



Unrepaired Sewer Line Irks Mill Creek Area Dwellers

Cave-in Area Evacuees Given

PRELUDE | PROCESSION | POND | PARTY

CELEBRATING THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF MILL CREEK THROUGH
PUBLIC ART, PLACEMAKING, AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

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PRELUDE | PROCESSION | POND | PARTY

NARRATIVE

The following proposal outlines an annual event and public art series for the Mill Creek watershed of West Philadelphia. Addressing the history of the Mill Creek watershed and its neighborhoods, which has seen disaster and neglect since the burial of its river in a sewer over a century ago, Prelude, Procession, Pond, Party brings together residents and visitors for a tour of the watershed and a day of music, art, dancing, food, and conversation. Stopping along the way at site-specific art installations created especially for the event, as well as at historic landmarks and engaging community organizations, this day-long event is designed to raise awareness of the fraught environmental and social history of the watershed, pay respect to those who have been harmed, celebrate the community's resilience, and encourage increased involvement in Mill Creek's future. For those who can't attend on the day itself, Prelude, Procession, Pond, Party is extended through a website and application, where visitors will find video documentation of the event, recorded interviews, an interactive map, an audio walking tour, and other content that provides insight into the historic Mill Creek watershed. Keep reading for a clearer idea of what participants can expect to encounter on event day:

A crowd gathers around a small stage and pulpit; some small groups of familiar neighbors form, while others mill about the park and start conversations with watershed residents they've not previously met. A voice comes through the loudspeaker, and people move closer in toward the stage. The Prelude begins with words by local city counselors, who talk of issues facing the communities of the watershed, as well as the history that set the stage for these issues to grow. This is followed by speeches and eulogies from faith leaders from throughout the watershed. They condemn both the historic and current actions and policies that have harmed the communities along Mill Creek, though they also speak of a brighter future, where neighbors come together to demand and build a stronger watershed. As the speeches wind down, the music begins. Slow melodies reflect the somber nature of Mill Creek's funeral and long-ago burial, and the crowd follows, marking the beginning of the the Funerary Procession.

The Procession works its way downstream to the Overbrook Environmental Education Center. The crowd finds its way to the woodlands behind the Center, gathering to hear the Center's founder, Jerome Shabazz, speak. He speaks of the work the Center is doing to fight Mill Creek's problems, and how, together, all of the participants can work together towards a better and more equitable collective future.

Jerome's passion and enthusiasm carries over to the crowd, providing the group with plenty of inspiration for designing a protest. They move indoors, where they work together to create protest signs to be carried throughout the Procession.

After concluding at Overbrook, the crowd moves on toward the Bowl Pond, where flooding and destruction continue to happen to this day. The signs made earlier that morning are on proud display, demanding better public accountability, protection against flooding and abandonment, and more attention from the city. The music along this march reflects the change in attitude, and adds to the atmosphere of protest.

The procession and protest arrives at Bowl Pond, a low point at the intersection of N. 57th St. and Lebanon Ave. In heavy rains this low spot fills with water, unable to properly drain. The surrounding buildings and roads flood, causing significant damage. The people within the Procession protest this condition, calling on the City to address the drainage issues here that time and again cause damage and pain.

From this location, the Procession moves onward to the Urban Arboreta at 49th and Parkside, traveling from one of Mill Creek's lowest topographical points to one of its highest. This formerly vacant lot, now utilized as a hybrid space for nursery production and neighborhood use, has panoramic views towards Philadelphia's skyline. Here, the group pauses to learn of the watershed's ecology and of ongoing efforts to improve habitat and ecological systems throughout the city. Participants then put these lessons to use, teaming with staff to plant trees throughout the site.

After such a long morning of walking, protesting, and planting, the members of the Procession are clearly beginning to get hungry. Luckily, the next stop is the Urban Tree Connection. After a brief garden tour highlighting their innovative farming practices, the volunteers at the garden join with the Procession group to prepare a lunch consisting of produce grown on site. Feeling reenergized from the fresh garden-grown meal, the Procession reassembles and heads onward toward a more somber location: the site of a deadly sewer collapse. Here, the underground sewer gave way, collapsing and killing multiple people in the middle of the night, and causing mass displacement. The Procession, marked once again by somber music, traces this tragic route along the creek, passing through a new art installation that calls attention to the original collapse and the subsequent decades of vacancy.

Upon arriving to the original site of collapse, the Procession members partake in a storytelling workshop, where they share their experiences living within the watershed. From those shared stories of the past, the group transitions to thinking of the future, envisioning ways that this vacant land could be used to build community.

After concluding, the Procession makes the quick walk to Aspen Farms,

where they gather to watch performances about Mill Creek put on by local students. New musicians arrive, creating a super-band for the last part of the Procession.

Followed by the more vibrant sounds of the newly expanded band, the Procession sets off toward the Supremo Foodmarket. Along the way, they stop at Haverford and 46th to view an installation that shows what this exact location looked like over one hundred years ago, when Mill Creek was being entombed within the sewer. Confused glances between the signage and present day Haverford Avenue show just how difficult it is to reconcile the Mill Creek of the 19th century with the Mill Creek of today.

Upon arriving at the Foodmarket, participants gather around a public art project situated in the middle of the wide expanse of wavy asphalt. Here, they can stare down deep into the earth, down to where Mill Creek still runs underneath their feet. Within this developed asphalt environment, people can finally see the flow of Mill Creek and hear the gentle roar of the water as it works its way downstream, deep below their feet

From here, the Procession moves onward to the Penn Alexander School, where participants learn of Philadelphia's efforts through Green City, Clean Waters to better deal with stormwater management. They explore an art installation that raises questions of permeability and access.

After concluding at Penn Alexander, the Procession enters its last leg of the day: onward toward Clark Park. The crowd becomes more joyful, focused on the positive futures that could be achieved within the watershed. The music is more upbeat, and additional neighbors join in, creating a huge movement working its way toward Clark Park. After a long day of walking, protesting, and exploring the watershed, the Procession participants are excited to be making their way to the final event: the Party at the Pond.

The Procession enters a park transformed: through an artistic intervention the park has taken on the form of its historic identity as Mill Pond. Here, the Party takes place. This culminating event of the day-long procession brings Mill Creek and city-wide residents together with visitors to celebrate the watershed, listen to music, eat, build community, and plan for a stronger Mill Creek watershed. Prior to the main festivities, community leaders give a speech about the need for continued community involvement and collective action on behalf of Mill Creek. At the conclusion of the speech, the festivities commence, continuing long into the night.

PRELUDE | PROCESSION | POND | PARTY

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

The five public artworks that comprise Prelude, Procession, Pond, Party will pay homage to the environmental and social history of the Mill Creek watershed in West Philadelphia. Since the burial of the neighborhood's river in a concrete sewer system about 150 years ago, the neighborhoods along the buried stream have repeatedly experienced collective trauma as collapses along the buried creek and flooding have resulted in death, disinvestment, deterioration, and abandonment. In the face of such adversity, Mill Creek's residents have shown true resilience, and since the 1970s have been reclaiming vacant land to create community gardens and other amenities. As part of a watershed-wide placemaking and community building effort, the public art exhibition draws inspiration from Mill Creek's incredible journey of self-determination, raising awareness of the problems that the community has faced and celebrating the successes it has thus far achieved, encouraging continued action.

