

FINANCE COMMITTEE
12/7/2022

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Wednesday, December 7, 2022
9:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILWOMAN QUETCY M. LOZADA
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH

BILL: 220938

1 - - -

2 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Today is
3 Wednesday, December 7, 2022. We're on
4 the Committee of Finance. Good
5 morning. Before we get into the
6 public hearing, I will make the
7 following announcements:

8 Due to the continued threat
9 of public health from COVID-19, City
10 Council Committees are currently
11 meeting remotely. We're using
12 Microsoft Teams to make these remote
13 hearings possible. Instructions for
14 how the public may view and offer
15 public testimony of public hearings of
16 Council -- I'm sorry. I had a little
17 technical difficulty.

18 Modesto, can you hear me?

19 COUNCIL SUPPORT: Yes, I can,
20 Mr. Chair.

21 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
22 you.

23 COUNCIL SUPPORT: You're
24 welcome.

25 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Due to

1 the continued threat of public health
2 from COVID-19, City Council Committees
3 are currently meeting remotely. We
4 are using Microsoft Teams to make
5 these remote hearings possible.

6 Instructions for how the
7 public may view and offer public
8 testimony at public hearings of
9 Council Committees are included in the
10 public hearing notices that are
11 published in The Daily News, Inquirer
12 and Legal Intelligencer prior to the
13 hearing and can also be found on
14 PHLCouncil.com. I now note that the
15 hour has come.

16 Mr. McMonagle, will you
17 please call the roll to take
18 attendance. Members that are in
19 attendance will please indicate that
20 you are present when your names are
21 called. Also, please say a few brief
22 words so that your image will appear
23 on the screen.

24 Also for the record,
25 Councilwoman Lozada was also appointed

1 to the Committee of Finance for today.

2 Mr. McMonagle.

3 THE CLERK: Good morning.

4 Councilwoman Bass.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
6 morning, Mr. Chairman and colleagues.

7 I am present.

8 THE CLERK: Councilman Jones.

9 (No response.)

10 THE CLERK: Councilwoman

11 Lozada.

12 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Good
13 morning, Mr. Chairman. Good morning
14 all. Excited to be here --

15 THE CLERK: Councilman Oh --
16 sorry.

17 COUNCILMAN OH: Good morning,
18 Chair. Good morning, colleagues. I
19 also am here. I too am excited to be
20 here.

21 THE CLERK: Councilmember
22 Squilla.

23 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Good
24 morning. Present.

25 THE CLERK: And, Councilman

1 Jones, one more time.

2 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

3 Councilman Jones is trying to log in.

4 He will be on shortly.

5 THE CLERK: You have a

6 quorum, Mr. Chair.

7 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank

8 you. A quorum of the Committee is now

9 present and the hearing is now called

10 to order. This is a public hearing on

11 the Committee of Finance regarding

12 Bill No. 220938.

13 Before we read the title of

14 the bill, we're just going to

15 clarify -- I'll let Mr. McMonagle read

16 the title of the bill and then I'll

17 make a comment before we start to hear

18 it.

19 THE CLERK: Bill No. 220938,

20 authorizing the Director of Commerce

21 and the Director of Finance to enter

22 into amendments to multi-year

23 agreements with the Philadelphia

24 Authority for Industrial Development,

25 PAID, the Philadelphia Redevelopment

1 Authority, formerly known as the
2 Redevelopment Authority of the City of
3 Philadelphia, PRA, and other parties
4 as necessary concerning the parking
5 garage project constructed as part of
6 the overall Market Street East Gallery
7 II Redevelopment Project, including an
8 additional amendment to the agreement
9 between the City and PAID, as amended,
10 originally authorized by Bill No. 546
11 approved June 15, 1993, and further
12 authorizing the Director of Commerce
13 and the Director of Finance, where
14 necessary or prudent, to enter into
15 ancillary agreements with any or all
16 of PAID, PRA, Parametric Garage
17 Associates, a new lender to
18 Parametric, and other parties under
19 certain terms and conditions.

20 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
21 you, Mr. McMonagle.

22 Before we begin hearing
23 testimony from witnesses we have for
24 today, I first want to state that
25 there has been some communication with

1 my office on this legislation, and we
2 will be amending the legislation on
3 the parts of this ordinance that
4 pointed to a possible striking of
5 Filbert Street. That will lead to
6 confusion. This ordinance was part of
7 a current striking or a future
8 striking or something to do with a
9 possible ordinance for a new arena in
10 that area. That language is being
11 stricken from this legislation.

12 And so, the purpose of this
13 legislation is still, as we received
14 this Administration Bill, to just
15 refinance the garage. So just for
16 clarity, we wanted to make that note
17 as we go into the hearing.

18 So everyone who has been
19 invited to the meeting to testify
20 should be aware that this public
21 hearing is being recorded. Because
22 the hearing is public, participants
23 and viewers have no reasonable
24 expectation of privacy. By continuing
25 to be in the meeting, you are

1 consenting to being recorded.

2 Additionally, prior to
3 recognizing Members for the questions
4 and comments they have for witnesses,
5 I will note for the record at this
6 time we will use the chat feature
7 available on Microsoft Teams to allow
8 Members to signify they wish to be
9 recognized. In order to comply with
10 the Sunshine Act, the chat feature
11 must only be used for that purpose.

12 Mr. McMonagle, can you please
13 call the panel we have to testify this
14 morning for the first bill.

15 THE CLERK: I'm sorry about
16 that. Can we please have Jacqueline
17 Dunn.

18 CITY TREASURER DUNN: Good
19 morning.

20 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Good
21 morning. Just state your name for the
22 record and you can proceed with your
23 testimony. Thank you.

24 CITY TREASURER DUNN: Thank
25 you, Chair. Good morning, Chair

1 Squilla and members of the Finance
2 Committee. My name is Jackie Dunn,
3 City Treasurer. And with me are Anne
4 Nadol, Commerce Director and Anne
5 Fadullon, Director of Planning and
6 Development. I'm here today to
7 testify on the amended Bill 220938.

8 This bill authorizes the
9 Director of Commerce and Director of
10 Finance to enter into amended multi-
11 year agreements with the Philadelphia
12 Authority for Industrial Development
13 or PAID, the Philadelphia
14 Redevelopment Authority or PRA,
15 Parametric Garage Associates and
16 Parametric's senior lenders to permit
17 Parametric to privately refinance its
18 senior debt related to the parking
19 garage located within the overall
20 Market Street East Gallery II site.

21 By way of background,
22 Parametric Garage Associates built the
23 garage at 11th and Filbert Streets in
24 1983 adjacent to the Gallery Mall in
25 order to satisfy the lead tenant

1 JC Penney's minimum parking
2 requirement. At the time, the City
3 acted as a surety for bondholders
4 ensuring timely payment of debt
5 service to bondholders with an
6 agreement by Parametric to repay the
7 City any amounts advanced plus
8 interest out of future years'
9 earnings.

10 Through 1997 when the last
11 surety payments were made, the City
12 was owed almost 17 million. By 2012,
13 the City was owed over 50 million,
14 including principal and interest. In
15 2012, Parametric obtained private
16 financing to pay off the remaining
17 bonds, and the transaction was
18 restructured so that the garage could
19 continue to operate. The City could
20 be repaid approximately 13 million of
21 what was owed and the City received
22 operational concessions from
23 Parametric in exchange for the City's
24 agreement to subordinate the balance
25 of its debt to a new senior lender.

1 Currently Parametric Garage
2 has approximately 13.9 million in
3 outstanding senior debt, which is
4 privately held. Additionally, the
5 City is in a subordinate position for
6 two notes: Secured Note A, which is
7 worth approximately \$11.9 million,
8 Unsecured Note B, which is worth
9 approximately \$52 million, including
10 principal and interest.

11 Parametric makes payments
12 toward the outstanding balance of
13 these notes when sufficient net
14 revenues are available. The
15 agreements authorized by the bill in
16 front of the Committee today would
17 permit a new lender to repay
18 Parametric's senior debt, would permit
19 the City's debt to remain in a
20 subordinate position to such a senior
21 lender, would permit the extension of
22 the term of the lease and the City
23 debt by 10 years and would allow the
24 City to make other modifications to
25 the loan documents to secure the

1 City's subordinate debt in order to
2 carry out the transaction that has
3 been requested by Parametric.

4 As Parametric requires the
5 City and the PRA's approval to
6 refinance its private senior debt, the
7 City's debt is in a secondary position
8 to the senior debt and as such, this
9 bill would preserve the value of what
10 is owed to the City for future
11 repayment by Parametric or successor
12 entity or in the event that the garage
13 is ever sold for fair market value.

14 Due to the time-sensitivity
15 surrounding the closing of the
16 refinancing of Parametric senior debt,
17 we are requesting that the rules of
18 Council be suspended to allow for
19 first reading of the ordinance at the
20 next session of Council. This
21 concludes my testimony and I am happy
22 to answer any questions that Council
23 may have.

24 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
25 you so much for your testimony. And

1 just for clarity, to make sure that
2 the amendment that we introduced today
3 does not affect the ability for the
4 refinancing of this garage, correct?

5 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

6 Correct, we support the removal of the
7 entire section too as it is unrelated
8 to this transaction.

9 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay.

10 Thank you so much for that and
11 appreciate that.

12 Are there any other questions
13 from members of the Committee?

14 COUNCILMAN JONES:

15 Mr. Chairman, I just want to be
16 recognized as present.

17 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
18 you, Councilmember Jones. For the
19 record, Councilmember Jones is
20 present.

21 If there's no other questions
22 for this panel, Mr. McMonagle, can you
23 please need the next person to
24 testify.

25 THE CLERK: Good morning,

1 Mr. Chair. Can we please have Robin
2 Hynicka followed up by Jonathan
3 Waldman, if you would please be ready,
4 and Zu Lin.

5 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Robin,
6 if you want to -- sorry about that.
7 Robin, just state your name for the
8 record and you can proceed with your
9 testimony.

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Robin's
12 not available.

13 Mr. McMonagle, can you please
14 call the next to testify.

15 THE CLERK: Jonathan Waldman,
16 please.

17 MR. WALDMAN: Yes. Good
18 morning.

19 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Good
20 morning. Just state your name for the
21 record and you can proceed. Thank
22 you.

23 MR. WALDMAN: Thank you. My
24 name is Jonathan Waldman. I'm a
25 longtime resident of Chinatown and a

1 Co-founder of CCOCA, which is the
2 Concerned Citizens of Chinatown
3 Association. I met my wife in
4 Chinatown 36 years ago, and Chinatown
5 plays a vital role in our lives as
6 well as those of our daughters and
7 other family members.

8 My wife volunteers in the
9 community here. My children practice
10 their Chinese language and culture
11 here. We shop for groceries here that
12 we can't get elsewhere and we visit
13 friends and families' homes,
14 restaurants and shops here for fun and
15 socializing.

16 My wife and children can feel
17 safe and comfortable here, free to
18 speak their language, practice their
19 culture, socialize with others having
20 similar experiences, backgrounds and
21 values. So the Chinese community
22 really means the world to me and this
23 bill, which was rushed through in
24 secrecy without any community heads-
25 up, demonstrates that there's no

1 regard for the voice of the Chinatown
2 community in determining our
3 neighborhood's future.

4 This bill, that Section 2,
5 would have had a major impact on
6 Chinatown and like the arena process,
7 was conducted in secrecy and secret
8 meetings and meetings by invitation-
9 only, meetings with select groups and
10 committees who say they represent
11 Chinatown, but absolutely do not
12 represent Chinatown. No impact
13 studies were done. No environmental,
14 economic or traffic impact studies
15 have been done.

16 Full impact studies must be
17 performed before this bill and future
18 bills like this one are considered.
19 We who live in Chinatown do not want
20 the arena. We're not on the fence
21 about it. We're not neutral to
22 positive about the arena. We're not
23 interested in CBAs or negotiating with
24 the developers.

25 The developers are trying to

1 buy their way into the Chinatown
2 community, and we will not stand for
3 it. We're absolutely opposed to the
4 arena. The developers keep coming
5 into the community trying to gaslight
6 our residents and gaslight
7 Philadelphians in general. We're
8 tired of hearing from the developers
9 and we're tired of seeing them in
10 Chinatown.

11 We don't want the arena under
12 any circumstances, conditions or
13 benefits agreement. We don't need
14 more meetings. We don't want the
15 developers coming back into Chinatown
16 anymore. Please vote against this
17 bill and other bills like it to help
18 prevent the destruction of Chinatown,
19 our homes, businesses, families and
20 culture. Thank you.

21 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
22 you so much for your testimony.

23 Mr. McMonagle, can you read
24 the next person to testify.

25 THE CLERK: Can we please

1 have Xu Lin.

2 (No response.)

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Xu, if
4 you're available, just state your name
5 and then proceed.

6 THE CLERK: Can we please
7 have Ellen Somekawa. I apologize if I
8 pronounced that wrong.

9 MS. SOMEKAWA: Hello. I am
10 Ellen Somekawa. I'm the Executive
11 Director of Folk Arts-Cultural
12 Treasures Charter School. I've worked
13 in Chinatown for 34 years. Chinatown
14 is where my two children went to
15 school, where my son learned to lion
16 dance and still lion dances every New
17 Year.

18 Chinatown is where 26 years
19 ago we started the Mid-Autumn
20 Festival, one day a year when
21 thousands of people claim 10th Street
22 and celebrate our community. Many of
23 us grew up our whole lives being made
24 to feel ashamed of who we are as Asian
25 people. The festival is a way of

1 raising our young people not with a
2 sense of shame, but one of pride.

3 Over 250 youth make the
4 festival happen each year and now
5 generations of young people have come
6 up from being toddlers at the festival
7 to being its organizers. These
8 beloved traditions and institutions
9 that have taken us decades and
10 generations to build are threatened by
11 the whims of billionaire developers
12 who assume they can come into any
13 community and impose their will on us.

14 If you facilitate the
15 destruction of this neighborhood, you
16 must know that it cannot be replaced.
17 Councilman Squilla, you went with us
18 to see the wasteland that is now
19 D.C.'s Chinatown. You would have no
20 excuse. This would be a premeditated
21 crime. I feel betrayed by our City
22 leaders for sneaking the striking of
23 Filbert Street into this unrelated
24 bill rather than standing up with the
25 people of Chinatown to defend our

1 priceless community against these
2 predators.

