

Committee on Public Property and Public Works
June 24, 2020

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PROPERTY AND PUBLIC WORKS

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Wednesday, June 24, 2020
9:30 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH

BILLS: 200188, 200345, 200354

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2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Well, good
3 morning, members of the Committee of
4 Public Property and Public Works. Good
5 morning to those who are here to
6 testify and good morning to the public
7 who are joining us here on Channel 64.

8 I understand that the state
9 law currently requires that the
10 following announcement be made at the
11 beginning of every remote public
12 hearing as follows: Due to the current
13 public health emergency, City Council
14 Committees are currently meeting
15 remotely. We are using Microsoft Teams
16 to make these remote hearings possible.
17 Instructions for how the public may
18 view and offer public testimony at
19 public hearings of Council Committees
20 are included in the public hearing
21 notices that are published in the Daily
22 News, the Inquirer and the Legal
23 Intelligencer prior to the hearings and
24 can also be found on phlcouncil.com.

25 I now note that the hour has

1 come. Ms. Atwell, will you please take
2 the roll call and the attendance of
3 members in today's hearing, and
4 indicate if you can, Members, that you
5 are present when your name is called
6 and also say a few brief words when
7 responding to that. Your image will
8 display on screen when you speak.

9 Ms. Atwell.

10 THE CLERK: Councilmember
11 Gauthier.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good
13 morning. Good morning, Ms. Atwell.
14 Good morning, Mr. Chair. Good morning,
15 everybody. Happy to be here today.

16 THE CLERK: Councilmember
17 Gym.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Good
19 morning, Committee Chairman. Good
20 morning, colleagues. I am present.

21 THE CLERK: Council Oh.

22 COUNCILMAN OH: Good morning,
23 Chairman. Good morning, colleagues.

24 THE CLERK: Councilmember
25 Domb.

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1 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Good
2 morning, Chairman Henon and colleagues.

3 THE CLERK: Councilmember
4 Jones.

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
6 morning, Mr. Chairman. Technical staff
7 and viewing audience, good morning.

8 THE CLERK: Councilmember
9 Squilla.

10 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Good
11 morning, Chairman and colleagues.
12 Present.

13 THE CLERK: And,
14 Councilmember Henon.

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: Councilman
16 Henon is present for the record. I
17 want to thank you, Ms. Atwell. A
18 quorum of this Committee is present at
19 this hearing and the hearing is now
20 called to order.

21 This is the public hearing of
22 the Committee of Public Property and
23 Public Works regarding Bill Nos.
24 200188, 200345 and 200354.

25 Ms. Atwell, would you please

1 read the titles of the bills?

2 THE CLERK: Bill No. 200188,
3 an ordinance authorizing the
4 Commissioner of Public Property, on
5 behalf of the City of Philadelphia, to
6 acquire fee simple title or a lesser
7 real estate interest to all or a
8 portion of a parcel or parcels of land
9 located in the vicinity of Calera Road
10 between Red Lion Road and Chalfont
11 Drive, commonly known as the Liberty
12 Bell Youth Organization Recreation
13 Center.

14 And Bill No. 200345, an
15 ordinance authorizing the Commissioner
16 of Public Property on behalf of the
17 City to acquire fee simple title or a
18 lesser interest in real estate by
19 purchase, dedication, donation,
20 condemnation, agreement in lieu of
21 condemnation, or otherwise, in parcels
22 of land along the Delaware River and in
23 the bed of the former Kensington &
24 Tacony Railroad, under certain terms
25 and conditions.

1 And Bill No. 200354, an
2 ordinance authorizing the Commissioner
3 of Public Property on behalf of the
4 City of Philadelphia to enter into an
5 amendment to a Joint-use Agreement with
6 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
7 pursuant to which certain parcels of
8 real estate constituting the I-95
9 right-of-way, located beneath the
10 elevated highway between the Benjamin
11 Franklin Bridge and the Walt Whitman
12 Bridge, are leased to the City of the
13 Philadelphia by the Commonwealth,
14 subleased by the Interstate Land
15 Management Corporation; all under
16 certain terms and conditions.

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
18 Ms. Atwell.

19 Before we begin to hear
20 testimony from the witnesses we have
21 here today, everyone who has been
22 invited to this meeting to testify
23 should be aware that this is a public
24 hearing -- well, that this public
25 hearing is being recorded. And because

1 the hearing is public, participants and
2 viewers have no reasonable expectation
3 of privacy. By continuing to be in
4 this meeting, you are consenting to
5 being recorded.