For this exhibition, five artists will be chosen to engage with the history of Mill Creek in collaboration with community-based organization and residents to create site-specific artworks on the theme of "landscape literacy." Building on the work of the West Philadelphia Landscape Project, the artworks are intended to help people better understand the forces that have shaped and continue to impact their neighborhood and inspire a plan for what it might become. Preference will be given to locally-based artists of color, and those that have a record of creating social-engaged works related to environmental justice. The sites for the artworks have been carefully chosen, and will be installed in historically significant locations along the procession, including:

- Lebanon Ave and N 58th St, **one of the low points in the watershed**
- The corridor leading to 5035 Funston St, **where 119 homes either collapsed or had to be razed in 1961**
- Sansom St and S 43rd St, the parking lot where a **major cave-in** occurred in 1952
- Penn Alexander School at 243 S 43rd St, the site of one of Green Cities, Clean Waters early **permeable pavement projects**
- Clark Park, the site of the **former Mill Pond**

These projects will aim to touch upon issues of ecological sustainability and ethical development with a sensitivity to the complex political history and relationships embedded within the neighborhood. Though the main event for Pond, Procession, Pond, Party only lasts for one day, these artworks will be on view for 8 months, providing the community with a visual reminder of their past, present, and potential future.



[01 A CREEKSIDER PRELUDE]

17 Civic Circle, Merion Station

9:00 am

[02 TAKING BACK THE WATERSHED]

6141 Lancaster Ave, Philadelphia

10:00 am

[03 FLOODING IN THE INVISIBLE POND]

Lebanon Ave and N 58th St

11:00 am

[04 PLANT A TREE FOR MILL CREEK]

Parkside Ave and N 49th St

12:00 pm

[05 LUNCH AT A NEIGHBORHOOD FARM]

Wyalusing and N 52nd St

2:00 pm

[06 WHAT IS OUR PAST HERE? WHAT IS OUR FUTURE HERE?]

5035 Funston St

3:15 pm

[07 ASPEN FARMS STUDENT SHOWCASE]

Aspen St and N 49th St

5:00 pm

[08 REMEMBERING THE BURIAL OF MILL CREEK]

Haverford and N 46th St

6:00 pm

[09 RIVER REVEALED]

Sansom St and S 43rd St

6:30 pm

[10 SOAK: PERMEABLE PAVING @ PENN ALEXANDER SCHOOL]

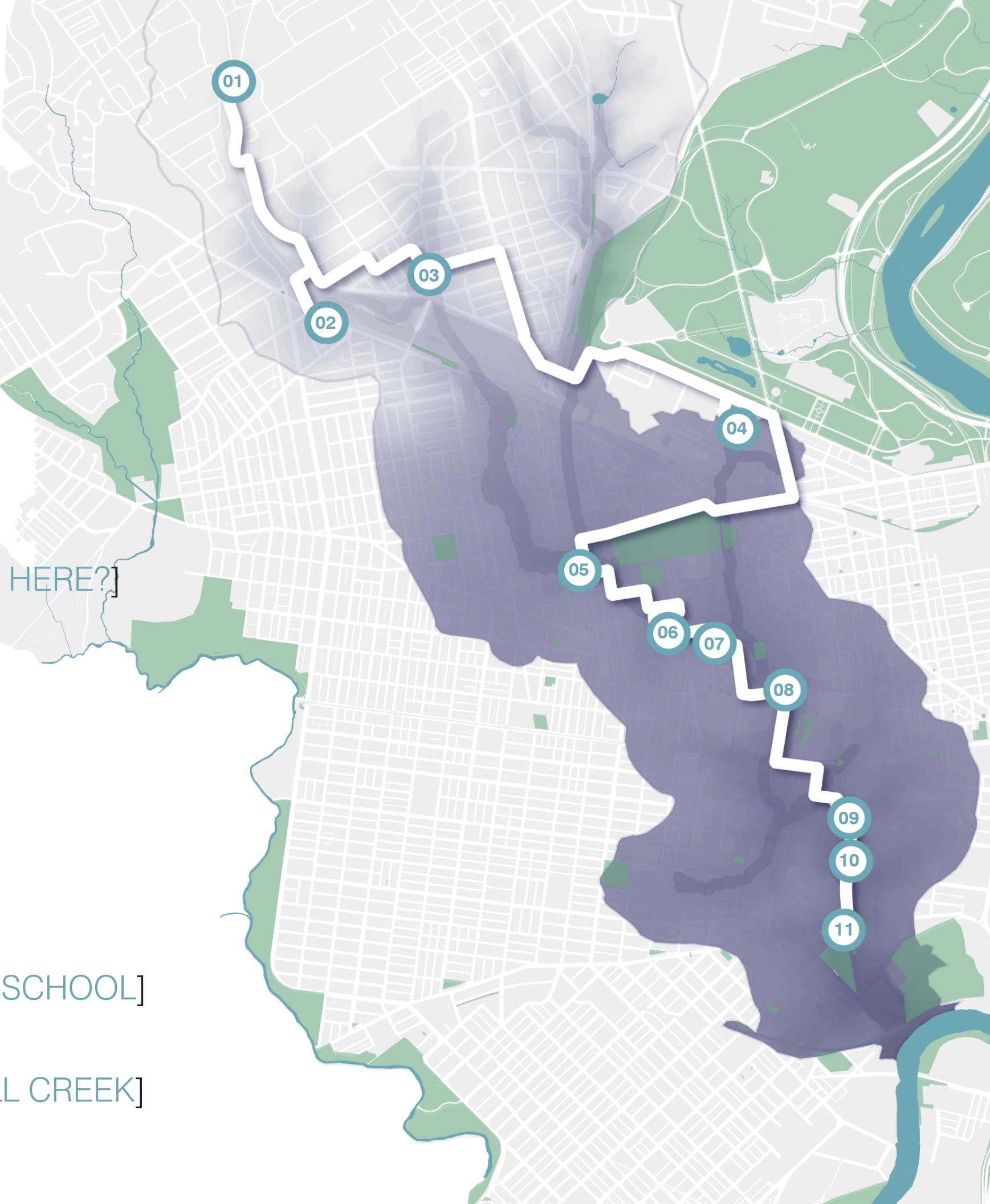
243 S 43rd St

6:50 pm

[11 REFILLING THE MILL POND: A PARTY FOR THE MILL CREEK]

Clark Park

7:30 pm



[STOP 01 - A CREEKSIDE PRELUDE]

