

REVIVE MARKET STREET

So, Philadelphia's mayor, Cherelle Parker, announced that she is following through with the plan to build a 76ers basketball arena in Center City Philadelphia on Market Street. I remember listening to Cherelle Parker speak one time, hearing how powerful her voice was, and decided that I would vote for her after only five minutes of hearing a few of the other candidates for mayor. You could just tell she had so much more passion than the other candidates, and because of this, I voted for her. I think that passion and authenticity are very easy to see within political candidates, and they are what I look for when it comes to voting. Actually, one time while walking down Chestnut Street, I was practicing my street photography, and she spontaneously got out of her car. I told her I voted for her, and she gave me a hug!

Her plan to implement the 76ers arena in Philadelphia is very controversial for some reason. It seems that any time the city wants to innovate and create some new change or actually do something, people just want to tear down the idea, protest, and complain about it. Yesterday, after the announcement, protesters arrived at City Hall, like they do pretty much every weekend, protesting that they do not want this arena built. I will be honest and say that at first, I was apprehensive about this project, as I do not care for sports whatsoever. I never watch them, only played them, and basically view them as bread and circuses, a distraction for the masses. However, the more I walk around Market Street, the more I realize it is in desperate need of revitalization. Needless to say, I'm a big fan of this project and look forward to her plan to bring it into fruition.

Philadelphia's Very First Commercial Quarter

I love looking at historic photographs of Philadelphia, and when you view Market Street, it's quite amazing to see all of the vendors, people shopping, and selling goods all throughout this wonderful, wide street. Market Street is my favorite place in the city to practice my street photography because it is so wide, with wide sidewalks where many people can walk along the storefronts. There are many bus stops, which provide a steady flow of people coming and going on almost every

block. The convention center is located here and is a place where many events are held. Connected to the convention center is the Reading Terminal Market, the hub of food in the city of Philadelphia. The terminal market is always bustling, filled with energy, locals, tourists, and any food you can think of. My personal favorite is the Amish farms that sell meat, which have been here for over a century and take up about 25% of the entire marketplace, rightfully so.

Market Street stretches all the way from the Delaware River in Old City, and all of the major shopping areas are between the river and City Hall. It even extends beyond City Hall, where many offices are held, all the way toward the Schuylkill River. When I was a young boy, I remember visiting the Gallery, our mall, which sat on Market Street's east side, near Chinatown and Philadelphia. The Gallery was always booming, filled with energy, and I'll never forget being a little boy with my grandmother, having such a great time in this mall. Now, as an adult, we have the Fashion District mall, which replaced the Gallery, and is quite honestly unsuccessful, as hardly anybody shops here. Most of the shops are empty and are always on clearance or on sale. It obviously is not getting the business it deserves or needs, but perhaps the movie theater, bowling alley, and arcade at the top get all of the love, as well as the food court near the train station. The Fashion District mall is in desperate need of change, and the 76ers arena is the perfect plan to revive Market Street from the ashes that are currently there.

I believe with the implementation of the 76ers arena, Market Street will be supreme once again, from City Hall to the Delaware River (my favorite location in the city for street photography).

Why Chinatown is Upset About the 76ers Arena

Upon hearing the protesters' complaints, I think I have a general understanding of why they are upset about this plan to create the arena. The main concerns seem to be gentrification, displacement, cultural erosion, traffic and noise, and the historical past resistance of Chinatown residents in the 1990s when the city wanted to build a Philadelphia Phillies stadium in this area but eventually did not follow through with the plan. While I understand the concerns, I actually believe that Chinatown will benefit from the implementation of the arena. If there is more attraction to Market Street because of the arena, more business will eventually flow into

