

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON PARKS, RECREATION,
AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Thursday, November 21, 2013
3:15 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ

BILL 130008 - An ordinance naming and designating the Department of Parks and Recreation owned playground on the 2300 of N. 5th Street as the "Rainbow De Colores Playground."

BILL 130660 - An ordinance authorizing the Parks and Recreation Commissioner on behalf of the City of Philadelphia to execute a Maintenance Agreement with the Township of Lower Merion under which the City will assist the Township in maintaining certain elements of the recreational trail crossing Manayunk Bridge...

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COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good

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afternoon. This hearing is called to

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order. This is a public hearing of the

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City Council Committee on Parks,

6

Recreation, and Cultural Affairs. The

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purpose of this public hearing is to hear

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testimony on Bill No. 130008 and Bill No.

9

130660.

10

I want to recognize the

11

presence of a quorum of Committee

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members, and in attendance we have

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Majority Leader Councilman Curtis Jones,

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Jr., Councilman David Oh, and Councilman

15

Bobby Henon.

16

And I do want to ask Councilman

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Jones, who is the Vice Chair of this

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Committee, if he had any opening comments

19

or statements before we call the panel

20

forward.

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COUNCILMAN JONES: I'm just --

22

thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for

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the opportunity to say a few words,

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because I know you run a strict meeting,

25

but I want to thank openly and publicly

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.
2 particularly Kay Sykora, who has worked
3 very hard. It started with the Nutter
4 Administration and the relationship with
5 the townships opening up channels of
6 communication and dealing with shared
7 assets such as bridges and parks and
8 trails. And she's done such a wonderful
9 job working to garner money to create
10 connectivity, walkability in the area.
11 I'm just thankful to have the opportunity
12 to represent her in the 4th Councilmanic
13 District.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
15 Councilman.

16 And we will now have the Clerk
17 read the title of Bill No. 130008.

18 THE CLERK: Bill No. 130008, an
19 ordinance naming and designating the
20 Department of Parks and Recreation owned
21 playground on the 2300 block of North 5th
22 Street as the "Rainbow De Colores
23 Playground."

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And if we
25 could have the first panel come forward,

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.
2 and that would be -- Panel No. 1 would be
3 Stephanie Craighead, Director of
4 Planning, Preservation, and Property
5 Management with the City of Philadelphia,
6 Department of Parks and Recreation, and
7 Priscilla Preston, a member of the
8 Friends of Rainbow De Colores Park.

9 (Witnesses approached witness
10 table.)

11 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And good
12 afternoon. Please state your name for
13 the record and begin your testimony.

14 MS. CRAIGHEAD: Good afternoon.
15 My name is Stephanie Craighead. I'm the
16 Director of Planning, Preservation, and
17 Property Management for Philadelphia
18 Parks and Recreation. Good afternoon,
19 Councilwoman Bass and members of the
20 Committee.

21 I appear before you today to
22 present testimony in support of Bill No.
23 130008 naming and designating the
24 Philadelphia Department of Parks and
25 Recreation playground on the 2300 block

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.
2 of North 5th Street as the "Rainbow De
3 Colores Playground." I would like to
4 thank Councilwoman Sanchez and her staff
5 and the community for working to help
6 make this playground a safe, clean place
7 for children and families to enjoy.

8 Thank you for the opportunity
9 to discuss this matter.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

11 Well, thank you. That was quick.

12 Are there any questions for
13 this witness?

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

16 Anyone else to testify on this bill?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Seeing no
19 one, that concludes testimony on Bill No.
20 130008. That's quick. And we'll now
21 have the Clerk read the title of Bill No.
22 130660.

23 THE CLERK: Bill No. 130660, an
24 ordinance authorizing the Parks and
25 Recreation Commissioner on behalf of the

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.
2 City of Philadelphia to execute a
3 Maintenance Agreement with the Township
4 of Lower Merion under which the City will
5 assist the Township in maintaining
6 certain elements of the recreational
7 trail crossing Manayunk Bridge, all under
8 certain terms and conditions.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And we're
10 going to have our next panel come forward
11 to testify, which is again Stephanie
12 Craighead and also Kay Sykora, Director
13 of the Schuylkill Project.

