

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

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, December 1, 2014
12:40 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE BLACKWELL
COUNCILMAN WILLIAM K. GREENLEE
COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN ED NEILSON
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

BILLS 140229, 140275, 140800, 140885, 140897,
140940, 140946, and 140949

RESOLUTION 140915

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COUNCILMAN HENON: Good
afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.
Finally, the Committee of Public Property
and Public Works is now in session.
Would the Clerk please read the
title of the bills and resolution.
THE CLERK: Bill No. 140229, an
ordinance amending Chapter 16-800 of The
Philadelphia Code, entitled "Philadelphia
Affordable Housing Opportunity Zones," by
designating the Allegheny Avenue,
Roosevelt Boulevard and Erie Avenue
Affordable Housing Opportunity Zones
pursuant to the 1500 New Affordable
Housing Units Initiative, all under
certain terms and conditions; and
Bill No. 140275, an ordinance
amending Bill No. 130946 (approved March
12, 2014), entitled "An ordinance
authorizing the Commissioner of Public
Property, on behalf of the City of
Philadelphia, to purchase from the
Philadelphia Authority for Industrial
Development a certain tract of land

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 together with the improvements thereon

3 situate in the area bounded by 46th

4 Street, Market Street, Haverford Avenue,

5 and 48th Street, known as 4601 Market

6 Street, under certain terms and

7 conditions," to include an Economic

8 Opportunity Plan, under certain terms and

9 conditions; and

10 Bill No. 140800, an ordinance

11 authorizing the Public Property

12 Commissioner, on behalf of the City of

13 Philadelphia, to accept from The School

14 District of Philadelphia title to a

15 certain approximately .81 acre parcel of

16 land known as 3600 North 11th Street, all

17 under certain terms and conditions; and

18 Bill No. 140885, an ordinance

19 authorizing the Commissioner of Public

20 Property on behalf of the City of

21 Philadelphia to enter into a lease with

22 the Philadelphia Authority for Industrial

23 Development for the lease of a certain

24 parcel of City-owned land on the South

25 side of Baltimore Avenue between 39th and

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 41st Streets, for further sublease, all
3 under certain terms and conditions; and

4 Bill No. 140897, an ordinance
5 authorizing the Procurement Commissioner,
6 on behalf of the City, to enter into a
7 Concession Agreement with Titan 360
8 Outdoor, LLC, for the provision of a
9 coordinated street furniture and
10 advertising program, and approving
11 placement in the right-of-way of such
12 street furniture, all under certain terms
13 and conditions; and

14 Bill No. 140940, an ordinance
15 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
16 Property to convey to the Philadelphia
17 Authority for Industrial Development all
18 or part of a parcel of land located at
19 2600-26 North 3rd Street, for further
20 conveyance, under certain terms and
21 conditions; and

22 Bill No. 140946, an ordinance
23 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
24 Property to convey to the Philadelphia
25 Authority for Industrial Development all

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or part of a certain parcel of land
bounded by West Wildey Street, Leopard
Street, Richmond Street, and North Front
Street, for further conveyance, under
certain terms and conditions; and

Bill No. 140949, an ordinance
authorizing the Commissioner of Public
Property to convey to the Philadelphia
Authority for Industrial Development all
or part of a parcel of land bounded by
Tulip Street, East Tucker Street, Memphis
Street, and East Albert Street, for
further conveyance, under certain terms
and conditions; and

Resolution No. 140915,
resolution approving the 2015 Proposed
Strategic Plan and Disposition Policy of
the Philadelphia Land Bank.

COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

First, I'd like to recognize
that we do have a quorum that is present,
and to my right is Councilwoman Jannie
Blackwell and Councilman David Oh. To my
left, Vice Chair Councilman Greenlee,

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Councilman Neilson, and Councilman
3 Squilla.

4 So with that, is there anyone
5 here from the Administration that wishes
6 to testify on Bill No. 140275 today?

7 (Witnesses approached witness
8 table.)

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: Good
10 morning. Would you please state your
11 name for the record and proceed with your
12 testimony.

13 COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: Good
14 afternoon, Chairman Henon and members of
15 the Committee on Public Property and
16 Public Works. My name is Bridget
17 Collins-Greenwald and I am the
18 Commissioner of the Department of Public
19 Property. I am here today to testify in
20 support of Bill No. 140275, an ordinance
21 amending Bill No. 130946, which was
22 approved on March 12th, 2014, entitled
23 "An ordinance authorizing the
24 Commissioner of Public Property, on
25 behalf of the City of Philadelphia, to

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purchase from the Philadelphia Authority
for Industrial Development a certain
tract of land together with the
improvements thereon situate in the area
bounded by 46th Street, Market Street,
Haverford Avenue, and 48th Street, known
as 4601 Market Street, under certain
terms and conditions," to include an
Economic Opportunity Plan, under certain
terms and conditions.

The 4601 Market Street campus
will provide co-location for the Police
and Health Departments currently located
in structures that can no longer
adequately service their evolving needs.
The Police Headquarters building will be
relocated here from its current location
at 7th and Race Streets. The Medical
Examiner's Office currently located at
321 University Avenue and the Public
Health Laboratories currently located at
Broad and Lombard will also relocate to
this campus.

Early exterior and roof

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 renovations will commence in April of
3 2015. The campus development and
4 building renovations will commence in
5 January 2016, with a scheduled completion
6 date of January 2018.

7 The Department of Public
8 Property supports this measure and,
9 accordingly, I respectfully ask that City
10 Council approve Bill No. 140275.

11 I am requesting a suspension of
12 the rules so as to allow for the first
13 reading at the next session of Council.

14 Thank you. I will be happy to
15 answer any questions you may have.

16 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
17 for your testimony. I just have two
18 quick questions.

19 Has there been any discussions
20 on what will become of the property at
21 7th and Race as well as the University
22 City and Broad and Lombard?

23 COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: Yes.
24 The plan for the City is to sell those
25 properties once our employees are out.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Is there a
3 timeline on getting them out to market?

4 COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: Well,
5 we don't plan on having anyone --
6 construction ending until 2018, January
7 of 2018. So around that time we would
8 start the discussions on how we would
9 actually sell the property.

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: Has any work
11 begun at 4601?

12 COMMISSIONER GREENWALD:
13 Selective demolition work has begun. So
14 they're actually gutting the building
15 right now.

16 COUNCILMAN HENON: Great. I
17 have no further questions.

18 The Chair recognizes
19 Councilwoman Blackwell.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
21 you very much.

22 Thank you both for all of your
23 work on this project.

24 To members of my committee,
25 certainly we have to legalize us having

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 an EOP plan, and that is why we have this
3 hearing today. We have been having major
4 community meetings. We've already had a
5 few. We will continue to have regular
6 community meetings on this issue. It's
7 one of the most important in our city and
8 major in my district, and certainly we
9 hope that the Committee will support this
10 legislation, which really calls for
11 adoption of an EOP plan.

12 Thank you.

13 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
14 Councilwoman.

15 Are there any other questions
16 from members of this Committee?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: Is there
19 anyone else here that wishes to testify
20 on Bill No. 140275?

21 (Witness approached witness
22 table.)

23 COUNCILMAN HENON: Would you
24 state your name for the record and please
25 proceed with your testimony.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 MR. JONES: Honorable Chair and
3 members of this Committee, my name is
4 Hanford Jones. I formerly worked with
5 the MBEC for 17 years. I wasn't there as
6 a City employee. I worked.

7 This project I have asked under
8 the Pennsylvania Right to Know Law who
9 the minority and female firms are on
10 contracts that have been awarded
11 commissioning services --

12 COUNCILMAN NEILSON: You're on
13 the wrong one.

14 MR. JONES: This is on 4601
15 Market, which the Public Property
16 Commissioner was just testifying on. And
17 as it relates to 4601 Market, contracts
18 have been awarded, conformed, and people
19 are getting paid. And I requested under
20 the Pennsylvania Right to Know Act to the
21 Law Department, OEO and other places
22 asking for who represented the actual
23 firms signed on documents to represent
24 black, minority, and women businesses,
25 and I have not gotten it.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 On eContract Philly's website,
3 there were two contracts on the soft cost
4 sides commissioning services that were
5 listed as being awarded, but the minority
6 business information wasn't on that.
7 It's not able to be seen on the OEO
8 annual report yet because the quarterly
9 report time period for when that's to be
10 recorded isn't up yet.

11 So, in other words, the point
12 is, we don't know who the minority and
13 female businesses are on the projects
14 that have been awarded for design,
15 construction management, project
16 management, commissioning services,
17 owners rep, and there may have been one
18 other. There's also been a demolition
19 contract awarded through the Procurement
20 Department, Department of Public Property
21 Capital Programs Office. That was over
22 six months ago. Still don't know who the
23 minority and female business people are,
24 because they won't be releasing it until
25 the annual or quarterly reporting period.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 So I'm just asking that a plan
3 is one thing, but those services I just
4 spoke of, folks have signed contracts
5 with the City Law Department. Those
6 contracts have been conformed, and
7 they're getting paid mobilization money,
8 and we don't know who the black and
9 female minority businesses are. And I
10 would pray that this Committee, upon
11 receipt of that, publicize it so we can
12 see what that distribution is with the
13 blacks and minorities and female
14 businesses that are on these contracts
15 that have been let to date for soft cost
16 services and the one public works
17 contract for demo services that's been
18 awarded.

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
20 for your testimony.

21 If I can ask the Commissioner
22 of Public Property to please answer the
23 request in writing to the Chair and
24 circulate it to the Committee members.

25 Thank you for your testimony.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 MR. ALI: Councilman, I'd like
3 to speak.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Let me
5 say that we thank Hanford Jones for
6 trying to keep up on this and major
7 projects in our city, and we think it
8 would be great to submit the information
9 to him and to the Committee and that that
10 keeps everything open and satisfies
11 everybody involved in this project. It's
12 so major that all the eyes looking on it,
13 the more, the better. So we thank you
14 for your interest in this issue as well,
15 Mr. Jones.

