

Retail will wrap around the proposed tower's base at Second and Race Street (Courtesy Peter Gluck and Partners).

Last week Philadelphia's new zoning code went into effect, but projects nurtured under the old code may still be rising. Just yesterday, architect Peter Gluck presented a tower proposal to the Old City Civic Association for a 16-story building adjacent to the Ben Franklin Bridge. Because the zoning permits were filed last month the building is subject to old code.

Gluck's presentation of 205 Race Street soured when new renderings revealed that an early proposal by SHoP Architects, initially approved at a 100-foot height, had morphed into a 197-foot tower that sets back from Race Street, [PlanPhilly reported](#). The group voted 11 to 1 to oppose the project.



The mildly zigzag facade rises 56' before stepping back to the 197' tower. (Courtesy Peter Gluck and Partners)



The tower's height is intended to gesture to the height of the bridge. (Courtesy Peter Gluck and Partners)

In a phone interview on his way back to New York from the presentation, Gluck said that the timing was coincidental. He added that the design phase of the project began more than a year ago, when political wrangling surrounding zoning legislation made the outcome of the code anything but certain. Gluck and the developer Jeffery Brown decided to move forward while the zoning

debates played out. “We knew what was going on,” Gluck said. “We designed it not for the zoning strictures, but what made sense urbanistically and what was doable from an economic standpoint.”

Gluck would not comment on curtain wall materials or engineering while the building is in the midst of the permitting process. But he did say that the taller height was a shift in massing intended to respond to the neighborhood context, adding that volume remains much the same. The initially approved building was 100 feet high all the way around its perimeter. The architect said the new design creates a lower parapet at 56 feet along Race Street, before setting back 14 feet and allowing the 197-foot high tower to rise. The setback would make way for a green roof and a two-story cutout into tower along the Race Street side. The design’s new Race Street height is intended to offer clear views of the bridge, while emphasizing the corridor leading to the recently completed Race Street Pier. The tower is intended to respond to the height of the bridge, though detractors point out that the new code addresses nearby building height and not the bridge.

Copious amounts of space would be set aside for a ground floor retailer with a glass storefront wrapping around Second Street. The glazing would give way to service docks along Florist Street, which runs just under the bridge. In an area known for its narrow colonial streets, Gluck said that the bridge allows the Florist Street service docks to be uniquely qualified to accommodate large trucks needed to service a supermarket. It’s an amenity that Gluck said the area needs, along with the people to use it. “Old city desperately needs population and retail, the kind of things that make a city work,” said Gluck. “Right now there’s a very long derelict area and our project is meant to enhance that movement toward the pier.”

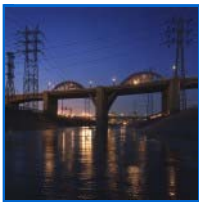
- [« Previous Post](#)
- [Next Post »](#)



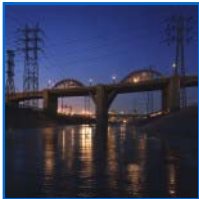
• [World Trade Update: Glass Rising](#)



• [Following Leak, Official High Line Renderings Hit the Street](#)



• [Shortlist For Sixth Street Viaduct Competition](#)



• [Shortlist to Replace Los Angeles’ Iconic Sixth Street Bridge Revealed](#)

[Leave A Comment](#)

Filed Under: [Peter Gluck](#), [Peter L. Gluck & Partners](#), [Philadelphia](#), [Renderings](#), [Top](#), [Towers](#), [Unveiled](#)

9 Responses to “Race Street Rising”

1. *barryg* says:  
[August 30, 2012 at 9:17 pm](#)

This would be amazing for the city and neighborhood, so of course OCCA voted against it.