3 People who are elected to
4 serve us seem to be conspiring with
5 the developers to grease the wheels
6 for the approvals they need. The 76
7 Devcorp developers have been
8 secretive, untrustworthy and
9 underhanded since they first announced
10 their project. It feels as if our
11 City officials are considering doing
12 their bidding in the same secretive,
13 untrustworthy and underhanded manner.
14 I hope you will prove me wrong. Thank
15 you for striking Section 2 of the
16 bill.

17 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
18 you all for your testimony. And just
19 for clarity's sake, there was no --
20 from what I understand, there was no
21 language in this bill that struck any
22 street. From what it seemed to me was
23 that if there was something in the
24 future that would have it, then they
25 would have to work on that at that

1 time.

2 There was no striking being
3 done and there was no arena
4 legislation being introduced in that
5 section, but we did remove that
6 section because of some of the
7 concerns we heard after the bill was
8 introduced, and working with the
9 Administration have agreed to that.
10 So that's just for clarity. Thank you
11 all for your testimony.

12 Mr. McMonagle, please read
13 the next person to testify.

14 THE CLERK: Can we please
15 have Coleen Young.

16 MS. YOUNG: Good morning. My
17 name is Coleen Young. My family has
18 deep roots in Chinatown since the
19 1940s and has remained in Chinatown
20 since, participating in the schools,
21 associations, community, working in
22 restaurants and establishing
23 businesses in Chinatown. My family
24 continues to be active in Chinatown as
25 have I, by volunteering weekly in the

1 community.

2 What I love about Chinatown
3 is that it is a gateway for each new
4 generation of Chinese immigrants that
5 arrive to settle seamlessly into a
6 community that has its culture, food,
7 traditions and language. Chinatown
8 creates opportunities for these
9 non-English-speaking immigrants to be
10 contributors within a thriving vibrant
11 community. It is also a sanctuary for
12 all those outside of Chinatown to
13 convene, socialize and immerse in its
14 local foods, shopping and culture.

15 This bill was introduced for
16 a hearing without the community's
17 knowledge despite promises to
18 proactively engage and communicate
19 with the Chinatown community. This
20 bill appears to be a secretive
21 backdoor deal to facilitate the
22 groundwork for the arena. The arena
23 process has been shady and shrouded in
24 the secrecy behind closed doors
25 talking with the selected few who do

1 not represent the whole community
2 despite the impression of words
3 they've conveyed to the developers.

4 I'm opposed to the arena.

5 The majority of the Chinatown
6 community is unequivocally opposed to
7 the arena. We are not neutral. We
8 are not indecisive. Chinatown
9 residents have resisted this type of
10 development for decades starting with
11 the proposed stadium in 2000, the
12 casino in 2008 and now the arena. We
13 have fought for a right to exist and
14 to be in control of what occurs in our
15 neighborhood. We will not let big
16 developers with self-interest
17 jeopardize Chinatown's historical
18 roots and vibrant community and
19 facilitate its gentrification.

20 Chinatown has flourished and
21 grown on its own for over 150 years.
22 Please vote against this bill so that
23 it does not advance the development of
24 an arena to destroy Chinatown and its
25 surrounding areas. Thank you.

1 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All
2 right. For clarity, again I know
3 everybody's testifying on that. But
4 this does not have anything to do with
5 the arena. We struck any language
6 that may have reflected a possible
7 interest in the future arena there,
8 but we will continue to allow
9 testimony on that, just noting that
10 this does not have a legislation to do
11 with an arena. So thank you.

12 Mr. McMonagle, please read
13 the name of the next person to
14 testify.

15 THE CLERK: Can we please
16 have Amanda Chan.

17 MS. CHAN: Hello. My name is
18 Amanda Chan and I am with VietLead. I
19 am also a resident of the 19107, but I
20 am speaking for my grandfather, his
21 friends and his neighbors, all of whom
22 were Chinatown residents who have been
23 living within a block of 10th and
24 Filbert for the last 65 years.

25 None of us are in support of

1 the new arena. None of us have ever
2 been invited to any conversations or
3 meetings about any redevelopment plans
4 until now. This process has been
5 exclusionary, inaccessible and flat-
6 out shady. So thank you to orgs like
7 API PA and AAU for including us.

8 When my grandpa and his
9 friends get together at the Friends
10 Senior Care Center on 9th and Arch,
11 they talk about their day with a lot
12 of worry and concern. They worry
13 about the grandchildren having to
14 cross streets and the expressway
15 during Center City rush hour in order
16 to get home from school. They call
17 their families to make sure that
18 everyone is home by 6:00 to avoid the
19 loud crowds and drunk groups from the
20 Convention Center in Center City.

21 They worry about their
22 families being able to afford housing
23 next year as gentrification continues
24 to raise rent prices. Every day they
25 have safety concerns like these that

1 exist because of the development that
2 has already happened in and around
3 Chinatown, and we have all had to
4 revolve our lives around it, mentally
5 physically, and emotionally.

6 They all agree that this
7 redevelopment is going to make
8 Chinatown even more unsafe for their
9 families and we all strongly oppose
10 against the arena and against any
11 shady redevelopment bills that are not
12 transparently presented to the
13 community that will be most affected
14 by it.

15 Our grandparents are all
16 working-class elderly folks in their
17 80s who have been in Chinatown and
18 lived in Philly for the majority of
19 their lives. They too are all
20 affected by the noise and crowds and
21 increased COVID risk to their
22 families. But what really keeps them
23 up at night are their concerns for
24 other people and their community,
25 which are concerns that have yet to be

1 shared or expressed by Councilmembers
2 or the corporate billionaire
3 developers like David Adelman.

4 Please make sure that any
5 bills in the future that impact
6 Chinatown residents are first brought
7 to Chinatown residents. Thank you.

8 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
9 you for your testimony.

10 Mr. McMonagle, please read
11 the title for the next speaker.

12 THE CLERK: Ronald Gibboni,
13 please.

14 MR. GIBBONI: Hello. My name
15 is Ronald. I graduated from Temple
16 University. The people of
17 Chinatown --

18 THE CLERK: Can we please
19 have --

20 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Hold on,
21 hold on, Mr. McMonagle. Ronald is
22 speaking.

23 Ronald, you're breaking up a
24 little bit. If you want to just state
25 your name again for the record and

1 then you can proceed.

2 MR. GIBBONI: Sure. My name
3 is Ronald. I'm representing the
4 people of Philadelphia in Chinatown --

5 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Ronald,
6 Ronald. I don't know if you can hear
7 us --

8 MR. GIBBONI: Hello?

9 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Yeah.
10 Please state your last name.

11 MR. GIBBONI: Oh, my last
12 name is Gibboni, G-i-b-b-o-n-i.

13 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
14 you. Please proceed.

15 MR. GIBBONI: Okay. So
16 there's only one Chinatown in
17 Philadelphia and the Friendship Gate,
18 and the surrounding blocks of business
19 are a beautiful part of this town.
20 And this bill is bad because it was
21 underhanded and quietly and quickly
22 done to progress the plans of
23 billionaires and to give Chinatown
24 residents little to no time to react
25 or respond, and the people in

1 Chinatown in Philadelphia don't want
2 this stadium.

3 It's a historically
4 significant neighborhood and the
5 neighborhood also has faced a long
6 history of fighting off billionaires'
7 development like this. And the bill
8 should not be voted for. A stadium is
9 not worth the destruction of a
10 historically significant neighborhood.
11 Thank you.

12 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
13 you. Thank you for your testimony.

14 Mr. McMonagle, please read
15 the next person to testify.

16 THE CLERK: Can we please
17 have Ethan Franz.

18 MR. FRANZ: Hello?

19 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Ethan,
20 please proceed. State your name for
21 the record and proceed with your
22 testimony.

23 MR. FRANZ: Hi. How's it
24 going? My name is Ethan Franz and I'm
25 affiliated with API PA. Yeah, so I

1 just wanted to say that, like, the
2 overall, like, the way this has been
3 done, it's been very -- it feels like
4 there's a blatant disregard for, like,
5 Chinatown residents and their
6 livelihoods and, like, definitely a
7 lack of empathy for Chinatown
8 residents, especially, like, you know,
9 COVID wasn't -- it was only two years
10 ago and people and businesses are
11 still, you know, trying to get past
12 that.

13 And it just feels, like, with
14 everything being done, it shows, like,
15 people of wealth, they have a sense of
16 entitlement and they just feel like
17 they can just toss their money around
18 and then just, you know, for the best.
19 And just wanted to say that, like, the
20 surreptitious nature in which, like,
21 all of these things have been
22 happening, it really just shows that
23 they just don't care about Chinatown
24 residents.

25 And, you know, and doing a

1 lot of canvassing myself for people,
2 and a lot of people do not want the
3 stadium. Just anecdotally speaking,
4 like, the majority of people that I've
5 spoken to are either unaware that it's
6 happening or just outright do not want
7 it. So I just wanted to, yeah,
8 express my disdain for the overall way
9 that this has been done. Thank you.

10 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
11 you for your testimony.

12 Mr. McMonagle, can you please
13 read the name of the next person to
14 testify.

15 THE CLERK: I apologize if I
16 mispronounce this. Hongyu Wei.

17 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Mr. Wei,
18 if you're available, state your name.

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
21 Mr. McMonagle, will you read the next
22 person.

23 THE CLERK: Can we please
24 have Hannah Sassaman.

25 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Hannah,

1 if you'd like to state your name for
2 the record and proceed with your
3 testimony.

4 MS. SASSAMAN: Did you call
5 me?

6 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Hannah?

7 MS. SASSAMAN: This is
8 Hannah. Can you hear me?

9 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Yes,
10 yes. State your name for the record
11 and proceed with your testimony.

12 MS. SASSAMAN: Good morning.
13 My name is Hannah Sassaman and I am
14 the Executive Director of People's
15 Tech Project, and I've worked at 10th
16 and Arch or 10th and Cherry rather
17 since before the pandemic. We've
18 rented an office there.

19 And what I love about
20 Chinatown is that the businesses there
21 are incredibly vibrant. Just there's
22 so much activity on the streets. My
23 children come and visit me, you know,
24 after school and they're big fans of
25 the Tito store, the Sanrio store.

1 I'll eat a KC's Pastries pineapple bun
2 any day of the week. This is a
3 vibrant living neighborhood in the
4 middle of Philadelphia that is
5 absolutely precious.

6 And while I know that you
7 struck the clause that was focusing on
8 starting to pave the way for the
9 arena, it was just completely not
10 above board to be in communication
11 with the businesses, communities,
12 schools and neighborhoods of Chinatown
13 about that work.

14 And so, I'm against any
15 legislation that doesn't have the full
16 and engaged participation of the
17 Chinatown community about development
18 on its borders. And please don't
19 hesitate to contact me with any
20 questions or concerns. Thank you so
21 much.

22 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Hannah,
23 thank you so much for your testimony.

24 Mr. McMonagle, can you please
25 read the next person to testify.

1 THE CLERK: Can we please
2 have Benjamin She.

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Ben,
4 state your name for the record and
5 then proceed with your testimony.

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
8 Mr. McMonagle, can you please read the
9 next person to testify.

10 THE CLERK: How about Debora
11 Kodish.

12 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
13 Ms. Kodish, if you're connected.

14 MS. KODISH: I'm Debora
15 Kodish, Founding Director of the
16 Philadelphia Folklore Project and a
17 Co-founder of the Folk Arts-Cultural
18 Treasures Charter School in Chinatown.
19 There's major decisions to be made
20 about the future of our City. They
21 shouldn't be made by way of lies,
22 subterfuge when no one is looking.

23 The self-planning shows the
24 true character of developers who can't
25 and won't face scrutiny about the real

1 harm that will be done. This bill is
2 originally written totally
3 disrespecting the majority of
4 Chinatown residents who absolutely do
5 not want an arena and a disregard of
6 the wide support Chinatown has among
7 people who love the place.

8 This bill as originally
9 written paved the way for advancing a
10 major disruptive project in the heart
11 of Philadelphia without any serious
12 attention to the harm. Where's the
13 solid unbiased environmental, cultural
14 and economic assessment that shows the
15 true impact of major development on
16 historic and treasured communities. I
17 say no to the bill as originally
18 written and no to an arena that would
19 irreparably damage Chinatown, one of
20 the few remaining vital communities of
21 color in Center City, Philadelphia and
22 one of the few vital Chinatowns on the
23 East Coast, the Philadelphia gem. We
24 should be putting our energies into
25 protecting and preserving Chinatown,

1 not making it easier for billionaires
2 looking to profit. Thank you.

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Again,
4 just for clarity, thank you for your
5 testimony, this bill does not pave a
6 way for an arena and does not allow an
7 arena to be built or even the language
8 that we struck allow that or allowed a
9 striking.

10 Mr. McMonagle, can you please
11 call the name of the next person to
12 testify.

13 THE CLERK: Can we please
14 have Sirun Chan.

15 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Sirun,
16 if you're available, state your name
17 and proceed with your testimony.

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: If
20 you're not connecting, Mr. McMonagle,
21 can you please call the next person to
22 testify.

23 THE CLERK: Let me please
24 have Grace Fan.

25 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Grace,

1 just state your name for the record
2 and then proceed with your testimony.

3 MS. FAN: Hi. Good morning.
4 My name is Grace Fan. I'm the Youth
5 Programs Coordinator at Asian
6 Americans United. I'm calling today
7 like everyone else about Bill No.
8 220938 and though I'm extremely glad
9 the Filbert Street section of this
10 bill was removed as you've been
11 saying, Councilman Squilla, our
12 community will not forget that this
13 bill did nearly help pave the way for
14 the construction of the 76ers arena in
15 Chinatown, making it that much easier
16 for our community to be gentrified out
17 of its home.

18 This is something that we
19 really care about and that's why we're
20 showing up here today. And while the
21 76ers arena has been continually
22 framed as a benefit to the surrounding
23 area by the very people who will make
24 millions off of its development, the
25 people who rely on Chinatown as the

1 very cultural, economic, familial and
2 relational lifeblood of our community
3 know that the 76ers arena will only be
4 a lethal virus affecting our vibrant
5 community until all that's left is a
6 McDonald's next to a Starbucks with a
7 Chinese sign.

