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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
PUBLIC HEARING

3

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

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Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Wednesday, June 14, 2006, 10:15 a.m.

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Bill 060474 - Submission to qualified electors of
the Philadelphia of proposal relating to the
appointment of the members of the Fairmount Park
Commission and authorizing the appropriate
officers to publish notice and to make
arrangements for the special election.

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Res. 060485 - Proposing amendment to Charter
relating to appointment of the members of the
Fairmount Park Commission.

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Council Members Present:

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Anna C. Verna, Chair
Jannie L. Blackwell, Vice Chair
Blondell Reynolds Brown
Darrell L. Clarke
Frank DiCicco
W. Wilson Goode, Jr.
James F. Kenney
Frank Rizzo

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Philadelphia Parks Alliance

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Committee of Seventy

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Fairmount Park Commission

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
3 you all for being here this morning
4 before this Committee of the Whole, which
5 is called to order.

6 The Chair notes that we have a
7 quorum and, therefore, we will ask the
8 clerk to please read the title of the
9 bill.

10 We actually have two bills this
11 morning -- Bill 060474 and Bill 060485,
12 and we will ask the clerk to read the
13 title of both bills.

14 THE CLERK: Bill No. 060474, an
15 ordinance providing for the submission to
16 the qualified electors of the City of
17 Philadelphia of the proposal set forth in
18 a resolution approved by Council
19 proposing an amendment of the
20 Philadelphia Home Rule Charter relating
21 to the appointment of the members of the
22 Fairmount Park Commission and authorizing
23 the appropriate officers to publish
24 notice and to make arrangements for the
25 special election.

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2 Resolution No. 060485, a
3 resolution proposing an amendment to the
4 Philadelphia Home Rule Charter relating
5 to the appointment of the members of the
6 Fairmount Park Commission, and providing
7 for the submission of the amendment of
8 the electors of Philadelphia.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
10 you very much.

11 We were confirming that we had
12 our quorum, which we do. The Chair
13 recognizes Councilman Darrell Clarke, and
14 after he makes his statement, and
15 Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds for an
16 opening statement.

17 And after that, we will ask the
18 Park Reform Task Force to come forward
19 while they're speaking, to be prepared to
20 make your testimony. That would be
21 Lauren Bornfriend, Joan Riley, Robert
22 Nix, III, and Zach Stalberg.

23 We welcome you to come to the
24 table, and we'll invite you to give your
25 testimony after my colleagues make their

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2 opening statements.

3 Councilman Clarke.

4 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you,

5 Madam Chair.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank

7 you.

8 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Good

9 morning.

10 Madam Chair, first I'd like to

11 thank all individuals and organizations

12 that have participated in this long trek

13 towards reforming our park systems and

14 our recreation systems, 'cause we will

15 ultimately do something as it relates to

16 that.

17 One of the things that I've

18 said is it's always good to have debate

19 on any particular issue. And as a result

20 of the debate, we think that we've

21 brought this particular issue to a level

22 that it has not been in quite some time.

23 So if nothing happens -- and I

24 do believe something will happen -- at

25 lease we've brought the issue with

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2 respects to the Fairmount Park to a level
3 that it hasn't been.

4 I'm confident that our
5 colleagues, after seeing the work that
6 has been done and that will be laid out,
7 will hopefully be in a position to pass
8 legislation in the fall to assure that
9 voters have an opportunity to vote on
10 this very important issue.

11 So I just want to thank
12 everybody involved at this time and thank
13 anybody who will be getting involved
14 during the course of the summer.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
16 you, Councilman.

17 Councilwoman Reynolds Brown.

18 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:
19 Thank you, Madam Chair.

20 I need to underscore the
21 remarks offered by my partner on this
22 bill and cosponsor of this effort,
23 Councilman Darrell Clarke.

24 Progress has been slow, but the
25 progress has been good in that consensus

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2 has been held at each step of the way.

3 So we move forward only after there's

4 consensus among the major stakeholders

5 therein, and those are the Philadelphia

6 Fairmount Park, the Horticultural

7 Society, Zach Stalberg, and Mr. Nix and

8 their team of professionals that are

9 taking another closer look at this, and

10 the Administration in the work of Bob

11 Allen.

12 Bob Allen has done an

13 enormously outstanding job in looking

14 to -- looking at efficiencies created by

15 the realignment separate from the bill.

16 So we need to underscore that

17 because that's the only way that we have

18 now arrived at this point with the work

19 that will be presented today.

20 I will be circulating to both

21 members of the committee and other

22 interested parties a timeline of all that

23 has taken place over the last 18 months.

24 So the interest and the effort

25 to help these departments work more

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2 efficiently is alive and well. And we
3 simply need to say thank you because the
4 work is still not done.

5 Thank you, Madam Chair.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
7 you very much.

8 Is there anyone else among the
9 Councilmembers who would like to make a
10 statement?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Okay.

13 Otherwise, we will ask Panel 1, Park
14 Reform Task Force that we just named.
15 Would you please come forward.

16 (Witnesses come forward.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
18 morning. Welcome. Please identify
19 yourselves for the record and make your
20 testimony.

21 MS. BORNFRIEND: Good morning.

22 I'm Lauren Bornfriend, the Executive
23 Director of the Philadelphia Parks
24 Alliance.

25 MR. STALBERG: I'm Zach

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2 Stalberg President and CEO of the
3 Committee of Seventy and Co-chair of
4 President Nix's group of advisors.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I
6 thought you were going to say "President
7 Bush." You said "President" --

8 (Laughter.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I'm
10 glad it's President Nix.

11 MR. STALBERG: Wouldn't get
12 close to that one.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Okay.

14 MR. NIX: This is far more
15 prestigious than that one.

16 (Laughter.)

17 MR. NIX: I'm Bobby Nix,
18 President of Fairmount Park Commission.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you.

21 MS. BORNFRIEND: Good morning.
22 Our group represents an alliance of park
23 advocates, civic advocates, and park
24 officials who have been working together
25 for several months to find a common

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2 agenda for park reform.

3 We agree that Philadelphia's
4 parks represent one of our city's
5 greatest resources, an asset to be envied
6 by other cities.