14 (Witnesses approached witness
15 table.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And please
17 state your name for the record and begin
18 your testimony, either one, whoever wants
19 to go first.

20 MS. CRAIGHEAD: Stephanie
21 Craighead. I appear before you today to
22 present testimony in support of Bill No.
23 130660 authorizing the Commissioner of
24 Public Property to enter into a long-term
25 Maintenance Agreement with Lower Merion

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.
2 Township whereby the City will assist the
3 Township in maintaining a recreational
4 trail crossing Manayunk Bridge.

5 This trail connects Lower
6 Merion Township's Cynwyd Trail to
7 Philadelphia's proposed Ivy Ridge Trail
8 and runs to the Ivy Ridge Train Station.
9 At the Ivy Ridge Station, it will connect
10 to a share of the road bike lane on
11 Umbria Street, which provides access to
12 Manayunk, the Shawmont Trail, and the
13 City's bicycle network, supporting the
14 creation of a network of contiguous
15 recreational trails throughout the City
16 of Philadelphia and surrounding counties
17 and enhancing the intrinsic value of the
18 City and benefiting the people living in
19 the City. As this is a long-term
20 agreement requiring the expenditure of
21 City services, it requires the City
22 Council approval.

23 The Department of Parks and
24 Recreation and Lower Merion Township's
25 Parks Department will use existing

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.
2 resources to help maintain this bridge
3 trail. Funding has been secured for
4 design and construction of the trail, and
5 the Township and the City are working in
6 conjunction to advertise and bid this
7 project this winter. Philadelphia Parks
8 and Recreation and Lower Merion Township
9 will maintain these assets once
10 construction is completed. This will
11 help meet several criteria of Greenworks,
12 Green 2015, and Philadelphia 2035,
13 including connecting neighborhoods to
14 parks, trails, and open space.

15 Therefore, I appear before you
16 today to pledge the support of the
17 Department of Parks and Recreation for
18 this legislation and respectfully ask
19 that City Council approve Bill No.
20 130660. In addition, I ask that the
21 rules be suspended so that this ordinance
22 may be passed upon the second reading at
23 Council.

24 Thank you very much.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.

2 very much for your testimony.

3 And do you want to state your
4 name and begin for the record -- state
5 your name for the record and begin.

6 MS. SYKORA: My name is Kay
7 Sykora. I'm with the Schuylkill Project
8 and Manayunk Development Corporation, and
9 I'd like to thank Councilwoman Bass and
10 the Committee for hearing this testimony
11 for 130660.

12 I want to just speak and say we
13 support this totally as both residents
14 and as the business community in
15 Manayunk, and I also want to underscore
16 what a wonderful process this has been,
17 because it has involved our neighbors in
18 Lower Merion that's working with us,
19 along with many of the non-profits that
20 are involved in bikes and trails and, of
21 course, Parks. And so it's been truly a
22 really coming together of people who have
23 been interested in seeing these trails
24 complete.

25 I think Stephanie's pretty much

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.
2 covered the benefits of this project, and
3 so I would just encourage people to make
4 this happen.

5 So thank you, and thank you for
6 the kind comments earlier.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Well, thank
8 you for your testimony. And I do want to
9 add that it's always great to see this
10 sort of cooperation between Philadelphia
11 and its surrounding neighbors to make
12 things like this happen. These aren't --
13 as I see it, these trails and areas are
14 not optional. These are amenities that
15 our communities deserve, and they
16 shouldn't just stop when you reach a
17 county line. In a lot of places you
18 can't even tell exactly where the county
19 line is, but the idea that we can have
20 particularly here in Philadelphia, we can
21 have these as amenities, it's really a
22 wonderful and very valuable thing for our
23 city.

24 So thank you so much for all
25 the work that you've done on this.

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.

2 I do want to recognize Majority
3 Leader Councilman Curtis Jones.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes. My
5 only comment is to make sure that the
6 Chairwoman and members of this committee,
7 whenever we do the official township
8 ribbon-cutting meeting them halfway,
9 invite them, because it is one of the
10 most breathtaking views in my district.
11 And you can oversee the canal, you can
12 oversee major parts of the City. When I
13 tell you it's breathtaking, it is.