16 And same for you, Mr. Ali.
17 (Witness approached witness
18 table.)

19 MR. ALI: Thank you.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: Mr. Ali,
21 good morning. And you were here to
22 testify on Bill No. 140275. Could you
23 please state your name for the record and
24 proceed with your testimony.

25 MR. ALI: Good morning -- good

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 afternoon, Chairman and members of the
3 Public Property and Public Works
4 Committee. My name is Jihad Ali. I'm a
5 citizen of Philadelphia. I'm here to
6 give testimony on Bill 140275.

7 I really want to come up and
8 make a comment and thank the
9 Councilwoman, because this issue of
10 inclusion in the City, although a lot of
11 times I've given testimony here before,
12 this Council has done a tremendous effort
13 to ensure that there's inclusion of
14 disadvantaged people in these projects.
15 However, when it leaves outside these
16 doors, it's all bets is off. When we
17 employ these construction managers, their
18 thing is divide and conquer. They tell
19 the building trades we're going to do
20 building trades, and that's the main
21 point.

22 The point is, we need an EOP
23 plan because we need to be able to give
24 the community a sense that we can monitor
25 this project. The Office of Economic

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Opportunity, in my opinion, is the worst
3 thing that happened in the City of
4 Philadelphia, because of all the projects
5 that have come through this floor, almost
6 300 projects, not one project, not one
7 report is online that gives what the
8 results of these millions of dollars that
9 we put in these communities. So we
10 really have a game where we're playing --
11 we're playing a game. We're talking at
12 the beginning of these projects about
13 participation and transparency. We use
14 all the words that sound honorable -
15 participation, inclusion, equity - but at
16 the end of the day, there's no report.
17 As Councilman Jones says numerous times,
18 if we can track it, we can see it, we can
19 find a solution. So what they've done is
20 beat us at our own game. What they do
21 is, they bring in an outside manager and
22 give the -- or outside compliance agency
23 and they give them the reports and then
24 the reports are on call whenever they
25 need them. But we, the citizens, we

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 shouldn't have to jump through hoops to
3 see how these dollars are being spent.

4 So you're our representatives,
5 and we're here because we have faith in
6 the system. So it's through the efforts
7 of people like yourself and Councilwoman
8 Blackwell that we'll be able to monitor
9 this project, but it is something that
10 needs to be done.

11 Thank you for allowing me to
12 testify.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
14 you very much, Mr. Ali, and certainly as
15 I just said with regard to Hanford Jones'
16 testimony, in a project this big, we
17 can't have too many eyes look on it to
18 make sure nothing has been overlooked and
19 that everyone who would like to know
20 what's going on with the project so that
21 they feel that they can see all that's
22 happening so that certainly inclusion is
23 what it should be and so that the
24 neighborhood gets all the jobs it can and
25 we do the right thing by tax dollars as

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 well.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. ALI: Thank you.

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: Is there
6 anyone else here that wishes to testify
7 on Bill No. 140275?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: May I ask
10 the Administration to please approach the
11 table and proceed with your testimony on
12 Bill No. 140940.

13 (Witnesses approached witness
14 table.)

15 COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: Good
16 afternoon, Chairman Henon and members of
17 the Committee on Public Property and
18 Public Works. My name is Bridget
19 Collins-Greenwald and I am the
20 Commissioner of the Department of Public
21 Property. I am here today to testify in
22 support of Bill No. 140940, an ordinance
23 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
24 Property to convey to the Philadelphia
25 Authority for Industrial Development all

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 or part of a parcel of land located at
3 2600-26 North 3rd Street, for further
4 conveyance, under certain terms and
5 conditions.

6 Comhar Incorporated, whose
7 principal is Nicholas Manno, will
8 purchase this property for \$79,800. The
9 property will be used to expand Comhar's
10 current business by providing parking.

11 The Department of Public
12 Property supports this measure and,
13 accordingly, I respectfully ask that City
14 Council approve Bill No. 140940.

15 I am requesting a suspension of
16 the rules so as to allow for the first
17 reading at the next session of Council.

18 Thank you. I will be happy to
19 answer any questions you may have.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: Are there
21 any questions from the Committee on this
22 bill, on Bill No. 140940?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: I just have
25 a few questions.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Anybody else on the Committee?

3 Nobody from the Committee?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. Why
6 don't you proceed with testimony on the
7 next bill, 140 -- is there anyone else
8 here that wishes to testify on Bill No.
9 140940?

10 (Witnesses approached witness
11 table.)

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: Please state
13 your name for the record and proceed with
14 your testimony.

15 MR. MANNO: My name is Nicholas
16 Manno. I'm the Chief Financial Officer
17 for Comhar Inc. I wanted to just clarify
18 that I am not personally purchasing the
19 site. Comhar Inc. is purchasing the
20 facility for their operations in the
21 area.

22 What it is, is when we moved
23 into the area, we serve about 2,400
24 individuals at that site, and one of the
25 recommendations or requests from

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Councilwoman Sanchez was that we provide
3 as much off-street parking as possible,
4 and we were using that lot for our
5 facility and for our operations.
6 Subsequently, it went up for sale, and
7 not knowing who a potential buyer would
8 be or what it would be used for, we felt
9 it would be in our best interest, both as
10 an organization, the community, and
11 Councilwoman Sanchez's request, to
12 purchase that lot and continue it as a
13 parking facility for our operations to
14 provide as much off-street parking as
15 possible and work with the community in
16 using it.

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Well, I have
18 a question then. Have you been working
19 with the Councilwoman and the community,
20 making sure that the community
21 participates and their concerns and
22 issues such as parking, have they been
23 addressed?

24 MR. MANNO: We have worked with
25 and talked with Councilwoman Sanchez on

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 the facility and the lot. We will, if
3 this proceeds forward, work with the
4 community and talk with the community and
5 utilize it as best as we possibly can on
6 off-street -- off-hours time.

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: I certainly
8 would suggest you working with the
9 District Councilperson, with the
10 community, trying to make sure that its
11 impact is not going to put anybody in any
12 kind of aggrieved position. So it's
13 important to work with the District
14 Councilperson and the community.

15 MR. MANNO: That's our intent.

16 COUNCILMAN HENON: I got a
17 question for Public Property. Who is the
18 agreement with with the City? Is it
19 Comhar or is it this gentleman
20 personally?

21 COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: Yeah.
22 As I testified, it's with Comhar, and
23 Nicholas Manno is the principal. So it's
24 with the incorporation. It's not with
25 him personally.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay.

3 Great.

4 MR. MANNO: So that's our
5 intent.

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: And I
7 believe somebody from the 7th
8 Councilmanic District is here today. So
9 I would suggest -- oh, there they go.
10 Well, the Chair recognizes Councilwoman
11 Maria Quinones-Sanchez.

12 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank
13 you, Mr. Chair. Yeah, Comhar, as he
14 mentioned, there are a lot of people that
15 get service there. Third Street -- one
16 of the reasons why this parking lot is
17 important for them is, they're on the
18 American Street corridor, and so what we
19 wanted to do was minimize the level of
20 residential car parking on American
21 Street and move it to 3rd Street so that
22 it doesn't impact the industrial corridor
23 that's on American Street. So this
24 works, and we've agreed to notify the
25 neighbors, and Comhar has agreed to allow

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 some of the residents who have
3 historically parked there to continue to
4 park there during the evening
5 non-business hours. So we think it's a
6 win-win. We keep parking off of American
7 Street for the industrial zone.

8 COUNCILMAN HENON: Great.
9 Thank you for clarifying that.

10 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank
11 you, Mr. Chair.

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
13 for your testimony.

14 Is there anyone else here who
15 wishes to testify on Bill No. 140940?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Anyone else
18 from this Committee?

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
21 for your testimony.

22 Would you please proceed with
23 your testimony on Bill No. 140946.

24 COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: Good
25 afternoon, Chairman Henon and members of

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 the Committee on Public Property and
3 Public Works. My name is Bridget
4 Collins-Greenwald and I am the
5 Commissioner of the Department of Public
6 Property. I am here today to testify in
7 support of Bill No. 140946, an ordinance
8 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
9 Property to convey to the Philadelphia
10 Authority for Industrial Development all
11 or part of a parcel of land bounded by
12 West Wildey Street, Leopard Street,
13 Richmond Street, and North Front Street,
14 for further conveyance, under certain
15 terms and conditions.

16 Core Equity IV, L.P., whose
17 principal is Tom Farrell, will purchase
18 this property for \$1,250,000. The
19 property will be developed into a
20 mixed-use building, including retail
21 space and residential apartments.

22 The Department of Public
23 Property supports this measure and,
24 accordingly, I respectfully ask that City
25 Council approve Bill No. 140946.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 I am requesting a suspension of
3 the rules so as to allow for the first
4 reading at the next session of Council.

5 Thank you. I will be happy to
6 answer any questions you may have.

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
8 Commissioner. I have a few questions.

9 How does the sales price
10 compare with the appraised value of the
11 property?

12 COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: It is
13 the appraised value.

14 COUNCILMAN HENON: It is
15 appraised value?

16 Were there any other bids that
17 were received on the property?

18 COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: One
19 other bid.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: Has Core
21 Equity L.P. developed any other
22 properties here in the City that you're
23 aware of?

24 COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: I am
25 not, but I believe Mr. Farrell is here.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 I could ask him to step up, if you'd
3 like. I'm not really sure of their
4 history, but if you would like him to
5 step up.

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: Sure.

7 (Witness approached witness
8 table.)

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: State your
10 name for the record.

11 MR. FARRELL: It's Tom Farrell.

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: Tom, how are
13 you? Thank you for stepping up. You
14 heard the question.

15 MR. FARRELL: I did. So I'm
16 not really the principal. It's Michael
17 Samschick who is the principal. I'm an
18 employee of the company.

19 Yeah, we have developed a lot
20 of properties in the area. We own four
21 or five blocks in the surrounding area.
22 We just did a 225-unit apartment
23 building. We're redeveloping a 140,000
24 square foot retail complex right along
25 Delaware Avenue. We've done a 135,000

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 square foot office building.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. And
4 what is the timeframe for this particular
5 project, construction timeframe?