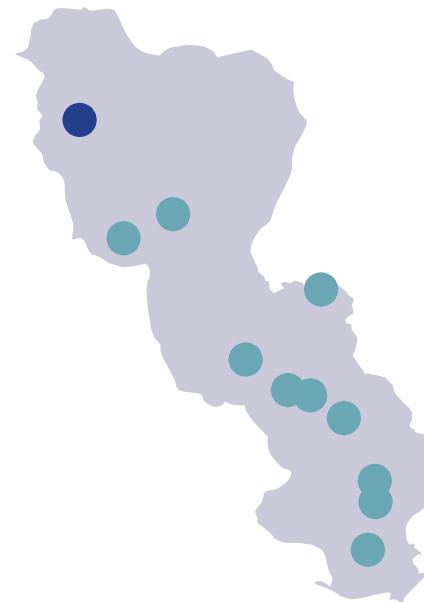
MERION BOTANIC PARK | 9:00 am

DESCRIPTION:

The day-long funeral for the buried Mill Creek begins at one of the only places where the water still flows above ground. Convening watershed residents and community leaders, as well as visitors from the greater Philadelphia area and beyond, the prelude commences with words by local city council members Jannie Blackwell and Curtis Jones, as well as Mayor Jim Kenney. Blackwell, Jones , and Kenney provide a brief history of Mill Creek, and explain the issues facing the communities of the watershed. A ceremony is then carried out, with all attendees placing a flower into the creek in honor of its past and continued life. This is followed by speeches and eulogies from local faith leaders, as these churches have long been pillars of West Philadelphia, and the ministers have for decades witnessed the tragedies that have occurred on the buried flood plain. Select community members are given the opportunity to say a few words as well. As the speeches wind down, the music begins, and the band leads the crowd to the park's exit, marking the beginning of the Funerary Procession and providing the tempo of the march onward to Overbrook.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS:

Local faith leaders and council members



SPEAKING POINTS:

- Almost 150 years ago, Mill Creek was buried in a sewer, and our community lost one of its most precious resources.
- Since that time, The Mill Creek watershed has witnessed continued development on the buried river's floodplains, leading to many heartbreaking tragedies that some of you here today have witnessed.
- We gather here today to pay our respects to the creek, and to the lives that have been lost along with it. But we also come together to celebrate our present-day community, and to envision the bright future we have ahead of us.



[STOP 02 - TAKING BACK THE WATERSHED]

OVERBROOK ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER | 10:00 am

DESCRIPTION:

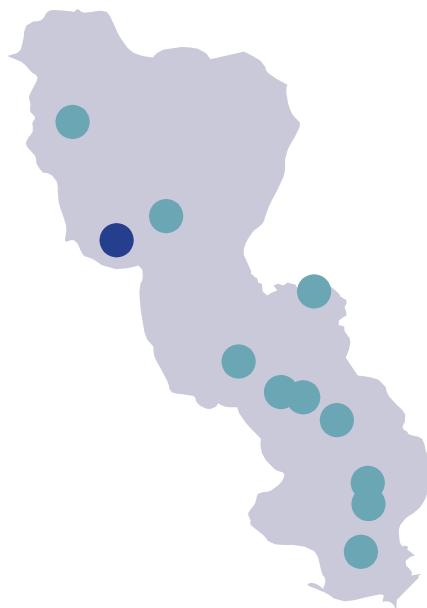
Our second stop on the procession is at Overbrook Environmental Education Center, a community based center dedicated to the preservation of our built and natural environments; improved public health; arts and literacy; and the promotion of sustainable and livable communities. At this stop, Jerome Shabazz, the Director of Overbrook, expands on the history of Mill Creek, and speaks about the importance of citizen engagement when it comes to improving the watershed. After the speech, Jerome and OEEC staff lead a workshop for participants to create protest signs together that can be used throughout the procession.

POTENTIAL PARTNER:

Philadelphia-based artist Joe Boruchow: focused on environmental and social justice

SPEAKING POINTS: JEROME SHABAZZ

- About 20 years ago, when we founded Overbrook Environmental Education Center, the site you are all standing on was a brownfield site. It was abandoned and dilapidated, with about 20 tons of trash on top of it, but we did not let that stop us from transforming this land into the environmental center you see before you today.
- Historically, The Mill Creek watershed has been neglected, but that won't stop us from creating the community we want and deserve to live in. It is our responsibility, and the responsibility of all citizens, organizations, and businesses in the Mill Creek watershed to partner together to improve our home.
- It's in our power to restore our environment, grow healthy food for ourselves and our neighbors, and beautify our surroundings with art and greenspace.
- Today, we will march through Mill Creek to let everyone know that we stand together, to encourage our neighbors to join us in our commitment to the community, and to send the message that we will not allow for the further degradation and neglect of our land.



[PROTEST! PROCESSION]

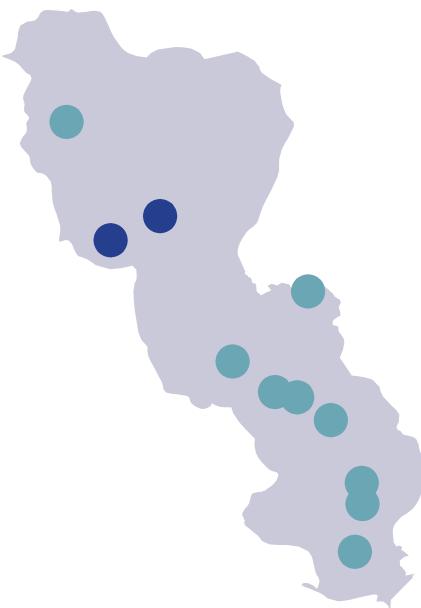
BETWEEN OVERBROOK & BOWL POND | 10:45-11:00 am

DESCRIPTION:

After concluding at Overbrook, the crowd moves on toward the Bowl Pond, a low topographical point in the watershed, where flooding and destruction continue to happen to this day. The Procession takes on an overtone of a rally and protest along this segment of the path as they approach Bowl Pond, which is representative of the continued failures of the city to address the issues of neglect and flooding. Participants carry the signs they created at Overbrook, demanding better public accountability, protection against flooding and abandonment, and more attention from the city. The music along this march reflects the change in attitude, and adds to the atmosphere of protest.

SAMPLE PROTEST SIGNS:

- Do Not Build on Our River!
- Forbid Construction on the Buried Floodplains of Mill Creek
- Philadelphia: Stop the Floods, Help Green our Watershed!
- Let's Transform our Vacant Lots into Green Space



[STOP 03: FLOODING IN THE INVISIBLE POND]