8 And I don't want to believe
9 that this is what our Councilmembers
10 want for our Asian immigrant
11 community. As a youth program's
12 coordinator at AAU, I know how much
13 Chinatown means to the Asian American
14 youth in Philadelphia. After hard
15 days at school, years of facing a
16 global pandemic and years of ongoing
17 anti-Asian violence on public transit
18 and in the streets, they need
19 somewhere safe to go with friends, get
20 food that reminds them of the country
21 they grew up in and share their
22 favorite dessert that they can't get
23 anywhere else. And where are young
24 people going to go if the 76ers arena
25 destroys Chinatown?

1 So please we're asking you to
2 help us protect this community that
3 we're putting our lives on pause to
4 protect, and please allow our
5 community to have agency over our
6 future and oppose the arena with us.
7 Thank you.

8 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
9 you so much for your testimony. Also,
10 note for the record I know AAU is
11 having a meeting with the 76ers coming
12 up on the 14th and people that want to
13 talk about that, please attend that
14 meeting with the AAU and the 76ers
15 arena proposal.

16 Again, we're trying to make
17 it clear that this bill is not that.
18 But understanding your concerns and
19 your interest, I appreciate your
20 testimony.

21 Mr. McMonagle, can you please
22 read the next person to testify.

23 THE CLERK: Can we please
24 have Mireya Gutierrez.

25 MS. GUTIERREZ: Hi. My name

1 is Mireya Gutierrez and I am a 12th
2 grader and a youth intern at Asian
3 Americans United. Although the
4 section of Bill No. 220938 mentioning
5 the closing of Filbert Street has been
6 removed, I believe a lot of us have
7 come here today to remind everyone how
8 much we need transparent communication
9 from City Council.

10 As one of the last driving
11 Chinatowns left in the U.S, we are
12 precious and valuable and should be
13 treated that way. I am still a
14 teenager. I've only been to two
15 Mid-Autumn Festivals. I have yet to
16 find the cheapest and best place for
17 fried dumplings. And if this process
18 of ignoring our neighborhood and its
19 leaders continues, I worry that I
20 won't be able to bring my future
21 children here.

22 To deny that closing down
23 Filbert Street between 10th and 11th
24 and Chinatown and building a 76ers in
25 the Fashion District is simply willful

1 ignorance. This whole idea that
2 Chinatown folks don't mind or might
3 not want to be involved is rooted in
4 stereotypical ideas of Asian Americans
5 being labeled as passive and docile.
6 We do not want the arena. Our
7 Chinatown cannot survive yet another
8 giant development right on our
9 streets. We don't want another
10 settlement meeting assuring us that
11 things will be okay when we know for a
12 fact they won't be.

13 Having backdoor meetings and
14 sneaking around us will not work. And
15 for us to have a thriving Philadelphia
16 community and healthy Chinatown,
17 transparency is crucial. As someone
18 who is thrilled to vote for the first
19 time in the next election, I hope to
20 be represented by people who listen to
21 their communities. Thank you.

22 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
23 you so much for your testimony and
24 thank you for participating in today's
25 hearing. Again, then just for clarity

1 and I know I said it a couple of
2 times, but this does not strike a
3 street even before the amendment or
4 after the amendment, understanding
5 your concerns again as we heard.

6 And please if you want to
7 talk about the arena, please go to the
8 AAU meeting with the proposal folks of
9 the arena on the 14th. Thank you.

10 Mr. McMonagle, please read
11 the next person to testify.

12 THE CLERK: Can we please
13 have Tina Nigal.

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Tina, if
16 you're available and logged in. If
17 not, Mr. McMonagle, can you please
18 read the next person to testify.

19 THE CLERK: Can we please
20 have Jordan Rosh.

21 MS. ROSH: Hi. Good morning.
22 My name is Jordan Rosh and I'm a youth
23 intern at Asian Americans United. And
24 I'm speaking today to voice my
25 frustration with the way Chinatown's

1 community has been treated with
2 regards to Bill 220938.

3 Councilmember Squilla, I feel
4 that your failure to communicate with
5 your constituents has revealed a
6 blatant disregard for the concerns of
7 many Philadelphians, but especially
8 our Asian elders, youth and
9 non-English-speaking community members
10 who would be most vulnerable to the
11 effects of the 76ers arena. And let's
12 be honest, the section of Filbert
13 Street that has been removed for
14 today's hearing was clearly meant to
15 pave the way for the construction of
16 the arena.

17 I'm disturbed by your conduct
18 not because I think I didn't get the
19 memo until yesterday, but because your
20 actions more broadly reveal you either
21 don't understand what's at stake here
22 or you just don't care. This bill
23 would have prioritized the will of
24 destructive billionaires over the
25 people who have poured their lives

1 into Chinatown and into Philadelphia,
2 the immigrants who come here and
3 provide a safe harbor and elders who
4 want to live out their days surrounded
5 by their families, the youth who want
6 to understand our heritage and who we
7 are.

8 Don't the members of our
9 community have a right to know what
10 the City plans to do with our home?
11 Our cultures, our histories, our
12 traditions, our hopes for the future
13 matter. Your lack of transparency
14 makes us feel insignificant. And
15 moving forward, we need you to
16 prioritize the futures of your
17 constituents, not those out-of-town
18 billionaires. I know you saw D.C.'s
19 Chinatown. This arena means
20 destruction and displacement. At the
21 very least you can do is be honest and
22 open about what's really going on and
23 not leaving us scrambling for
24 information about major decisions
25 being made behind closed doors.

1 You owe it to the community,
2 to the elders who need affordable
3 housing, the business owners who rely
4 on regulars to break even, to the kids
5 who meet up for boba every Friday, to
6 all of us. Thank you.

7 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
8 you for your testimony. And also just
9 to be clear, the legislation that came
10 through the Administration, I amended
11 the language out. And understanding I
12 know there's some confusion on what
13 happened there, but we do the best to
14 represent our interests in our
15 community. And when we heard
16 concerns, we acted.

17 Mr. McMonagle, can you please
18 read the next person to testify.

19 THE CLERK: Can we please
20 have Chris Henderson.

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All
23 right. Mr. McMonagle, could you
24 please read the next person to
25 testify.

1 THE CLERK: All right. So
2 can we please have Robin Hynicka.

3 (No response.)

4 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All
5 right. If Rob is not connected,
6 Mr. McMonagle, are there any other
7 people to testify on this legislation?

8 THE CLERK: Can we please
9 have Nikki Grant.

10 MS. GRANT: Good morning,
11 Councilmembers. My name is Nikki
12 Grant. I'm a Policy Director at
13 Amistad Law Project. We are a small
14 non-profit legal organization and our
15 office is located in Chinatown. Every
16 day I go to work, I feel honored and
17 blessed to be a part of such a
18 vibrant, active and beautiful
19 community.

20 Every one of our neighbors
21 that we have spoken to is absolutely
22 against the construction of an arena
23 in the neighborhood and have expressed
24 real fear that they will be pushed out
25 and the community will be destroyed,

1 much like the Chinatown in D.C.

2 Look, we all love the 76ers.

3 I still trust the process, but not at
4 the expense of the residents and the
5 businesses in Chinatown who deserve to
6 thrive and to be completely at the
7 forefront of any plans that impact
8 their home. I'm glad that today's
9 bill apparently won't contribute to
10 what we fear, but I do hope that you
11 listen to the community members who've
12 spoken today before pursuing any
13 future legislation that might pave the
14 way for the arena. Thank you.

15 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
16 you so much for your testimony.

17 Mr. McMonagle, please read
18 the next person to testify.

19 THE CLERK: Can we please
20 have Camille Desierto.

21 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Camille,
22 are you connected?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: If not,
25 Mr. McMonagle, please read the next

1 person.

2 THE CLERK: Can we please
3 have Sergio Cea.

4 MR. CEA: Hi. Can you hear
5 me?

6 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Yes,
7 please proceed. State your name for
8 the record and you can proceed with
9 your testimony. Thank you.

10 MR. CEA: Thanks. Good
11 morning, Councilmember. My name is
12 Sergio Cea. I'm the Political
13 Director of Reclaim Philadelphia. Our
14 organization's office is located in
15 Chinatown. We moved into that
16 workspace before the pandemic and
17 we've shared those offices with our
18 movement organization partners in the
19 City.

20 So I spent a lot of time
21 working, eating, socializing and
22 organizing in Chinatown with friends,
23 visiting family and citywide partners.
24 Although I've lived in Philadelphia
25 for 10 years, roughly a third of my

1 life, I was born in Washington, D.C.
2 And so, I've seen and know the impact
3 sports arenas have had on cultural
4 communities like D.C.'s Chinatown.

5 I'm worried how the rich and
6 unique communities who rely on and
7 depend on each other will be pushed
8 out and displaced, destroying long
9 ties to a generational community that
10 have existed here for decades, and for
11 decades have fought back similar
12 attempts.

13 I'm worried about Chinatown
14 looking more and more like Times
15 Square. And when these communities
16 disappear, we know that they cannot be
17 replaced. There's no ambiguity on
18 where the community stands on these
19 proposals. The majority of Philly's
20 Chinatown community is opposed to the
21 arena and despite promises for ongoing
22 communication, they were not consulted
23 before this hearing was brought up.

24 Their voices cannot continue
25 to be ignored and should be centered.

1 To many, this bill looks like a
2 backdoor deal to pave way for that
3 arena. And although I have been told
4 and I hear that some edits have been
5 made removing the Filbert Street
6 language, many find this whole process
7 sneaky and untrustworthy. And because
8 of this, we really advise you all to
9 vote against this and listen to the
10 voices of the community in Chinatown.
11 Thank you.

12 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
13 you so much for your testimony.

14 Mr. McMonagle, could you
15 please read the next person to
16 testify.

17 THE CLERK: Can we please
18 have Justin Lee.

19 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Justin,
20 if you're available and connected,
21 please testify.

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
24 Mr. McMonagle, would you please read
25 the next person.

1 THE CLERK: Can we please
2 have David Qu -- Kyu. I apologize if
3 I've mispronounced it.

4 MR. KYU: No problem. Good
5 morning. Can you hear me?

6 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Yes, we
7 hear you fine.

8 MR. KYU: My name is David
9 Kyu and I've worked in Chinatown at
10 Asian Arts Initiative for the past 13
11 years. I just want to remind
12 Councilman Squilla has been a friend
13 to Asian Arts Initiative. When we
14 were displaced by the expansion of the
15 Convention Center, it was Councilman
16 Squilla's office that helped us secure
17 funding to purchase a new building in
18 the neighborhood. When we needed a
19 roadthrough paved, Councilman Squilla
20 helped us be on that list when the
21 Streets Department was coming through.

22 Most recently it was
23 Councilman Squilla's office that
24 advised us as we installed a community
25 fridge on our block to help feed our

1 neighbors. I do wonder aloud if this
2 amendment is irrelevant to the
3 business of the bill and was, in fact,
4 so easy to strike from the bill, why
5 it was ultimately added in the first
6 place so late in the evening.

7 I appreciate that Councilman
8 Squilla has cautioned the developers
9 to work with the community members,
10 that -- he said it is vital actually
11 for their processes. I'm here to tell
12 you that they have not, and that is
13 why so many Chinatown members are here
14 in this Finance meeting for an
15 "unrelated bill," because they have
16 not included our voices.

17 We have no other means to be
18 included and that is why we are here
19 testifying today. We invite Council
20 and Councilman Squilla to act with
21 integrity and transparency in this
22 process moving forward and hope that
23 you will continue to support and
24 include the voices of Chinatown's
25 businesses, residents and cultural

1 institutions. Thank you.

2 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
3 you so much for your testimony. And
4 again, if people weren't on, Asian
5 Arts Initiative is having a meeting
6 with the 76er arena folks on the 14th.
7 Encourage everybody who is interested
8 in the arena or concerns with the
9 arena to please attend that meeting.
10 Thank you.

11 Mr. McMonagle, can you read
12 the next person to testify.

13 THE CLERK: Can we please
14 have Karina Hall.

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Karina
17 is not available. Mr. McMonagle, can
18 you please read the next person.

19 THE CLERK: Can we have
20 Michael Zhang.

21 MR. ZHANG: Good morning,
22 Councilmembers. Michael Zhang. I
23 think we've met in previous meetings
24 regarding Septa safety and the School
25 District lottery admission. And,

1 Councilmember Squilla, I'm speaking
2 from the heart today and if you ever
3 have been to Chinatown with
4 (inaudible) and you know what has
5 happened to D.C. Chinatown and that
6 was my childhood home, and it has been
7 destroyed by the arena.

8 And I've seen the
9 devastation, the downward spiral the
10 community has become after the
11 pandemic. The police department has
12 moved away from Chinatown, the
13 streetlights are out and the arena is
14 very bright with LED lights and by the
15 Convention Center, it's also bright
16 and then by the Fashion District it's
17 very bright. But when you get to
18 Chinatown, there are many lights that
19 are out and not replaced, graffiti
20 everywhere and it's not been cleaned
21 up. And that was the reason I came
22 out.

23 And when Lynn called me to
24 help her with a police trailer, we and
25 Lynn met at CDC and I was not invited

1 to those meetings. Someone told me
2 about it so I showed up. And I voiced
3 my concerns to the 6th District
4 Council. I said, cameras is good but
5 it's not enough. We need safety.
6 We've got people getting beat up,
7 getting robbed and I've got uncles --
8 and my dad still lives in Chinatown.
9 I've got uncles and aunts that walk
10 their dogs in their neighborhood, and
11 those streetlights are dark in those
12 alleys. And it's unsafe.

13 And I know we have the police
14 trailer. I helped organize from the
15 community fundraisers and we brought
16 together money to help put the police
17 trailer together and I was not a part
18 of any of those meetings that you guys
19 were a part of or within the email
20 groups, and I'm very disappointed.

21 My mother is no longer with
22 me, but all the members of my mother
23 are in Chinatown and please do not
24 destroy Chinatown. Thank you.

25 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank

1 you for your testimony and thank you
2 for your help. And also, if you do
3 have lights out or anything like that,
4 if you want to send me an email or
5 location, we'll be happy to work on
6 that and the graffiti removal in the
7 community. And knowing that there
8 were no meetings on this legislation,
9 again it came through the
10 Administration, so it was something
11 that needed to get done.

12 Yes, there was language to
13 maybe look for future possible things
14 to happen on Filbert Street, but again
15 when that was brought to my attention,
16 it was removed.

17 Mr. McMonagle, can you please
18 read the next person to testify.

19 THE CLERK: Can we please
20 have Casey Butcher.

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: No
23 response from Casey. Can you please
24 read the next person.

25 THE CLERK: Can we please

1 have Lynn Ye.