6 Additionally, prior to
7 recognizing members for questions or
8 comments they have for witnesses, I
9 will also note for the record at this
10 time that we will be using the chat
11 feature that is available on the
12 Microsoft Teams which will allow
13 members to signify that they wish to be
14 recognized. In order to comply with
15 the Sunshine Act, I think it can only
16 be used for this purpose and this
17 purpose only.

18 Ms. Atwell, would you please
19 call the first panel or witness to
20 testify here this morning.

21 THE CLERK: Aparna Palantino.

22 COUNCILMAN HENON: Good
23 morning, Ms. Palantino. You are
24 connected, ready to proceed. Please
25 state your name for the record and you

1 may proceed with your testimony and
2 thank you for being here.

3 MS. PALANTINO: Thank you,
4 Chairperson Henon and members of the
5 Committee on Public Property and Public
6 Works. My name is Aparna Palantino and
7 I serve as the Deputy Commissioner for
8 Capital Infrastructure and Land
9 Management for the Department of Parks
10 & Recreation. I'm here today to
11 testify in support of Bill No. 200188,
12 an ordinance authorizing the
13 Commissioner of Public Property on
14 behalf of the City of Philadelphia to
15 acquire fee simple title or a lesser
16 real estate interest to all or a
17 portion of a parcel or parcels of land
18 located in the vicinity of Calera Road
19 between Red Lion Road and Chalfont
20 Drive, commonly known as the Liberty
21 Bell Youth Recreation Center.

22 This ordinance will allow the
23 City of Philadelphia to acquire for a
24 nominal fee the premises known as the
25 Patrick McDonald Memorial Gym, also

1 known as Liberty Bell Youth
2 Organization Rec Center. The facility
3 is immediately adjacent to Picariello
4 Playground, and Parks & Recreation will
5 be able to utilize the gym for
6 programming and other sports
7 activities. Councilman O'Neill, in
8 whose District the gymnasium is
9 located, is supportive of this
10 transfer.

11 The Department of Parks & Rec
12 supports this measure and accordingly,
13 I respectfully request that City
14 Council approve Bill No. 200188. I'm
15 also requesting a suspension of the
16 rules as to allow for first reading at
17 the next session of Council. Thank
18 you. I will be happy to answer any
19 questions you might have at this time.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
21 for your testimony. And I'm going to
22 ask any members of the Committee if
23 they have any questions.

24 (No response.)

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: I don't

1 see any. Is there anyone else here
2 from the Administration that wishes to
3 testify on this bill?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: I'm not
6 seeing any. Ms. Atwell, can you please
7 call our next witness and panel for our
8 next bill, please.

9 THE CLERK: Sure. It's going
10 to be Rob Armstrong.

11 COUNCILMAN HENON: Good
12 morning, Rob. Thank you for joining us
13 here today. You are connected and
14 ready to proceed at your convenience.
15 Please state your name for the record
16 and then proceed with your testimony.

17 MR. ARMSTRONG: My name is
18 Rob Armstrong. Good morning,
19 Chairperson Henon and members of the
20 Committee on Public Property and Public
21 Works. My name is Rob Armstrong. I'm
22 the Trails & Transportation Program
23 Manager for the Office of
24 Transportation, Infrastructure and
25 Sustainability, OTIS. I'm here today

1 to testify in support of Bill No.
2 200345, an ordinance authorizing the
3 Commissioner of Public Property on
4 behalf of the City to acquire fee
5 simple title or a lesser interest in
6 real estate by purchase, dedication,
7 donation, condemnation, agreement in
8 lieu of condemnation, or otherwise, in
9 parcels of land along the Delaware
10 River and in the bed of the former
11 Kensington & Tacony Railroad, under
12 certain terms and conditions.

13 This bill allows the City of
14 Philadelphia to acquire right-of-way
15 along the former K&T Railroad and along
16 the Delaware River for an expansion
17 recreational parkland existing
18 primarily of proposed K&T Trail, multi-
19 use recreational trail and associated
20 amenities. On completion of
21 construction, the right-of-way will be
22 operated and maintained by Philadelphia
23 Parks & Recreation along with its
24 nonprofit partner, the Riverfront North
25 Partnership. The proposed right-of-way

1 runs between Old Frankford Creek and
2 Princeton Avenue along the Delaware
3 River, surge to connect the public to
4 two public boat launches, Frankford
5 Boat launch and the Tacony Boat launch
6 as well as Lardner's Point Park
7 abutting the proposed right-of-way.