6 MR. FARRELL: So it's part of a
7 bigger plan. We're going to use it for
8 parking temporarily as we develop the
9 rest of the area, and then once we
10 complete a bigger parking structure,
11 we'll be converting that into the retail
12 and apartments. So I would say it would
13 probably start within a year to two
14 years.

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: Are you
16 waiting for letters of intent from the
17 bigger construction master plan or is
18 this going to be phased in over -- so how
19 long do you anticipate the phase-in with
20 the parking, the use of this property?

21 MR. FARRELL: I mean, I think
22 we would start using the parking probably
23 in the next three to six months and then
24 start to develop it probably a year to a
25 year and a half after that.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. Well,
3 thank you for your testimony.

4 MR. FARRELL: You're welcome.
5 Thanks.

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: Are there
7 any questions from the members of the
8 Committee regarding this bill?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: Is there
11 anyone else here that wishes to testify
12 on Bill No. 140946?

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN HENON: Would you
15 please proceed with your testimony on
16 Bill No. 140949, Commissioner.

17 COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: Good
18 afternoon, Chairman Henon and members of
19 the Committee on Public Property and
20 Public Works. My name is Bridget
21 Collins-Greenwald and I am the
22 Commissioner of the Department of Public
23 Property. I am here today to testify in
24 support of Bill No. 140949, an ordinance
25 authorizing the Commissioner of Public

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Property to convey to the Philadelphia
3 Authority for Industrial Development all
4 or a part of the parcel of land bounded
5 by Tulip Street, East Tucker Street,
6 Memphis Street, and East Albert Street,
7 for further conveyance, under certain
8 terms and conditions.

9 Cedar Street Homes, LLC, whose
10 principal is Michael Tomasetti, will
11 purchase this property for \$280,000. The
12 property will be developed into seven
13 single-family homes.

14 The Department of Public
15 Property supports this measure and,
16 accordingly, I respectfully ask that City
17 Council approve Bill No. 140949.

18 I am requesting a suspension of
19 the rules so as to allow for the first
20 reading at the next session of Council.

21 Thank you. I'll be happy to
22 answer any questions you may have.

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
24 you, Commissioner. Is the property being
25 used for anything right now?

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 COMMISSIONER GREENWALD: It's
3 vacant now.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.
5 Thank you.

6 Any questions from members of
7 the Committee?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing
10 none, anyone else here to testify on Bill
11 No. 140949?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing
14 none, the next bill we'll take up is Bill
15 No. 140800. Who is here to testify?
16 Okay.

17 (Witness approached witness
18 table.)

19 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Good
20 afternoon.

21 MS. CRAIGHEAD: Good afternoon.

22 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Please
23 identify yourself and proceed.

24 MS. CRAIGHEAD: Good afternoon,
25 Chairman --

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: A little
3 closer to the mic.

4 MS. CRAIGHEAD: Good afternoon,
5 Chairman Henon and Committee members. My
6 name is Stephanie Craighead. I'm the
7 Director of Planning, Preservation,
8 Property Management for Philadelphia
9 Parks and Recreation. I am pleased to
10 appear before you today on behalf of the
11 Department to testify in support of Bill
12 No. 140800, which authorizes the Public
13 Property Commissioner, on behalf of the
14 City of Philadelphia, to accept as a
15 donation a deed from The School District
16 of Philadelphia that conveys title to the
17 City to a parcel of land known as 3600
18 North 11th Street, also known as 11th and
19 Venango Playground.

20 Philadelphia Parks and
21 Recreation has operated the 11th and
22 Venango Playground for the last eight
23 years. Improvements have been made to
24 the playground, including the
25 installation of playground equipment.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 The Department has maintained the
3 playground and conducts programming.
4 Additional funding has been committed to
5 improve the playground's role as a public
6 play and community space.

7 Therefore, I appear before you
8 to pledge support of Philadelphia Parks
9 and Recreation for this legislation and
10 respectfully ask that City Council
11 approve Bill No. 140800.

12 In addition, I respectfully
13 request that this Committee vote this
14 bill out with a favorable recommendation
15 and that the rules be suspended to permit
16 first reading in the next Council
17 session.

18 Thank you. I would be happy to
19 answer any questions you have at this
20 time.

21 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
22 you, Ms. Craighead.

23 Any questions?

24 (No response.)

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 none, is there anyone else -- thank you
3 for your testimony.

4 Anyone else here to testify on
5 Bill No. 140800?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing
8 none, we now move on to Bill No. 140229.
9 I think Ms. McColloch.

10 (Witness approached witness
11 table.)

12 MS. MCCOLLOCH: Good afternoon,
13 Councilman Henon and other members of the
14 Public Property and Public Works
15 Committee and members of City Council. I
16 am Deborah McColloch, Director of
17 Housing. I am here to present testimony
18 on behalf of the Administration on Bill
19 No. 140229, which would establish the
20 Allegheny Avenue, Roosevelt Boulevard and
21 Erie Avenue Affordable Housing
22 Opportunity Zones pursuant to the 1500
23 New Affordable Housing Units Initiative.

24 The Administration shares
25 Council's commitment to create a wide

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 range of affordable housing opportunities
3 and to strengthen Philadelphia's low- and
4 moderate-income neighborhoods. We also
5 share Council's goal to maximize
6 available city, state, and federal
7 resources to transform vacant public and
8 private properties into affordable rental
9 and homeownership housing units. For
10 this reason, the Administration is
11 committed to working with Council
12 President Clarke and the sponsors of Bill
13 No. 140229 to create Affordable Housing
14 Opportunity Zones in designated
15 neighborhoods throughout Philadelphia to
16 facilitate the development of affordable
17 housing.

18 We look forward to continuing
19 to work with City Council staff and
20 affordable housing stakeholders to
21 maximize all available resources to
22 create and preserve affordable rental and
23 homeownership housing opportunities in
24 these zones and throughout the City.

25 Thank you for the opportunity

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 to present this testimony. I'm happy to
3 answer questions you may have.

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

5 I have a quick question. I know we've
6 had and there's been plenty of
7 discussions about the zones at Public
8 Property hearings back in June, and it
9 was told to us that Council needs to
10 establish Affordable Housing Opportunity
11 Zones first, which we have, and then
12 attempt to identify the resources to
13 build them. Has OHCD, has there been any
14 resources that have been identified for
15 possible funding streams to these zones?

16 MS. MCCOLLOCH: Not any new
17 resources. The usual ones that we
18 present to you every year as part of our
19 Consolidated Plan process, federal,
20 Community Development Block Grant, HOME
21 funds, Housing Trust Fund earnings and so
22 forth.

23 COUNCILMAN HENON: And that's

24 all --

25 MS. MCCOLLOCH: It's all part

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 of the same --

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: It's all
4 part of the plan for the Opportunity
5 Zones?

6 MS. MCCOLLOCH: Yes.

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: Great.

8 Does any member of the
9 Committee have any questions?

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILMAN HENON: Is there
12 anyone here who wishes to testify on Bill
13 No. 140229?

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: Deborah,
16 thank you for your time.

17 MS. MCCOLLOCH: Thank you.

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: We will now
19 hear testimony on Bill No. 140885. Is
20 there anyone here that wishes to testify
21 on the bill?

22 (Witnesses approached witness
23 table.)

24 MR. STOBBER: Good afternoon,
25 Chairman Henon and members of the

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Committee. My name is Andrew Stober. I
3 serve as the Chief of Staff in the
4 Mayor's Office of Transportation and
5 Utilities, and I'm here today in support
6 of Bill No. 140885, an ordinance
7 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
8 Property on behalf of the City of
9 Philadelphia to enter into a lease with
10 the Philadelphia Authority for Industrial
11 Development for the lease of a certain
12 parcel of City-owned land on the South
13 side of Baltimore Avenue between 39th and
14 41st Street, for further sublease, all
15 under certain terms and conditions.

16 This area is commonly known as
17 the 40th Street Portal or where the
18 trolleys emerge from the tunnel that
19 offers access to University City and
20 Center City. The Mayor's Office of
21 Transportation and Utilities, SEPTA, and
22 the Department of Public Property have
23 worked closely with the University City
24 District for the past few years to create
25 an opportunity at the 40th Street Portal

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 to create a fitting gateway to West
3 Philadelphia, an improved pedestrian
4 experience, and a vibrant neighborhood
5 public space. The UCD has a strong track
6 record of partnering with the City and
7 others to develop and maintain dynamic
8 public spaces that welcome residents,
9 commuters, and visitors alike.

10 City Council has approved a
11 \$200,000 City Capital investment in the
12 project. This City investment will
13 leverage \$1.8 million in private,
14 foundation, and state funds. The City's
15 agreement with UCD ensures that all
16 standard City requirements, including
17 public bidding, an Economic Opportunity
18 Plan, and the application of 21st century
19 wage standards, will be part of the
20 lease.

21 I respectfully request that the
22 rules of Council be suspended to allow
23 for first reading at the next session of
24 Council, and I'd welcome the opportunity
25 to answer any questions.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

3 State your name and proceed
4 with your testimony.

5 MR. BERGHEISER: Thank you.

6 Good afternoon. My name is Matt
7 Bergheiser and I'm Executive Director of
8 University City District, a non-profit
9 organization that helps to foster a more
10 vibrant neighborhood. Thank you to
11 Councilman Henon and members of the
12 Committee, and I am especially grateful
13 to Councilwoman Blackwell, without whose
14 partnership and leadership this and so
15 many other critical projects simply would
16 not be possible. Thank you,
17 Councilwoman.

18 I'm here today with Andrew
19 Stober and with my colleague, Prema
20 Katari Gupta, to talk to you about the
21 40th Street trolley portal. And what I'd
22 like to say about it is that it's a site
23 that has long captured the imagination of
24 the West Philadelphia community. As
25 Andrew mentioned, it's located where four

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 out of the five SEPTA trolley lines that
3 run through our community emerge from the
4 ground, and it's an acre of bare concrete
5 surrounded by a vibrant West
6 Philadelphia.