14 We want to thank you for the
15 connectivity and all the work you're
16 doing.

17 MS. SYKORA: Thank you.

18 MS. CRAIGHEAD: Thank you.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And I thank
20 you as well. I look forward to that
21 ribbon-cutting. I'm going to be there.

22 I do want to recognize that
23 we've been joined by Councilwoman Maria
24 Quinones-Sanchez, a Committee member.
25 And I know that she wanted to make some

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.
2 comments about the previous bill, 130008.

3 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Yes.

4 Actually, Ms. Priscilla Preston, if she
5 can come forward and testify, I'll let
6 her tell the story. But before she comes
7 forward, this is a beautiful little park
8 that was restored in collaboration with
9 LISC, APM, Marangeli Meja, who is joining
10 her from APM. It was, you know, a
11 combination of a few lots that now host
12 not only a park and a spray area, but
13 some green space, a handball court. And
14 Ms. Priscilla Preston who was here when
15 she was working on the planning, there
16 was a discussion about giving the park a
17 name, and she said, It has a name. I
18 gave it a name. And so today we're here
19 to officially memorialize that. I told
20 her we are going to make sure that
21 history is clear that it was
22 Ms. Priscilla Preston who named this
23 park.

24 So with that, I'll let her
25 testify.

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Wonderful.

3 Will you state your name for
4 the record and begin your testimony.

5 MS. PRESTON: Good afternoon,
6 everyone.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
8 afternoon.

9 MS. PRESTON: My name is
10 Priscilla Preston and I live in North
11 Philadelphia. And in the '70s, I was
12 Vice President of a NAC board and we were
13 allotted money for programs in different
14 activities in our area. At that
15 particular time, we had no area for
16 children between the age of, say, 5 and
17 10. So the City gave us the land and we
18 made a playground for younger children.

19 Well, during the time, the park
20 became deteriorated and it had gone
21 astray, and then later on, say four, five
22 years ago, it was brought to my attention
23 that there was about in the neighborhood
24 something to revitalize the park, which
25 made me very happy since I was an

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.
2 original member that initiated it. So
3 with the help of a lot of people, APM,
4 Maria -- I'm sorry, but I call her
5 Maria -- and Department of Agriculture
6 and other agencies, we got funds and the
7 park was refurbished. Now it is
8 beautiful. I walk past there and I see
9 day care children, and the name of the
10 park is Rainbow De Colores, because it
11 represents the many colors of our
12 community. Our community is made up of a
13 lot of colors. Our Board at that time
14 and that Board was made up of the
15 nationalities of that particular area,
16 and we wanted all the colors of our
17 neighborhood represented. So that's why
18 it's called in English Rainbow and in
19 Spanish De Colores, to represent the
20 mixture of our neighborhood.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Wonderful.
22 Well, thank you so much for that
23 information and for enlightening us. You
24 know, Councilwoman Quinones-Sanchez has
25 been a staunch advocate on behalf of

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.
2 playgrounds and recreational spaces,
3 particularly for our younger constituents
4 here in Philadelphia. It's so very, very
5 important that they have a place to go
6 and to enjoy themselves and that it is a
7 quality facility as well or playground
8 space as well.

9 MS. PRESTON: And now my great
10 grandchildren play in it.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Wonderful.
12 Wonderful.

13 MS. PRESTON: It makes me very
14 proud.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yes.

16 Councilman Henon I want to
17 recognize.

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
19 Madam Chair.

20 Ms. Preston, I just want to
21 commend you on your efforts to get to
22 this point, you know, in naming --

23 MS. PRESTON: I had a lot of
24 help. I didn't do it all by myself now.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Well,

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.

2 listen, I think that's great. You're
3 saying this is a toddler park?

4 MS. PRESTON: It's more for
5 toddlers, say to the age of like 10 maybe
6 and down.

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: And, again,
8 I just want to say congratulations to
9 you, because last year in my district,
10 we, through a whole lot of diligent work
11 with the community, the community built a
12 toddler park, and I think that's what's
13 missing within the City of Philadelphia,
14 a place where younger children can go and
15 they feel safe and they could be looked
16 at and watched after and they can just
17 interact with each other and people from
18 the community, the rainbow community. So
19 I just want to say congratulations to you
20 and great job.