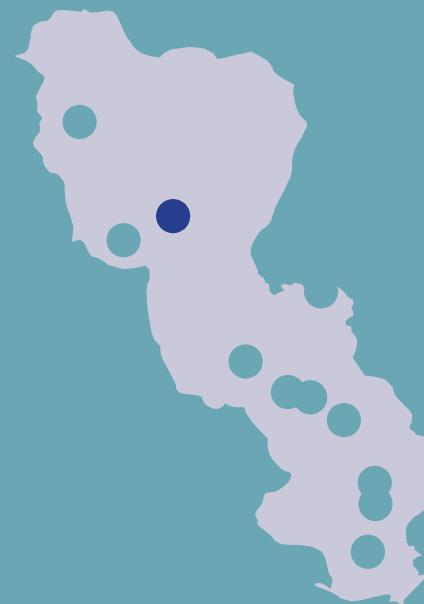
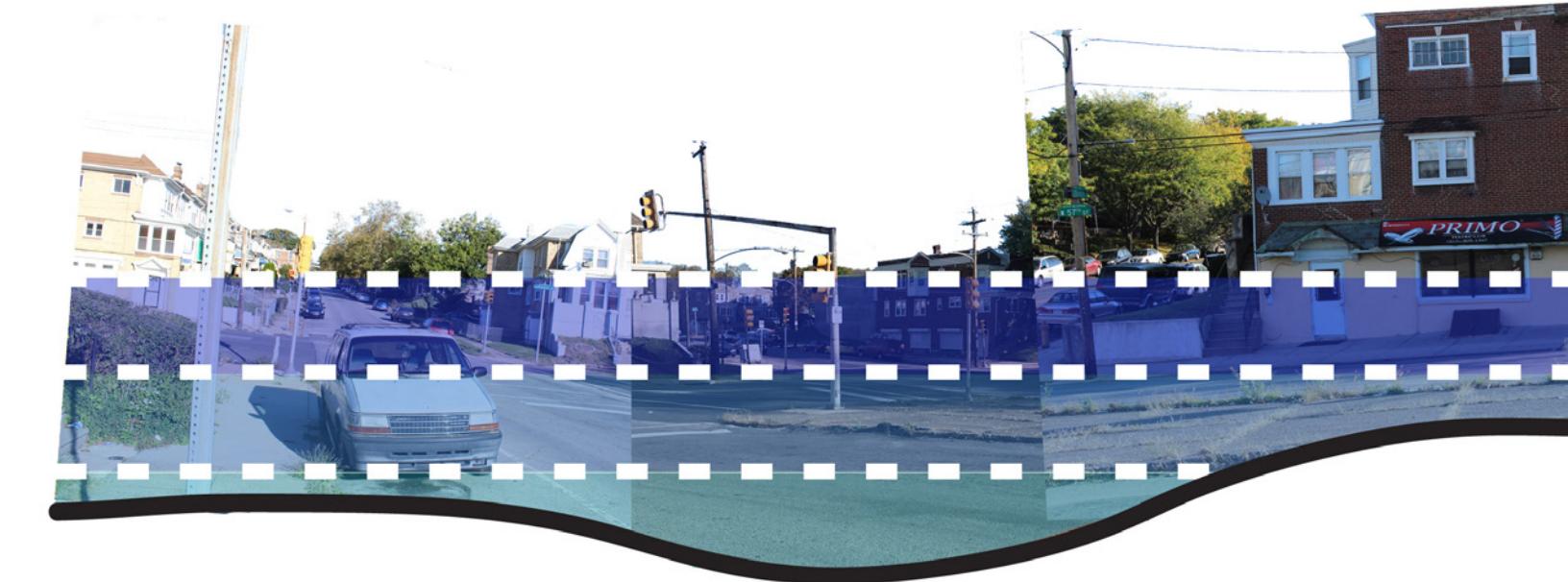
BOWL POND: LABANON AVE. & N. 58th ST. | 11:00 am

DESCRIPTION:

The procession and protest comes to the Invisible Pond, a low point at the intersection of Lebanon Ave and N 58th St that is comprised of houses and small businesses. In good weather you might not pick up on the clues that reveal the location's vulnerability, but in heavy rains it's hard to ignore: this low spot fills with water, unable to properly drain and causes significant damage to the surrounding buildings and roads. The protest continues here, as participants call on the City to address the drainage issues here that time and again cause damage and pain. Local residents and business owners tell stories of flooding and damage, and ask for support from the City to help rebuild and reengineer the site for improved drainage.

POTENTIAL ART PARTNER:

Philadelphia-based sculptor and environmental artist Stacy Levy



PUBLIC ART RFP

The Prompt: Work with people working and living within the Bowl Pond to explore its social and environmental history. Raise awareness of the unnatural topography and the urban conditions here that lead to flooding; and potentially suggest solutions on how this flooding can be addressed.

The Artwork: The selected installation will reflect a conscientious understanding of the surrounding community and environmental conditions. While the art installation is not limited to a particular media, concepts that integrate seamlessly into the surrounding environment and infrastructure are required. This piece will join 4 other artworks related to Mill Creek's environmental history as part of the event and exhibition Prelude, Procession, Pond, Party, and will remain on view for 8 months following its installation.

Parameters & Contact: Proposals should not exceed 2 pages in length, and should include at least 3 visuals, as well as details about materials, budget, and a draft artist statement. Please submit renderings and sketches of your proposal to pppp@mit.edu.

[STOP 04: PLANT A TREE FOR MILL CREEK]

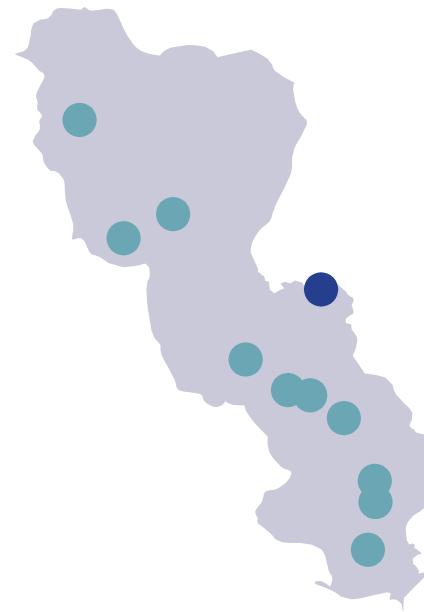
URBAN ARBORETA: PARKSIDE AVE. & N. 49th | 12:00 pm

DESCRIPTION:

Following the somber moment at one of Mill Creek's lowest topographical points, the procession continues to a more uplifting scene—the site of Urban Arboreta: Transforming Ground at 49th at Parkside, a once vacant lot with panoramic views of Philadelphia that is being actively converted into a hybrid space for nursery production and neighborhood use. A project of Philadelphia's City Parks Association, Urban Arboreta: Transforming Ground has a strong community focus, and offers educational programs and opportunities for professional job training in the nursery trade, benefiting the ecological, social and economic health of Mill Creek. As part of the procession, participants help Urban Arboreta to move their project forward with a collaborative tree-planting party led by Urban Arboreta's directors Deenah Loeb and Timothy Baird, along with Land Health Institute director and ecologist Scott Quitel. The session includes an ecology walk on-site to familiarize participants with the land, a natural drawing and journaling workshop, a second ecology walk to prepare for the planting, and the completion of the planting itself.

