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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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COMMITTEE ON RULES

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Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, December 1, 2009
10:20 a.m.

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PRESENT:

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNA C. VERNA

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COUNCILMAN DARRELL L. CLARKE

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COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE, JR.

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COUNCILMAN WILLIAM GREENLEE

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COUNCILMAN JACK KELLY

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COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN

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BILL 090704 - An ordinance establishing a
neighborhood improvement district in an area
that generally includes Cheltenham Avenue with
boundaries of Wadsworth Avenue on the west and
Broad Street on the east...

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V A R A L L O Incorporated

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Litigation Support Services

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Eleven Penn Center

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1835 Market Street, Suite 600

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Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

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215.561.2220 215.567.2670

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERA: Good

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morning, everyone. This is a public

4

hearing of the Committee on Rules.

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I would ask Mr. Erekson to

6

please read the title of Bill No. 090704.

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THE CLERK: Bill No. 090704, an

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ordinance establishing a neighborhood

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improvement district in an area that

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generally includes Cheltenham Avenue with

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boundaries of Wadsworth Avenue on the

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west and Broad Street on the east, Ogontz

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Avenue with boundaries of Cheltenham

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Avenue on the north and 67th Avenue on

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the south and Wadsworth Avenue with

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boundaries of Cheltenham Avenue on the

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northeast and Michener Avenue on the

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southwest; to be known as the Greater

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Cheltenham Avenue Business Improvement

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District; designating Greater Cheltenham

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Avenue Business Improvement District

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Inc., a Pennsylvania non-profit

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corporation, as the Neighborhood

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Improvement District Management

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Association for the District; approving a

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2 plan for the District, including a list
3 of proposed improvements and their
4 estimated cost, and providing for
5 assessment fees to be levied on property
6 owners within the District; authorizing
7 the Director of Commerce, on behalf of
8 the City, to execute an agreement with
9 Greater Cheltenham Avenue Business
10 Improvement District Inc. relating to the
11 District; and authorizing Greater
12 Cheltenham Avenue Business Improvement
13 District Inc. to assess property owners
14 within the District a special property
15 assessment fee to be used in accordance
16 with the approved plan, all in accordance
17 with the provisions of the Community and
18 Economic Improvement Act and under
19 certain terms and conditions.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERA: Thank
21 you.

22 For the record, I would like to
23 note that on June 11th, 2008, City
24 Council held a hearing on Bill No. 080376
25 which will establish a business

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2 improvement district covering the same
3 area as is provided for in the bill
4 currently being considered. This bill
5 was approved. However, after the passage
6 of the bill, it appears that some of the
7 property owners had not been included
8 with notification that they would be
9 assessed for fees. Therefore, the
10 sponsor proceeded with a new ordinance
11 that is before us today rather than amend
12 the previous one. That is why we're here
13 today.

14 So I would ask our first
15 witness to please take the witness table,
16 identify yourself and proceed with your
17 testimony.

18 And while you're doing that, I
19 would like the record to note that we do
20 have a quorum. To my extreme left,
21 Councilman Kelly, Councilwoman Brown,
22 Councilman Clarke, Councilman Greenlee,
23 and to my right is Councilman Goode.

24 (Witness approached witness
25 table.)

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERA: Thank
3 you. Good morning.

4 MR. FRISHKOFF: Good morning,
5 Madam Chairwoman and members of City
6 Council. My name is Andrew Frishkoff. I
7 am the Director of Neighborhood Economic
8 Development for the City of
9 Philadelphia's Commerce Department.

10 In June 2008, we provided
11 testimony in support of Bill 080376
12 authorizing the establishment of the
13 Greater Cheltenham Avenue Business
14 Improvement District. We understand that
15 the previous legislation did not name all
16 of the properties that would be subject
17 to the BID assessment and today's bill is
18 being submitted to correct those
19 omissions and to ensure that all of the
20 properties that would be included within
21 the District are named and properly
22 notified.

23 I would like to reiterate the
24 Commerce Department's support for the
25 cleaning, public safety and marketing

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2 activities that the Greater Cheltenham
3 Avenue Business Improvement District will
4 provide.

5 I am happy to answer any
6 questions you may have. Thank you for
7 your time and consideration.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
9 you very much, sir.

10 Are you aware of any property
11 owners who continue to object to the
12 adoption of this bill?

13 MR. FRISHKOFF: None have
14 contacted our office at the Commerce
15 Department.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Do
17 you know how many additional properties
18 have been specifically included in the
19 bill for assessment purposes?

20 MR. FRISHKOFF: I do not. The
21 community sponsors have that information.
22 We'll be happy to share that.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And
24 someone is here that would be able to
25 tell us?

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2 MR. FRISHKOFF: Yes.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
4 you.

5 Are there any questions from
6 members of the Committee?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
9 Mr. Frishkoff, you will remain in the
10 event that we have some questions?

11 MR. FRISHKOFF: Thank you.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
13 you.

14 Our next witness, please.

15 (Witness approached witness
16 table.)

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good
18 morning. Welcome. Kindly identify
19 yourself for the record.