7 Within a few weeks of starting
8 my job in 2009, I was approached by
9 members of the community to see how we
10 might improve this site, and a letter
11 stating the widespread support of the
12 community and the deep interest of the
13 community in this project is included in
14 the materials we provided.

15 The lease we are asking you to
16 authorize and the project that my
17 colleague will describe is the
18 culmination of years of collaborative
19 work between community members, SEPTA,
20 the City, PIDC, and our organization to
21 transform the site into a community
22 asset.

23 MS. GUPTA: Good afternoon. My
24 name is Prema Katari Gupta and I'm
25 Director of Planning and Economic

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Development at the University City
3 District.

4 The project we're presenting is
5 the happy result of several years of
6 partnerships and collaboration.

7 Fortunately for everyone, no one is
8 particularly attached to the trolley
9 portal in its current state. And an
10 image of the existing conditions is in
11 the packet. It is a derelict and
12 isolated expanse of concrete. The
13 neighbors want the site transformed into
14 a beautiful and lively community
15 gathering space with benches, trees and
16 shrubs, and a cafe. SEPTA was more than
17 happy to work with us as long as safety
18 concerns were addressed; namely, the
19 complete intermingling of pedestrians and
20 trolleys in the track area as well as
21 lighting upgrades. I think that they are
22 also very happy to have a maintenance
23 partner for the site, and we are very
24 proud of the standard we have set at The
25 Porch at 30th Street Station as well as

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 other public space projects throughout
3 West Philadelphia.

4 We worked with a landscape
5 architecture firm to come up with a
6 design that transforms the site into a
7 vibrant and social public space,
8 featuring trees, movable tables and
9 chairs, native horticulture, artful
10 lighting, and boulders for creative play.
11 The site will transform into an amenity
12 for residents, area workers, students, as
13 well as transit riders. In addition,
14 improvements will greatly improve safety
15 by rationalizing pedestrian circulation,
16 enhancing lighting, and providing a great
17 many more eyes on the street.

18 As Andrew mentioned, the
19 improvements cost approximately \$2
20 million and we are close to being fully
21 funded through roughly a 50/50 split of
22 public and private sources. We have
23 worked closely with the City and have an
24 Economic Opportunity Plan for
25 construction. We are eager to start this

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 project and are very grateful for your
3 time today.

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: The Chair
5 recognizes Councilwoman Blackwell.

6 Thank you for your testimony.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
8 you.

9 Certainly we are asking the
10 Committee to support this venture.
11 Frankly, this team, led by Matt
12 Bergheiser, has been the best we've had
13 for UCD and they do an excellent and
14 thorough job in their commitment to the
15 community. So we are happy to support
16 this project and certainly ask the
17 Committee to do the same.

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
19 Councilwoman.

20 Mr. Stober, your testimony
21 states that the cost of the project is \$2
22 million. Is SEPTA contributing anything
23 to the financial end of this project?

24 MR. STOBER: SEPTA is not
25 contributing to the financial.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN HENON: According to
3 the lease agreement, UCD is responsible
4 for the majority of the premises?

5 MR. STOBBER: That's correct.

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: What isn't
7 being maintained by UCD under the
8 agreement?

9 MR. STOBBER: So the tunnel
10 itself -- what's not being maintained by
11 UCD under the agreement are all of the
12 things that SEPTA felt it was important
13 for it to continue to maintain. So all
14 of the SEPTA -- all of the poles that
15 have the catenary, all of the area around
16 the tracks, and the tunnel itself are
17 going to continue to be maintained by
18 SEPTA.

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: So the cafe
20 is going to be generating some revenue.
21 Will UCD receive any portion of that
22 revenue or is that going to the General
23 Fund?

24 MR. STOBBER: So the way the
25 agreement is structured is, any revenue

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 that is generated from the cafe will have
3 to be reinvested based on improved costs
4 in the pedestrian plaza and maintaining
5 that. Anything beyond that, I don't
6 recall it with me, but there would be a
7 split with the City and UCD.

8 COUNCILMAN HENON: It's in the
9 agreement?

10 MR. STOBBER: It's in the
11 agreement, yeah.

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: When do you
13 anticipate the start of construction and
14 what's the timeline on it?

15 MR. STOBBER: I'll let UCD
16 address that.

17 MS. GUPTA: Our hope is the
18 spring we'll be able to start
19 construction, if all goes as planned.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: And starting
21 in spring?

22 MS. GUPTA: Spring.

23 COUNCILMAN HENON: Ending in
24 spring?

25 MS. GUPTA: It will probably

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 take about 12 months of construction.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: Great. We
4 appreciate your time.

5 Are there any members of the
6 Committee that wish to ask any questions?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILMAN HENON: Anyone here
9 today that wishes to ask any questions or
10 testimony on Bill No. 140885?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
13 for your time.

14 For the record, I'd like to
15 note that there is a letter of support
16 that's been submitted to the Committee on
17 the project that is submitted on the
18 record from Spruce Hill Community
19 Association.

20 We will now hear testimony on
21 Bill No. 140897. Is there anyone from
22 the Administration that wishes to testify
23 on this bill?

24 (Witness approached witness
25 table.)

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2 MR. STOBBER: Good afternoon,
3 Chairman Henon and members of the
4 Committee. My name is Andrew Stober.
5 I'm Chief of Staff in the Mayor's Office
6 of Transportation and Utilities. I am
7 here today to testify in support of Bill
8 140897, an ordinance authorizing the
9 Procurement Commissioner, on behalf of
10 the City, to enter into a Concession
11 Agreement with Titan Outdoor for a street
12 furniture and advertising program, and to
13 permit the placement of such street
14 furniture in the right-of-way.

15 I am delighted to bring before
16 Council for its consideration a proposed
17 Concession Agreement that would benefit
18 tens of thousands of Philadelphia
19 commuters each day, improve our
20 streetscapes in neighborhoods across the
21 City, generate additional revenue for the
22 General Fund, expand our longstanding
23 program of deeply discounted advertising
24 for arts and cultural institutions, and
25 create significant long-term

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 opportunities for locally based minority
3 and women-owned businesses. Candidly, I
4 would not be here today were it not for
5 Council's insistence that the City pursue
6 opportunities to expand the number of
7 transit shelters that serve our citizens
8 and grow General Fund revenue.

9 The core of this 20-year
10 agreement is an approximately \$12.4
11 million investment by Titan to replace
12 the approximately 300 existing transit
13 shelters across the City and add
14 approximately 300 more shelters. The
15 shelters, which will now include benches,
16 lighting, and transit signage, will be
17 installed over a five-year period along
18 transit routes throughout the City, with
19 multiple shelters installed in each
20 Council district in each year of the
21 installation period. The shelters and
22 kiosks, which you'll see renderings of
23 shortly, and other physical elements of
24 the project are designed by DIGSAU, an
25 award-winning Philadelphia architecture

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.
2 firm.

3 Beyond these 600 shelters, the
4 agreement calls for the installation of
5 100 arts information kiosks and replacing
6 the poorly maintained honor boxes in
7 Center City with beautifully designed and
8 professionally maintained honor box
9 condos and kiosks, and the opportunity to
10 install benches at transit stops that do
11 not have sufficient demand to support a
12 transit shelter.

13 The arts information kiosks
14 will be instantly recognizable, an iconic
15 and guaranteed home for the public
16 promotion of the City's non-profit arts
17 and cultural institutions. The kiosks
18 will hold standard bus shelter size ads
19 and have at least one side dedicated to
20 arts and culture promotion. The pricing
21 of these ads and the administration will
22 be handled by the Center City District
23 through their existing program.

24 In addition to providing this
25 significant capital investment, Titan

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 will pay the City both a minimum annual
3 guarantee and a percentage of its gross
4 revenues from the program. The minimum
5 annual guarantee will pay the City no
6 less than \$52 million over the term of
7 the agreement, which is 20 years, and the
8 share of gross revenues is anticipated to
9 total another \$47 million, for a total of
10 \$100 million.

11 Titan has a strong track record
12 in Philadelphia. This agreement doesn't
13 just provide for installation, but also
14 contains strict maintenance standards and
15 enforcement provisions to make sure that
16 the City and the public get and keep the
17 high-quality program we've negotiated
18 for.

19 Titan has also built a
20 reputation for exceeding its commitment
21 to minority and women-owned contractors.
22 This contract includes an Economic
23 Opportunity Plan that anticipates 80
24 percent of expenses being paid to
25 minority or women-owned businesses.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 At the City's sole discretion,
3 the contract allows for the City to join
4 others around the world in converting
5 static bus shelter panels to digital
6 panels. These digital panels, if
7 allowed, would be appropriate to the
8 environment. They are contractually
9 restricted from displaying video or any
10 rapid animation and would be required to
11 stay within City-established limits for
12 brightness. Ten percent of all
13 advertising time on digital panels,
14 should they be allowed by the City, would
15 be dedicated to public service
16 announcements, including arts and
17 cultural information.

18 This contract affords the City
19 the opportunity to replace decrepit
20 transit shelters with world-class
21 amenities designed right here in
22 Philadelphia while generating numerous
23 other benefits for the City.

24 I respectfully request that the
25 Committee amend the ordinance to include

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 the full Concession Agreement and report
3 the bill with a favorable recommendation
4 and that the rules of Council be
5 suspended to allow for first reading at
6 the next session of Council.

7 I'd welcome the opportunity to
8 answer any questions.

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
10 Mr. Stober. The amendments have been
11 circulated, and they'll be addressed in
12 our Committee meeting.

13 Would Scott Goldsmith from
14 Titan please approach.

15 You can stay there.

16 (Witness approached witness
17 table.)

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: When you are
19 ready, would you please state your name
20 for the record and proceed with your
21 testimony.

