Annual Meeting Report by
Judi Rogers
Executive Director
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The Parkway Council Foundation fared well and accomplished quite a bit in 2011, given the current challenging economic climate.

Planning

On the heels of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources-funded study regarding the possible reconfiguration of specific dangerous intersections, the Parkway Council contracted for traffic counts in the area of 25th/Pennsylvania/Kelly/Fairmount. This effort was funded in partnership with the Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Philadelphian, Philadelphia’s Department of Parks and Recreation, and Eastern State Penitentiary. When completed, the report will be shared with City administration, and we will continue our preliminary discussions regarding their possible funding and oversight of the project’s next steps. Ultimately, we hope that the original study’s recommendations will be contributory to significant physical improvements in that area.

The Parkway Council began its initial planning for the celebration of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway’s Centennial in 2017-2018. An enthusiastic and diverse committee has met several times to brainstorm a vision, relevant themes, program and legacy ideas, and a growing list of potential partners for the multi-year celebration. The board has identified a tentative theme of “Shaping the Second Century of the Parkway.” We are currently working on identifying and securing funding for the next planning phase. On a related note, the Parkway Council applied for (and was selected to receive) eight hours of pro bono marketing consulting for the Centennial project, which will be provided by the end of this calendar year.

Funding for the ubiquitous purple Phlash visitor shuttles expired as of the end of October 2011, and the Parkway Council has been working with a coalition of organizations to target funding for 2012 and beyond. Nothing has been resolved to date, but political efforts continue.

Marketing

The Parkway Council has continued to expand its marketing efforts for the Parkway Museums District (“PMD”). There has been a steady increase in traffic to the PMD’s website, with double the number of visits and page views over 2010. We have also significantly expanded our social media presence, building the PMD’s Facebook fan base nearly 80% in the past year.

Our effort to collectively market the PMD via a collateral piece has also met with success. The PMD brochure was expanded in size in 2011, and was broadly distributed via institutions, hotels, and key visitor locations. We have achieved excellent results with the brochures’ coupon redemption, which has doubled since 2010.
Additional 2011 marketing efforts included placing a print advertisement in the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors’ Bureau’s Spring/Summer *Official Visitors Guide*, and working in tandem with the Philadelphia Visitors Channel to create a video profiling the institutions of the PMD, to be shown in over 15,000 hotel rooms in the Philadelphia region.

A “marketing summit” was convened in November, with marketing/communications counterparts from most of the Parkway Council members in attendance. It provided a great opportunity for discussing collaborative ideas, PMD marketing, as well as to share upcoming projects, programs, and exhibitions.

This past year also included an effort to create a PMD logo and related iconography. It was determined that other tasks were a higher priority, so that project will be revisited in the future.

**Relationship Building**

The Parkway Council (or designees) met with senior level City administration (including Mike DiBerardinis, Rina Cutler, Alan Greenberger, Darrell Clarke, and Bill Greenlee) as well as numerous community stakeholders to discuss the Parkway studies, and to build key relationships. We also held meetings with City administration regarding homeless issues, amphibious tour boats, and both the current and future Family Court buildings.

The organization planned and hosted our annual “State of the Parkway” board meeting in March, including several funders, leaders of neighborhood organizations, and City administration. Upcoming projects and priorities for the Parkway Council, its member organizations, and the neighborhood groups were shared, and common interests were discussed.

We continued to work closely with leadership of Logan Square Neighborhood Association throughout the year, partnering on common issues and concerns such as the homeless presence, zoning, and building reuse.

**Advocacy**

In 2011, the Parkway Council served as an advocate for (and “voice of”) the Parkway in various situations, including: the Family Court Building (1801 Vine Street) reuse; plans for the construction of a Mormon Temple (17th & Vine Streets), amphibious vehicle tours in the Parkway area, and the homeless presence and impact on Parkway.

Pro bono legal research was provided (on behalf of the Parkway Council) by Parkway Council board member Mark Silow, to assist the City with legal issues associated with the large public feedings on the Parkway. In addition, a video was produced by Parkway Council member Center City District to help persuade the City to enforce the Fairmount Park curfew and prohibit the unregulated service of meals on the Parkway.

The Executive Director continued to serve as the Parkway Council’s representative on the City’s Combined Outreach committee, attending monthly meetings regarding homeless outreach and related issues.

We look forward to 2012 as a year that will bring significant progress in all of the areas mentioned: planning, marketing, relationship building, and advocacy.