2 (No response.)

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All

4 right. No response from Ms. Ye.

5 Mr. McMonagle, next person

6 please.

7 THE CLERK: Can we please

8 have Jessica Lin.

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: No

11 response. Mr. McMonagle, next

12 testifier.

13 THE CLERK: And third time's

14 a charm. Can we please have Robin

15 Hynicka.

16 REVEREND HYNICKA: You're

17 staring at me.

18 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Yes,

19 Robin.

20 REVEREND HYNICKA: Sorry for

21 the confusion. I wasn't aware that we

22 had to join by Teams and then it took

23 a while to get connected. Anyway,

24 thank you for allowing me to testify.

25 My name is Reverend Robin Hynicka.

1 I'm the Pastor of Arch Street United
2 Methodist Church and the Vice-
3 president of Center City Organize for
4 Responsible Development, which is a
5 registered community organization
6 committed to transparent neighbor
7 engagement in Center City development.

8 My congregation includes
9 members who live and work in
10 Chinatown, early in the life of the
11 Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter
12 School, which was a creation of the
13 educators, parents and children highly
14 invested in the future of Chinatown.
15 The church is a sanctuary serving as
16 the school's auditorium of assemblies
17 of large events. My congregation is
18 committed to the preservation and
19 expansion of Chinatown and is
20 absolutely opposed to the sports
21 arena.

22 The name of the RCO I am a
23 member of, Center City Organize for
24 Responsible Development speaks for
25 itself. It is committed to community

1 economic development that prioritizes
2 neighborhood voices. Those voices are
3 to outweigh billionaire dollars. For
4 decades, Market East development has
5 been in the hands of the developers
6 who have delivered failure after
7 failure. I --

8 COUNCIL SUPPORT: Pardon me,
9 Chair, for a second. Channel 64 is
10 having technical difficulties, so we
11 will need to take a pause of the
12 broadcast.

13 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay.
14 Thank you. Reverend Hynicka, if you
15 don't mind if you wait several minutes
16 until we get back on 64.

17 REVEREND HYNICKA: No
18 problem.

19 (Brief recess.)

20 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Reverend
21 Hynicka, just again state your name
22 for the record and then restart your
23 testimony. Thank you.

24 REVEREND HYNICKA: Thank you,
25 Councilman. My name is Reverend Robin

1 Hynicka and I'm the Pastor of the Arch
2 Street United Methodist Church, the
3 Vice-president of Center City
4 Organized for Responsible Development,
5 the Registered Community Organization,
6 committed to transparent neighbor
7 engagement in Center City development.

8 The congregation includes
9 members who live and work in Chinatown
10 early in the life of the Folk Arts-
11 Cultural Treasures Charter School,
12 which was a creation of educators,
13 parents and children highly invested
14 in the future of Chinatown. The
15 church's sanctuary serves as the
16 school's auditorium for assemblies and
17 other large events.

18 My congregation is committed
19 to the preservation and the expansion
20 of Chinatown and is absolutely opposed
21 to the proposed sports arena. The
22 name of the RCO I'm a member of,
23 Center City Organized for Responsible
24 Development speaks for itself, is
25 committed to community economic

1 development that prioritizes
2 neighborhood voices. These voices
3 ought to outweigh billionaire dollars.

4 For decades, Market East
5 development has been in the hands of
6 developers who have delivered failure
7 after failure. The time has come to
8 invest in the Chinatown neighborhood,
9 its preservation and expansion. I am
10 very, very glad to hear that the bill
11 in its original form has been amended
12 to extract the provision that would
13 strike Filbert Street between 10th and
14 11th Streets, but the mere fact that
15 this item was in the original bill
16 raises deep concerns about the
17 transparency of the process that might
18 lead to the potential development of
19 an arena at 10th and Market.

20 I formally -- I'm at this
21 point formally requesting that the
22 City conduct an impact study on the
23 order of one required when federal
24 funds are invested in any project and
25 would have a major impact in Chinatown

1 and its near neighbors. Thank you for
2 this opportunity to testify.

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
4 you very much, Reverend Hynicka. And
5 just again, I want to reiterate that
6 the legislation never struck a street
7 or intended to strike a street. There
8 was language in there talking about
9 Filbert Street and a possible striking
10 in the future. But once we received a
11 concern about that language being in
12 there, we did amend that out. So
13 thank you for your testimony and thank
14 you all for testifying.

15 Mr. McMonagle, is there
16 anyone else to testify on our list?

17 THE CLERK: No, Mr. Chair.

18 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All
19 right. Thank you.

20 Is there anyone else who
21 didn't get a chance to testify that's
22 out there?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
25 you. Are there any questions from the

1 Committee?

2 (No response.)

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Hearing

4 none --

5 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

6 Mr. Chairman.

7 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank

8 you. Councilmember Bass.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yes. So

10 I just wanted to say that I wanted to
11 thank everybody for being here and
12 testifying today. I did want to also
13 just make note though that I know that
14 this is something that you've been
15 working very hard on in terms of
16 making sure that any conversations
17 around a stadium, a future stadium or
18 the concept even of a future stadium
19 are not going to be done without an
20 extensive, an extensive amount of
21 public conversation.

22 So I really just wanted to
23 put that out on the floor that that is
24 not what we are tasked with in this
25 Committee today. And so, I think

1 there may have been some confusion on
2 that matter. But I really wanted to
3 clarify and state that this is not
4 something that's going to be ushered
5 through quietly without public
6 discourse and certainly as the
7 Chairman of this Committee and as the
8 representative for the 1st Council
9 District where the property is
10 located, it will obviously include
11 your input and our input as well as
12 members of Council.

13 And I can say that I
14 certainly have some concerns and some
15 reservations about what this would do
16 to Chinatown if it actually became a
17 stadium. I'll say that growing up, my
18 mother actually grew up in Camden, New
19 Jersey and she talked about the divide
20 that happened in Camden within the
21 African American community when the
22 expressways were laid --

23 COUNCIL SUPPORT: Pardon me,
24 Council. I'm sorry to interrupt. We
25 just got another call from Channel 64

1 and the feed is down again. So we
2 will have to take another quick pause
3 unfortunately.

4 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: I
5 apologize there, Councilmember. I
6 guess we will be on hold again until
7 technical difficulties are worked out.
8 We will go back to you once we go live
9 again. Thank you.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank
11 you.

12 (Brief recess.)

13 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
14 Councilmember Bass for comment.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yes.
16 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 So I just wanted to wrap up
18 by saying that this is not going to be
19 a process that's pushed through in the
20 middle of the night. We're not going
21 to be doing anything of the sort. And
22 I know that there are those members of
23 Council such as myself who have very
24 strong reservations and concerns about
25 this particular project and what it

1 would do to the community.

2 I was just saying that my
3 mother grew up in Camden and when they
4 brought in the expressway, it
5 completely decimated the Africa
6 American community and population in
7 Camden, New Jersey. So I know with
8 these large infrastructure projects,
9 you know, for all that they do, all
10 that they bring, the good and the
11 not-so good and the effects on people
12 who have lived in communities for a
13 very long time. So I just wanted to
14 really underscore that.

15 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
17 you so much, Councilmember.

18 Councilmember Jones.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: (Muted).

20 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: You're
21 muted. You're muted, Councilmember.
22 But you sounded good.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: I hate
24 when that happens. Thank you,
25 Mr. Chairman.

1 I just wanted to echo what
2 Member Bass said, to the degree that
3 this will not be rushed, that out of
4 the membership involved I know you are
5 methodical. I know you are open to
6 other views contrary even to your own.
7 And that at the end of the day when we
8 will have a decision, that reflects
9 your values, that reflects the
10 community's concerns and I am totally
11 confident in that, Mr. Chairman.

12 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
13 you, Councilmember. And I agree, and
14 I also made a commitment to the
15 Chinatown community that nothing would
16 move forward before all of their
17 questions were answered and everything
18 was thoroughly investigated, and then
19 we would decide what, you know, how
20 the process would play out at that
21 point.

22 There's so many different
23 organizations in Chinatown. All the
24 voices need to be heard. I understand
25 their concerns with this hearing even

1 though the intent was not to be a
2 Chinatown arena discussion. I do
3 understand the respect, their comments
4 on not just during this legislation,
5 but future legislation also. So thank
6 you all for participating and hanging
7 in there and allowing the community
8 representatives to have their say
9 during this hearing.

10 So without any further
11 questions or comments from Members for
12 the last panel, no other panels to
13 testify, we'll take a brief break to
14 connect members to the public that
15 wish to testify on the bill before the
16 Committee today.

17 Mr. McMonagle, are there any
18 public commenters?

19 THE CLERK: Modesto, is there
20 anyone that wants to connect?

21 COUNCIL SUPPORT: We'll need
22 a minute or so just to try to connect
23 an individual that wanted to testify.

24 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
25 you, Modesto.

1 COUNCIL SUPPORT: You're
2 welcome.

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: For the
4 record, I know if people are still on,
5 Asian Americans United is holding a
6 meeting on December 14th on the arena
7 proposal with the host. It looks like
8 the meeting time is 6:00 to 7:30 at
9 Ocean Harbor Restaurant, 1023 Race
10 Street. Hopefully, questions about
11 the arena, impacts and things like
12 that will be heard at the AAU meeting
13 with the arena folks. Thank you.

14 And also for --

15 MR. BUTCHER: (Inaudible).

16 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Who is
17 that, Modesto?

18 MR. BUTCHER: Hello?

19 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Oh, I'm
20 sorry. If you want to make a public
21 comment, please state your name for
22 the record and then proceed with your
23 comment on the current legislation.

24 MR. BUTCHER: Okay. Thank
25 you. My name is Casey Butcher. I'm a

1 resident of Philadelphia. I'm a
2 community organizer with POWER
3 Interfaith. You know, I just want to
4 share that while I'm happy that the
5 amendment relative to the stadium
6 construction in Chinatown has been
7 modified or withdrawn at the last
8 minute, I do want to say that it's
9 really important to me that the
10 community -- there's really thorough
11 listening in the community to make
12 sure that the citizens are involved in
13 making decisions about the built
14 environment all across the City,
15 including in Chinatown and that the
16 City should make efforts and our
17 representatives in City government
18 should make efforts to protect
19 historic neighborhoods, protect
20 communities that have been, you know,
21 living together for generations.

22 And it's one of the last
23 kind of communities of color that's
24 integrated as such in Center City,
25 Philadelphia. And I think that the

1 zoning as it is right now with all the
2 stadiums on the south side of the City
3 is really smart and makes it easy for
4 traffic, and I would just encourage
5 the Council to make every effort to
6 protect Chinatown, but certainly not
7 to pass any measures with their back
8 to the community without having kind
9 of listened to folks like myself and
10 others who really value Chinatown in
11 the City and want to make sure that
12 it's here for generations to come.

13 Thank you.

14 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
15 you so much for your testimony and
16 agreed. Also, the one comment about
17 being smart and the arena's in South
18 Philadelphia, I talked to some of the
19 residents there and they don't think
20 it's so smart there too. So we do
21 understand the concerns and efforts
22 that need to go into these types of
23 discussions and possible developments
24 of such. So thank you for your
25 testimony.

1 Modesto, is there anyone else
2 who needs to be connected?

3 MR. BUTCHER: There may be,
4 but I'm not in charge of the list. I
5 don't know.

6 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: No, I
7 was asking our IT guys. Thank you.
8 Thank you for your testimony.

9 COUNCIL SUPPORT: We had one
10 more person, Mr. Chair, but
11 unfortunately we received their
12 voicemail.

13 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay.
14 Thank you. Seeing that there's no one
15 else to testify, I want to thank all
16 panels and witnesses for their
17 participation today. We value your
18 opinions. And I would like to invite
19 all panels and witnesses to please
20 disconnect from the hearing before we
21 go into our public meeting. We will
22 now pause the proceedings briefly as
23 multiple participants leave the
24 hearing. As soon as everybody leaves,
25 we will go into our public meeting.

1 (Brief pause.)

2 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay.

3 This concludes the public hearing for
4 the Committee. We will now go into
5 our public meeting to consider this
6 action to be taken on the bills before
7 this Committee today.

8 Mr. McMonagle, will you
9 please call the roll to take
10 attendance. Members that are in
11 attendance, just indicate that you are
12 present and we will start our public
13 meeting.

14 THE CLERK: Councilwoman
15 Bass.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
17 morning, Mr. Chairman and colleagues.
18 I am still present.

19 THE CLERK: Councilman Jones.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES:
21 Mr. Chairman, colleagues, I am
22 present.

23 THE CLERK: Councilman Oh.

24 COUNCILMAN OH: Present.

25 THE CLERK: Councilman

1 Squilla.

2 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Present.

3 And, Councilmember Lozada.

4 THE CLERK: Councilmember
5 Lozada had to leave.

6 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay.
7 Thank you so much. We still have a
8 quorum?

9 THE CLERK: Yes, we do, sir.

10 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
11 you, Mr. McMonagle. We will now go
12 into our public meeting.

13 The Chair recognizes
14 Councilmember Bass for a motion on the
15 amendment to Bill No. 220938.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank
17 you, Mr. Chairman.

18 And I offer an amendment to
19 Bill No. 220938. A copy of the
20 amendment has been circulated to all
21 members of the Committee. And I move
22 that the amendment to Bill No. 220938
23 be approved.

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: Second.

25 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank

1 you. The Chair notes for the record
2 that Councilmember Jones seconds the
3 motion.

4 It has been moved and
5 properly seconded that the amendment
6 to Bill No. 220938 be approved. All
7 those in favor of the motion will
8 signify by saying aye.

9 (Aye.)

10 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Those
11 opposed?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: The ayes
14 have it and the motion carries.

15 The Chair now recognizes
16 Councilmember Bass for a motion on
17 Bill No. 220938 as amended.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank
19 you, Mr. Chairman.

20 I move that Bill No. 220938
21 as amended be reported from this
22 Committee with a favorable
23 recommendation and further move that
24 the rules of Council be suspended to
25 permit first reading of this bill at

1 the next session of Council.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Second.

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
4 you. Chair notes for the record
5 Councilmember Jones seconds the
6 motion.

7 It has been moved and
8 properly seconded that Bill No. 220938
9 as amended be reported from this
10 Committee with a favorable
11 recommendation and further move that
12 the rules of Council be suspended as
13 to permit the first reading of this
14 bill at the next session of Council.