22 MR. GOLDSMITH: Scott
23 Goldsmith. I am the Chief Commercial
24 Officer of Titan.

25 Good afternoon, Chairman Henon

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 and members of the Committee. My name is
3 Scott Goldsmith, Executive Vice President
4 and Chief Commercial Officer of Titan. I
5 am here in support of Bill 140897, an
6 ordinance authorizing the Procurement
7 Commissioner, on behalf of the City, to
8 enter into a Concession Agreement with my
9 company, Titan Outdoor, LLC, for the
10 provision of a coordinated street
11 furniture and advertising program, and
12 approving the placement in the
13 right-of-way for such street furniture,
14 all under certain terms and conditions.

15 Titan is a media company that
16 helps municipalities develop solutions
17 through innovation and advertising. We
18 are unique in the out-of-home industry
19 because our focus is firmly and
20 exclusively on transportation
21 advertising. We sell and market to
22 people in transit, a demographic that
23 advertisers and brands are anxious to
24 reach. Titan was the only company with a
25 national sales force exclusively

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 dedicated to the sale of advertising for
3 cities and transit authorities. We are
4 leading the industry in innovation and
5 will bring it to the City of
6 Philadelphia, if awarded the Concession
7 Agreement.

8 Titan has operated in the City
9 of Philadelphia since 2005. We've served
10 as SEPTA's advertising contractor since
11 2005 and the City's bus shelter
12 contractor since 2011. We maintain a
13 fully operational sales office and
14 operations facility in the City and
15 employ 43 people, the majority of whom
16 live in Philadelphia, and those are all
17 full-time employees. We are also a
18 national media company, with offices in
19 13 markets and 125 additional sales and
20 marketing executives exclusively focused
21 on selling advertising for our municipal
22 partners. Titan has paid the City more
23 than \$5 and a half million since 2011 in
24 connection with the existing bus shelter
25 concession, including more than \$2.2

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1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 million in overage payments.

3 In formulating our proposal, it
4 was very important to Titan that we hire
5 a local Philadelphia design and
6 architecture firm to design the street
7 furniture. We believe that DIGSAU -- and
8 there are renderings just to the right --
9 has designed street furniture that will
10 be both physically attractive and robust
11 throughout the 20-year term. Jules
12 Dingle, a DIGSAU partner, is here today
13 to answer any questions you might have.

14 Titan prides itself on directly
15 employing an in-house operations staff
16 that will ensure that street furniture is
17 properly maintained. We are committed to
18 ensuring that all of our shelters are
19 cleaned and serviced on a regular basis,
20 and the contract is quite clear on our
21 obligations. We are also proud of our
22 commitment to clear snow from the
23 shelters within 24 hours of the last
24 snowfall, and all of our operations
25 employees are members of DC31.

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2 Titan is proposing a turnkey
3 solution that comes at absolutely no cost
4 to taxpayers. In addition to providing a
5 significant capital investment of
6 approximately \$12.4 million, we will pay
7 the City both a minimum annual guarantee
8 and a percentage of the gross revenues
9 from the program. The minimum annual
10 guarantee will pay the City no less than
11 52 million over the term of the
12 agreement, and the share of gross revenue
13 is anticipated to total another 47
14 million, for a total estimated payment of
15 \$100 million over the 20-year term.

16 In addition, Titan is the
17 leader in providing digital networks to
18 transit and municipal authorities. We
19 operate over 2,000 digital displays on
20 transit properties and municipal
21 properties. It is revolutionizing the
22 way in which advertising is delivered, as
23 it generates significantly more revenue
24 for our partners and it allows
25 municipalities the opportunity to deliver

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 relevant and emergency messaging to its
3 citizens. We estimate that the
4 additional digital will result in over
5 \$13 million in additional payments to the
6 City, and we are excited at the prospect
7 of installing digital displays on some
8 street furniture, but we also understand
9 it will be at the sole discretion of the
10 City.

11 Titan's commitment to utilizing
12 minority and women-owned businesses is a
13 corporate mandate that we take seriously.
14 We have built a reputation in
15 Philadelphia and across the nation of
16 exceeding our commitments to minority and
17 women-owned contractors. We are
18 currently exceeding all of our OEO
19 contractual goals in each of the markets
20 that we operate, including Philadelphia,
21 and we will continue to be proactive in
22 maximizing OEO participation if awarded
23 the new concession.

24 I want to thank Councilmembers
25 Johnson and Henon as well as the Council

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 President for sponsoring and introducing
3 the legislation. We are looking forward
4 to continuing expanding our partnership
5 with the City of Philadelphia, and we
6 respectfully request that you vote to
7 approve Bill 140897.

8 We're happy to answer any
9 additional questions you might have.

10 Thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
12 for your testimony. I have a few
13 questions.

14 There's been a lot of
15 information out there on the capital
16 investment that Titan is making under
17 this agreement, and I don't see anything
18 where it pertains to the maintenance
19 costs. Under the current contract, can
20 somebody tell the Committee what Titan
21 spends on the annual maintenance costs
22 and how much it expects to spend for the
23 300 pieces of furniture under the
24 expansion?

25 MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, over the

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 course of the last four years, we spent
3 approximately \$1.6 million in operational
4 costs, and to mention 1.1 million of that
5 has been with MBE, W, and DBE firms. We
6 expect obviously these operational costs
7 will expand as we install more street
8 furniture, so there will be 600 total
9 shelters. And the contract is quite
10 clear about our obligations.

11 In addition, there is a letter
12 of credit of \$500,000 that we're required
13 to maintain that the City can draw down
14 on in the event that we do not do what we
15 say we're going to do. And we are going
16 to expand our operations team. As I
17 said, we have 24 full-time operations
18 employees with trucks, and these are all
19 employed by Titan and, again, they're all
20 union members, and they know what they're
21 doing. They've been doing this for the
22 last four years. And we worked very
23 closely with the City over the last four
24 years to maintain and make sure that the
25 shelters, albeit they were an aging

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 infrastructure that we inherited, we're
3 very excited to be working with DIGSAU to
4 build new street furniture that will be
5 considerably easier to maintain, because
6 the way it's constructed is meant to --
7 it will be easier to clean, but we'll
8 have people out to these shelters at
9 least once a week and likely more.

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: In one of
11 the packets I read that the proposed
12 digital signs would have an option of
13 carrying information about SEPTA, SEPTA
14 delays. How would that work where we
15 would have discussions with SEPTA about
16 this proposal?

17 MR. STOBBER: Sure. So we would
18 coordinate with SEPTA on working with
19 them to stream information to digital
20 shelters. You're seeing lots of other
21 cities do this in terms of using that
22 technology to deliver a whole variety of
23 public service information, from just
24 regular information like SEPTA delays to
25 emergency information.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Well, that's
3 good to know that we're not just a pilot
4 program here in the City of Philadelphia.

5 So in Center City, being it's a
6 very active public transit system and
7 it's robust and it's very dependent upon
8 streamlining that kind of information,
9 could you tell me about the maps? Some
10 of the shelters in Center City have maps?

11 MR. STOBBER: Yeah. So some of
12 the shelters in Center City have maps.
13 Those maps were installed by the
14 Transportation Management Association in
15 Center City, which is under the auspices
16 of the Center City District. Those maps
17 would continue to be on the shelters.
18 We've designed these shelters
19 specifically with a place to put maps.
20 We'll hopefully be able to expand working
21 with SEPTA or with others to expand maps
22 to shelters in other parts of the City.

23 COUNCILMAN HENON: So they're
24 going to remain?

25 MR. STOBBER: They are going to

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 remain.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: Great.

4 Do we know exactly the
5 locations of the kiosks along Broad
6 Street, Walnut, Chester, and Market
7 Streets?

8 MR. STOBBER: So we don't know
9 the exact locations of the arts and
10 information kiosks yet. One of the
11 things that's most exciting to me about
12 this program is, we are now enshrining
13 this program. So we'll be there for 20
14 years, and we're expanding the number of
15 panels that are provided. So there will
16 be a net increase of 50 panels available
17 for discounted advertising available over
18 the next 20 years as a result of this
19 agreement.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: Are these
21 the same locations, the kiosks, as will
22 be replaced?

23 MR. STOBBER: So they are not
24 going to be -- so what's currently out
25 there are bus shelters on Walnut Street

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 and Broad Street and Market East. So the
3 bus shelters along Market East will
4 continue to be arts -- will continue to
5 have arts and culture panels on them.
6 The shelters along Walnut Street and
7 Broad Street are a critical part of
8 raising the funds to be able -- having
9 those available at market rates, having
10 the funding so we can provide expanded
11 shelters throughout the City. We're
12 going to be replacing those throughout
13 Center City and other locations at the
14 request of the arts and culture community
15 with these kiosks.

16 When that program was first
17 initiated 20 years ago, obviously Center
18 City looked very different. Walnut
19 Street was the street. That's not true
20 anymore. If you look at the pedestrian
21 volumes on Chestnut and Broad and JFK and
22 Market, they rival those on Walnut
23 Street. And so we'll hopefully help the
24 arts and culture community reach new
25 audiences where they are today, not just

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 where they were 20 years ago.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: And is
4 there a -- and if you don't have it,
5 maybe you can provide it to the Chair and
6 I'll distribute it to the Committee. Is
7 there an installation and replacement
8 kiosk schedule?

9 MR. STOBBER: Yes. So there's a
10 plan to install them over five years. In
11 the first year, 34 and then 16 or 17 in
12 each of the following years. What we
13 have communicated to the Cultural
14 Alliance and others who have asked and
15 negotiated with Titan is that they
16 guarantee to provide the same number of
17 panels during that transition in Center
18 City. So while the Walnut Street panels
19 will be transitioning out, there'll be
20 other panels available at those rates in
21 Center City.

22 COUNCILMAN HENON: At those
23 rates. What type of visibility? Would
24 it remain the same type of visibility?

25 MR. STOBBER: So I think all of

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Center City from an advertising
3 perspective is high visibility, and we'll
4 be working hard with both Titan and the
5 Center City District and the Cultural
6 Alliance to make sure that these are in
7 locations where the Cultural Alliance is
8 reaching the customers it's seeking to
9 reach.

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: And who sets
11 the rates, the advertising rates?