7 We also agree that our parks
8 have suffered long enough and that the
9 citizens of Philadelphia deserve well
10 funded parks with transparent, creative,
11 and proactive leadership, and we know
12 that a better park system will help our
13 city its and neighborhoods thrive in the
14 years to come.

15 Today, we are pleased to see
16 City Council take up legislation that
17 could help bring better parks to all
18 Philadelphians.

19 The current bill is a good
20 start. It needs improvement because it
21 leaves unanswered key questions about
22 governance and funding. We are, however,
23 optimistic that these questions can be
24 answered by summer's end.

25 The resolution sponsors,

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2 Councilmembers Clarke and Reynolds-Brown,
3 have indicated that they understand our
4 concerns and are willing to work with us
5 to resolve them.

6 We are further encouraged by
7 the resolution introduced by
8 Councilmembers Reynolds-Brown, Clarke,
9 and Nutter on June 8th, calling upon the
10 Mayor to appoint a Parks and Recreation
11 Funding Task Force.

12 The issue of alternative
13 funding sources for Philadelphia's parks
14 is a key one that must be addressed along
15 with governance reform.

16 We thank the Councilmembers for
17 their openness. With their cooperation,
18 we hope to amend and supplement this
19 legislation so that Fairmount Park gets
20 the independent, visionary leadership and
21 secure finances it deserves.

22 I'll now speak to concerns we
23 have about three areas in the current
24 resolution -- the appointment of
25 commissioners, the responsibilities and

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2 tasks of the new commission, and the
3 financial future of the park.

4 First, the appointment process.

5 We agree that Fairmount Park needs a
6 commission to guide and protect this
7 invaluable civic asset.

8 Our primary goal is that a
9 revamped commission be independent,
10 visionary, and effective. It needs to be
11 able to make plans, implement sound
12 policies, and raise sufficient funds to
13 run a first-class park system.

14 To execute those tasks, the
15 commissioners will need broad support
16 from both inside and outside government.
17 To win and maintain that support, what it
18 needs first and foremost is public
19 credibility. To confer that credibility
20 upon this revamped commission, we support
21 a nomination process that is fully open
22 to the public.

23 We have proposed amending the
24 current legislation to specify a
25 nominating panel whose members will

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2 select a slate of potential commissioners
3 for submission to the Mayor for approval
4 and subsequent review by City Council, in
5 keeping with other boards and
6 commissions.

7 The nominating panel should be
8 drawn from private and non-sector
9 organizations. A nominating panel member
10 should represent community-based
11 organizations, environmental and
12 historical organizations, business and
13 economic development groups, and arts and
14 culture organizations.

15 A diverse representative and
16 independent nominating panel should
17 greatly help to ensure diverse
18 representative and independent Fairmount
19 Park Commission.

20 We would prefer that the
21 commission be named a board of trustees,
22 but whatever it's named, the park's
23 oversight board must be strong enough to
24 win public's trust.

25 Responsibilities and tasks. A

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2 second step toward credibility for the
3 revamped commission is to define its
4 responsibilities in this proposed
5 legislation.

6 We propose the legislation be
7 amended to spell out the revamped
8 commission's role regarding such critical
9 park issues as land use and protection,
10 environmental and historical
11 preservation, partnerships, planning,
12 interdepartmental coordination, reporting
13 to the public, and, of course,
14 fund-raising.

15 In addition, we propose that a
16 code of ethics be established. This
17 brings us to our third area of concern,
18 which is finance.

19 A dwindling budget lies at the
20 core of many of Fairmount Park's
21 problems. A reformed park system must
22 have both a solid municipal base as well
23 as a broad capacity to raise and generate
24 funds from private, philanthropic, and
25 non-local government sources.

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2 To this end, proposed
3 legislation should address the crucial
4 need for both operating and capital
5 funds. We'd like to see solid proposals
6 for dedicated funding for the park along
7 with an agreement under which the park
8 system retains a significant portion of
9 any revenues it generates.

10 Finally, the revamped
11 commission needs the staff and capacity
12 to organize and maintain an
13 entrepreneurial long-term revenue-raising
14 strategy that can improve the entire park
15 network.

16 These are our three primary
17 areas of concern. Other areas must also
18 be addressed, such as elevating the
19 position of park executive director to
20 commissioner, thereby conferring the same
21 status on Fairmount Park as other City
22 departments such as Streets, Water,
23 Recreation, and Police.

24 There are also potential legal
25 questions involving the City Charter and

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2 state laws governing Fairmount Park.

3 Our core mission today,
4 however, is to outline amendments so that
5 the revamped commission created by reform
6 legislation is independent, credible,
7 clear about its roles and
8 responsibilities, and financially secure.

9 We are grateful that the
10 sponsoring Councilmembers have indicated
11 a willingness to work with our group over
12 the summer to resolve these questions.
13 We are working hard, as we speak, to
14 retain the legal and organizational
15 expertise to address them.

16 By summer's end, we intend to
17 have detailed proposals that can be used
18 to amend the current legislation. The
19 results should be a resolution that
20 Council can support with confidence,
21 knowing that the resulting system will
22 provide Philadelphians of every age, race
23 and, community with cleaner, greener,
24 safer, and more exciting parks.

25 In closing, let's return to the

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2 core beliefs shared by this group, which
3 is that a better park system will make
4 Philadelphia a better place to live,
5 work, and visit.

6 Parks help us strengthen
7 neighborhoods, they attract visitors and
8 employers, retain residents, and serve
9 youth and families. They help us make
10 our city attractive, healthy, and
11 exciting.

12 With a jewel like Fairmount
13 Park Commission and all of the other
14 parks that surround it, there is no
15 reason that Philadelphia should not stand
16 out as a green giant among cities.

17 Please join in using this
18 summer to amend the current bill and
19 prepare any other legislation that may be
20 needed to bring Fairmount Park the
21 leadership and resources that it
22 deserves. The result will be a better
23 Philadelphia and region for all of us.

24 Thank you.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank

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2 you very much.

3 Would you gentlemen like to
4 testify, or you're satisfied that this
5 testimony includes all that you would
6 like to say?