POTENTIAL PARTNER:

- City Parks Association
- Urban Arboreta
- Land Health Institute



[STOP 05: LUNCH AT A NEIGHBORHOOD FARM]

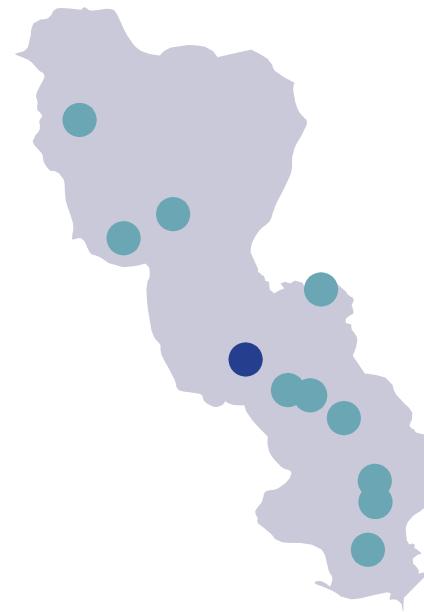
URBAN TREE CONNECTION: WYALUSING & N. 52nd ST. | 2:00 pm

DESCRIPTION:

At this stop, participants enjoy a meal at the $\frac{3}{4}$ -acre food farm in the middle of a West Philadelphia block in the Haddington neighborhood. Urban Tree Connection has active programming to help reduce neighborhood food insecurity, promote wellness, and cultivate community leadership. Since 1989, they have been working to transform abandoned open spaces in West Philadelphia's historically marginalized communities into safe and functional places that inspire positive human interaction and contribute to the community's health. Community Liaison Lisa Barkley provides participants with an overview of Urban Tree Connection's history, mission, and programs, then takes them on a garden tour before leading a collaborative food preparation workshop using produce grown at the farm itself. Participants and UTC staff then enjoy a picnic lunch together before the procession continues.

POTENTIAL PARTNER:

Urban Tree Connection



[PROCESSION: THE LOST 119]

BETWEEN UTC & 5035 FUNSTON ST. | 3-3:15 pm

DESCRIPTION:

Following lunch, the procession continues along one of the most tragic parts of the path of the buried Mill Creek. In the summer of 1961, four row houses built on top of the buried floodplain collapsed along this street, killing three and endangering dozens of others. Following the deaths, the city evacuated and razed 115 additional homes for safety reasons – a necessary but still painful move, resulting in large scale displacement for many of the neighborhood's low-income residents. At the time, the city acknowledged that some 1100 of 1800 existing homes in the area needed further rehabilitation, and that 800 of those – more than a fourth of the area's structure— would need to be razed, but many unstable homes remain in the neighborhood, and building on top of the floodplain continues. As participants cross this stretch of the buried river, it is a time for mourning and reflection.

POTENTIAL ART PARTNER:

New York-based environmental and site-specific artist Mary Miss



PUBLIC ART RFP

The Prompt: The neighborhood witnessed a great deal of devastation along this corridor due to the irresponsible development along the floodplains of the Mill Creek, and it is therefore one of the most significant locations in Mill Creek's history. Create a memorial for the 4 lives and 119 homes that were lost along the river in 1961. Consider the broader loss the neighborhood has witnessed and the continued injustice taking place here.

The Artwork: The most appropriate proposals will suggest works that can function as both a memorial and a way of calling attention to the government's continued disregard for the consequences of floodplain development. While the art installation is not limited to a particular media, concepts that integrate seamlessly into the surrounding environment and infrastructure are required. This piece will join 4 other artworks related to Mill Creek's environmental history as part of the event and exhibition Prelude, Procession, Pond, Party, and will remain on view for 8 months following its installation.

Parameters & Contact: Please submit renderings and sketches of your proposal to xyz@pppp.org. Proposals should not exceed 2 pages in length, and should include at least 3 visuals, as well as details about materials, budget, and a draft artist statement



[STOP 06: WHAT IS OUR PAST HERE? WHAT IS OUR FUTURE HERE?]

BROWN ST. & FUNSTON ST. | 3:15 pm

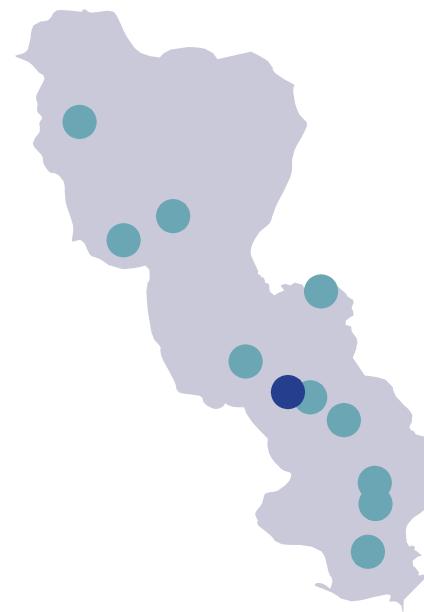
DESCRIPTION:

This stop begins with a resident's narrative of the collapses that have happened along the buried Mill Creek, especially the one that took place on this very site in 1961, as a way to remember the families living in the collapsed houses and those who died. Following the speech, First Person Arts, a Philadelphia nonprofit organization that specializes in personal storytelling and social impact process, leads a storytelling workshop to help expand the voices of the watershed's people and history. The workshop helps participants share their various stories about living in or visiting the Mill Creek Watershed.

The hour-long storytelling session transitions into an hour-and-a-half long community visioning session led by the Citizens Planning Institute graduates and the Mill Creek Community Partnership. This interactive, community-driven planning process takes place in the empty lots where the collapsed houses used to be, now only home to the French-fry sculpture. This is a place that is used by the community, but has no plants, benches, or tables, and feels empty and inactive when not in use. How can the lots be transformed into a more dynamic community gathering space that supports the necessary neighborhood activities, but also provides green infrastructure benefits, and becomes a way of connecting with the environment? Most importantly, how can the space be activated in a way that allows the most flexibility to community members for different types of uses? The conversation is the first of many, and allows neighbors to hear each other express their values and vision for the future of Mill Creek, while kicking off the planning process for the future of the vacant land to balance multiple community goals and values.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS:

- First Person Arts
- Citizens Planning Institute
- Mill Creek Community Partnership
- West Mill Creek Advisory Council
- Mill Creek Rec Center



[STOP 07: ASPEN FARMS STUDENT SHOWCASE]

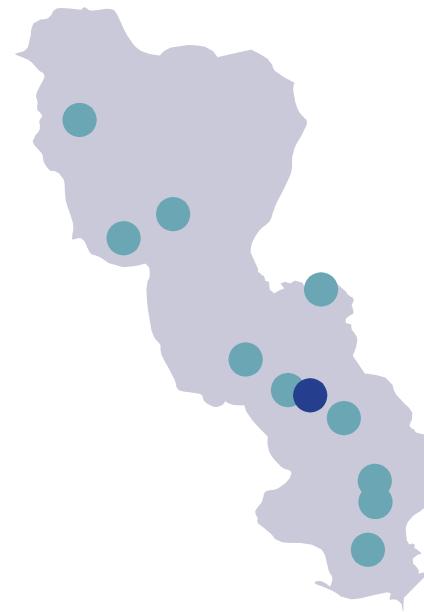
ASPEN FARMS: N.49th & ASPEN ST. | 5:00 pm

DESCRIPTION:

After a community meeting about planning in the watershed at Aspen Farms, community members walk down the street to Aspen Farms for a snack and performances by student musicians, dancers, actors, and poets. Local public school groups have prepared for this event by creating themed performances and skits about the community's past and future. Following the performances and a healthy serving of Janice's pineapple upside down cake, visitors learn about the community garden and further reflect on the future of the watershed's open spaces in a more relaxed environment. The procession then continues with an ever-growing marching band leading the group onwards through the watershed to the party at Clark Park.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS:

- Parkway West High School
- James Rhoads School



[STOP 08: REMEMBERING THE BURIAL OF MILL CREEK]

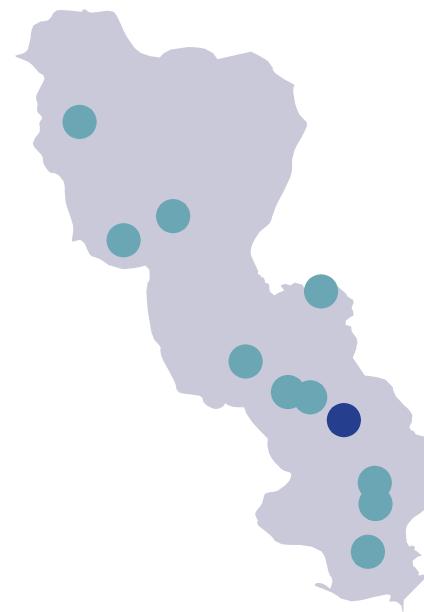
N.46th & HAVERFORD | 6:00 pm

DESCRIPTION:

The procession takes a pause at one of the historic sites of the crime. Almost 150 years ago, in 1869, the covering of Mill Creek began, encapsulating the watercourse in a 20-foot diameter drainpipe said to be the largest sewer pipe in the world at the time. Its burial was completed around 1895. Though this strategy may have solved the pollution issue at the time, it robbed the neighborhood of a vital resource and created a host of other problems as the city continued to develop on the river's floodplains, leading to the collapse of buildings, death, and disinvestment. For this event, a historic image of the creek being encased in concrete is enlarged and installed on this street corner. The billboard promotes landscape literacy by providing viewers with basic information about Mill Creek and the CSO system, as well as a website address where they can go to learn more about the environmental history of the neighborhood.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS:

- West Philadelphia Community History Center
- Philly H2O
- Lee Cultural Center



[STOP 09: RIVER REVEALED]

S. 43rd ST. & SANSOM ST. | 6:30 pm

DESCRIPTION:

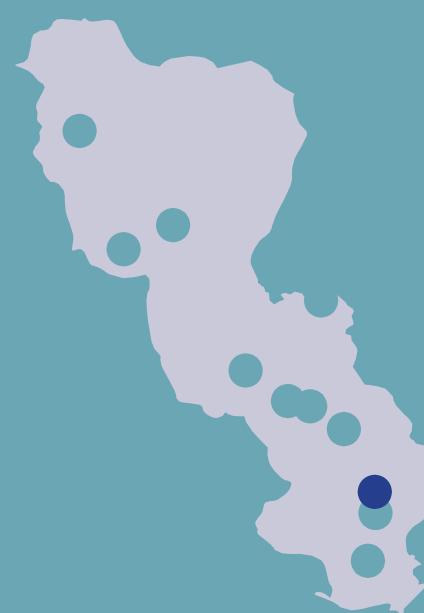
The next stop is the parking lot of a grocery store where one of the most calamitous cave-ins in Mill Creek history took place. In August 1952, a “yawning pit” opened after the sewer collapsed, extending the entire width of Sansom Street between 43rd and 44th, and measuring 30 by 40 feet with a depth of 35 feet. A couple of cars tumbled into the hole, and nearly 300 residents were forced to evacuate their homes near the wreckage. Another cave-in occurred nearby in 1971. An artwork that responds to the history of the site is installed here for participants to view.

POTENTIAL ART PARTNER:

Philadelphia-based artist and landscape architect Kate Farquhar



PUBLIC ART RFP

The Prompt: The Mill Creek has been buried in concrete for almost 150 years, but it still flows strong beneath our feet, dutifully carrying our waste out to the Schuylkill. Most people in Philadelphia, and even in the Mill Creek neighborhood, are unaware that such a river exists, or that it used to flow freely above ground (and still does, in some places). With the river disguised as a sewer, its destructive power has oft been forgotten, and continued development on top of it has led to the ruin of Mill Creek's landscape—including the disaster at this location, when the street collapsed in 1952. Respond to the history of this specific site, and the importance of landscape literacy.

The Artwork: Particular interest will be paid to works that focus on making the Mill Creek visible once again and revealing its depth, illuminating the foolishness of design that ignores nature. While the art installation is not limited to a specific media, concepts that integrate seamlessly into the surrounding environment and infrastructure are required. This piece will join 4 other artworks related to Mill Creek's environmental history as part of the event and exhibition Prelude, Procession, Pond, Party, and will remain on view for 8 months following its installation.

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[STOP 10: SOAK: PERMEABLE PAVING @ PENN ALEXANDER SCHOOL]