12 MR. STOBBER: The Center City
13 District sets the rates in this program.

14 COUNCILMAN HENON: Great.

15 Are there any questions from
16 other members of the Committee?

17 The Chair recognizes
18 Councilwoman Maria Quinones-Sanchez.

19 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank
20 you. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for indulging
21 me.

22 As you move towards the
23 neighborhoods and providing some of these
24 shelters, have any policies been
25 promulgated about how do you prioritize

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 them and how are you coordinating with
3 our Commerce Department where we may be
4 doing commercial streetscape projects?

5 MR. STOBBER: They have. So
6 we've been working closely with the
7 Commerce Department for the past few
8 years to use some grant funds to install
9 shelters. One of the things that was
10 important from the City side as we
11 negotiated this agreement was to make
12 sure we weren't just installing shelters
13 in the places where they had the highest
14 market price for advertising. So the
15 agreement very clearly lays out
16 requirements for a number of shelters to
17 be installed in different parts of the
18 City and then additionally says to ensure
19 that no fewer than six shelters will be
20 installed in each Council district during
21 the five years, and we'll be working --
22 during each of those five years, I should
23 say. And we'll be working very closely
24 with Commerce, with Councilmembers, with
25 CDCs to coordinate the deployment.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank

3 you.

4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: Great.

6 Thank you.

7 Any other members wish to

8 ask...

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: Is there
11 anyone else here that wishes to testify
12 on Bill No. 140897?

13 Would you come forward, state
14 your name for the record, and proceed
15 with your testimony.

16 (Witness approached witness
17 table.)

18 MR. GOODWIN: Good afternoon,
19 Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee.
20 My name is Charles Goodwin. I am the
21 Vice President for Governmental Relations
22 of the Center City Residents Association,
23 the regional community organization for
24 Center City west of Broad Street.

25 We were hoping for a proposal

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 that we could be enthusiastic about, but
3 we don't feel we're quite there yet with
4 this proposal, and we're concerned about
5 the rapidity with which this proposal is
6 evidently being pushed through Council.

7 We do appreciate that we'll be
8 getting new bus shelters and that many
9 neighborhoods in the City will be getting
10 new bus shelters, but the bus shelters we
11 seem to be getting under this deal seem
12 to be very much 1990's bus shelters, not
13 2014 bus shelters or, more importantly,
14 2025 bus shelters or 2035 bus shelters
15 when this contract will end.

16 There's no provision in the
17 contract itself for transit information
18 other than the posting of bus route
19 numbers. In 2014, people who ride buses
20 in this town deserve at least the
21 schedule, and within five years, we
22 should have realtime information on all
23 the bus kiosks concerning when buses will
24 be arriving or how far away they are. We
25 can't be in 2035 with bus shelters that

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 don't provide that information. No other
3 city will be in that.

4 We're concerned that whereas
5 most cities the advertising on bus kiosks
6 is confined to a perpendicular plane to
7 the street, this agreement does not
8 restrict advertising to the perpendicular
9 plane, but allows for complete wraps of
10 the bus shelter and so forth. Needless
11 to say, that brings up concerns about
12 both crime and sanitation, people using
13 the facilities to relieve themselves if
14 they're fully masked from public view.

15 We do not know the extent to
16 which there's been consideration of
17 whether the City could do this more
18 advantageously than contract itself out.
19 I think that's taken as a foregone
20 conclusion, and we'd like to see more
21 thought put on that, both in terms of
22 construction and maintenance.

23 It's our understanding Titan
24 will own the structures throughout the
25 duration of this contract, and we're not

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 quite sure what's going on there.

3 On the newspaper box
4 replacement, well, the honor boxes have
5 become a bit of an eyesore. On the other
6 hand, the weekly free paper is probably a
7 dying technology, and are we going to
8 have streets crowded with these eight box
9 blight things that are going to be empty
10 15 years from now or ten years from now
11 when these papers aren't being printed
12 anymore?

13 About the arts kiosks, this
14 seems to us to be a replacement for the
15 arts advertising on Walnut Street and
16 other Center City streets. We're a
17 little concerned that these will be
18 obstructive of view and make it more
19 difficult for pedestrians to navigate
20 down the streets.

21 We have concerns that the
22 quality of ads, at least as regulated in
23 the contract, do not seem to adequately
24 regulate the ads. As written, we can
25 have pawnshops, casinos, Cash for Gold,

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 payday lenders, We Buy Homes, and any
3 number of other nuisance advertisers,
4 many of whom are financial interest that
5 prey on City residents advertising in our
6 bus kiosks, and there doesn't seem to be
7 any way to prevent this very downscale
8 advertising either in the core business
9 district or in the neighborhoods. And
10 certainly to the extent Walnut and
11 Chestnut Street, our principal functions
12 of those is to have nice people come from
13 out of town and leave their money here.
14 We should keep those streets looking nice
15 so that we encourage people to come in
16 and leave their money behind.

17 Finally, we have some concerns
18 that the financial benefits here as
19 represented, this is just a straight
20 adding up of the guaranteed payments over
21 the term of the contract, without any
22 reflection of appropriate discounting.
23 So that while we're hearing that there's
24 a \$52 million guaranteed benefit, when
25 you allow for a reasonable interest rate,

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 that benefit at 4 percent becomes
3 about -- 4 percent discount rate becomes
4 about a \$33 million guaranteed benefit
5 and at an 8 percent discount rate, which
6 would be a typical commercial rate,
7 becomes a \$22 million present value to
8 that benefit.

9 So in short, we do welcome
10 improvement in the transit
11 infrastructure. We're not sure yet that
12 this is the deal that we should have, and
13 that instead of putting this through when
14 the contract was released, I believe, on
15 November 25th, which is some 23 days
16 before City Council's final sitting this
17 year, that more study ought to go into
18 this and whatever arrangements need to be
19 made to extend the current contract an
20 extra quarter or so so that we can come
21 up with a contract that is good enough
22 for the people of the City of
23 Philadelphia, and we would encourage you
24 to do that.

25 Thank you.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
3 for your testimony.

4 I believe our next witness is
5 Katie Bartolotta from PennFuture.

6 COUNCILMAN OH: Chairman, could
7 I ask him a question?

8 COUNCILMAN HENON: Certainly.

9 Excuse me, sir. Center City
10 Residents, could you please approach the
11 witness stand again, please.

12 (Witnesses approached witness
13 table.)

14 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
15 much.

16 COUNCILMAN HENON: We have a
17 question from the Committee.

18 COUNCILMAN OH: Just for my
19 clarification, are you testifying on
20 behalf of the Center City Residents
21 Association or are you testifying as a
22 private person?

23 MR. GOODWIN: I am here as a
24 representative of the organization.
25 Because of the late date on which this

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 project has been presented to us, we, the
3 organization, have not yet been able to
4 reach -- we only heard about this on the
5 11th of November at our monthly meeting.

6 COUNCILMAN OH: Will you be --

7 MR. GOODWIN: We -- forgive me
8 for interrupting. The organization does
9 not have a position yet because we
10 haven't had time. I'm here to express
11 the concerns that have been raised in the
12 organization's deliberations at this
13 point.

14 COUNCILMAN OH: Okay. So you
15 are here representing the organization.
16 The organization has not officially come
17 to a decision. If you do, you will send
18 a letter to the Chairman?

19 MR. GOODWIN: Certainly. And
20 to repeat, we are enthusiastic about the
21 underlying concept. We're not sure that
22 this is the deal that gets us there.

23 COUNCILMAN OH: All right.

24 Thank you very much.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 for your time.

3 Anyone else from the Committee
4 want to ask any other questions?

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: Would you
7 please state your name for the record and
8 proceed with your testimony.

9 MS. BARTOLOTTA: Good
10 afternoon, Chairman Henon and members of
11 the Committee. My name is Katie
12 Bartolotta and I am the Philadelphia
13 Outreach Coordinator for PennFuture, a
14 statewide environmental advocacy
15 organization. In this capacity, I am
16 coordinating the Next Great City
17 initiative, a coalition of over 100
18 member organizations whose mission is to
19 create cleaner, safer, and healthier
20 Philadelphia neighborhoods.

21 As a coalition, Next Great City
22 identifies areas where neighborhood
23 quality of life in Philadelphia can be
24 improved through commonsense, low-cost
25 solutions rooted in sustainability. With

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 the strong leadership from the Nutter
3 Administration and members of the City
4 Council, the Next Great City Coalition
5 has had overwhelming success in seeing
6 our policy agenda come to fruition. We
7 are currently in the process of
8 developing a new agenda with new action
9 steps for the 2015 Mayoral and Council
10 races.

11 One of our initial
12 recommendations in our 2007 agenda
13 addressed an issue that was on the minds
14 of Philadelphians citywide - making
15 improvements to transit stops to
16 encourage ridership. Residents found
17 that many transit stops were poorly lit,
18 positioned in front of vacant properties
19 where there was little foot traffic, and
20 had signs that were difficult to read or
21 locate. The City's previous contracts
22 with advertising firms have led to
23 underwhelming revenues and infrastructure
24 improvements that did not address
25 properly the problems that discourage

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.
2 ridership.

3 Other major metropolitan cities
4 such as New York and Boston have already
5 had major successes with recent outdoor
6 advertising contracts. New York signed a
7 long-term 20-year agreement that is
8 expected to return one billion in revenue
9 over the duration of the contract. The
10 new infrastructure requirements in the
11 agreement will be fulfilled by local
12 businesses, creating 100 new jobs.

13 Boston's forward-looking
14 contract includes a provision that 80
15 percent of bus stops will have shelters
16 at the end of their ten-year contract.

17 We are pleased to see that
18 Titan Outdoor's proposal provides an
19 appropriate level of revenue and
20 infrastructure benefits to the City, and
21 our coalition supports the effort
22 wholeheartedly. Philadelphia has an
23 opportunity to take advantage of a
24 public-private partnership that could
25 yield impressive dividends as Boston and

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 New York cities have already achieved in
3 their respective contracts with outdoor
4 advertisers. Titan's revenue
5 projections, infrastructure goals, and
6 timelines are very encouraging.