15 All those in favor of the
16 motion will signify by saying aye.

17 (Aye.)

18 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Those
19 opposed?

20 (No response.)

21 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: The ayes
22 have it and the motion carries.

23 That will conclude the
24 meeting. This concludes the business
25 before the Committee on Finance.

1 Thank you all very much for your
2 attendance and patience. Have a great
3 day and jump on the Streets hearing if
4 you're on that Committee. Thank you.

5 (Committee on Finance
6 concluded at 10:28 a.m.)

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

2 I, hereby certify that the
3 proceedings and evidence noted are contained
4 fully and accurately in the stenographic
5 notes taken by me in the foregoing matter,
6 and this is a correct transcript of the
7 same.
8

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11
12 _____
13 TANEHA CARROLL
14 Court Reporter - Notary Public
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<u>WORD</u> <u>INDEX</u>					
< \$ >	6:00 25:18	admission	69:5	46:22 47:14	36:16 42:16
\$11.9 11:7	69:8	53:25	Amistad 46:13	49:21 50:3	50:20 53:17
\$52 11:9	64 59:9, 16	advance 23:23	amount 63:20	53:6, 8, 9 54:7,	avoid 25:18
	64:25	advanced 10:7	amounts 10:7	13 58:21	aware 7:20
	65 24:24	advancing 35:9	ancillary 6:15	60:21 61:19	57:21
	6th 55:3	advise 50:8	and/or 78:22	68:2 69:6, 11,	aye 75:8, 9
		advised 51:24	anecdotally	13	76:16, 17
< 1 >	< 7 >	affect 13:3	31:3	arenas 49:3	ayes 75:13
10 11:23	7 1:1 2:3	affiliated 29:25	Anne 9:3, 4	arena's 71:17	76:21
48:25	7:30 69:8	afford 25:22	announced	arrive 22:5	
10:28 77:6	76 20:6	affordable	20:9	Arts 51:10, 13	< B >
1023 69:9	76er 53:6	45:2	announcements	53:5 60:10	back 17:15
10th 18:21	76ers 37:14,	Africa 66:5	2:7	Arts-Cultural	49:11 59:16
24:23 32:15,	21 38:3, 24	African 64:21	answer 12:22	18:11 34:17	65:8 71:7
16 40:23	39:11, 14	agency 39:5	answered	58:11	backdoor
61:13, 19	40:24 43:11	ago 15:4	67:17	ashamed 18:24	22:21 41:13
11th 9:23	47:2	18:19 30:10	anti-Asian	Asian 18:24	50:2
40:23 61:14		agree 26:6	38:17	37:5 38:10, 13	background
12th 40:1	< 8 >	67:13	anymore 17:16	40:2 41:4	9:21
13 10:20	80s 26:17	agreed 21:9	Anyway 57:23	42:23 43:8	backgrounds
51:10		71:16	API 25:7	51:10, 13 53:4	15:20
13.9 11:2	< 9 >	agreement 6:8	29:25	69:5	bad 28:20
14th 39:12	9:00 1:1	10:6, 24 17:13	apologize 18:7	asking 39:1	balance 10:24
42:9 53:6	9th 25:10	agreements	31:15 51:2	72:7	11:12
69:6		5:23 6:15	65:5	assemblies	BASS 1:1 4:4,
15 6:11	< A >	9:11 11:15	apparently	58:16 60:16	5 63:5, 8, 9
150 23:21	a.m 1:1 77:6	alleys 55:12	47:9	assessment	65:10, 14, 15
17 10:12	AAU 25:7	allow 8:7	appear 3:22	35:14	67:2 73:15, 16
19107 24:19	38:12 39:10,	11:23 12:18	appears 22:20	Associates	74:14, 16
1940s 21:19	14 42:8 69:12	24:8 36:6, 8	apply 78:20	6:17 9:15, 22	75:16, 18
1983 9:24	ability 13:3	39:4	appointed 3:25	Association	beat 55:6
1993 6:11	able 25:22	allowed 36:8	appreciate	15:3	beautiful
1997 10:10	40:20	allowing 57:24	13:11 39:19	associations	28:19 46:18
1st 64:8	absolutely	68:7	52:7	21:21	believe 38:8
	16:11 17:3	aloud 52:1	approval 12:5	assume 19:12	40:6
< 2 >	33:5 35:4	Amanda	approvals 20:6	assuring 41:10	beloved 19:8
2 16:4 20:15	46:21 58:20	24:16, 18	approved 6:11	attempts 49:12	Ben 34:3
2000 23:11	60:20	ambiguity	74:23 75:6	attend 39:13	benefit 37:22
2008 23:12	accurately	49:17	approximately	53:9	benefits 17:13
2012 10:12, 15	78:1	amend 62:12	10:20 11:2, 7,	attendance	Benjamin 34:2
2022 1:1 2:3	Act 8:10	amended 6:9	9	3:18, 19 73:10,	best 30:18
220938 1:1	52:20	9:7, 10 45:10	Arch 25:10	11 77:2	40:16 45:13
5:12, 19 9:7	acted 10:3	61:11 75:17,	32:16 58:1	attention	betrayed 19:21
37:8 40:4	45:16	21 76:9	60:1	35:12 56:15	bidding 20:12
43:2 74:15, 19,	action 73:6	amending 7:2	area 7:10	auditorium	big 23:15
22 75:6, 17, 20	actions 43:20	amendment	37:23	58:16 60:16	32:24
76:8	active 21:24	6:8 13:2 42:3,	areas 23:25	aunts 55:9	BILL 1:1
250 19:3	46:18	4 52:2 70:5	arena 7:9	Authority	5:12, 14, 16, 19
26 18:18	activity 32:22	74:15, 18, 20,	16:6, 20, 22	5:24 6:1, 2	6:10 7:14
	added 52:5	22 75:5	17:4, 11 21:3	9:12, 14	8:14 9:7, 8
< 3 >	additional 6:8	amendments	22:22 23:4, 7,	authorized	11:15 12:9
34 18:13	Additionally	5:22	12, 24 24:5, 7,	6:10 11:15	15:23 16:4, 17
36 15:4	8:2 11:4	American	11 25:1 26:10	authorizes 9:8	17:17 19:24
	Adelman 27:3	38:13 64:21	33:9 35:5, 18	authorizing	20:16, 21 21:7
< 5 >	adjacent 9:24	66:6	36:6, 7 37:14,	5:20 6:12	22:15, 20
50 10:13	Administration	Americans	21 38:3, 24	available 8:7	23:22 28:20
546 6:10	7:14 21:9	37:6 40:3	39:6, 15 41:6	11:14 14:12	29:7 35:1, 8,
	45:10 56:10	41:4 42:23	42:7, 9 43:11,	18:4 31:18	17 36:5 37:7,
< 6 >			16 44:19		10, 13 39:17

40:4 43:2, 22 47:9 50:1 52:3, 4, 15 61:10, 15 68:15 74:15, 19, 22 75:6, 17, 20, 25 76:8, 14 billionaire 19:11 27:2 59:3 61:3 billionaires 28:23 29:6 36:1 43:24 44:18 bills 16:18 17:17 26:11 27:5 73:6 bit 27:24 blatant 30:4 43:6 blessed 46:17 block 24:23 51:25 blocks 28:18 board 33:10 boba 45:5 bondholders 10:3, 5 bonds 10:17 borders 33:18 born 49:1 break 45:4 68:13 breaking 27:23 brief 3:21 59:19 65:12 68:13 73:1 briefly 72:22 bright 54:14, 15, 17 bring 40:20 66:10 broadcast 59:12 broadly 43:20 brought 27:6 49:23 55:15 56:15 66:4 build 19:10 building 40:24 51:17 built 9:22 36:7 70:13 bun 33:1 business 28:18 45:3 52:3 76:24 businesses 17:19 21:23	30:10 32:20 33:11 47:5 52:25 Butcher 56:20 69:15, 18, 24, 25 72:3 buy 17:1 < C > call 3:17 8:13 14:14 25:16 32:4 36:11, 21 64:25 73:9 called 3:21 5:9 54:23 calling 37:6 Camden 64:18, 20 66:3, 7 cameras 55:4 Camille 47:20, 21 canvassing 31:1 Care 25:10 30:23 37:19 43:22 carries 75:14 76:22 CARROLL 78:12 carry 12:2 Casey 56:20, 23 69:25 casino 23:12 cautioned 52:8 CBAs 16:23 CCOCA 15:1 CDC 54:25 Cea 48:3, 4, 10, 12 celebrate 18:22 Center 25:10, 15, 20 35:21 51:15 54:15 58:3, 7, 23 60:3, 7, 23 70:24 centered 49:25 certain 6:19 certainly 64:6, 14 71:6 certification 78:19 certify 78:1 certifying 78:23 CHAIR 1:1 2:20 4:18 5:6 8:25 14:1	59:9 62:17 72:10 74:13 75:1, 15 76:4 Chairman 4:6, 13 13:15 63:6 64:7 65:16 66:15, 25 67:11 73:17, 21 74:17 75:19 Chan 24:16, 17, 18 36:14 chance 62:21 Channel 59:9 64:25 character 34:24 charge 72:4 charm 57:14 Charter 18:12 34:18 58:11 60:11 chat 8:6, 10 cheapest 40:16 Cherry 32:16 childhood 54:6 children 15:9, 16 18:14 32:23 40:21 58:13 60:13 Chinatown 14:25 15:2, 4 16:1, 6, 11, 12, 19 17:1, 10, 15, 18 18:13, 18 19:19, 25 21:18, 19, 23, 24 22:2, 7, 12, 19 23:5, 8, 20, 24 24:22 26:3, 8, 17 27:6, 7, 17 28:4, 16, 23 29:1 30:5, 7, 23 32:20 33:12, 17 34:18 35:4, 6, 19, 25 37:15, 25 38:13, 25 40:24 41:2, 7, 16 44:1, 19 46:15 47:1, 5 48:15, 22 49:4, 13, 20 50:10 51:9 52:13 54:3, 5, 12, 18 55:8, 23, 24 58:10, 14, 19 60:9, 14, 20 61:8, 25 64:16	67:15, 23 68:2 70:6, 15 71:6, 10 Chinatown's 35:22 40:11 Chinatown's 23:17 42:25 52:24 Chinese 15:10, 21 22:4 38:7 Chris 45:20 Church 58:2, 15 60:2 church's 60:15 CINDY 1:1 circulated 74:20 circumstances 17:12 Citizens 15:2 70:12 CITY 1:1 2:9 3:2 6:2, 9 8:18, 24 9:3 10:2, 7, 11, 13, 19, 21 11:5, 22, 24 12:5, 10 13:5 19:21 20:11 25:15, 20 34:20 35:21 40:9 44:10 48:19 58:3, 7, 23 60:3, 7, 23 61:22 70:14, 16, 17, 24 71:2, 11 City's 10:23 11:19 12:1, 7 citywide 48:23 claim 18:21 clarify 5:15 64:3 clarity 7:16 13:1 21:10 24:2 36:4 41:25 clarity's 20:19 clause 33:7 cleaned 54:20 clear 39:17 45:9 clearly 43:14 CLERK 4:3, 8, 10, 15, 21, 25 5:5, 19 8:15 13:25 14:15 17:25 18:6 21:14 24:15	27:12, 18 29:16 31:15, 23 34:1, 10 36:13, 23 39:23 42:12, 19 45:19 46:1, 8 47:19 48:2 50:17 51:1 53:13, 19 56:19, 25 57:7, 13 62:17 68:19 73:14, 19, 23, 25 74:4, 9 closed 22:24 44:25 closing 12:15 40:5, 22 Coast 35:23 Co-founder 15:1 34:17 Coleen 21:15, 17 colleagues 4:6, 18 73:17, 21 color 35:21 70:23 come 3:15 19:5, 12 32:23 40:7 44:2 61:7 71:12 comfortable 15:17 coming 17:4, 15 39:11 51:21 comment 5:17 65:14 69:21, 23 71:16 commenters 68:18 comments 8:4 68:3, 11 Commerce 5:20 6:12 9:4, 9 commitment 67:14 committed 58:6, 18, 25 60:6, 18, 25 COMMITTEE 1:1 2:4 4:1 5:8, 11 9:2 11:16 13:13 63:1, 25 64:7 68:16 73:4, 7 74:21 75:22	76:10, 25 77:4, 5 Committees 2:10 3:2, 9 16:10 communicate 22:18 43:4 communication 6:25 33:10 40:8 49:22 communities 33:11 35:16, 20 41:21 49:4, 6, 15 66:12 70:20, 23 community 15:9, 21, 24 16:2 17:2, 5 18:22 19:13 20:1 21:21 22:1, 6, 11, 19 23:1, 6, 18 26:13, 24 33:17 37:12, 16 38:2, 5, 11 39:2, 5 41:16 43:1, 9 44:9 45:1, 15 46:19, 25 47:11 49:9, 18, 20 50:10 51:24 52:9 54:10 55:15 56:7 58:5, 25 60:5, 25 64:21 66:1, 6 67:15 68:7 70:2, 10, 11 71:8 community's 22:16 67:10 completely 33:9 47:6 66:5 comply 8:9 concept 63:18 concern 25:12 62:11 Concerned 15:2 concerning 6:4 concerns 21:7 25:25 26:23, 25 33:20 39:18 42:5 43:6 45:16 53:8 55:3 61:16 64:14 65:24 67:10, 25 71:21
--	---	---	---	--	---