21 MS. PRESTON: Thank you. Thank
22 you very much.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
24 again for your testimony.

25 I did want to add one other

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.
2 thing, that your Councilwoman, along with
3 all of the other members, with the
4 exception of the Councilman at-large, but
5 have made a commitment to ensure that all
6 of our young people are safe, and
7 Councilwoman Quinones-Sanchez was no
8 exception to that and has allocated for
9 cameras for all of the recreation centers
10 in her district. And so there'll be
11 cameras there to make sure that our kids
12 are safe as well. So we want to thank
13 her and really all of the members of the
14 Committee, and thank you all as well for
15 your hard work.

16 MS. PRESTON: Thank you having
17 me.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Absolutely.
19 Is there anyone else to testify
20 on behalf of this bill?

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. That
23 concludes testimony on Bill No. 130660
24 and also the testimony from the previous
25 bill, 130008. And this now concludes the

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.
2 public hearing of the Committee on Parks,
3 Recreation, and Cultural Affairs.

4 We will now go into our public
5 meeting shortly, and the Chair now
6 recognizes Councilmember Jones for a
7 motion on Bill No. 130008.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
9 Madam Chair. We recommend passage of
10 130008 with a favorable recommendation,
11 that the rules of Council be suspended to
12 allow this reading at our next scheduled
13 Council meeting.

14 (Duly seconded.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It has been
16 moved and properly seconded that Bill No.
17 130008 be reported from this committee
18 with a favorable recommendation and
19 further moved that the rules of Council
20 be suspended as to permit first reading
21 at the next scheduled session of City
22 Council.

23 All of those in favor say aye.

24 (Aye.)

25 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Any

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.

2 opposed?

3 (No response.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: The motion
5 carries, and Bill No. 130008 will be
6 reported from this committee with a
7 favorable recommendation with a request
8 that the rules of Council be suspended to
9 permit first reading at the next session
10 of Council.

11 The Chair now recognizes
12 Councilmember Jones for a motion on Bill
13 No. 130660.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
15 again, Madam Chair. I make a motion that
16 Bill No. 130660 be moved from this
17 committee with a favorable recommendation
18 and further that the rules of Council be
19 suspended to allow first reading of this
20 bill at our next scheduled meeting of
21 Council.

22 (Duly seconded.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It has been
24 moved and properly seconded that Bill No.
25 130660 be reported from this committee

1 11/21/13 - PARKS - BILL 130008, etc.
2 with a favorable recommendation and
3 further moved that the rules of Council
4 be suspended as to permit first reading
5 at the next scheduled session of City
6 Council.

7 All of those in favor say aye.
8 (Aye.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Those
10 opposed?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: The bill
13 carries, and Bill No. 130660 will be
14 reported from this committee with a
15 favorable recommendation with a request
16 that the rules of Council be suspended to
17 permit first reading at the next session
18 of Council.

19 With that, the business of this
20 committee is concluded. Thank you very
21 much for attending.

22 (Committee on Parks,
23 Recreation, and Cultural Affairs
24 concluded at 3:35 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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, and that this is a true and
correct transcript of same.