20 MS. HOLLOWAY: Denise Holloway.

21 Good morning, Councilwoman
22 Verna, other members of the Rules
23 Committee and members of City Council.
24 My name is Denise Holloway from the
25 Office of State Representative Dwight

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2 Evans. I am here today to testify on
3 behalf of Bill No. 090704, which
4 establishes a neighborhood improvement
5 district known as the Greater Cheltenham
6 Avenue Business Improvement District.
7 The District focuses on revitalization of
8 portions of the economic corridors of
9 Cheltenham Avenue, Ogontz Avenue and
10 Wadsworth Avenue.

11 The Greater Cheltenham Avenue
12 Business Improvement District is the
13 second phase of a larger plan, the
14 Cheltenham/Northwest Philadelphia
15 Inter-Municipal Cooperative Planning
16 Initiative. In the past, the commercial
17 areas of Cheltenham, Ogontz and Wadsworth
18 Avenues were vibrant, bustling strips
19 catering to the many needs of those it
20 served. However, in most recent years,
21 these same corridors have been slow to
22 attract high-quality merchants and are
23 perceived as unsafe and unclean. The BID
24 is looking to reverse this trend.

25 Through cooperation with

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2 Cheltenham Township, some of the benefits
3 of the BID are: Commercial enterprises
4 within Northwest Philadelphia and the
5 region will increase their market share.
6 BIDs have worked successfully in a
7 thousand communities, including several
8 in the Philadelphia region and a
9 bi-municipal BID on City Avenue. Bids
10 keep costs low because all owners share
11 the cost of security, cleaning and
12 marketing. On average, this BID will
13 cost each property owner approximately
14 \$224 per year, or about 61 cents per day.
15 BIDs are planned and run by
16 businesspeople, those who are assessed.
17 BIDs increase property values for
18 merchants and those in the surrounding
19 residential area. BIDs promote
20 neighborhood beautification. BIDs
21 enhance public safety. BIDs improve
22 customer experience, and BIDs improve
23 quality of life.

24 In addition to local business
25 participation, the BID will also solicit

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2 financial support from local non-profit
3 organizations that will also benefit from
4 this partnership.

5 Thank you for this opportunity
6 to testify today.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
8 you very much.

9 I'm really not too familiar
10 with this area. Can you tell us if all
11 of these property owners are within the
12 City limits or are some located in
13 Cheltenham Township?

14 MS. HOLLOWAY: For this
15 legislation, the 239 properties that have
16 been included are in the Philadelphia
17 area.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
19 you.

20 What is the total annual budget
21 and what percentage is supplied to the
22 City property owners?

23 MS. HOLLOWAY: The budget is
24 \$400,000 collectively, but that's --
25 Philadelphia will pay about ten percent

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2 of that, but the collective budget
3 between Philadelphia and Cheltenham is
4 \$400,000, and Philadelphia will pay about
5 38,000.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Has a
7 new revised final plan for the proposed
8 district been submitted?

9 MS. Holloway: I'm sorry? Has
10 a new plan been?

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna:
12 Submitted.

13 MS. Holloway: Well, the
14 committee has met during the time, and
15 so -- the committee has met, and I
16 wouldn't say that it's a revised plan.
17 It's been a progressive plan to fit the
18 needs of both sides of Cheltenham Avenue
19 between Cheltenham and Philadelphia.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank
21 you.

22 The Chair recognizes Councilman
23 Greenlee.

24 COUNCILMAN Greenlee: Thank
25 you, Madam President.

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2 Good morning, Ms. Holloway.

3 MS. HOLLOWAY: Good morning.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Just
5 quickly, you mention -- and you partially
6 answered it, I think, in a previous
7 answer. You say through cooperation with
8 Cheltenham Township. What exactly are
9 they providing? What are they doing?

10 MS. HOLLOWAY: Actually, they
11 have about, I believe it's about, 40
12 properties that are also contributing to
13 the BID, and they are contributing the
14 majority of the budget to the BID. So
15 they've been equal partners with
16 decision-making and analyzing what would
17 best -- the needs of both sides of
18 Cheltenham, because the idea is a
19 regional effect, since most people that
20 are shopping in the area don't realize --
21 they don't consider that they're crossing
22 the street to go to Cheltenham or
23 Philadelphia. So we're looking at it as
24 a regional opportunity.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I mean,

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2 I'm kind of familiar with this area. Has
3 there ever been a study like as far as
4 who shops there? Is it more
5 Philadelphians that shop there, more
6 people from Cheltenham or Montgomery
7 County? Do you have a feel for that?

8 MS. HOLLOWAY: I would say I
9 can only answer that question
10 anecdotally. Anecdotally, more
11 Philadelphians shop there on the
12 Cheltenham side in the Cheltenham Mall
13 and the Cedarbrook Plaza than people from
14 Cheltenham, though there has been a
15 larger influx of people from Cheltenham
16 that have started to come to those areas.

17 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.
18 All right. Thank you.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
20 You're welcome.

21 Are there any other questions
22 from members of the Committee?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
25 you very much.

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2 MS. HOLLOWAY: Thank you.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Do we
4 have anyone else to testify on this bill?

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

7 Seeing no one, this will conclude our
8 public hearing and will be continued to
9 the call of the Chair.

10 Thank you very much.

11 (Committee on Rules concluded
12 at 10:30 a.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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I HEREBY CERTIFY that the

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proceedings, evidence and objections are

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contained fully and accurately in the

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stenographic notes taken by me upon the

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foregoing matter on December 1, 2009, and that

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this is a true and correct transcript of same.

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MICHELE L. MURPHY

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RPR-Notary Public

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