Chinatown because of it. With more traffic, more people come more shoppers, more curious minds, more tourists, more locals eager to explore the surrounding areas. Chinatown needs locals and tourists alike to shop and eat within their great restaurants. I could imagine that people will gather in droves before big games, eating in Chinatown, and then heading to the game to watch basketball. Maybe they don't want this? But honestly, I don't see why they wouldn't want this, as business is business, and Chinatown is full of family businesses. I understand that it is a residential neighborhood, and noise could be a potential concern, but Chinatown is far enough away from the chaos of Market Street, in my opinion, that the noise shouldn't be that big of a concern at all. Who knows, maybe I'm right, or maybe I'm wrong, but the more I think about it, the more I see it as a net positive for the city, implementing this arena. Market Street deserves an economic boom, a revival, as the Fashion District mall stands. It is probably losing more money than it's making. Market Street is one of the most important streets in our city for economic thriving, and considering Chinatown's small business owners, I'm sure they could deserve a bit of that boom too and can see the arena promoting this. Both big business and small business will benefit. Let's just see what happens; I just hope everyone can settle down, stop protesting, and just be open to change for once. The scary truth is, every time these protesters arrive outside of City Hall, the communists with their hammer and sickle flag flying, their strange fashion trends, and communist manifesto in hand, always arrive at the scene. Anything that is being supported by communists should be viewed skeptically. These people just want to tear everybody down to a base level, but I seek to go beyond. Let's see this city flourish, and implement a great change, a great revival of the city's most historic marketplace, once again.

Smoking in Public

Yesterday, I noticed Philadelphia public transportation, SEPTA, was handing out pamphlets and even free nicotine patches to promote the idea that people should stop smoking on these damn subways. I actually took a pamphlet and two packs of nicotine patches and will give them to people who smoke and spread the love. Smoking is disgusting, and I can't stand when it blows in my face when I'm practicing street photography on the sidewalks. I get it, you're in public and have the right to smoke, but it still doesn't hide the fact that it's disgusting behavior. Also, smoking on the train is just wild to me. People will roll joints, smoke cigarettes, do

heroin, and all sorts of funny drugs on the trains. This is why I mostly stay away from the train but typically only take the bus. People need to become more considerate of their neighbors, especially if there are children on the train. I think the general rule should be, if you want to smoke and give yourself cancer, just do it in the private confines of your home or your vehicle. Don't force other people to inhale your cancer, and just be more considerate of other people. Or even better yet, start taking the nicotine patches and get over this disgusting habit.

If People Ate Better, They'd Be Less Irritable

When I see people screaming and angry, always bickering on the streets like hyenas, I can't help but think in my head, if people just ate better, they'd be less irritable. It's typically the people who look extremely unwell, unfit, or overweight who are always complaining, screaming, yelling, and getting into a frenzy. If these people would just balance their hormones by eating healing foods, like heading over to Chinatown and enjoying a bowl of Vietnamese pho from Cali Pho—the best pho in Center City—they would warm their body, soul, and heart, and maybe just be a little bit more peaceful. I seriously think the food we consume determines the way in which we feel and our moods. When people eat ultra-processed food, their hormones become unbalanced, which puts them in a rage. **Let's boycott TastyKake?**

Just Let Life Flow

Ultimately, a lot of life's problems and trivialities are so small in the grand scheme of things.

We are currently on a spinning rock, orbiting around a ball of fire, falling into a dark abyss, into the void and darkness of space. When you zoom out, recognize the shortness of life, and the universe at large, does a fucking arena being built on a street affect you that deeply, that it has your body moving, making shirts, signs, and chanting outside of City Hall? Are these very small external factors going to control your emotional state for the rest of your life? Control what you are in control of. You are not in control of what the city's decisions are. You are a citizen, you have a vote, you have a voice, but complaining gets you nowhere. If you want change, take

action, run for city council, get involved in politics at City Hall, not just put up posters everywhere, hand out communist manifestos, and try to tear the whole city down. Let's build up the city and just focus on the things that are in your control, from within your immediate circle, your soul, your life. Stop worrying about all the external noise, stop focusing on the mayor's decisions, and just go live your everyday life.