7 The proposal submitted by Titan
8 promises a \$10 million investment in
9 repairing and adding shelters and kiosks.
10 Titan projected a guaranteed \$52 million
11 in revenue over the next 20 years, with a
12 potential for an additional 47 million
13 from the City's cut of sales revenue.

14 Titan has also identified additional
15 revenue sources from digital advertising
16 as well as from a personal electronic
17 advertising network that would allow
18 users to interface with advertisements
19 from their smartphones in realtime.

20 Titan has established high
21 participation rates of women and
22 minority-owned businesses to help fulfill
23 the contract needs and has identified by
24 name the companies that could provide
25 these services. As for design and

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 implementation, Titan has outlined an
3 aggressive remodel and build schedule
4 that has worked with Philadelphia
5 architects and designers DIGSAU to ensure
6 that all street furniture is designed to
7 fit different contexts; for example,
8 narrow sidewalks and high passenger
9 volumes.

10 Public-private partnerships can
11 give Philadelphians attractive public
12 spaces at no cost to the City. The
13 economic and environmental benefits can
14 multiply, increasing mobility through
15 increased ridership, eliminating eyesores
16 by revamping and adding to our shelter
17 and kiosk infrastructure, and decreasing
18 crime at stops where there is
19 insufficient lighting and traffic. By
20 increasing public transportation use, the
21 City lowers its automobile air pollution
22 levels that contribute to asthma and
23 other related illnesses.

24 PennFuture and the Next Great
25 City urges this body to vote this bill

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 out of Committee to allow the City to
3 enter into an outdoor advertising
4 contract with Titan.

5 Thank you, and I'm happy to
6 answer any questions.

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
8 for your testimony.

9 Any questions from the
10 Committee members?

11 The Chair recognizes
12 Councilwoman Blackwell.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
14 you.

15 I noted what you said about
16 places where they are not needed, but if
17 any company does inclusion and works with
18 the District Councilperson, certainly
19 we're vital in knowing where they are
20 needed, where our busy areas are, and
21 where our commercial corridors and other
22 areas are. So it makes a big difference.

23 Thank you for your testimony.

24 MS. BARTOLOTTA: Thank you.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Councilwoman.

3 Next witness, Hanford Jones.

4 (Witness approached witness

5 table.)

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: State your
7 name for the record and proceed with your
8 testimony.

9 MR. JONES: My name is Hanford
10 Jones, H-A-N-F-O-R-D.

11 Honorable members of this
12 Committee on Public Property and Public
13 Works, I am formally protesting any award
14 under Bill No. 14089700 to Titan on the
15 City of Philadelphia street furniture
16 contract. As a whistle blower, I
17 forwarded information to the Controller's
18 Office more than six months ago detailing
19 fraud and Minority Business Enterprise
20 abuse of the Mayor's and City Council's
21 efforts to include black, minority,
22 women, and disabled businesses on City
23 contract opportunities. Titan, who is
24 the incumbent on the City street
25 furniture contract, was detailed in

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Addendum No. 6 of this competition for
3 this RFP, which I faxed to Mr. Henon's
4 office on 11/25/14, as having achieved
5 over 67 percent of M/W/DBE participation.
6 That's when I discovered the fraud and
7 MBE abuse on this contract.

8 Titan also won a SEPTA contract
9 for over \$100 million to provide
10 advertising services to SEPTA using the
11 same DBE firms in their efforts to
12 defraud the U.S. Department of
13 Transportation and SEPTA's DBE program.

14 Once I received under the
15 Pennsylvania Right to Know Law the
16 information concerning the DBEs listed by
17 Titan, I discovered that they listed two
18 black-owned firms from Philadelphia who
19 to this day do not know anything about
20 being listed by Titan on the SEPTA
21 contract, which is signed by the
22 President of Titan, nor on this contract.

23 I pray that this Committee does
24 not move this recommendation forward
25 until the City Controller's Office

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 releases its review of my whistle blower
3 allegations.

4 I just want to add that I'm
5 waiting for a response from a particular
6 U.S. DOT office IG's representatives on
7 this subject as it relates to documents
8 signed on federal DBE forms to allege
9 that they met some DBE goals.

10 So I am submitting this for
11 e-mail for formal record inclusion to
12 this bill.

13 And I just want to add that the
14 ranges for this job were professional
15 services, which I didn't hear any
16 minority or female advertisement or PR
17 firms on their team. There was a goal
18 for construction and a goal for option
19 maintenance, and I don't know what the
20 EEO goals were for minorities and women
21 in the workforce, but I would hope that
22 this Committee really looks more deeper
23 into what the goals were in the proposal
24 and what is alleged to be submitted now
25 even on these super percents of

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 participation.

3 Thank you.

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you

5 for your testimony. And for the record,

6 an EOP plan has been attached to the

7 contract that has been circulated here to

8 the Committee members, and we'll

9 absolutely be happy to provide that to

10 you.

11 MR. JONES: Again, the fraud

12 and abuse was basically on the

13 incumbent's contract where they alleged

14 in Addendum No. 6 to have listed all

15 these firms that do not know -- did not

16 know two years ago that they were listed

17 by this very same firm. And as currently

18 as this year, on the SEPTA contract,

19 those same two black firms, local, did

20 not know that they were being listed by

21 Titan to SEPTA. So there's a breakdown

22 somewhere in OEO and the DBE office of

23 SEPTA calling to confirm people listed on

24 serious government forms as having

25 knowledge that their business is

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 participating. That evidently wasn't
3 done.

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

5 The Chair recognizes
6 Councilwoman Blackwell.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
8 you, Mr. Chairman. I'm requesting that
9 the Committee -- he mentioned several
10 organizations, several agencies, that is,
11 he mentioned the Controller's Office to
12 whom he has submitted information, we
13 have Angela Dowd-Burton, OEO office, and
14 I'm requesting that -- the Committee can
15 do what it want at this hearing, but I'm
16 requesting that before we do any voting
17 on this contract, that we hear from our
18 City agencies that they check into this
19 matter and the Mayor's Office of
20 Transportation to verify that we're doing
21 the right thing.

22 MR. JONES: Thank you very
23 much.

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

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Is there
3 anyone else here that wishes to testify
4 on Bill No. 140897?

5 Please approach.
6 (Witness approached witness
7 table.)

8 COUNCILMAN HENON: State your
9 name for the record and you may proceed
10 with your testimony.

11 MS. GUPTA: Good afternoon. My
12 name is Prema Katari Gupta and I'm
13 Director of Planning and Economic
14 Development at University City District
15 and I'm also a resident of Mount Airy.

16 Thank you, Councilman Henon,
17 for the opportunity to speak in support
18 of the coordinated street furniture
19 program, as well as to the rest of the
20 Committee members, including Councilwoman
21 Blackwell, who makes all of our work in
22 University City possible.

23 Philadelphia has long been
24 considered one of the most walkable
25 cities in America, with its abundant

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 sidewalks and short lively blocks.

3 However, there is still much work that

4 can be done to make our city more

5 friendly, safe, and appealing to

6 pedestrians, particularly outside of

7 Center City, which is why I am very

8 excited to speak in support of this

9 program.

10 The coordinated street

11 furniture program will significantly

12 improve the appearance, quality, and

13 coordination of street furniture

14 amenities for the public by adding new

15 transit shelters, benches, arts

16 promotion, and informational signage,

17 allowing amenities that once existed

18 predominantly only in Center City to be

19 deployed elsewhere. Just the idea of

20 having 300 more transit shelters in the

21 City is very exciting, particularly to

22 those of us who ride buses and trolleys

23 in the rain and the snow. We are

24 particularly excited about the design by

25 a local but internationally renowned firm

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 DIGSAU, which will allow the street
3 furniture to have a distinctly
4 Philadelphia feel. We've had the
5 privilege of working with DIGSAU on a few
6 projects and could not be more
7 enthusiastic about this choice.

8 Thank you again for the
9 opportunity to speak in support of this
10 ordinance, and, again, assuming that all
11 contracting issues are resolved, we very
12 much hope that it will advance.

13 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
14 you, Ms. Gupta.

15 Any questions?

16 (No response.)

17 (Witness approached witness
18 table.)

19 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing
20 none, Mr. Ali, I assume you want to
21 testify?

22 MR. ALI: Yes.

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Please
24 identify yourself and proceed.

25 MR. ALI: Good afternoon,

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Chairman --

3 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Let me
4 ask, is there anyone else here that wants
5 to testify on this?

6 Why don't you come up and sit
7 too.

8 Okay. Mr. Ali, go ahead.

9 MR. ALI: Good afternoon,
10 members of the Public Property and Public
11 Works Committee. My name is Jihad Ali
12 and I'm a citizen of Philadelphia. I am
13 here today to give testimony on this
14 bill, 140897.

15 After having heard the
16 testimony of Hanford Jones and the
17 Councilwoman, I think that's an excellent
18 suggestion, because those are serious
19 allegations. Because, see, when we come
20 down here, those of us who are from the
21 neighborhoods, we don't have
22 representation like the fine gentleman
23 that spoke from the Center City District.
24 I mean, he had an excellent presentation.
25 They have an organized body. Well, in

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 these diverse communities, we're not
3 organized like that. What we have is
4 you. We have our elected officials, and
5 we have you to have the courage to say
6 just what the Councilwoman said, hold up,
7 slow down for a minute, let's see what
8 the other people say, let's see what the
9 people who have the authority and the
10 responsibility to ferret out wrongdoing,
11 let's see what they say.

12 If they pass, then we welcome
13 them aboard. If they don't, then we need
14 to reconsider, because we can't be --
15 those of us on this side of the table
16 that are counting on you to make
17 opportunities for us, as Dr. King once
18 said, we're all tied by a garment of
19 destiny. Those people that are in those
20 neighborhoods, they're tied by the
21 actions that you take.