7 MR. NIX: I'm satisfied with
8 the testimony.

9 MR. STALBERG: Me too. Thanks
10 very much.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
12 you very much.

13 Are there questions or comments
14 from members of the Council?

15 (No questions or comments from
16 members of Council.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
18 you very much.

19 The next individual to speak is
20 Mr. Robert Lukens, Friends of
21 Wissahickon.

22 Is Penny Balkin, Fairmount Park
23 Association, here? You will be next.

24 Is Mr. Fred Mauer here? Okay.
25 We'll go in that order.

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2 (Witness comes forward.)

3 MR. LUKENS: Good morning,
4 Madam Chair and members of Council.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
6 morning.

7 MR. LUKENS: I'm Bob Lukens,
8 President of the Friends of Wissahickon,
9 one of the largest and most active of the
10 many friends groups that work closely
11 with the Fairmount Park Commission.

12 We very much appreciate the
13 opportunity to testify before Council on
14 the most recently proposed legislation
15 relating to the reorganization and reform
16 of the Fairmount Park governance
17 structure.

18 As you may remember, but you
19 may not, because we submitted our
20 testimony in writing, we've actually
21 appeared at a couple of previous hearings
22 and submitted testimony.

23 I would start out by saying we
24 actually agree a hundred percent with the
25 Park Reform Task Force testimony that you

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2 just heard.

3 We have a few of our own
4 comments. We agree -- the Friends of the
5 Wissahickon agree that reform of the park
6 system and the method of selecting
7 commissioners is important if the parks
8 are going to continue to be a vital asset
9 to the residents of the City, and we are
10 very pleased that Council understands
11 this issue and has begun to propose some
12 steps aimed at modifying existing the
13 somewhat unwieldy structure.

14 However, as we noted in our
15 previous testimony, the Fairmount Park
16 Commission's strategic plans suggest
17 taking at least three to five years to
18 explore the issues involved in a merger,
19 not a, brief last-minute City Council
20 hearing leading to a ballot question and
21 only one part of the complex set of
22 reforms needed to make the park's
23 governance and funding structure more
24 effective.

25 We feel that this ordinance

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2 deviates from the overall recommendations
3 of the park's alliance and the
4 Nix-Stalberg advisory committee who have
5 essentially agreed on wanting to
6 restructure the commission as a
7 quasi-independent board composed
8 primarily of nonprofit and private-sector
9 representatives.

10 If the ordinances and ballot
11 question are approved, we also do not
12 think it's wise to have the changes go
13 into effect until the next administration
14 comes into office.

15 In addition, in particular, the
16 ordinance does not address the leadership
17 and funding issues that are the major
18 concerns of the Friends of the
19 Wissahickon and of the park's alliance
20 and the Nix-Stalberg reports.

21 However, yesterday, in
22 preparing for our testimony, we learned
23 about the resolution that has been
24 introduced by Councilpersons Brown,
25 Clarke, and Nutter urging the Mayor to

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2 set up a task force with participation by
3 all of the park, recreation stakeholders
4 to look into these and other issues in a
5 more systemic and complete fashion.

6 I have not had a chance to
7 discuss the resolution with the board of
8 the Friends or the executive committee,
9 but we're very -- personally very
10 supportive of that resolution and hope
11 that it will pass and that the Mayor will
12 act on it.

13 Again, we do appreciate
14 Council's interest in this issue. We
15 hope we can work with you and with the
16 park's alliance and with the rest of the
17 task force over the coming months and
18 years to pass comprehensive reform, but
19 the Friends urge you not to support the
20 bills before you today on this as being
21 incomplete.

22 And that concludes my formal
23 testimony. Thank you.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
25 you, Mr. Lukens.

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2 Any questions from our
3 colleagues for Mr. Lukens?

4 (No questions from members of
5 the committee.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
7 you very much.

8 MR. LUKENS: Thank you.

9 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Madam
10 Chair, Madam Chair?

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yes.
12 Mr. Lukens? Councilman Clarke.

13 MR. LUKENS: Yes. Do you have
14 a question?

15 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Yes. Thank
16 you.

17 First, thank you for coming
18 down and thank you for being involved in
19 this process.

20 I just wanted to respond to
21 some of the comments you've made with
22 respects to timeline.

23 MR. LUKENS: Yes.

24 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: And I think
25 you characterized it as a last-minute

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2 legislation or hearing.

3 MR. LUKENS: Right.

4 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: And
5 Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds-Brown will
6 be passing out a sheet that talks about
7 the timeline as it relates to dealing
8 when this actually starts.

9 The initial expression of
10 interest starts in the spring of 2001.
11 And the original cut of the bill, I think
12 it was actually introduced about a year
13 ago.

14 So I wouldn't characterize this
15 as a last-minute issue, and we've had
16 several hearings, both in this Council
17 and in a number of community forums, so
18 we have kind of had a pretty lengthy
19 process as it related to this particular
20 bill.

21 The other thing -- and you did
22 mention in your testimony, you talked
23 about the need to have all aspects of the
24 report, the strategic plan addressed, and
25 you hadn't had a chance to read it.

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2 But in the task force
3 resolution, we talked about the need to
4 have additional funding and other aspects
5 of that report, so we clearly understand
6 that this is just one component of the
7 strategic plan proposal, and we fully
8 intend on engaging that and the other
9 aspects of that in a serious way.

10 With respects to the next
11 administration, this has been something
12 that's been coming up. I said earlier,
13 although I got a resounding endorsement
14 that I would be reelected, but in earlier
15 testimony, I talked about the fact that
16 we as Councilmembers are here now. You
17 know, tomorrow is never promised, and
18 this is an issue that is near and dear to
19 our heart.

20 So we are moving towards moving
21 this, and we will be involved in the
22 selection.

23 There's another issues with
24 respects to the timeline as it relates to
25 the expiration of the current term -- the

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2 members of the park, and I understand
3 that that term expires next year in May.