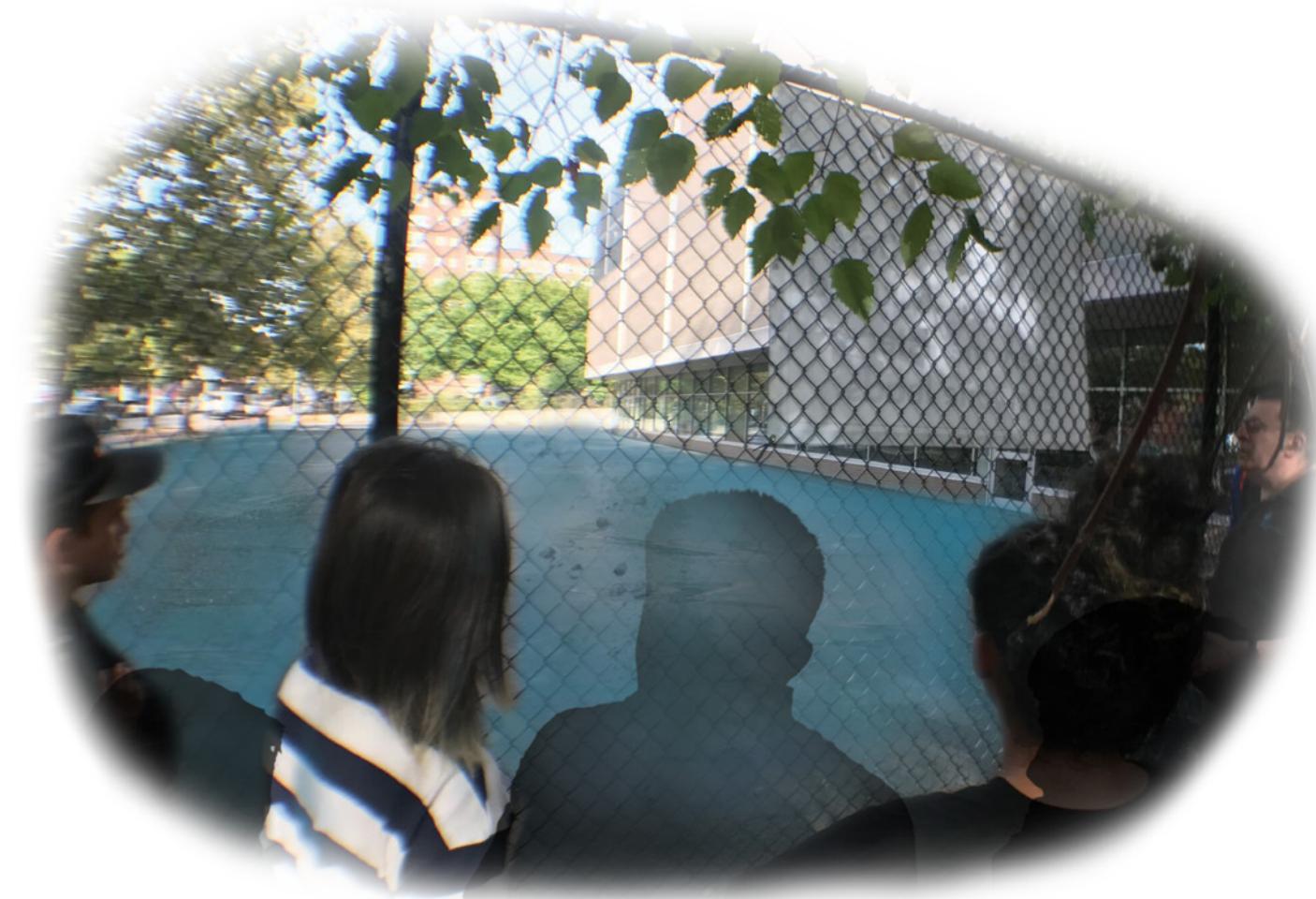
243 S. 43rd ST. | 6:50 pm

DESCRIPTION:

As the procession continues towards Clark Park, the group visits another art installation designed to highlight the permeable pavement at Penn Alexander School, which is a project of the Philadelphia Water Department's "Green City, Clean Waters" initiative and was constructed in partnership with the School District by the water department. "Green City, Clean Waters" is a plan to increase green infrastructure across Philadelphia to manage stormwater overflow from rainfall with collection and storage tools like rain gardens, green roofs, permeable pavement, and rain barrels. The permeable pavement at Penn Alexander School was one of the first projects that the Water Department implemented as part of this initiative, and has the advantage of being in a public space, with increased educational opportunities for children attending the school.

POTENTIAL ART PARTNER:

Mural Arts Philadelphia sponsored pervious ground mural



PUBLIC ART RFP

The Prompt: The "Green City, Clean Waters" website notes that it has added over 1,100 stormwater tools to the Philadelphia landscape, but many of them are not recognizable to the passerby. How can the permeable pavement at Penn Alexander School reveal its identity to the neighborhood and fit into the narrative of the Mill Creek Watershed?

The Artwork: This site provides an opportunity to pilot a temporary or permanent art installation that "daylights" the permeability of the pavement and makes the green infrastructure tools used by the city more visible. While the art installation is not limited to a particular media, concepts that integrate seamlessly into the surrounding environment and infrastructure are required. This piece will join 4 other artworks related to Mill Creek's environmental history as part of the event and exhibition Prelude, Procession, Pond, Party, and will remain on view for 8 months following its installation.

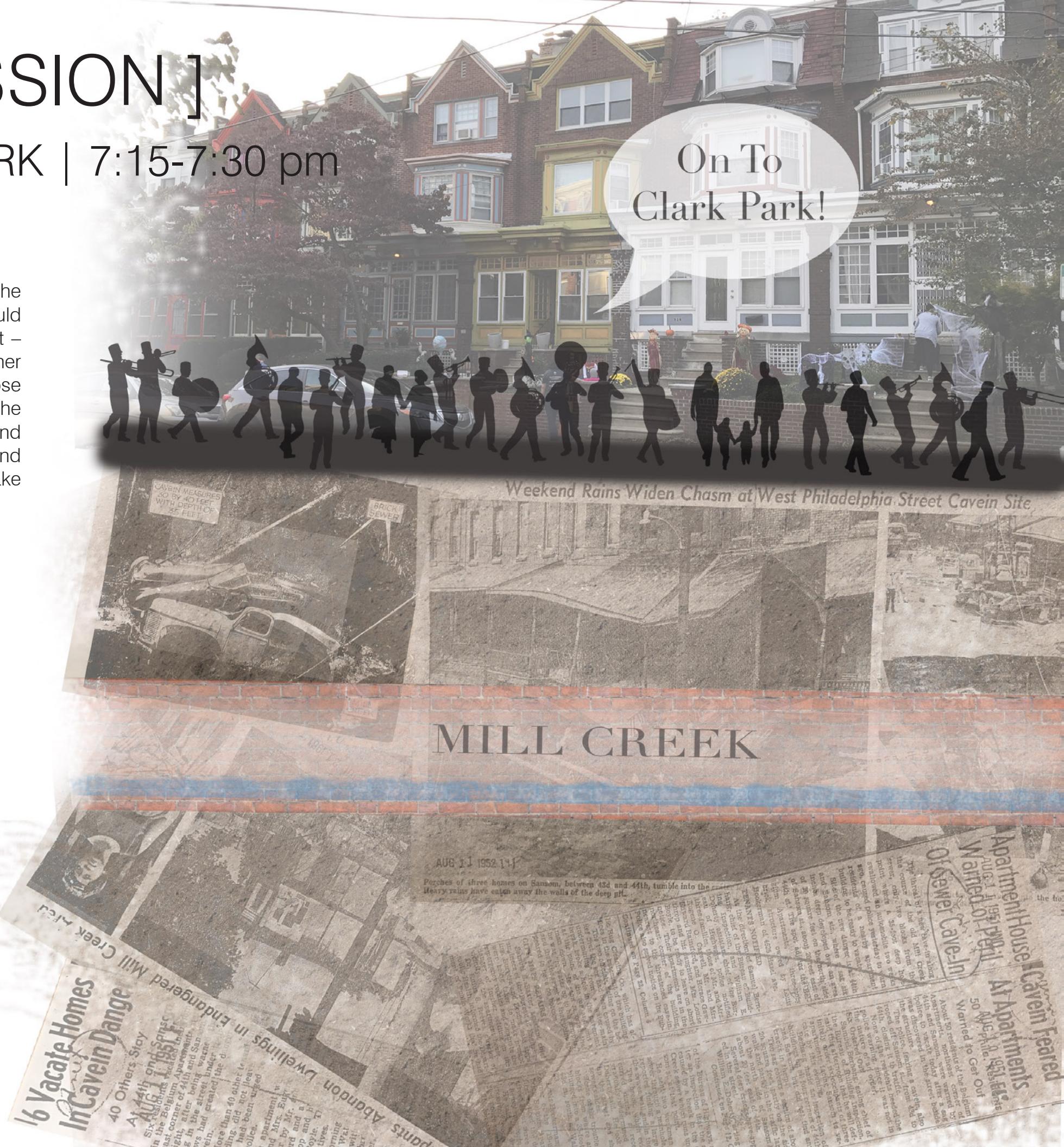
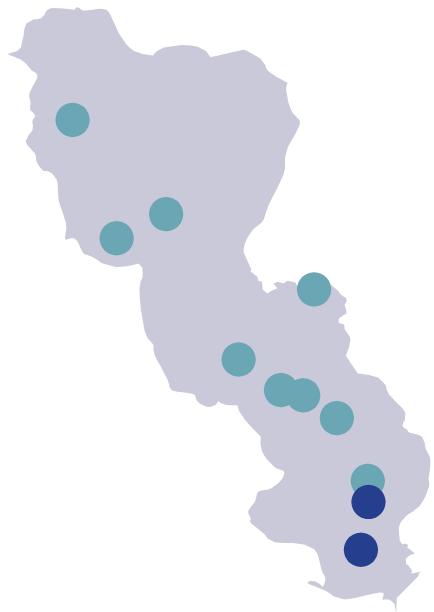
Parameters & Contact: Please submit renderings and sketches of your proposal to pppp@mit.edu. Proposals should not exceed 2 pages in length, and should include at least 3 visuals, as well as details about materials, budget, and a draft artist statement.