8 The proposed right-of-way is
9 also part of the larger Regional
10 Circuit Trail System and the National
11 East Coast Greenway. Councilmember
12 Henon, in his district this parcel
13 resides, is in support of this
14 legislation. The Office of
15 Transportation, Infrastructure and
16 Sustainability always supports this
17 measure and accordingly, I respectfully
18 request that City Council approve Bill
19 No. 200345. I'm also requesting a
20 suspension of the rules as to allow for
21 first reading at the next session of
22 Council. Thank you. I will be glad to
23 answer any questions you may have
24 regarding this proposed ordinance.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you

1 for your testimony, Mr. Armstrong.

2 Are there any questions or
3 comments from members of this
4 Committee?

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: I don't
7 see any at this time. Anyone else from
8 the general public have any questions
9 or comments?

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILMAN HENON: I also do
12 not see none. I appreciate and thank
13 you for your testimony today.

14 Ms. Atwell, is there anyone
15 else testifying for our next bill,
16 would you please call their name.

17 THE CLERK: Bridget Collins-
18 Greenwald.

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: Good
20 morning, Commissioner. Thank you for
21 joining us here today and we appreciate
22 you offering testimony. If you are now
23 ready to proceed, we are lined up and
24 teed up for your testimony. Please
25 state your name for the record and you

1 may proceed.

2 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-

3 GREENWALD: Sure. Good morning,
4 Chairman Henon and members of the
5 Committee on Public Property and Public
6 Works. My name is Bridget Collins-
7 Greenwald and I am the Commissioner of
8 the Department of Public Property. I'm
9 here today to testify in support of
10 Bill No. 200354, a bill authorizing the
11 Commissioner of Public Property on
12 behalf of the City of Philadelphia to
13 enter into an amendment to a Joint-Use
14 Agreement with the Commonwealth of
15 Pennsylvania pursuant to which certain
16 parcels of real estate constituting the
17 I-95 right-of-way, located beneath the
18 elevated highway between the Benjamin
19 Franklin Bridge and the Walt Whitman
20 Bridge are leased to the City of
21 Philadelphia by the Commonwealth, and
22 then subleased by the Interstate Land
23 Corporation, all under certain terms
24 and conditions. Hold on. I believe
25 I'm losing my camera here.

1 ILMC is a nonprofit
2 corporation which has the
3 responsibility to maintain the parcels
4 on behalf of this City and market those
5 areas not needed for a free movement of
6 traffic, to generate funds for
7 maintenance of parcels subject to the
8 Joint-Use Agreement, which originally
9 went into effect March 29, 1990.

10 The City desires to extend
11 the terms of the Joint-Use Agreement
12 with the Commonwealth and to continue
13 to sublease the parcels to ILMC. The
14 Department of Public Property supports
15 this measure and accordingly, I
16 respectfully ask that City Council
17 approve Bill No. 200354. I'm
18 requesting the suspension of the rules
19 to allow for the first reading at the
20 next session of Council. Thank you.
21 I'll be happy to answer any questions
22 that you have.

23 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
24 for your testimony, Commissioner.

25 I'm going to ask if there are

1 any questions or comments from members
2 of the Committee. I do not see any --

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

4 Council --

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: Go ahead.

6 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

7 Mr. Chair, this is Mark Squilla.

8 Commissioner, as we put this
9 out there, would you be able then to
10 have leases completed through the
11 summer and --

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: Councilman
13 Squilla, you seem to be breaking up.

14 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay.

15 Let me know if I get any better.

16 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-

17 GREENWALD: I actually heard that if
18 you want me to answer it, Councilman.

19 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Yes.

20 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-

21 GREENWALD: So what we could do is we
22 could have a month-to-month agreement
23 that will go with this that will allow
24 us to negotiate those leases if this
25 bill is pending, knowing that if the

1 bill is passed and we sign the
2 Joint-Use Agreement, then we can
3 finalize the leases after the agreement
4 is signed, but we can work on
5 everything through the summer.

6 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay.
7 Because I knew there were some concerns
8 from ILMC because they wouldn't be able
9 to do those leases. But, yeah, if we
10 can do a month-to-month lease and have
11 that intact so that they can continue
12 to operate until the bill officially
13 passes, I think that would be --

14 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-
15 GREENWALD: Yeah, I think they should
16 be okay on that front.

17 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All
18 right. Thank you very much.

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: Well,
20 thank you, Councilman.

21 Any other members of this
22 Committee or from the general public
23 have any questions on this bill or any
24 comments?

25 (No response.)

1 COUNCILMAN HENON: I do not
2 see any. Commissioner, thank you for
3 your testimony. We appreciate your
4 support and your testimony here this
5 morning. Thank you so much.