4 Am I correct commissioner?

5 MR. NIX: On April 7th.

6 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: And I think
7 it would, frankly speaking, be extremely
8 disappointed if we would allow --
9 although I don't have anything against
10 the Board of Judges, but I do have
11 something against the process that if we
12 do not do something that allows us to
13 address the May expiration date, then
14 come May of '07, the Board of Judges will
15 pick the next group of Fairmount Park
16 commissioners in the same antiquated way.

17 So I think it's prudent for us
18 to take that opportunity and come up with
19 a process that allows it.

20 We had talked with some of the
21 advocates and some of the task force
22 members about possibly having a
23 transition term where maybe the first
24 term of the newly selected commissioners
25 would not be the traditional five-year

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2 term, so it would give the next
3 administration and the next council an
4 opportunity to participant in a process
5 earlier than the before-mentioned
6 five-year process, and that's one of the
7 things that we'll be talking about over
8 the course of the summer.

9 Okay.

10 MR. LUKENS: May I respond?

11 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Sure,
12 absolutely.

13 MR. LUKENS: First off, I thank
14 you for clarifying these points.

15 I actually have been at the two
16 prior hearings and have testified, but
17 it's a little tricky because the target
18 is changed. The proposals have
19 exchanged, and I gather they're still
20 under discussion.

21 And we're very much
22 appreciative, actually, of the -- that
23 you've brought this to Council and really
24 started a dialogue. And these park
25 groups and ourselves are really working

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2 on it. But it is a little bit hard
3 without seeing the whole to comment on
4 pieces of it.

5 And I agree with you that the
6 timing would be fine to come up with a
7 good, solid proposal in the nearer term
8 than three to five years. I mean, I
9 agree with you with the timing and am
10 looking forward to getting the timeline
11 as well. We hope to participate.

12 Thank you.

13 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: You're
14 welcome.

15 Thank you, Madam Chair.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
17 you very much.

18 Any further questions?

19 (No further questions.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
21 you.

22 Miss Penny Balkin, Fairmount
23 Park Association.

24 (Witness comes forward.)

25 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good

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2 morning.

3 MS. BALKIN: Good morning.

4 Thank you so much.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:

6 Certainly.

7 MS. BALKIN: And thank you,
8 Councilman Clarke and Councilwoman
9 Reynolds-Brown for continuing to create
10 this public forum and giving us an
11 opportunity to discuss the future of
12 Fairmount Park.

13 I know that we all agree --

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Excuse
15 me. Please identify yourself for the
16 record.

17 MS. BALKIN: Oh, I'm sorry I'm
18 Penny Balkin Bach, and for the record,
19 our organization is the Fairmount Park
20 Art Association.

21 I know that we all agree that
22 Fairmount Park is one of Philadelphia's
23 greatest treasures. And listening to the
24 previous testimony, I think we also all
25 agree that it deserves more attention,

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2 more funding, and greater accountability.

3 I'm responding on behalf of the
4 Fairmount Park Art Association, which was
5 founded in 1872 as a nonprofit citizens'
6 organization and is one of the Fairmount
7 Park Commission's earliest private
8 partners.

9 As the nation's first public
10 art organization, we have worked
11 extensively with the Park Commission and
12 the city To commission and preserve
13 outdoor sculpture, making Philadelphia an
14 internationally-recognized Museum Without
15 Walls.

16 And given our experience over
17 this very long term, we do not support
18 this ordinance to amend the Home Rule
19 Charter; we do, however, support this
20 ongoing discussion.

21 An improved process to appoint
22 commissioners is needed, but the
23 ordinance, as written, has many
24 shortcomings and seems premature. The
25 appointment process described in the

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2 ordinance does not address the park's
3 governance problems, its funding, or the
4 public's desire for inspired and capable
5 leadership.

6 We, your constituents, want
7 change, but we want change for the
8 better, not a Band-Aid, and change that
9 brings significant and long-term
10 improvement.

11 By calling this hearing and
12 raising this issue, we hope that Council
13 will be responsive to citizen input
14 before proposing such an important
15 measure that would change the governance
16 of the park.

17 The park needs leadership
18 reform that is more deliberate,
19 responsive, and effective than what is
20 called for in the ordinance, which, we
21 believe, will be viewed conceptually by
22 the public for the following reasons, as
23 written.

24 First of all, the ordinance
25 proposes trading a mysterious judicial

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2 and political process for another process
3 that gives the appearance of being highly
4 politicized, and we believe that this
5 will continue to erode public trust.

6 An alternative would be to
7 create a nonprofit board of trustees with
8 City representation. Another option
9 would create a nominating panel that
10 reports to the Mayor, but we urge that
11 such a panel be composed of a majority of
12 individuals from the public/private,
13 nonprofit, corporate, and philanthropic
14 sectors.

15 The next issue is expertise.
16 The ordinance does not describe the skill
17 sets needed to advance the welfare of the
18 park.

19 The Art Commission composition,
20 for example, is very specific: It
21 specifies a painter a sculptor, an
22 architect, a landscape architect, and so
23 on, be represented on the commission.

24 The public needs assurance that
25 the Park Commission would be composed of

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2 individuals with appropriate financial
3 and management expertise, but also
4 knowledge of the issues relating to land
5 use, preservation, landscape,
6 environment, and arts and culture.

7 And, finally, the proposed
8 ordinance does not provide for continuity
9 of leadership through staggered terms. A
10 new commission with each new
11 administration, we feel, would not serve
12 the long-term interests of the park and
13 its constituents.

14 We believe that effective
15 change needs to be innovative and
16 creative and that Fairmount Park requires
17 a new model altogether, one that would
18 incorporate the need for private support
19 and entrepreneurship that is being sought
20 by parks across the nation. Philadelphia
21 can be the new model.

22 Finally, we affirm that any
23 Charter changes, as we think of them,
24 must transcend the good intentions of
25 this administration and this council. We

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2 need a structure that will endure in
3 years to come for the benefit of all
4 people in Philadelphia and this park
5 system that we all treasure.

6 Thank you so much.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
8 you very much.

9 (Applause.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Any
11 questions or commence?

12 Councilwoman Reynolds-Brown.

13 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:
14 Thank you, thank you very much. Thank
15 you for your testimony.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Miss
17 Balkin, would you remain. Councilwoman
18 Reynolds-Brown would like to address you.