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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A Absolutely 17:18 access 7:11 accurately 21:5 activities 13:14 add 10:9 16:25 addition 8:20 Administration 3:4 advertise 8:6 advocate 14:25 Affairs 1:4 2:6 18:3 20:23 afternoon 2:3 4:12,14,18 13:5 13:8 age 13:16 16:5 agencies 14:6 ago 13:22 agreement 1:19 6:3,25 7:20 Agriculture 14:5 allocated 17:8 allotted 13:13 allow 18:12 19:19 amenities 10:14 10:21 and/or 21:22 APM 12:9,10 14:3 appear 4:21 6:21 8:15 apply 21:20 approached 4:9 6:14 approval 7:22 approve 8:19 area 3:10 12:12 13:14,15 14:15 areas 10:13 assets 3:7 8:9 assist 1:20 6:5 7:2 astray 13:21 attendance 2:12 attending 20:21 attention 13:22 at-large 17:4	authorizing 1:18 5:24 6:23 aye 18:23,24 20:7 20:8 B Bass 1:11 2:2 3:14 3:24 4:11,19 5:10,15,18 6:9 6:16 8:25 9:9 10:7 11:19 13:2 13:7 14:21 15:11,15 16:23 17:18,22 18:15 18:25 19:4,23 20:9,12 beautiful 12:7 14:8 behalf 1:18 5:25 14:25 17:20 benefiting 7:18 benefits 10:2 bicycle 7:13 bid 8:6 bike 7:10 bikes 9:20 bill 1:15,18 2:8,8 3:1,17,18 4:1,22 5:1,16,19,21,23 6:1,22 7:1 8:1 8:19 9:1 10:1 11:1 12:1,2 13:1 14:1 15:1 16:1 17:1,20,23,25 18:1,7,16 19:1,5 19:12,16,20,24 20:1,12,13 block 3:21 4:25 board 13:12 14:13,14 Bobby 1:11 2:15 breathhtaking 11:10,13 bridge 1:21 6:7 7:4 8:2 bridges 3:7 brought 13:22	built 16:11 business 9:14 20:19 C call 2:19 14:4 called 2:3 14:18 cameras 17:9,11 canal 11:11 care 14:9 carries 19:5 20:13 centers 17:9 certain 1:20 6:6,8 CERTIFICATE 21:2 certification 21:19 CERTIFY 21:3 certifying 21:23 Chair 1:11 2:17 2:22 15:19 18:5 18:9 19:11,15 Chairwoman 11:6 channels 3:5 children 5:7 13:16,18 14:9 16:14 CINDY 1:11 city 1:2,7,19,20 2:5 4:5 6:2,4 7:2 7:15,18,19,21 7:21 8:5,19 10:23 11:12 13:17 16:13 18:21 20:5 City's 7:13 clean 5:6 clear 12:21 Clerk 3:16,18 5:21,23 collaboration 12:8 Colores 1:16 3:22 4:8 5:3 14:10,19 colors 14:11,13 14:16	combination 12:11 come 3:25 6:10 12:5 comes 12:6 coming 9:22 commend 15:21 comment 11:5 comments 2:18 10:6 12:2 Commissioner 1:18 5:25 6:23 commitment 17:5 committee 1:3 2:5 2:11,18 4:20 9:10 11:6,24 17:14 18:2,17 19:6,17,25 20:14,20,22 communication 3:6 communities 10:15 community 5:5 9:14 14:12,12 16:11,11,18,18 complete 9:24 completed 8:10 concluded 20:20 20:24 concludes 5:19 17:23,25 conditions 6:8 congratulations 16:8,19 conjunction 8:6 connect 7:9 connecting 8:13 connectivity 3:10 11:15 connects 7:5 constituents 15:3 construction 8:4 8:10 contained 21:5 contiguous 7:14 control 21:22	cooperation 10:10 Corporation 9:8 correct 21:8 Council 1:2 2:5 7:22 8:19,23 18:11,13,19,22 19:8,10,18,21 20:3,6,16,18 Councilman 1:11 1:12,12 2:13,14 2:14,16,21 3:15 11:3,4 15:16,18 15:25 16:7 17:4 18:8 19:14 Councilmanic 3:12 Councilmember 18:6 19:12 Councilwoman 1:11,13 2:2 3:14 3:24 4:11,19 5:4 5:10,15,18 6:9 6:16 8:25 9:9 10:7 11:19,23 12:3 13:2,7 14:21,24 15:11 15:15 16:23 17:2,7,18,22 18:15,25 19:4 19:23 20:9,12 counties 7:16 county 10:17,18 course 9:21 court 12:13 covered 10:2 Craighead 4:3,14 4:15 6:12,20,21 11:18 create 3:9 creation 7:14 criteria 8:11 crossing 1:21 6:7 7:4 Cultural 1:4 2:6 18:3 20:23 Curtis 1:12 2:13
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