concessions 10:22	7:24	18 59:13, 20, 25 62:3, 18, 24	< D >	destroy 23:24 55:24	displacement 44:20
conclude 76:23	contrary 67:6	63:3, 7 65:4,	D.C 47:1	destroyed 46:25 54:7	disregard 30:4
concluded 77:6	47:9	13 66:16, 19,	49:1 54:5	destroying 49:8	35:5 43:6
concludes 12:21 73:3	contributors 22:10	20, 23 67:12	D.C.'s 19:19	destroys 38:25	disrespecting 35:3
76:24	control 23:14	68:24 69:3, 16,	44:18 49:4	destruction 17:18 19:15	disruptive 35:10
conditions 6:19 17:12	78:22	19 71:14 72:6,	dad 55:8	29:9 44:20	District 40:25
conduct 43:17	convene 22:13	13 73:2, 19, 20,	Daily 3:11	destructive 43:24	53:25 54:16
61:22	Convention 25:20 51:15	23, 24, 25 74:2,	damage 35:19	determining 16:2	55:3 64:9
conducted 16:7	54:15	6, 10, 24, 25	dance 18:16	devastation 54:9	disturbed 43:17
confident 67:11	conversation 63:21	75:10, 13 76:2, 3, 18, 21	dances 18:16	Devcorp 20:7	divide 64:19
confusion 7:6	conversations 25:2 63:16	Councilmember 4:21 13:18, 19	dark 55:11	developers 16:24, 25 17:4,	docile 41:5
45:12 57:21	conveyed 23:3	43:3 48:11	daughters 15:6	8, 15 19:11	documents 11:25
64:1	Coordinator 37:5 38:12	54:1 63:8	DAVID 1:1	20:5, 7 23:3,	dogs 55:10
congregation 58:8, 17 60:8, 18	copy 74:19	65:5, 14 66:17,	27:3 51:2, 8	16 27:3 34:24	doing 20:11
connect 68:14, 20, 22	corporate 27:2	18, 21 67:13	day 18:20	52:8 59:5	30:25 65:21
connected 34:13 46:5	correct 13:4, 6 78:1	74:3, 4, 14	25:11, 24 33:2	61:6	dollars 59:3
47:22 50:20	COUNCIL 1:1 2:10, 16,	75:2, 16 76:5	46:16 67:7	Development 5:24 9:6, 12	61:3
57:23 72:2	19, 23 3:2, 9	Councilmember s 27:1 38:9	77:3	23:10, 23 26:1	doors 22:24
connecting 36:20	12:18, 20, 22	46:11 53:22	days 38:15	29:7 33:17	44:25
consenting 8:1	40:9 52:19	COUNCILWO MAN 1:1	44:4	35:15 37:24	downward 54:9
consider 73:5	55:4 59:8	3:25 4:4, 5, 10,	deal 22:21	41:8 58:4, 7,	driving 40:10
considered 16:18	64:8, 12, 23, 24	12 63:5, 9	50:2	24 59:1, 4	drunk 25:19
considering 20:11	65:23 68:21	65:10, 15	Debora 34:10, 14	60:4, 7, 24	Due 2:8, 25
conspiring 20:4	69:1 71:5	73:14, 16	debt 9:18	61:1, 5, 18	12:14
constituents 43:5 44:17	72:9 75:24	74:16 75:18	10:4, 25 11:3,	developments 71:23	dumplings 40:17
constructed 6:5	76:1, 12, 14	country 38:20	18, 19, 23 12:1,	different 67:22	Dunn 8:17, 18,
construction 37:14 43:15	COUNCILMA N 1:1 2:2, 21,	couple 42:1	6, 7, 8, 16	difficulties 59:10 65:7	24 9:2 13:5
46:22 70:6	25 4:8, 15, 17,	Court 78:13	decades 19:9	difficulty 2:17	< E >
consulted 49:22	23, 25 5:2, 3, 7	COVID 26:21	23:10 49:10,	direct 78:22	early 58:10
contact 33:19	6:20 8:20	30:9	11 59:4 61:4	Director 5:20,	60:10
contained 78:1	12:24 13:9, 14,	COVID-19 2:9 3:2	December 1:1	21 6:12, 13	earnings 10:9
continually 37:21	17 14:5, 11, 19	creates 22:8	2:3 69:6	9:4, 5, 9 18:11	easier 36:1
continue 10:19 24:8	17:21 18:3	creation 58:12	decide 67:19	32:14 34:15	37:15
49:24 52:23	19:17 20:17	60:12	decimated 66:5	46:12 48:13	East 6:6 9:20
continued 2:8	24:1 27:8, 20	crime 19:21	decision 67:8	disappear 49:16	35:23 59:4
3:1	28:5, 9, 13	cross 25:14	decisions 34:19 44:24	disappointed 55:20	61:4
continues 21:24 25:23	29:12, 19	crowds 25:19	70:13	disconnect 72:20	easy 52:4 71:3
40:19	31:10, 17, 20,	26:20	deep 21:18	discourse 64:6	eat 33:1
continuing	25 32:6, 9	crucial 41:17	61:16	discussion 68:2	eating 48:21
	33:22 34:3, 7,	cultural 35:13	defend 19:25	discussions 71:23	echo 67:1
	12 36:3, 15, 19,	38:1 49:3	definitely 30:6	disdain 31:8	economic 16:14 35:14
	25 37:11 39:8	52:25 60:11	degree 67:2	displaced 49:8	38:1 59:1
	41:22 42:15	culture 15:10,	delivered 59:6	51:14	60:25
	45:7, 22 46:4	19 17:20 22:6, 14	61:6		edits 50:4
	47:15, 21, 24	cultures 44:11	demonstrates 15:25		educators 58:13 60:12
	48:6 50:12, 19,	current 7:7	deny 40:22		effects 43:11
	23 51:6, 12, 15,	69:23	Department 51:21 54:11		66:11
	19, 23 52:7, 20	currently 2:10	depend 49:7		effort 71:5
	53:2, 16 55:25	3:3 11:1	deserve 47:5		
	56:22 57:3, 10,	CURTIS 1:1	Desierto 47:20		
			despite 22:17		
			23:2 49:21		
			dessert 38:22		

efforts 70:16, 18 71:21	exist 23:13 26:1	feed 51:25 65:1	61:20, 21	gateway 22:3	24:20
either 31:5 43:20	existed 49:10	feel 15:16	formerly 6:1	gem 35:23	grandpa 25:8
elderly 26:16	expansion 51:14 58:19	18:24 19:21	forward 44:15	general 17:7	grandparents 26:15
elders 43:8	60:19 61:9	30:16 43:3	52:22 67:16	generation 22:4	Grant 46:9, 10, 12
44:3 45:2	expectation 7:24	44:14 46:16	fought 23:13	generational 49:9	grease 20:5
elected 20:3	expense 47:4	feels 20:10	49:11	generations 19:5, 10 70:21	great 77:2
election 41:19	experiences 15:20	30:3, 13	found 3:13	71:12	grew 18:23
Ellen 18:7, 10	express 31:8	fence 16:20	Founding 34:15	gentrification 23:19 25:23	38:21 64:18
email 55:19	expressed 27:1 46:23	Festival 18:20, 25 19:4, 6	framed 37:22	gentrified 37:16	66:3
56:4	expressway 25:14 66:4	Festivals 40:15	Franz 29:17, 18, 23, 24	getting 55:6, 7	groceries 15:11
emotionally 26:5	expressways 64:22	fighting 29:6	free 15:17	Gibboni 27:12, 14 28:2, 8, 11, 12, 15	groundwork 22:22
empathy 30:7	extension 11:21	Filbert 7:5	Friday 45:5	G-i-b-b-o-n-i 28:12	groups 16:9 25:19 55:20
Encourage 53:7 71:4	extensive 63:20	9:23 19:23	fridge 51:25	give 28:23	growing 64:17
energies 35:24	extract 61:12	24:24 37:9	fried 40:17	glad 37:8 47:8 61:10	grown 23:21
engage 22:18	extremely 37:8	40:5, 23 43:12	friend 51:12	global 38:16	guess 65:6
engaged 33:16	< F >	50:5 56:14	friends 15:13	go 7:17 38:19, 24 42:7 46:16	Gutierrez 39:24, 25 40:1
engagement 58:7 60:7	face 34:25	61:13 62:9	24:21 25:9	65:8 71:22	guys 55:18 72:7
ensuring 10:4	faced 29:5	FINANCE 1:1	38:19 48:22	72:21, 25 73:4	< H >
enter 5:21 6:14 9:10	facilitate 19:14 22:21	2:4 4:1 5:11, 21 6:13 9:1, 10 52:14	Friendship 28:17	74:11	Hall 53:14
entire 13:7	23:19	76:25 77:5	front 11:16	going 5:14	hands 59:5 61:5
entitlement 30:16	facing 38:15	financing 10:16	frustration 42:25	26:7 29:24	hanging 68:6
entity 12:12	fact 41:12	find 40:16	Full 16:16 33:15	38:24 44:22	Hannah 31:24, 25 32:6, 8, 13 33:22
environment 70:14	52:3 61:14	50:6	fully 78:1	63:19 64:4	happen 19:4 56:14
environmental 16:13 35:13	Fadullon 9:5	fine 51:7	fun 15:14	65:18, 20	happened 26:2 45:13
especially 30:8 43:7	failure 43:4	first 6:24	funding 51:17	Good 2:4 4:3, 5, 12, 13, 17, 18, 23 8:18, 20, 25 13:25 14:17, 19 21:16	54:5 64:20
establishing 21:22	59:6, 7 61:6, 7	8:14 12:19	fundraisers 55:15	32:12 37:3	happening 30:22 31:6
Ethan 29:17, 19, 24	fair 12:13	20:9 27:6	funds 61:24	42:21 46:10	happens 66:24
evening 52:6	familial 38:1	41:18 52:5	further 6:11	48:10 51:4	happy 12:21 56:5 70:4
event 12:12	families 15:13	75:25 76:13	68:10 75:23	53:21 55:4	harbor 44:3 69:9
events 58:17 60:17	17:19 25:17, 22 26:9, 22	flat 25:5	76:11	66:10, 11, 22	hard 38:14 63:15
everybody 53:7 63:11	44:5	floor 63:23	future 7:7	73:16	harm 35:1, 12
72:24	family 15:7	flourished 23:20	10:8 12:10	government 70:17	hate 66:23
everybody's 24:3	21:17, 23	folk 18:11	16:3, 17 20:24	Grace 36:24, 25 37:4	heads 15:24
evidence 78:1	48:23	34:17 58:11	24:7 27:5	grader 40:2	health 2:9 3:1
exchange 10:23	Fan 36:24	60:10	34:20 39:6	graduated 27:15	healthy 41:16
Excited 4:14, 19	37:3, 4	Folklore 34:16	40:20 44:12	graffiti 54:19	hear 2:18 5:17 28:6
exclusionary 25:5	fans 32:24	folks 26:16	47:13 56:13	56:6	32:8 48:4
excuse 19:20	Fashion 40:25	41:2 42:8	58:14 60:14	grandchildren 25:13	50:4 51:5, 7 61:10
Executive 18:10 32:14	54:16	53:6 69:13	62:10 63:17, 18 68:5	grandfather	heard 21:7 42:5 45:15 67:24 69:12
	favor 75:7	71:9	futures 44:16		
	76:15	followed 14:2			
	favorable 75:22 76:10	following 2:7	< G >		
	favorite 38:22	food 22:6 38:20	Gallery 6:6 9:20, 24		
	fear 46:24	foods 22:14	garage 6:5, 16 7:15 9:15, 19, 22, 23 10:18		
	47:10	forefront 47:7	11:1 12:12		
	feature 8:6, 10	foregoing 78:1, 19	13:4		
	federal 61:23	forget 37:12	gaslight 17:5, 6		
		form 61:11	Gate 28:17		
		formally			

hearing 2:6 3:10, 13 5:9, 10 6:22 7:17, 21, 22 17:8 22:16 41:25 43:14 49:23 63:3 67:25 68:9 72:20, 24 73:3 77:3 hearings 2:13, 15 3:5, 8 heart 35:10 54:2 held 11:4 Hello 18:9 24:17 27:14 28:8 29:18 69:18 help 17:17 37:13 39:2 51:25 54:24 55:16 56:2 helped 51:16, 20 55:14 Henderson 45:20 heritage 44:6 hesitate 33:19 Hi 29:23 37:3 39:25 42:21 48:4 highly 58:13 60:13 historic 35:16 70:19 historical 23:17 historically 29:3, 10 histories 44:11 history 29:6 Hold 27:20, 21 65:6 holding 69:5 home 25:16, 18 37:17 44:10 47:8 54:6 homes 15:13 17:19 honest 43:12 44:21 Hongyu 31:16 honored 46:16 hope 20:14 41:19 47:10 52:22 Hopefully	69:10 hopes 44:12 host 69:7 hour 3:15 25:15 housing 25:22 45:3 How's 29:23 Hynicka 14:2 46:2 57:15, 16, 20, 25 59:14, 17, 21, 24 60:1 62:4 < I > idea 41:1 ideas 41:4 ignorance 41:1 ignored 49:25 ignoring 40:18 II 6:7 9:20 image 3:22 immerse 22:13 immigrant 38:10 immigrants 22:4, 9 44:2 impact 16:5, 12, 14, 16 27:5 35:15 47:7 49:2 61:22, 25 impacts 69:11 important 70:9 impose 19:13 impression 23:2 inaccessible 25:5 inaudible 54:4 69:15 include 52:24 64:10 included 3:9 52:16, 18 includes 58:8 60:8 including 6:7 10:14 11:9 25:7 70:15 increased 26:21 incredibly 32:21 indecisive 23:8 indicate 3:19 73:11 individual 68:23	Industrial 5:24 9:12 information 44:24 infrastructure 66:8 Initiative 51:10, 13 53:5 input 64:11 Inquirer 3:11 insignificant 44:14 installed 51:24 institutions 19:8 53:1 Instructions 2:13 3:6 integrated 70:24 integrity 52:21 Intelligencer 3:12 intended 62:7 intent 68:1 interest 10:8, 14 11:10 24:7 39:19 interested 16:23 53:7 interests 45:14 Interfaith 70:3 intern 40:2 42:23 interrupt 64:24 introduced 13:2 21:4, 8 22:15 invest 61:8 invested 58:14 60:13 61:24 investigated 67:18 invitation 16:8 invite 52:19 72:18 invited 7:19 25:2 54:25 involved 41:3 67:4 70:12 irrelevant 52:2 irreparably 35:19 item 61:15 its 9:17 10:25 12:6 19:7 22:6, 13 23:19, 21, 24 33:18 37:17, 24	40:18 61:9, 11 62:1 < J > Jackie 9:2 Jacqueline 8:16 JC 10:1 jeopardize 23:17 Jersey 64:19 66:7 Jessica 57:8 join 57:22 Jonathan 14:2, 15, 24 JONES 1:1 4:8 5:1, 3 13:14, 18, 19 66:18, 19, 23 73:19, 20 74:24 75:2 76:2, 5 Jordan 42:20, 22 JR 1:1 jump 77:3 June 6:11 Justin 50:18, 19 < K > Karina 53:14, 16 KC's 33:1 keep 17:4 keeps 26:22 kids 45:4 kind 70:23 71:8 know 19:16 24:2 28:6 30:8, 11, 18, 25 32:23 33:6 38:3, 12 39:10 41:11 42:1 44:9, 18 45:12 49:2, 16 54:4 55:13 63:13 65:22 66:7, 9 67:4, 5, 19 69:4 70:3, 20 72:5 knowing 56:7 knowledge 22:17 known 6:1 Kodish 34:11, 13, 14, 15	Kyu 51:2, 4, 8, 9 < L > labeled 41:5 lack 30:7 44:13 laid 64:22 language 7:10 15:10, 18 20:21 22:7 24:5 36:7 45:11 50:6 56:12 62:8, 11 large 58:17 60:17 66:8 late 52:6 Law 46:13 lead 7:5 9:25 61:18 leaders 19:22 40:19 learned 18:15 lease 11:22 leave 72:23 74:5 leaves 72:24 leaving 44:23 LED 54:14 Lee 50:18 left 38:5 40:11 Legal 3:12 46:14 legislation 7:1, 2, 11, 13 21:4 24:10 33:15 45:9 46:7 47:13 56:8 62:6 68:4, 5 69:23 lender 6:17 10:25 11:17, 21 lenders 9:16 lethal 38:4 lies 34:21 life 49:1 58:10 60:10 lifeblood 38:2 lights 54:14, 18 56:3 Lin 14:4 18:1 57:8 lion 18:15, 16 list 51:20 62:16 72:4 listen 41:20	47:11 50:9 listened 71:9 listening 70:11 little 2:16 27:24 28:24 live 16:19 44:4 58:9 60:9 65:8 lived 26:18 48:24 66:12 livelihoods 30:6 lives 15:5 18:23 26:4, 19 39:3 43:25 55:8 living 24:23 33:3 70:21 loan 11:25 local 22:14 located 9:19 46:15 48:14 64:10 location 1:1 56:5 log 5:3 logged 42:16 long 29:5 49:8 66:13 longer 55:21 longtime 14:25 Look 47:2 56:13 looking 34:22 36:2 49:14 looks 50:1 69:7 lot 25:11 31:1, 2 40:6 48:20 lottery 53:25 loud 25:19 love 22:2 32:19 35:7 47:2 LOZADA 1:1 3:25 4:11, 12 74:3, 5 Lynn 54:23, 25 57:1 < M > major 16:5 34:19 35:10, 15 44:24 61:25 majority 23:5 26:18 31:4 35:3 49:19
---	---	--	---	---	--