19 (Witness returns to witness
20 table.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
22 you very much.

23 Councilwoman.

24 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:
25 Thank you. Thank you For your testimony

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2 and interest.

3 I had prematurely written a
4 question of -- you stated what you don't
5 support, but if I had been patient and
6 listening, I now see what you do support.

7 To that end and number one of
8 the appointment process, your testimony
9 says, and I quote: Another option would
10 be to create a nominating panel that
11 reports to the Mayor but one that is
12 composed of majority, which you have
13 italicized, of individuals from the
14 private, nonprofit, corporate, and
15 philanthropic sectors.

16 I would submit to you that that
17 is a beginning but is not totally
18 inclusive of the broad world of
19 stakeholders that care about our parks --
20 namely, park groups who may not fit -- or
21 who clearly do not fit in any of the
22 categories that you just mentioned.

23 And I was searching to see how
24 many park groups we have because they are
25 a very active -- neighborhood park

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2 groups, actively engaged volunteers who
3 are making a difference to what is your
4 perspective with regards to creating an
5 opportunity an opportunity where they
6 also have a voice.

7 MS. BALKIN: I absolutely agree
8 that they would be included, yes.

9 That was not meant to exclude
10 them but I think, interestingly enough,
11 we are a citizens organization ourselves.

12 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:

13 Okay.

14 MS. BALKIN: We're not directly
15 working with the park or even the park
16 reform group.

17 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:

18 Okay.

19 MS. BALKIN: So I think, you
20 know, from our perspective, we're trying
21 to articulate some of the membership that
22 hasn't been discussed up until this
23 point.

24 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:

25 Oh, okay, all right.

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2 MS. BALKIN: But thank you for
3 raising that; it's a very fair issue.
4 And we very much support all of the
5 volunteer groups and we work closely with
6 them ourselves.

7 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:
8 Okay. You've piqued my curiosity.
9 You say that the organization
10 you represent is not a formal members of
11 the Fairmount Park Alliance; is that what
12 I heard?

13 MS. BALKIN: We're not working
14 with them directly.

15 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN: I
16 see.

17 MS. BALKIN: We're not working
18 with the Reform Commission directly.

19 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN: I
20 see. Okay.

21 Final question. Councilman
22 Clarke and I have begun to have informal
23 visits with some of our colleagues, and
24 we have not gotten to them all.

25 But in my visit with Councilman

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2 Rizzo, Councilman Frank Rizzo, one of his
3 staff persons raised a very good question
4 that I couldn't answer, and that is that
5 in the Fairmount Park houses, there is a
6 lot of art work --

7 MS. BALKIN: Yes.

8 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:

9 -- that most of us don't know about,
10 don't know its existence, but it's
11 valuable and historic in nature.

12 Has your organization had any
13 involvement with that world of
14 Philadelphia Fairmount Park?

15 What do you think about us, the
16 City, doing something with that --
17 they're really treasures is what they
18 are.

19 MS. BALKIN: Yes. Well, I --
20 we are not directly involved with that
21 because our purview primarily in terms of
22 what we consider public art is generally
23 outdoor sculpture.

24 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN: I
25 see.

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2 MS. BALKIN: But I do know that
3 the museum, the Philadelphia Museum of
4 Art, is responsible for administering at
5 least one of -- or perhaps more of the
6 houses that has an art collection. And
7 you would probably want to speak with
8 Gail Harrity about that.

9 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:
10 Okay.

11 MS. BALKIN: Because I know
12 that they have an interest, and I know
13 that they have been very involved in the
14 restoration and in the oversight of the
15 park houses, which are really a great
16 treasure in Philadelphia.

17 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:
18 Okay. Thank you, thank you again for
19 your testimony.

20 MS. BALKIN: Thank you.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
22 you.

23 Councilman Goode.

24 Miss Balkin?

25 (Witness returns to witness

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2 table.)

3 MS. BALKIN: I'm so sorry.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
5 you.

6 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you,
7 Madam Chair.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
9 Certainly.

10 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Miss
11 Balking, in your testimony, you describe
12 the proposed new process as being highly
13 politicized, or giving the appearance of
14 being highly politicized. What do you
15 mean by that statement?

16 MS. BALKIN: The proposed
17 ordinance, I believe, states that only
18 two of the representatives would
19 represent parks groups, and the other ten
20 would be appointed -- five by the Mayor
21 and five by Council.

22 And I think there's an
23 impression in the community at-large that
24 that does not assure adequate community
25 involvement.

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2 COUNCILMAN GOODE: How is that
3 any more politicized than the current
4 process?

5 MS. BALKIN: Excuse me?

6 COUNCILMAN GOODE: How is that
7 any more politicized than the current
8 process?

9 MS. BALKIN: I agree that
10 perhaps it's not, but I think that we, as
11 citizens, think we can do better.

12 COUNCILMAN GOODE: The
13 Fairmount Park Commission is, in fact, a
14 governmental entity; is that correct?

15 MS. BALKIN: Yes.

16 COUNCILMAN GOODE: And it will
17 remain a governmental entity; is that
18 correct?

19 MS. BALKIN: I'm not here to
20 make that decision, sir.

21 COUNCILMAN GOODE: It will
22 remain a governmental entity whether we
23 change the Charter or however we change
24 the Charter, it will remain a government
25 entity.

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2 MS. BALKIN: Right.

3 COUNCILMAN GOODE: How, in
4 fact, do you depoliticize the process?

5 MS. BALKIN: I think it would
6 give the public the confidence that a
7 cross-section of individuals would be
8 involved in the nomination process.

9 COUNCILMAN GOODE: My question
10 was: How do you depoliticize the
11 process?

12 MS. BALKIN: Of appointments to
13 the nominating committee?

14 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Appointments
15 to the commission itself or whatever it's
16 going to be called.

17 MS. BALKIN: I'm sorry, I...
18 There are two issues? Just so I
19 understand your question.

20 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Mm-hmm.

21 MS. BALKIN: One is the -- the
22 way that the nominating panel is
23 constructed, and the other is the way
24 that the commission --

25 COUNCILMAN GOODE: My

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2 understanding is that will be addressed
3 through an amendment today.

