



STATEMENT OF VIVIEN LI, PRESIDENT AND CEO, RIVERLIFE

PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING: RIV, Riverfront Zoning
FEBRUARY 20, 2018

Good afternoon, I am Vivien Li, President and CEO of Riverlife, a non-profit organization which promotes, enhances, and activates Pittsburgh's riverfronts. Thank you for this opportunity to speak in support of the proposed Riverfront Zoning.

For nearly two decades, Riverlife has promoted improved ecological balance along and in our rivers while supporting vibrant, well-designed riverfront development. Thanks to the efforts of many partners, including elected and public officials, property owners, stakeholders and advocates, and many funders, our riverfronts now serve as Pittsburgh's front door.

Establishment of the proposed RIV Riverfront Zoning will continue to enhance the quality of our riverbanks and shores while allowing for environmentally sustainable development and greater riverfront access. The proposed zoning provides greater certainty as riverfront property owners move forward with much-welcomed development. The zoning draws upon analysis and principles first articulated in the 2010 *Allegheny Riverfront Vision Plan* and the 2013 *Allegheny Riverfront Green Boulevard Plan* and updated in a series of comprehensive analysis papers prepared by Camiros for the City Planning Department in 2017.

As proposed, the zoning incorporates standards which will ensure continued improved ecological quality of natural river edges; better physical and visual connections to the river; promotion of water-dependent uses; and high-quality design standards. Riverlife strongly supports the creation of the RIV Riverfront Zoning.

Finally, we commend Mayor Bill Peduto for being one of the strongest allies in understanding the importance of comprehensive riverfront zoning, and want to thank the City Planning staff, in particular Ray Gastil, Andrew Dash, and Andrea Lavin Kossis for their leadership and hard work in listening to many different perspectives and bringing this to fruition. We collectively have been part of an inclusive public participation process which has spanned more than two years, including a well-attended "Waterfronts That Work" Summit held last March where free child care was available so that the community could actively participate; open houses and public meetings held both during day time and evenings to solicit maximum public input; as well as focus groups, working groups, and on-line participation.

We look forward to the Commission's timely approval of the proposed RIV Riverfront Zoning. Thank you.