making 36:1 37:15 63:16 70:13 Mall 9:24 manner 20:13 MARK 1:1 Market 6:6 9:20 12:13 59:4 61:4, 19 matter 44:13 64:2 78:1 McDonald's 38:6 McMonagle 3:16 4:2 5:15 6:21 8:12 13:22 14:13 17:23 21:12 24:12 27:10, 21 29:14 31:12, 21 33:24 34:8 36:10, 20 39:21 42:10, 17 45:17, 23 46:6 47:17, 25 50:14, 24 53:11, 17 56:17 57:5, 11 62:15 68:17 73:8 74:11 means 15:22 38:13 44:19 52:17 78:21 meant 43:14 measures 71:7 meet 45:5 meeting 2:11 3:3 7:19, 25 39:11, 14 41:10 42:8 52:14 53:5, 9 69:6, 8, 12 72:21, 25 73:5, 13 74:12 76:24 meetings 16:8, 9 17:14 25:3 41:13 53:23 55:1, 18 56:8 member 58:23 60:22 67:2 Members 3:18 8:3, 8 9:1 13:13 15:7 43:9 44:8 47:11 52:9, 13 55:22 58:9 60:9 64:12	65:22 68:11, 14 73:10 74:21 membership 67:4 memo 43:19 mentally 26:4 mentioning 40:4 mere 61:14 met 15:3 53:23 54:25 methodical 67:5 Methodist 58:2 60:2 Michael 53:20, 22 Microsoft 2:12 3:4 8:7 Microsoft® 1:1 Mid-Autumn 18:19 40:15 middle 33:4 65:20 million 10:12, 13, 20 11:2, 7, 9 millions 37:24 mind 41:2 59:15 minimum 10:1 minute 68:22 70:8 minutes 59:15 Mireya 39:24 40:1 mispronounce 31:16 mispronounced 51:3 Modesto 2:18 68:19, 25 69:17 72:1 modifications 11:24 modified 70:7 money 30:17 55:16 morning 2:5 4:3, 6, 13, 17, 18, 24 8:14, 19, 21, 25 13:25 14:18, 20 21:16 32:12 37:3 42:21 46:10 48:11	51:5 53:21 73:17 mother 55:21, 22 64:18 66:3 motion 74:14 75:3, 7, 14, 16 76:6, 16, 22 move 67:16 74:21 75:20, 23 76:11 moved 48:15 54:12 75:4 76:7 movement 48:18 moving 44:15 52:22 multi 9:10 multiple 72:23 multi-year 5:22 Muted 66:19, 21 < N > Nadol 9:4 name 8:21 9:2 14:7, 20, 24 18:4 21:17 24:13, 17 27:14, 25 28:2, 10, 12 29:20, 24 31:13, 18 32:1, 10, 13 34:4 36:11, 16 37:1, 4 39:25 42:22 46:11 48:7, 11 51:8 57:25 58:22 59:21, 25 60:22 69:21, 25 names 3:20 nature 30:20 near 62:1 nearly 37:13 necessary 6:4, 14 need 13:23 17:13 20:6 38:18 40:8 44:15 45:2 55:5 59:11 67:24 68:21 71:22 needed 51:18 56:11 needs 72:2	negotiating 16:23 neighbor 58:6 60:6 neighborhood 19:15 23:15 29:4, 5, 10 33:3 40:18 46:23 51:18 55:10 59:2 61:2, 8 neighborhoods 33:12 70:19 neighborhood's 16:3 neighbors 24:21 46:20 52:1 62:1 net 11:13 neutral 16:21 23:7 never 62:6 new 6:17 7:9 10:25 11:17 18:16 22:3 25:1 51:17 64:18 66:7 News 3:11 Nigal 42:13 night 26:23 65:20 Nikki 46:9, 11 noise 26:20 non-English- speaking 22:9 43:9 non-profit 46:14 Notary 78:13 note 3:14 7:16 8:5 11:6, 8 39:10 63:13 noted 78:1 notes 11:6, 13 75:1 76:4 78:1 notices 3:10 noting 24:9 not-so 66:11 < O > obtained 10:15 obviously 64:10 occurs 23:14 Ocean 69:9 offer 2:14 3:7 74:18	office 7:1 32:18 46:15 48:14 51:16, 23 offices 48:17 officials 20:11 OH 1:1 4:15, 17 28:11 69:19 73:23, 24 Okay 13:9 28:15 41:11 59:13 69:24 72:13 73:2 74:6 once 62:10 65:8 ongoing 38:16 49:21 open 44:22 67:5 operate 10:19 operational 10:22 opinions 72:18 opportunities 22:8 opportunity 62:2 oppose 26:9 39:6 opposed 17:3 23:4, 6 49:20 58:20 60:20 75:11 76:19 order 5:10 8:9 9:25 12:1 25:15 61:23 ordinance 7:3, 6, 9 12:19 organization 46:14 48:18 58:5 60:5 organizations 67:23 organization's 48:14 organize 55:14 58:3, 23 Organized 60:4, 23 organizer 70:2 organizers 19:7 organizing 48:22 orgs 25:6 original 61:11, 15	originally 6:10 35:2, 8, 17 ought 61:3 out-of-town 44:17 outright 31:6 outside 22:12 outstanding 11:3, 12 outweigh 59:3 61:3 overall 6:6 9:19 30:2 31:8 owe 45:1 owed 10:12, 13, 21 12:10 owners 45:3 < P > PA 25:7 29:25 PAID 5:25 6:9, 16 9:13 pandemic 32:17 38:16 48:16 54:11 panel 8:13 13:22 68:12 panels 68:12 72:16, 19 Parametric 6:16, 18 9:15, 17, 22 10:6, 15, 23 11:1, 11 12:3, 4, 11, 16 Parametric's 9:16 11:18 Pardon 59:8 64:23 parents 58:13 60:13 parking 6:4 9:18 10:1 part 6:5 7:6 28:19 46:17 55:17, 19 participants 7:22 72:23 participating 21:20 41:24 68:6 participation 33:16 72:17 particular 65:25 parties 6:3, 18 partners 48:18, 23
--	---	--	--	---	--

parts 7:3	41:15 44:1	possible 2:13	37:2 48:7, 8	8:11	received 7:13
pass 71:7	48:13, 24 70:1,	3:5 7:4, 9	69:22	pursuing 47:12	10:21 62:10
passive 41:5	25 71:18	24:6 56:13	proceedings	pushed 46:24	72:11
Pastor 58:1	Philadelphians	62:9 71:23	72:22 78:1	49:7 65:19	recess 59:19
60:1	17:7 43:7	potential 61:18	process 16:6	put 55:16	65:12
Pastries 33:1	Philly 26:18	poured 43:25	22:23 25:4	63:23	Reclaim 48:13
patience 77:2	Philly's 49:19	POWER 70:2	40:17 47:3	putting 35:24	recognized 8:9
pause 39:3	PHLCouncil.co	PRA 6:3, 16	50:6 52:22	39:3	13:16
59:11 65:2	m 3:14	9:14	61:17 65:19		recognizes
72:22 73:1	physically 26:5	practice 15:9,	67:20	< Q >	74:13 75:15
pave 33:8	pineapple 33:1	18	processes	Qu 51:2	recognizing
36:5 37:13	place 35:7	PRA's 12:5	52:11	questions 8:3	8:3
43:15 47:13	40:16 52:6	precious 33:5	profit 36:2	12:22 13:12,	recommendatio
50:2	Planning 9:5	40:12	Programs 37:5	21 33:20	n 75:23 76:11
paved 35:9	plans 25:3	predators 20:2	program's	62:25 67:17	record 3:24
51:19	28:22 44:10	premeditated	38:11	68:11 69:10	8:5, 22 13:19
pay 10:16	47:7	19:20	progress 28:22	QUETCY 1:1	14:8, 21 27:25
payment 10:4	play 67:20	PRESENT 1:1	project 6:5, 7	quick 65:2	29:21 32:2, 10
payments	plays 15:5	3:20 4:7, 24	20:10 32:15	quickly 28:21	34:4 37:1
10:11 11:11	please 3:17, 19,	5:9 13:16, 20	34:16 35:10	quietly 28:21	39:10 48:8
Penney's 10:1	21 8:12, 16	73:12, 18, 22,	46:13 61:24	64:5	59:22 69:4, 22
people 18:21,	13:23 14:1, 3,	24 74:2	65:25	quorum 5:6, 8	75:1 76:4
25 19:1, 5, 25	13, 16 17:16,	presented	projects 66:8	74:8	recorded 7:21
20:3 26:24	25 18:6 21:12,	26:12	promises		8:1
27:16 28:4, 25	14 23:22	preservation	22:17 49:21	< R >	Redevelopment
30:10, 15 31:1,	24:12, 15 27:4,	58:18 60:19	pronounced	Race 69:9	5:25 6:2, 7
2, 4 35:7	10, 13, 18	61:9	18:8	raise 25:24	9:14 25:3
37:23, 25	28:10, 14	preserve 12:9	properly 75:5	raises 61:16	26:7, 11
38:24 39:12	29:14, 16, 20	preserving	76:8	raising 19:1	refinance 7:15
41:20 43:25	31:12, 23	35:25	property 64:9	RCO 58:22	9:17 12:6
46:7 53:4	33:18, 24 34:1,	president 58:3	proposal	60:22	refinancing
55:6 66:11	8 36:10, 13, 21,	prevent 17:18	39:15 42:8	react 28:24	12:16 13:4
69:4	23 39:1, 4, 13,	previous 53:23	69:7	read 5:13, 15	reflected 24:6
People's 32:14	21, 23 42:6, 7,	priceless 20:1	proposals	17:23 21:12	reflects 67:8, 9
performed	10, 12, 17, 19	prices 25:24	49:19	24:12 27:10	regard 16:1
16:17	45:17, 19, 24	pride 19:2	proposed	29:14 31:13,	regarding
permit 9:16	46:2, 8 47:17,	principal	23:11 60:21	21 33:25 34:8	5:11 53:24
11:17, 18, 21	19, 25 48:2, 7	10:14 11:10	protect 39:2, 4	39:22 42:10,	regards 43:2
75:25 76:13	50:15, 17, 21,	prior 3:12 8:2	70:18, 19 71:6	18 45:18, 24	registered
person 13:23	24 51:1 53:9,	prioritize	protecting	47:17, 25	58:5 60:5
17:24 21:13	13, 18 55:23	44:16	35:25	50:15, 24	regulars 45:4
24:13 29:15	56:17, 19, 23,	prioritized	prove 20:14	53:11, 18	reiterate 62:5
31:13, 22	25 57:6, 7, 14	43:23	provide 44:3	56:18, 24	related 9:18
33:25 34:9	69:21 72:19	prioritizes	provision	reading 12:19	relational 38:2
36:11, 21	73:9	59:1 61:1	61:12	75:25 76:13	relative 70:5
39:22 42:11,	plus 10:7	privacy 7:24	prudent 6:14	ready 14:3	rely 37:25
18 45:18, 24	point 61:21	private 10:15	public 2:6, 9,	real 34:25	45:3 49:6
47:18 48:1	67:21	12:6	14, 15 3:1, 7, 8,	46:24	remain 11:19
50:15, 25	pointed 7:4	privately 9:17	10 5:10 7:20,	really 15:22	remained
53:12, 18	police 54:11,	11:4	22 38:17	26:22 30:22	21:19
56:18, 24 57:5	24 55:13, 16	proactively	63:21 64:5	37:19 44:22	remaining
72:10	Policy 46:12	22:18	68:14, 18	50:8 63:22	10:16 35:20
PHILADELPH	Political 48:12	problem 51:4	69:20 72:21,	64:2 66:14	remind 40:7
IA 1:1 5:23,	population	59:18	25 73:3, 5, 12	70:9, 10 71:3,	51:11
25 6:3 9:11,	66:6	proceed 8:22	74:12 78:13	10	reminds 38:20
13 28:4, 17	position 11:5,	14:8, 21 18:5	published 3:11	reason 54:21	Remote 1:1
29:1 33:4	20 12:7	28:1, 14 29:20,	purchase 51:17	reasonable	2:12 3:5
34:16 35:11,	positive 16:22	21 32:2, 11	purpose 7:12	7:23	remotely 2:11
21, 23 38:14		34:5 36:17			3:3