4 But beyond that, you talk about
5 the selection process of the commission,
6 and you say that we're trading it for one
7 that gives the appearance of it being a
8 highly politicized -- being highly
9 politicized.

10 My question is: How do you
11 depoliticize the process?

12 MS. BALKIN: I think it has to
13 do with the construction of the
14 nominating panel.

15 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Okay. That
16 will be done.

17 Thank you.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
19 you very much.

20 Certainly I agree with my
21 colleague. And, absolutely, we're still
22 talking about a governmental process.

23 And I'm always happy when we,
24 as Council, have oversight or input,
25 because when you have the executive

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2 branch and the legislative branches, then
3 we can be assured that we're trying to do
4 the will of as many people as we can, the
5 citizens in our city, so I applaud you
6 for the work that you've done.

7 Fred Mauer?

8 (Witness comes forward.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
10 you, Mr. Mauer. Please identify yourself
11 for the record.

12 MR. MAUER: I have a copy for
13 the transcription.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
15 you, Mr. Mauer.

16 MR. MAUER: My name is Fred
17 Mauer, and I testify on this matter. I
18 have indicated to you ordinances that are
19 involved.

20 I find there is a major fault
21 in offering this --

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Excuse
23 me, sir. Do you represent a parks group
24 or a citizen of our city and area --

25 MR. MAUER: I have testified

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2 previously on budget matters and park
3 matters and many forums, so I have an
4 association with many parks.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
6 you.

7 MR. MAUER: I find there is a
8 major fault in offering this ordinance
9 without a true findings of fact. The
10 public information meetings focus on
11 different subjects, so this is not a
12 continuation.

13 And the obvious concession at
14 those past meetings was that all
15 complaints about Fairmount Park were
16 caused by the deliberate underfunding of
17 the parks, and it was not caused by
18 governance.

19 There is no fact-findings of
20 failures attributed to malfeasance or
21 dereliction of duty or hints of any
22 corruption. This effort is not like the
23 blue-ribbon Charter Committee that kept
24 governance of the park intact and only
25 added to its commission the Water and

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2 Streets Department and the Recreation
3 Commissioner the Chief surveyor to
4 integrate into the Managing Director's
5 bureaucracy as a good government model.

6 This new ordinance wants to
7 dispose of the complete board of
8 commissioners that were ordained in the
9 1867 State law and authorized in the 1875
10 State constitution with continuation of a
11 special powers for the benefit of all the
12 people of the state.

13 And today, they want to replace
14 it with a weaker City political machinery
15 scheme of absolute power to return us to
16 the days of corrupt and contented
17 puppets.

18 I am a constituent of
19 Councilman Darrell Clarke, and I am very
20 disappointed in his plan to dismantle the
21 governance of the Fairmount Park
22 Commission, which has provided 140 years
23 of public service to make our city
24 usable, with a pleasant environment,
25 enjoyable.

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2 I think my councilman is very
3 wrong, and he should be smart enough to
4 end this hostile campaign.

5 Fairmount Park, as a city/state
6 commission, was a special agency
7 confirmed and approved in the 1875
8 Constitution, and it was carried intact
9 into the new City Charter by reformers
10 who wanted to end the past 50 years of
11 Republican rule.

12 Now we've had 50 years of
13 Democratic party rule, and they want to
14 destroy the one institution that all the
15 people enjoy the most and change it just
16 for a private whim and not a true public
17 need.

18 I can't understand why my
19 councilman adopted such a hostile
20 attitude toward the independence that
21 kept our park a little more independent
22 from the total kingship of a Mayor and
23 Councilman.

24 I heard him complain about the
25 commission seemed to do things that he

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2 thinks are little details, but those are
3 the business of the commission as a legal
4 body of record.

5 When I monitor the commission
6 meetings, I find that it has full
7 attendance and a willingness to serve our
8 public needs. However, when I monitor
9 City Council meetings, I find empty
10 seats, inattention, private
11 conversations, and much more drivel.

12 My councilman explained his
13 hostility came from his experience when
14 he was appointed to serve a term on the
15 Fairmount Park's Citizens Advisory
16 Council and that he was frustrated with
17 dealing with the Fairmount Park
18 Commission. Instead of appreciating his
19 experience as an understanding and
20 growth, he has turned it into a grudge.

21 I do want to note that his
22 service on the Citizens Advisory Council
23 was improper because he was a political
24 aide, a paid City employee, and not a
25 true citizen volunteer or a park

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2 advocate. I think he humbled himself to
3 be considered equal as a citizen, and now
4 he wants to show his superiority against
5 the commissioners.

6 While my councilman has a
7 chance to explain his anger against the
8 commissioners, he mentions power and
9 petty gripes and not substantial matters.

10 I never heard him once attempt
11 to fix the huge underfunding causes. My
12 councilman has not explained his contempt
13 of the commissioners that he wants to
14 kill off.

15 Does he have a problem with
16 President Nix? I do, because President
17 Nix wants to give the Mayor everything he
18 wants.

19 Does he have a problem with
20 Commissioner Carter? I do, because he
21 was a blatant political appointment by
22 Governor Rendell, and my councilman kept
23 silent with his agreement.

24 Does he have a problem with
25 Commissioner Mason? I do not, because

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2 she is the only person to speak freely
3 and upsets the Mayor's hidden agendas.

4 I recall when candidate
5 Blondell campaigned that she wanted to
6 fix Fairmount Park, restore the park
7 rangers, and work for full funding. I
8 think we were bamboozled; she did nothing
9 of the sort.

10 Let's stop this political
11 trickery, let's give us full funding for
12 our commissioners so they can fulfill
13 their commission. It's time to stop this
14 poisonous attitude and give commissioners
15 freedom to do their work without more
16 aggravation.

17 I think this motion should be
18 withdrawn.

19 Thank you.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
21 you very much.

22 Councilman Goode, is your light
23 on? Councilman Goode and then Councilman
24 Clarke.

25 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you,

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2 Madam Chair.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:

4 Certainly.

5 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good
6 morning, sir, and thank you for your
7 testimony.