6 Being that there are no other
7 questions or comments from members of
8 this Committee, this will conclude our
9 public hearing and we will now go into
10 our public meeting. There being no
11 further questions from members of the
12 Committee and no other witnesses to
13 testify, I'll ask if there's anyone
14 else here present which I've already
15 done in this hearing whose name I have
16 failed to call that wishes to offer any
17 testimony.

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: All right.
20 I want to thank you all and again,
21 thank the panels and witnesses for your
22 participation today as we value your
23 input, especially coming from the
24 Departments and the Administration. So
25 that does conclude our public hearing

1 on Public Property and Public Works.

2 We are now going into our
3 public meeting to consider the actions
4 being taken on the bills before the
5 Committee today.

6 The Chair recognizes
7 Councilmember Squilla on a motion for
8 Bill No. 200188.

9 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
10 you, Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill
11 No. 200188 be reported from this
12 Committee with a -- make a motion to
13 move the bill out of Committee.

14 (Duly seconded.)

15 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: With the
16 rules of Council being suspended at the
17 first reading of this bill at the next
18 session of Council.

19 (Duly seconded.)

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. For
21 the record, it has been seconded by
22 Councilmember Gym. It has been moved
23 and properly seconded that Bill No.
24 200188 be reported from this Committee
25 with a favorable recommendation and

1 further move that the rules of Council
2 be suspended as to permit the first
3 reading of this bill at our next
4 session of Council. All those in favor
5 will motion by signifying by saying
6 aye.

7 (Aye.)

8 COUNCILMAN HENON: Opposed?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: The ayes
11 have it. Motion carries.

12 The Chair now recognizes
13 Councilmember Squilla again for a
14 motion on Bill No. 200345.

15 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
16 you, Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill
17 No. 200345 be reported from this
18 Committee with a favorable
19 recommendation and further move that
20 the rules of Council be suspended as to
21 permit the first reading of this bill
22 at the next session of Council.

23 (Duly seconded.)

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. It
25 has been moved and seconded, I believe,

1 by Councilman Oh; is that correct?

2 COUNCILMAN OH: Yes.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: It has
4 been moved and seconded by Councilman
5 Oh for the record and properly seconded
6 that Bill No. 200345 be reported from
7 this Committee with a favorable
8 recommendation and further move that
9 the rules of Council be suspended to
10 permit the first reading of this bill
11 at our next session of Council. All
12 those in favor of the motion signify by
13 saying.

14 (Aye.)

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: Those
16 opposed?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: The ayes
19 have it. The motion carries.

20 The Chair again recognizes
21 Councilman Squilla for a motion on Bill
22 No. 200354.

23 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
24 you, Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill
25 No. 200354 be reported from this

1 Committee with a favorable
2 recommendation and further move that
3 the rules of Council be suspended as to
4 permit the first reading of this bill
5 at the next session of Council.

6 (Duly seconded.)

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: Do I hear
8 a second? Who for the record is the
9 second?

10 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
11 Councilmember Gym.

12 COUNCILMAN HENON:
13 Councilmember Gym is noted as a second
14 to the motion. It has been moved and
15 properly seconded that Bill No. 200354
16 be reported from this Committee with a
17 favorable recommendation and further
18 move that the rules of Council be
19 suspended as to permit the first
20 reading of this bill at our next
21 session of Council. All those in favor
22 will signify by saying aye.

23 (Aye.)

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: Opposed?

25 (No response.)

1 COUNCILMAN HENON: The ayes
2 have it. The motion is considered at
3 our next session.

4 This will conclude our
5 business before the Committee of Public
6 Property and Public Works here today.
7 I want to thank as always all the
8 members of this Committee, all the tech
9 staff that make these virtual hearings
10 and Council sessions possible. We
11 thank you so much. The public thanks
12 you so much because the City is able to
13 continue on with its business. So I
14 want to thank you all. You have a
15 great, blessed day today and thank you
16 for your attendance. The meeting has
17 concluded.

18 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Bye,
20 everybody.

21 (Committee on Public Property
22 and Public Works adjourned at
23 10:00 a.m.)

24 - - -
25

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, hereby certify that the
proceedings and evidence noted are contained
fully and accurately in the stenographic
notes taken by me in the foregoing matter,
and this is a correct transcript of the
same.

Court Reporter - Notary Public

(The foregoing certification of
this transcript does not apply to any
reproduction of the same by any means,
unless under the direct control and/or
supervision of the certifying reporter.)

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