removal 13:6 56:6	47:23 50:22 53:15 56:21, 23 57:2, 4, 9, 11 62:23 63:2 75:12 76:20	safety 25:25 53:24 55:5	34:23	socializing 15:15 48:21	68:24 69:3, 16, 19 71:14 72:6, 13 73:2 74:1, 2, 6, 10, 25 75:10, 13 76:3, 18, 21
remove 21:5	23 57:2, 4, 9, 11 62:23 63:2 75:12 76:20	sake 20:19	send 56:4	sold 12:13	Squilla's 51:16, 23
removed 37:10 40:6 43:13 56:16	Responsible 58:4, 24 60:4, 23	sanctuary 22:11 58:15 60:15	senior 9:16, 18 10:25 11:3, 18, 20 12:6, 8, 16 25:10	solid 35:13	stadium 23:11 29:2, 8 31:3 63:17, 18 64:17 70:5 stadiums 71:2 stake 43:21 stand 17:2 standing 19:24 stands 49:18 Starbucks 38:6 staring 57:17 start 5:17 73:12 started 18:19 starting 23:10 33:8 state 6:24 8:21 14:7, 20 18:4 27:24 28:10 29:20 31:18 32:1, 10 34:4 36:16 37:1 48:7 59:21 64:3 69:21 stenographic 78:1 stereotypical 41:4 store 32:25 Street 6:6 7:5 9:20 18:21 19:23 20:22 37:9 40:5, 23 42:3 43:13 50:5 56:14 58:1 60:2 61:13 62:6, 7, 9 69:10 streetlights 54:13 55:11 Streets 9:23 25:14 32:22 38:18 41:9 51:21 61:14 77:3 stricken 7:11 strike 42:2 52:4 61:13 62:7
removing 50:5	restart 59:22	Sanrio 32:25	sense 19:2 30:15	son 18:15	
rent 25:24	Restaurant 69:9	Sassaman 31:24 32:4, 7, 12, 13	Septa 53:24	soon 72:24	
rented 32:18	restaurants 15:14 21:22	satisfy 9:25	Sergio 48:3, 12	sorry 2:16 4:16 8:15 14:6 57:20 64:24 69:20	
repaid 10:20	restructured 10:18	saw 44:18	serious 35:11	sort 65:21	
repay 10:6 11:17	reveal 43:20	saying 37:11	serve 20:4	sounded 66:22	
repayment 12:11	revealed 43:5	School 18:12, 15 25:16 32:24 34:18 38:15 53:24 58:12 60:11	serves 60:15	south 71:2, 17	
replaced 19:16 49:17 54:19	revenues 11:14	schools 21:20 33:12	session 12:20 76:1, 14	speak 15:18	
reported 75:21 76:9	REVEREND 57:16, 20, 25 59:14, 17, 20, 24, 25 62:4	school's 58:16 60:16	settle 22:5	speaker 27:11	
Reporter 78:13, 23	revolve 26:4	scrambling 44:23	settlement 41:10	speaking 24:20 27:22 31:3 42:24 54:1	
represent 16:10, 12 23:1 45:14	rich 49:5	screen 3:23	shady 22:23 25:6 26:11	speaks 58:24 60:24	
representative 64:8	right 23:13 24:2 41:8	scrutiny 34:25	share 38:21 70:4	spent 48:20	
representatives 68:8 70:17	roadthrough 51:19	seamlessly 22:5	shared 27:1 48:17	spiral 54:9	
represented 41:20	Rob 46:5	second 59:9 74:24 76:2	shop 15:11	spoken 31:5 46:21 47:12	
representing 28:3	robbed 55:7	secondary 12:7	shopping 22:14	sports 49:3 58:20 60:21	
reproduction 78:20	Robin 14:1, 5, 7 46:2 57:14, 19, 25 59:25	seconded 75:5 76:8	shops 15:14	Square 49:15	
requested 12:3	Robin's 14:11	seconds 75:2 76:5	shortly 5:4	SQUILLA 1:1 2:2, 21, 25 4:22, 23 5:2, 7 6:20 8:20 9:1 12:24 13:9, 17 14:5, 11, 19 17:21 18:3 19:17 20:17 24:1 27:8, 20 28:5, 9, 13 29:12, 19 31:10, 17, 20, 25 32:6, 9 33:22 34:3, 7, 12 36:3, 15, 19, 25 37:11 39:8 41:22 42:15 43:3 45:7, 22 46:4 47:15, 21, 24 48:6 50:12, 19, 23 51:6, 12, 19 52:8, 20 53:2, 16 54:1 55:25 56:22 57:3, 10, 18 59:13, 20 62:3, 18, 24 63:3, 7 65:4, 13 66:16, 20 67:12	
requesting 12:17 61:21	role 15:5	secret 16:7	showed 55:2	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
required 61:23	roll 3:17 73:9	secretive 20:8, 12 22:20	showing 37:20	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
requirement 10:2	Ronald 27:12, 15, 21, 23 28:3, 5, 6	section 13:7 16:4 20:15 21:5, 6 37:9 40:4 43:12	shows 30:14, 22 34:23 35:14	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
requires 12:4	rooted 41:3	secure 11:25 51:16	shrouded 22:23	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
reservations 64:15 65:24	roots 21:18 23:18	Secured 11:6	side 71:2	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
resident 14:25 24:19 70:1	Rosh 42:20, 21, 22	see 19:18	sign 38:7	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
residents 17:6 23:9 24:22 27:6, 7 28:24 30:5, 8, 24 35:4 47:4 52:25 71:19	roughly 48:25	seeing 17:9 72:14	significant 29:4, 10	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
resisted 23:9	rules 12:17 75:24 76:12	seen 49:2 54:8	signify 8:8 75:8 76:16	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
respect 68:3	rush 25:15	select 16:9	similar 15:20 49:11	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
respond 28:25	rushed 15:23 67:3	selected 22:25	simply 40:25	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
response 4:9 14:10 18:2 31:19 34:6 36:18 42:14 45:21 46:3	safe 15:17 38:19 44:3	self-interest 23:16	sir 74:9	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
	< S >	self-planning	Sirun 36:14, 15	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
			site 9:20	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
			small 46:13	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
			smart 71:3, 17, 20	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
			sneaking 19:22 41:14	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
			sneaky 50:7	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	
			socialize 15:19 22:13	spoke 31:5 46:21 47:12	

striking 7:4, 7, 8 19:22 20:15 21:2 36:9 62:9 strong 65:24 strongly 26:9 struck 20:21 24:5 33:7 36:8 62:6 studies 16:13, 14, 16 study 61:22 subordinate 10:24 11:5, 20 12:1 subterfuge 34:22 successor 12:11 sufficient 11:13 Sunshine 8:10 supervision 78:22 SUPPORT 2:19, 23 13:6 24:25 35:6 52:23 59:8 64:23 68:21 69:1 72:9 sure 13:1 25:17 27:4 28:2 63:16 70:12 71:11 surety 10:3, 11 surreptitious 30:20 surrounded 44:4 surrounding 12:15 23:25 28:18 37:22 survive 41:7 suspended 12:18 75:24 76:12 < T > take 3:17 59:11 65:2 68:13 73:9 taken 19:9 73:6 78:1 talk 25:11 39:13 42:7 talked 64:19 71:18 talking 22:25 62:8	TANEHA 78:12 tasked 63:24 Teams 1:1 2:12 3:4 8:7 57:22 Tech 32:15 technical 2:17 59:10 65:7 teenager 40:14 tell 52:11 Temple 27:15 tenant 9:25 term 11:22 terms 6:19 63:15 testifier 57:12 testify 7:19 8:13 9:7 13:24 14:14 17:24 21:13 24:14 29:15 31:14 33:25 34:9 36:12, 22 39:22 42:11, 18 45:18, 25 46:7 47:18 50:16, 21 53:12 56:18 57:24 62:2, 16, 21 68:13, 15, 23 72:15 testifying 24:3 52:19 62:14 63:12 testimony 2:15 3:8 6:23 8:23 12:21, 25 14:9 17:22 20:18 21:11 24:9 27:9 29:13, 22 31:11 32:3, 11 33:23 34:5 36:5, 17 37:2 39:9, 20 41:23 45:8 47:16 48:9 50:13 53:3 56:1 59:23 62:13 71:15, 25 72:8 Thank 2:21 5:7 6:20 8:23, 24 12:24 13:10, 17 14:21, 23 17:20, 21 20:14, 17 21:10 23:25	24:11 25:6 27:7, 8 28:13 29:11, 12, 13 31:9, 10 33:20, 23 36:2, 4 39:7, 8 41:21, 22, 24 42:9 45:6, 7 47:14, 15 48:9 50:11, 12 53:1, 2, 10 55:24, 25 56:1 57:24 59:14, 23, 24 62:1, 3, 13, 19, 24 63:7, 11 65:9, 10, 16 66:15, 16, 24 67:12 68:5, 24 69:13, 24 71:13, 14, 24 72:7, 8, 14, 15 74:7, 10, 16, 25 75:18 76:3 77:1, 4 Thanks 48:10 things 30:21 41:11 56:13 69:11 think 43:18 53:23 63:25 70:25 71:19 third 48:25 57:13 thorough 70:10 thoroughly 67:18 thousands 18:21 threat 2:8 3:1 threatened 19:10 thrilled 41:18 thrive 47:6 thriving 22:10 41:15 ties 49:9 time 5:1 8:6 10:2 21:1 28:24 41:19 48:20 61:7 66:13 69:8 timely 10:4 times 42:2 49:14 time's 57:13 time-sensitivity 12:14 Tina 42:13, 15 tired 17:8, 9	title 5:13, 16 27:11 Tito 32:25 Today 2:2 4:1 6:24 9:6 11:16 13:2 37:6, 20 40:7 42:24 47:12 52:19 54:2 63:12, 25 68:16 72:17 73:7 today's 41:24 43:14 47:8 toddlers 19:6 told 50:3 55:1 toss 30:17 totally 35:2 67:10 town 28:19 traditions 19:8 22:7 44:12 traffic 16:14 71:4 trailer 54:24 55:14, 17 transaction 10:17 12:2 13:8 transcript 78:1, 20 transit 38:17 transparency 41:17 44:13 52:21 61:17 transparent 40:8 58:6 60:6 transparently 26:12 treasured 35:16 TREASURER 8:18, 24 9:3 13:5 Treasures 18:12 34:18 58:11 60:11 treated 40:13 43:1 true 34:24 35:15 trust 47:3 try 68:22 trying 5:3 16:25 17:5 30:11 39:16	two 11:6 18:14 30:9 40:14 type 23:9 types 71:22 < U > U.S 40:11 ultimately 52:5 unaware 31:5 unbiased 35:13 uncles 55:7, 9 underhanded 20:9, 13 28:21 underscore 66:14 understand 20:20 43:21 44:6 67:24 68:3 71:21 understanding 39:18 42:4 45:11 unequivocally 23:6 unfortunately 65:3 72:11 unique 49:6 United 37:6 40:3 42:23 58:1 60:2 69:5 University 27:16 unrelated 13:7 19:23 52:15 unsafe 26:8 55:12 Unsecured 11:8 untrustworthy 20:8, 13 50:7 use 8:6 ushered 64:4 < V > valuable 40:12 value 12:9, 13 71:10 72:17 values 15:21 67:9 vibrant 22:10 23:18 32:21 33:3 38:4 46:18 Vice 58:2 VICE-CHAIR 1:1	Vice-president 60:3 VietLead 24:18 view 2:14 3:7 viewers 7:23 views 67:6 violence 38:17 virus 38:4 visit 15:12 32:23 visiting 48:23 vital 15:5 35:20, 22 52:10 voice 16:1 42:24 voiced 55:2 voicemail 72:12 voices 49:24 50:10 52:16, 24 59:2 61:2 67:24 volunteering 21:25 volunteers 15:8 vote 17:16 23:22 41:18 50:9 voted 29:8 vulnerable 43:10 < W > wait 59:15 Waldman 14:3, 15, 17, 23, 24 walk 55:9 want 6:24 13:15 14:6 16:19 17:11, 14 27:24 29:1 31:2, 6 35:5 38:8, 10 39:12 41:3, 6, 9 42:6 44:4, 5 51:11 56:4 62:5 63:12 69:20 70:3, 8 71:11 72:15 wanted 7:16 30:1, 19 31:7 63:10, 22 64:2 65:17 66:13 67:1 68:23 wants 68:20
--	--	--	--	---	---

Washington 49:1	working-class 26:16				
wasteland 19:18	workspace 48:16				
way 9:21	world 15:22				
17:1 18:25	worried 49:5,				
30:2 31:8	13				
33:8 34:21	worry 25:12,				
35:9 36:6	21 40:19				
37:13 40:13	worth 11:7, 8				
42:25 43:15	29:9				
47:14 50:2	wrap 65:17				
wealth 30:15	written 35:2, 9,				
Wednesday	18				
1:1 2:3	wrong 18:8				
week 33:2	20:14				
weekly 21:25	< X >				
Wei 31:16, 17	Xu 18:1, 3				
welcome 2:24					
69:2	< Y >				
well 15:6	Ye 57:1, 4				
64:11	Yeah 28:9				
went 18:14	29:25 31:7				
19:17	year 9:11				
We're 2:3, 11	18:17, 20 19:4				
5:14 16:20, 21,	25:23				
22 17:3, 7, 9	years 10:8				
37:19 39:1, 3,	11:23 15:4				
16 65:20	18:13, 18				
We've 32:17	23:21 24:24				
48:17 53:23	30:9 38:15, 16				
55:6	48:25 51:11				
wheels 20:5	yesterday				
whims 19:11	43:19				
who've 47:11	young 19:1, 5				
wide 35:6	21:15, 16, 17				
wife 15:3, 8, 16	38:23				
willful 40:25	youth 19:3				
wish 8:8	37:4 38:11, 14				
68:15	40:2 42:22				
withdrawn	43:8 44:5				
70:7					
witnesses 6:23	< Z >				
8:4 72:16, 19	Zhang 53:20,				
wonder 52:1	21, 22				
words 3:22	zoning 71:1				
23:2	Zu 14:4				
work 20:25					
33:13 41:14					
46:16 52:9					
56:5 58:9					
60:9					
worked 18:12					
32:15 51:9					
65:7					
working 21:8,					
21 48:21					
63:15					