8 And while I was entertained by
9 it, I have the same question I had for
10 the previous witness. The question is:
11 How is this proposed new process any more
12 political than the current process?

13 MR. MAUER: This new proposal
14 will make it worse.

15 COUNCILMAN GOODE: How is it
16 more political?

17 MR. MAUER: Because the way
18 it's presented right now, you know who
19 the commissioners are, how it's
20 appointed, but once you take away the
21 present structure, you make it to a
22 secret process, where the politicians
23 have more control, and inside, only their
24 friends will be appointed to these
25 things.

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2 COUNCILMAN GOODE: It is a
3 secret process now, so my question is --

4 MR. MAUER: It is a
5 partial-secret process.

6 COUNCILMAN GOODE: It's a
7 secret process and it is a political
8 process now.

9 MR. MAUER: Yes, it is, and
10 it --

11 COUNCILMAN GOODE: My question
12 is: How is the proposed new process any
13 more political than the current process?
14 That's my question.

15 MR. MAUER: Because, as I said
16 and I'll repeat it, we do know how the
17 commission has worked with 140 years with
18 their law. We know how to deal with
19 those laws.

20 And the commissioners are very
21 subordinate to the Mayor already because
22 when they made the Charter, they created
23 a strong mayor policy, so the Mayor has
24 extreme power now.

25 The problem is that he has

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2 almost total power, and the only
3 independence is a little independence of
4 the commissioners because they're not
5 under his thumb directly.

6 If you put the new process in
7 place, what they are proposing is that
8 there will be other avenues of control
9 and not a real change in politics.

10 When the Charter Committee --
11 Charter Committee, in 1951, went through
12 this, that was their blue-ribbon
13 committee, I think they did a good job,
14 and they couldn't find a better solution.

15 So what they did, instead of
16 amending the commissioners, they added
17 seats, added five seats to the
18 commissioners. And they were City
19 employees; they were the Water
20 Commissioner and the Recreation
21 Commissioner, who was just being created.
22 We didn't have a recreation commissioner
23 because Fairmount Park was the only
24 recreation until the new Charter.

25 So we created a new

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2 commissioner of --

3 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Sir, sir.

4 MR. MAUER: -- recreation who
5 has responsibility.

6 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Sir.

7 MR. MAUER: So you have this
8 integrated system.

9 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Sir, I had
10 one simple question. It's: How is this
11 process more political than the previous
12 process?

13 MR. MAUER: It is more
14 political because you have lost your
15 obvious things. We have an open forum in
16 the commissioners, and this is going to
17 return to the point where only deputies
18 will run the commission. You will have
19 trustees who are not commissioners.

20 Right, now all of these
21 commissioners are responsible under the
22 Sunshine Act to do honest duty in the
23 public. Once you remove this, these
24 commissioners from that role, they can no
25 longer function there. It will be a

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2 strict interioral [sic] departmental
3 structure.

4 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Sir, I thank
5 you for your testimony. I have no idea
6 how you answered my question.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. MAUER: I think it's a
9 difficult question because they politics
10 are what you --

11 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Obviously.
12 Thank you.

13 MR. MAUER: We created a
14 political structure called a city and a
15 government. So it doesn't depoliticize
16 it, but it does remove the elements of
17 absolute control.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
19 Councilman Clarke.

20 Mr. Mauer, would you remain for
21 Councilman Clarke.

22 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you,
23 Madam Chair.

24 I just wanted to thank
25 Mr. Mauer for his testimony and thank him

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2 for his ringing support for me as a
3 councilperson.

4 (Laughter.)

5 MR. MAUER: I did vote for you.

6 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I
7 appreciate it so much.

8 (Laughter.)

9 MR. MAUER: It wasn't about
10 that. I think, in some areas, you do a
11 commendable job, but not in all areas,
12 and I think, in other areas, you need a
13 little more refreshment in what our parks
14 are about.

15 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I look
16 forward to continuing to having the
17 discussion. Thank you very much for your
18 testimony.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you.

21 Any other comments or
22 questions?

23 Councilwoman Reynolds-Brown.

24 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:
25 Thank you.

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2 Mr. Mauer --

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:

4 Mr. Mauer, one more colleague would like
5 to make remarks.

6 (Witness returns to witness
7 table.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:

9 Councilwoman?

10 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:

11 Have you had an opportunity to review the
12 strategic plan?

13 MR. MAUER: Yes, I have.

14 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:

15 What parts, components in the strategic
16 plan do you agree with?

17 MR. MAUER: The conclusions.

18 Let me tell you, there are two strategic
19 plans, and I don't know if you're
20 familiar with the --

21 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:

22 Let me be clear about which strategic
23 plan I'm referring to. I'm referring to
24 the most current strategic plan, not the
25 one of 1983, that was cosponsored or

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2 co-funded by the City of Philadelphia and
3 the William Penn Foundation a little over
4 a year ago.

5 MR. MAUER: I'm referring to
6 the second one, the one created by Mayor
7 Rendell. When he was mayor, he created a
8 new strategic plan which suggested that
9 they should become a little more
10 entrepreneurial in their activities.

11 In that strategic plan, they
12 did not request any changes in the
13 structure; they only made suggestions on
14 how they could improve the financial
15 structure.

16 That City planning was never
17 implemented effectively because it was
18 not funded -- like the master plan in
19 1983, it was not funded, and they were
20 not given an opportunity to do it.

21 Now, what happened is, some
22 groups felt that the -- they were so
23 frustrated with the situation in
24 Fairmount Park that they had to go
25 outside and hire a \$600,000 consultant to

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2 do a study, which then came back with
3 recommendations, which said -- basically
4 repeated all of the things we have done
5 over the past 30 years and just come up
6 with another conclusion that came out
7 with three conclusions.

8 One conclusion was to do
9 nothing. So I think in essence, the
10 strategic plan was a very wasteful
11 practice, and all the things you can take
12 out of there is more evidence and more
13 utility.

14 I think any time somebody does
15 a study, you should take note of it and
16 try to utilize it to its best knowledge,
17 but the strategic plan was a wasteful --
18 two-year waste of time, and our
19 commissioners could have had more
20 opportunity if they were just able to sit
21 down among themselves and if they weren't
22 always being has would by consultants and
23 studies.

