



Mayor's Office of Sustainability
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www.phillyfpac.org

February 12, 2015

Philadelphia Historical Commission
Room 576, City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Re: Hoop houses in Philadelphia historic districts

Dear Historical Commission:

We are writing to you in our roles as the co-chair of Mayor's Food Policy Advisory Council ("FPAC") and chair of the FPAC's Vacant Land Subcommittee. We value and respect the role of the Historical Commission in maintaining the integrity of our historic districts. We wish to offer our support for allowing accessory agriculture structures in Philadelphia's historic districts.

It is the mission of the FPAC to facilitate the development of responsible policies that improve access for Philadelphia residents to culturally appropriate, nutritionally sound, and affordable food that is grown locally through environmentally sustainable practices.

Since 2011, the Vacant Land Subcommittee of the FPAC has been working to ensure that the City of Philadelphia has the most effective policies and programs to support its urban agriculture sector. The work of the FPAC is done in collaboration with various city agencies, many of which are represented on the FPAC by non-voting *ex officio* members.

As FPAC, we recognize that expanding opportunities for community gardening and market farming has many benefits for Philadelphians, including increased food security, environmental health, ecosystem services, community development, cultural preservation, and stormwater management. We also realize that agriculture and horticulture have deep roots in Philadelphia's urban history.

Accessory agriculture structures, such as greenhouses, hoop houses, and high tunnels, enable growers to extend the growing season into the colder months. Under severe weather conditions, these structures control temperatures to allow crop bulbs and seeds to be stored in the ground. Many of the organizations whose staff sit as appointed members on the FPAC use accessory agriculture structures as a critical component of their urban agricultural programming. The FPAC supports consistent and predictable policies that encourage the growing use of accessory agricultural structures in Philadelphia because of their role in increasing production and expanding food access.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diane Cornman-Levy".

Diane Cornman-Levy
Co-Chair, FPAC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Laura Cahn".

Amy Laura Cahn
Chair, FPAC Vacant Land Subcommittee