

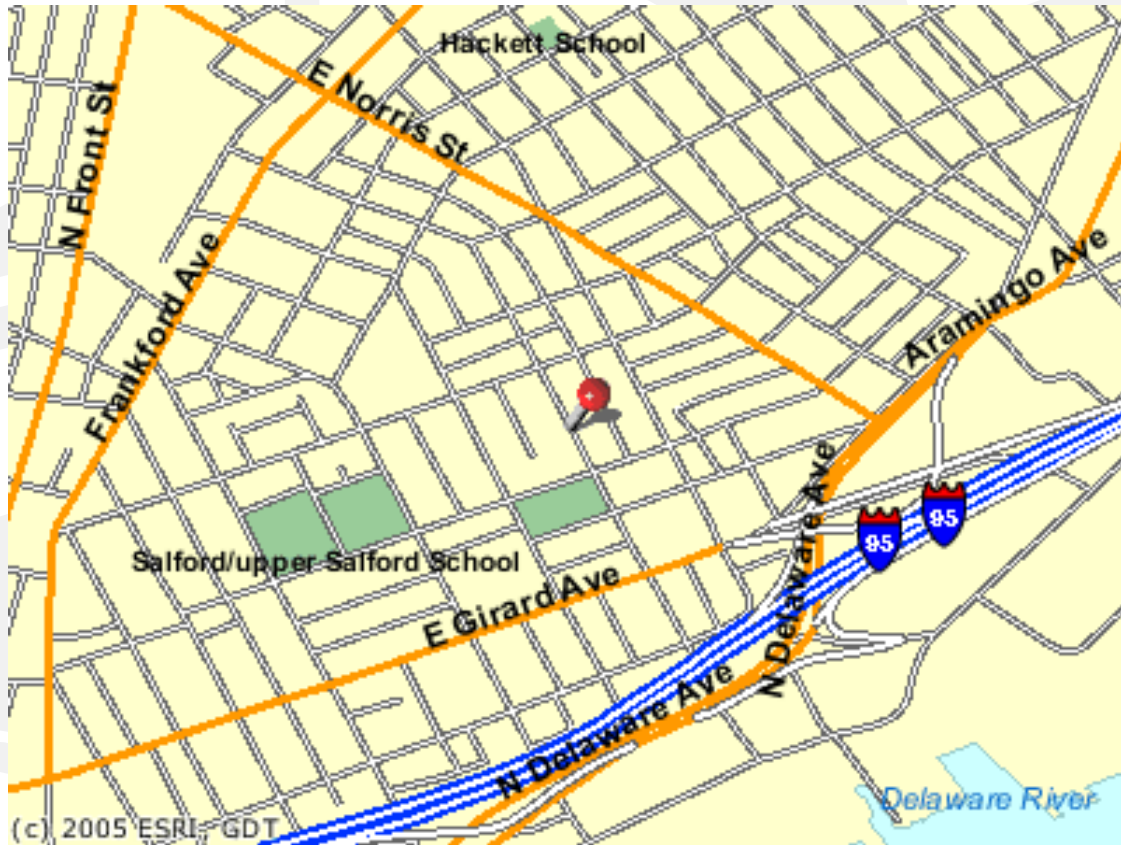


Green Buildings

The Rag Flats

Philadelphia, PA

Meg Lewis, 10/25/05



<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?searchtype=address&country=US&addtohistory=&searchtab=home&address=3100+E+berks+street&city=Philadelphia&state=pa&zipcode=19125>

The Rag Flats: An experiment in sustainability



- High-density urban development located on/in former rag factory in Fishtown
- 11 Unit development
- Mix of row houses, trinities, lofts
- “experiment in specifically ‘urban’ and sustainable forms of dwelling”

Green Features

- Solar power providing 80-100% of developments electricity (goal – zero energy community)
- 6,000 gallon rain-collection cistern stored underneath development for outside water uses
- Porous & permeable cement
- Radiant floor heating system
- Energy efficient appliances

Green Features Continued

- Renewable bamboo flooring
- Most buildings maintain 20x20' footprint
- Use of natural light & reflective strategies
- Close to public transportation systems
- Re-use of some materials (from former factory)

Views from several angles

Note
compactness,
yet the many
avenues light
can enter into
each building



Does development succeed as green example?

- Cistern may be of questionable value
 - Can 6,000 gallons of water be used solely for outdoor usages?
 - However, at least overflow will go into ground rather than as stormwater run-off
- Are buildings *too* closely packed?
 - Are Philadelphian's ready for that much community?
 - At first glance – yes – it appears only two units are left for sale.

Does development succeed as green example?

➤ Lack of education

➤ Not much information available on internet about details of green techniques.

Lack of details on:

- materials, processes, costs, design and building techniques implemented
- Why certain designs were chosen
- Community & non-community response

EXPERIMENT!



- Rag Flats is an experiment – as an experiment, it succeeds!
- Compared to most other projects currently in Philadelphia, the Rag Flats is striding ahead environmentally

Comparisons



- Private Developers
 - Apparent that little attention is paid to green techniques – example: Bart Blatstein
 - Builds upon brownfields, but little other mention of green elements

Comparisons



- Public Developers – Philadelphia Housing Authority
 - Building affordable housing that is image of suburbs
 - Buildings have energy efficient appliances
 - But PHA has a different purpose that does not focus on green building techniques

Rag Flats – leading by example?



Rag Flats leading by example

- Contains some core green, urban sustainability values – energy efficiency, density, close proximity to public transportation
- 11 Unit potential to pass on the word about sustainability
- Mainly lacking in education – more potential for evaluation of successes and failures after all units are sold



Rag Flats

**Fishtown,
Philadelphia**

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