24 If they had a chance to sit
25 down and work among themselves, which

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2 they would like to do, I think we would
3 have had a better commission --
4 commissioners. But if you don't give
5 them that opportunity, they have no
6 ability.

7 If you keep saying to them
8 we're going to get rid of you because
9 that's our private call, then our
10 commissioners have no capability to do
11 anything except defend themselves, and I
12 think you made a burden for them that you
13 should remove.

14 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:
15 My response is two things.

16 One, I was not here during the
17 Rendell years, so I will not speak of
18 anything about that which I know nothing
19 about.

20 And, secondly, the strategic
21 plan released June '04 was the
22 recommendation that came out of hearings,
23 which took place October '01.

24 Thank you for testimony.

25 Thank you, Madam Chair.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank

3 you.

4 Any other questions or comments

5 for Mr. Mauer?

6 (No further questions or

7 comments for Mr. Mauer.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank

9 you very much.

10 Is there anyone else here to

11 testify?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Seeing

14 none, then that will end our hearing, and

15 we will enter into our stated meeting.

16 * * *

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1 6/14/06 - COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - PUBLIC MEETING

2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Does
3 everyone have copies of the proposed
4 amendments to Bill No.'s 060474 and
5 060485?

6 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: A brief
7 statement, I just wanted to make one
8 brief statement.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
10 Councilman Clarke?

11 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Yeah, thank
12 you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
14 Certainly.

15 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Madam
16 Chair, real briefly, before we vote on
17 the amendment.

18 During the course of the
19 discussion, this is one of the issues as
20 it relates to the proposed legislation
21 that there was pretty much a consensus on
22 in terms of the nominating panel.

23 One of the things that the
24 advocate groups and the task force wanted
25 to do was to clearly define the

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2 categories of interest that individuals
3 would be selected from.

4 In this particular proposal, it
5 calls for -- it is consistent with the
6 current Charter as it relates to boards
7 and commissions where up to three members
8 per seat would be selected by the Mayor
9 as nominees.

10 Those individuals will be a
11 part of a process that looks at the
12 commissioners or board of trustees,
13 whatever we ultimately end up calling
14 them, will be a part of the process that
15 selects the commissioners up to three per
16 seat, that then will be forwarded to us
17 by the Mayor for a public hearing, a
18 fully transparent process.

19 Then the City Council of
20 Philadelphia will have to authorize the
21 selection of those members, as we do all
22 other boards and commissions.

23 So this is one of the things
24 that we had a clear consensus on.

25 This amendment simply changes

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2 the process as it relates to what was
3 originally proposed, where the Council
4 and the Mayor selected the nominating
5 panel.

6 This process creates a group --
7 a category of individuals where the Mayor
8 will select those individuals from, and
9 that's something that the park advocates
10 were interested in having.

11 I personally don't have a
12 problem with it, as long as we can make
13 sure to get the appropriate people on
14 that nominating panel.

15 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS-BROWN:
16 Madam Chair, I would only add to
17 Councilman Clarke's comments that the
18 groups also need to include neighborhood
19 park organizations that are actively
20 having a voice in the future for
21 Philadelphia Fairmount Park.

22 Thank you, Madam Chair.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna:
24 Councilman Clarke?

25 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you,

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2 Madam Chair. One last thing.

3 Madam Chair, it was also agreed
4 upon that we request a recess until
5 September 14th, the morning of September
6 14th, understanding that that will be a
7 busy day.

8 All of the interested parties
9 has indicated that throughout the course
10 of the summer, we hopefully will iron out
11 whatever differences may remain. And
12 frankly, I don't see a whole lot. So we
13 will, hopefully, over the next three
14 months, be in a position to secure any
15 finally amendments.

16 But I think we are working well
17 together. We're on the track to pretty
18 much have this resolved, particularly
19 some of the funding issues. While it may
20 not be in this particular bill, we have
21 agreed to come up with a process that
22 addresses some of the other issues that
23 have been referenced in the strategic
24 plan, and if it calls for the
25 introduction of some additional

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2 legislation, when we come back in the
3 fall, we will be fully prepared to do
4 that.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: But
6 you still are prepared for the amendments
7 today?

8 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Yes. We
9 would like to ask for the approval of
10 this amendment to amend the bill to
11 reflect what we agree on as it relates to
12 the nominating panel, with the
13 understanding that over the next three
14 months, we'll be working on some of the
15 outstanding issues and hopefully be
16 prepared when we come back in September
17 to offer whatever amendments we come up
18 with as a result of that.

19 And during the course of the
20 summer, we would like to sit down with
21 Councilmembers to make sure that they're
22 comfortable with whatever the amendments
23 are.

24 And, as promised to the Council
25 President, we hopefully will not have a

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2 lengthy hearing the first day back, the
3 morning before the Council session.

4 (Motion seconded.)

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: It
6 has been moved and seconded that the
7 amendment to Bill No. 060474 be adopted.

8 All in favor will please say
9 aye.

10 Those opposed?

11 The ayes have it, and the
12 motion carries.

13 The Chair recognizes Councilman
14 Clarke regarding Resolution No. 060485.

15 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: I'm sorry
16 060485?

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank
18 you.

19 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you,
20 Madam President.

21 Madam President, I move for the
22 approval of the amendment to the
23 Resolution 060485.

24 (Motion seconded.)

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: It

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2 has been moved and seconded that the
3 amendment be adopted.

4 All in favor will please
5 indicate by saying aye.

6 Those opposed?

7 The ayes have it, and the
8 motion carries.

9 That concludes our hearing for
10 today, and it will be continued until
11 Thursday, September the 14th, at 9 a.m.

12 Thank you all very much very
13 much.

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I HEREBY CERTIFY that the proceedings,
evidence, and objections are contained fully and
accurately in the stenographic notes taken by me
upon the foregoing matter on Wednesday, June 14,
2006, and that this is a true and correct
statement of same.

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JOSEPHINE CARDILLO

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RPR-Notary Public

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