[THE FINAL PROCESSION]

PENN ALEXANDER TO CLARK PARK | 7:15-7:30 pm

DESCRIPTION:

The final leg of the procession towards the party is much more joyful than the previous, as participants are now focused on the positive futures that could be achieved within the watershed. The music is more prominent and upbeat – additional band members have joined in as the Procession has marched farther down the watershed. As the Procession nears its completion at Clark Park, those neighbors and community members who were unable to join throughout the day now come out, creating a huge movement working its way toward the Pond at Clark Park. After a long day of walking, forging relationships, protesting, and exploring the watershed's history and future, the procession participants make their way to the grand finale: the Party at the Pond.



[STOP 11: REFILLING THE MILL POND]

CLARK PARK | 7:30 pm

DESCRIPTION:

Once the procession reaches Clark Park, participants will be greeted by a transformed landscape that pays homage to the former Mill Pond, one of many that used to dot the length of Mill Creek during the area's industrial period. This pond, which was fed by Mill Creek, once powered a paper mill and another mill to the south during the 1800s. The mills were closed in the 1860s as the area shifted from farmland to residential, the creek was buried to make it easier to build houses, and the pond dried up. In the early 1890s, the site was used as a public dump before the city decided to convert it into a park in 1894.

POTENTIAL ART PARTNER:

New York-based artist and environmental activist Mary Mattingly



PUBLIC ART RFP

The Prompt: While the pond and mills are now gone, the bowl-shape of the pond remains, providing an opportunity to explore the site's former life as a mill pond. Respond to the local history of the area with a reinterpretation of this space and resurfacing of this "pond" in a manner that will create a space for a watershed-wide community gathering.

The Artwork: Preference will be given to artworks that explore the archetypes surrounding both mills and ponds, and incorporate landscape features that speak to these typologies. Artists are encouraged to think in terms of both ephemeral and permanent interventions. While the art installation is not limited to a particular media, concepts that integrate seamlessly into the surrounding environment and infrastructure are required. This piece will join 4 other artworks related to Mill Creek's environmental history as part of the event and exhibition Prelude, Procession, Pond, Party, and will remain on view for 8 months following its installation.

Parameters & Contact: Please submit renderings and sketches of your proposal to pppp@mit.edu. Proposals should not exceed 2 pages in length, and should include at least 3 visuals, as well as details about materials, budget, and a draft artist statement.

[A PARTY FOR THE MILL CREEK]

CLARK PARK | 7:30 pm

DESCRIPTION:

The culminating event of the day-long procession for the Mill Creek is a party celebrating the life of and within the watershed. The party takes place in the newly activated Mill Pond in Clark Park and engages neighbors from all along the route of the day's events, the neighborhoods surrounding Clark Park, and beyond. As the procession enters the park, the accompanying band reaches a raucous level of excitement and volume, announcing the entrance of the marchers into the party. Before the festivities begin, a few speakers acknowledge and describe the importance of the day's events, and provide another call to action for the attendees to connect and plan for the future of the watershed, especially regarding open space, flooding, and stormwater management.

Local bands kick off the party, filling the pond with sound and dancing. Dinner is provided by local food trucks from around the city, which park around the perimeter of Clark Park, drawing even more neighbors to the festivities. This culminating event promotes celebration and community bonding, and sets the stage for collaboration across neighborhoods to plan for the future of the watershed.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS:

- The Pew Center for Arts and Heritage
- UC Green



SPEAKING POINTS:

- Welcome everyone to Clark Park and the Mill Creek watershed!
- As many residents and those of you who have participated in today's procession know, the neighborhoods of Mill Creek have been through some hard times. However, Mill Creek is also one of the most resilient watersheds out there and its people are constantly working to improve their neighborhood and the life of everyone in it.
- If you did not get a chance to join today's procession, I urge you to take advantage of the audio and video tours that have been created to learn about the watershed, and to visit the many art installations that speak to Mill Creek's past and future.
- The collective energy in this park right now must not fade once the party's over! We need all of you to continue working together to make Mill Creek the kind of place we all know it can be – a vibrant, beautiful neighborhood with safe and enjoyable public spaces and a healthy ecology. We will keep everyone updated about future community meetings at www.millcreekwatershedpa.com and look forward to seeing you all there.
- Now get your dancing shoes on, enjoy the delicious food, and keep getting to know one another. It's time to party!



[AFTERLIFE]

DESCRIPTION:

What happens next, and what is left behind? Using the precedent for this project, *funkgodjazz&medicine: Black Radical Brooklyn*, as a guide, the afterlife of this project provides several ways to interact with the art installations and events even after the day-long funeral celebration has taken place.

First, a **funeral fan** printed with a map of the watershed and procession route will guide walkers on the day of the event, but can also be distributed later to community members interested in a self-guided adventure through the Mill Creek Watershed.

An **audio tour, website, and digital map app** will allow visitors to the watershed to experience the sights and sounds of the funeral celebration even after it has taken place as they walk through the Mill Creek neighborhoods, or from their own homes. As participants walk into a location in the tour or approach an art installation, the app will prompt the viewer to listen to the corresponding segment of the audio tour. Speeches, music, and stories will be recorded during the event so that they can be referenced and enjoyed later on in the locations in which they occurred.

The digital map will also serve as a visual reminder of the galvanizing network of community organizations and spaces across the watershed and along the route in particular. Demonstrating this network visually will help new projects benefiting these communities leverage support and funding. The map will be a powerful interactive web tool that will link photographs, the audio tour, and links to the work of each participating organization from the same website.

Finally, as a party favor on the day-of, participants will take away a **packet of wildflower seeds** suitable for the urban environment of West Philadelphia to sprinkle in their own yard or neighborhood.

