout the year, the majority of which are open to the public. Last year, we participated in 120 meetings and community events.

Those meetings included quarterly community meetings and an annual in-person Community Resource Fair at The Bellwether District, during which attendees participated in site tours and engaged with our team in-person. We also have a Community Advisory Panel which is made up of 20+ organizations representing South and Southwest Philadelphia. That group meets on a quarterly basis and is instrumental in helping us share information with local residents and identify areas for community support.

If you are interested in The Bellwether District presenting to your organization, please submit a request via the "contact us" form at thebellwetherdistrict.com.

Q6: You can probably tell I have a solar background. I love that you have all the buildings with solar on top of them. Are you designing the buildings to allow for the solar the weight of the solar, which is about four pounds square per square foot in the design of these roofs?

In each building that exists today, we accounted for five pounds per square foot on the roof structure to ensure future solar panels can be accommodated.

Q7: With the pollution in the aquifer, what guarantees that pollution will not migrate into New Jersey, where water companies, towns, and farmers draw water from?

Evergreen/Sunoco is responsible for environmental remediation activities related to the deep aquifer. They identify the deep aquifer as Area of Interest 11 (AOI 11). Questions on this topic can be directed

to Evergreen at their upcoming public meeting on March 25th at 6:30 PM. More information can be found on their website, www.phillyrefinerycleanup.info.