22 So, Councilwoman, I want to
23 thank you for having that courage,
24 because it takes courage. Like the guy
25 said from the Center City District, with

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 the quickness -- his word was rapidity,
3 but with the rapidity that this stuff
4 moves sometimes, it takes courage to say
5 slow down, let me help these people, let
6 me listen. Because unless you know
7 everything, then you can look on your
8 little crystal ball and know that these
9 guys are squeaky clean. But too many of
10 us in this room have been surprised time
11 after time by people who have let us
12 down.

13 So those are some serious
14 allegations, because it's discrimination.
15 It's discriminating against the people
16 that look just like you and I,
17 Councilwoman. So I support you, and
18 that's the kind of courage we want to see
19 down here.

20 Thank you so much, and thank
21 you for allowing me to speak today.

22 (Applause.)

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Hold on
24 one second.

25 Councilwoman Blackwell.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
3 you, Mr. Ali. And, again, we repeat, we
4 mentioned the office of OEO, Angela
5 Dowd-Burton, Mayor's Office of
6 Transportation, and we also mentioned
7 the -- what was the third office? And
8 the Controller's Office, as was
9 referenced in Mr. Jones' statement, that
10 we want to hear from at least those three
11 agencies before we make a decision on
12 moving forward.

13 And thank you, Mr. Ali.

14 MR. ALI: I'd like to suggest
15 the Office of Integrity. We throw that
16 name around a lot. Let's see what the
17 Office of Integrity and Responsibility
18 says.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We
20 will add that. So those are four
21 agencies that the record will reflect
22 that we've asked for a response from
23 before we vote for this project by this
24 company.

25 Thank you.

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2 MR. ALI: Thank you.

3 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Please
4 identify yourself and proceed.

5 MR. McINERNEY: My name is John
6 McInerney. I'm the Vice President of
7 Marketing at the Greater Philadelphia
8 Cultural Alliance. Thank you to
9 Councilmembers Oh, Blackwell, Henon, and
10 Greenlee for giving us the time to
11 testify today.

12 The Cultural Alliance, we
13 represent more than 400 cultural groups
14 and members of the broader civic
15 community, and we're here to discuss the
16 importance of designating space for
17 cultural promotion and the continuation
18 of discounted rates for cultural
19 advertising through the Art in Transit
20 program.

21 As you know, Philadelphia is
22 home to a thriving cultural sector,
23 making national news as an art capital.
24 Last year alone Philadelphia's non-profit
25 cultural sector attracted over 17 million

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2 visits for over 33,000 productions,
3 films, exhibitions, and other works. As
4 reported in our recent economic impact
5 report, the arts generated 1.1 billion in
6 direct spending in an overall economic
7 impact in the City of 2.8 billion.

8 Further, the sector generates close to
9 30,000 full-time equivalent jobs and \$766
10 million in household income for
11 Philadelphia residents.

12 But beyond the economic
13 numbers, cultural groups are at the heart
14 of the community, providing not just
15 affordable music, theatre, and dance, but
16 access to free arts education like the
17 Art Splash program for kids 12 and under
18 at the Art Museum or the free
19 performances by the Orchestra and the
20 Opera in communities around the City or
21 the work the Horticultural Society does
22 to bring fresh produce and community
23 gardens to economically challenged
24 neighborhoods that don't have access to
25 affordable healthy food.

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2 What do all these groups have
3 in common? They are non-profit cultural
4 groups who have used the discounted
5 advertising in the Art in Transit program
6 to support their mission-driven work.

7 Since 1994, Center City
8 District, in conjunction with the City of
9 Philadelphia, has offered the Art in
10 Transit program to provide discounted
11 promotional opportunities for non-profit
12 arts, cultural, and civic groups.

13 Currently, there are 92 shelter display
14 panels available on Chestnut, Walnut,
15 Market, and South Broad Street for the
16 display of posters promoting upcoming
17 performances, exhibits, and events. The
18 cost of participation starts as low as
19 \$40 to \$80 a week depending on the
20 location. These posters are viewed by
21 tens of thousands of people a day, making
22 Art in Transit a very powerful and
23 cost-effective marketing tool.

24 Since its inception, cultural
25 organizations, both large and small, have

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2 taken advantage of this program in order
3 to get the word out about their
4 programming. In 2014 alone, more than 35
5 cultural groups used the program. They
6 include the very large, like the Museum
7 of Art, the Orchestra, and the Opera
8 Philadelphia, as well as small
9 community-based organizations, such as
10 the 11th Hour Theatre Company, Pasion Y
11 Arte, Quince Productions, and the
12 Philadelphia Arts Collective.
13 Additionally, several community
14 organizations use the program, including
15 Women Against Abuse, MANNA, the AIDS
16 Fund, and Philadelphia Fight, who join me
17 here today.

18 Maintaining this program is not
19 only a benefit for the organizations, but
20 helps the City highlight the vibrant arts
21 activity that have made this such an
22 attractive place to locate a new business
23 or relocate a family, and those
24 businesses and residents that come here
25 for the rich arts scene directly

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2 contribute to the health of the local
3 economy.

4 While we understand that the
5 City is pursuing this contract to raise
6 needed revenue for the City budget and
7 improve the street furniture, these
8 groups and the Arts in Transit program
9 will make up only a small portion of the
10 millions in revenue Titan will return to
11 the City under this comprehensive
12 contract.

13 The program, however, does have
14 a big impact for the groups that use the
15 program, and the proposed changes will
16 have a direct impact on their ability to
17 attract audiences and remain viable
18 charitable organizations.

19 This brings me to the question
20 posed here today whether to authorize an
21 agreement between the City and Titan
22 Outdoor, LLC, to allow Titan to manage
23 the City's street furniture and
24 advertising programs. Over the past
25 month, we have been in continuous contact

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2 with Titan Outdoor and the Mayor's Office
3 of Transportation and Utilities regarding
4 the plans for cultural promotion in this
5 new contract. We appreciate them sharing
6 their plans for cultural promotional
7 opportunities and their swift responses
8 to our concerns.

9 In this contract, you will find
10 that the discounted cultural advertising
11 will be eliminated from all bus shelters,
12 except for 21 shelters on East Market
13 Street, and replaced with 100 stand-alone
14 art information kiosks, with one side
15 devoted exclusively to cultural
16 advertising. The location of this kiosk
17 is yet to be determined. In a letter
18 from the Office of Transportation and
19 Utilities' Chief of Staff Andrew Stober,
20 we have been assured that these kiosks
21 will be the same size as the bus shelters
22 currently, and as they are being
23 installed, the City and Titan will commit
24 to having no less than the number of
25 panels currently available. Further, we

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2 have been assured that all pricing and
3 administration will be handled by Center
4 City District.

5 Despite these assurances, we
6 still have concerns with this plan and
7 its impact on the arts community. We
8 have not received specific assurance --

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: Excuse me,
10 sir. I'm sorry. I hate to interrupt,
11 but I think I'm going to have to. We are
12 running up against time. Can you
13 summarize the rest of your testimony?
14 And I'll absolutely submit it in the
15 record.

16 MR. MCINERNEY: Yes.
17 Absolutely. Our main concern is that the
18 movement of the Art in Transit program to
19 these independent kiosks where we don't
20 know where they'll be located and there's
21 concerns about their being an obstruction
22 for pedestrians will render the program
23 ineffective as it currently is, and we
24 just want to ask Titan and the City to
25 continue to dedicate 10 percent of the

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2 bus shelters on Chestnut and Market that
3 would go away to cultural groups as
4 they've done in Dilworth Park.

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

6 MS. SHINGLEDECKER: Hello. My
7 name is Lorelei Shingledecker. I'm
8 representing Philadelphia Fight. I'm
9 Philadelphia Fight's Chief Strategy
10 Officer. Thank you for the opportunity
11 to speak today.

12 Philadelphia Fight is the
13 comprehensive AIDS service organization
14 that provides primary care services,
15 social services, and education programs
16 to low-income community members who are
17 living with HIV and those who are at
18 risk. Every year we run AIDS Education
19 Month, a month-long citywide campaign of
20 conferences, events, and activities to
21 raise awareness about HIV. During this
22 month, we run two conferences at the
23 Convention Center that reach almost 3,000
24 people. We have a hip-hop concert where
25 over 1,200 youth are tested for HIV in

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2 exchange for a free concert ticket. We
3 hold events for the faith community,
4 attracting around 600 faith leaders
5 throughout the City. These are only a
6 few of over 15 events that we promote
7 citywide.

8 The increasing awareness of the
9 plight of HIV and how it affects
10 Philadelphia's most vulnerable
11 communities is due in large part to our
12 advertising and promotion through the Art
13 in Transit program. Leading up to and
14 during the month of June, we advertise
15 our programs for AIDS Education Month on
16 SEPTA, targeting the paths most traveled
17 by our patients and community members.
18 We advertise in bus shelters in prime
19 Center City locations, not far from our
20 three downtown locations.

21 A sizable number of
22 participants during AIDS Education Month
23 hear about and are reminded of our events
24 because our presence on SEPTA,
25 specifically the bus shelters. I want to

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2 emphasize the importance of this
3 outreach, because in a very direct way,
4 it helps save lives.

5 Please continue as a vital
6 partner to these efforts to fight the
7 spread of HIV by sustaining the Art in
8 Transit program.

9 Thank you for your time.

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
11 very much for your testimony.

12 Any questions from the
13 Committee?

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: Is there
16 anyone else here that wishes to testify
17 on 140897?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: For the
20 record, I am going -- thank you for your
21 time.

22 For the record, I want to ask
23 the Administration to respond to some of
24 the concerns of the Committee. You don't
25 have to approach the bench. If you could

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2 respond in writing for the record to some
3 of the concerns and issues of members of
4 the community addressing our
5 participation with this particular
6 contract that's in front of us now. I
7 think not just the community but some of
8 the Committee members here have raised
9 some issues. So if you could, as we
10 proceed moving forward, submit some
11 response in writing for the record, and I
12 thank you for the time.

13 With no other testimony, we
14 will now hear testimony on Resolution No.
15 140915, the Land Bank Strategic Plan. We
16 have quite a few people who signed up.
17 I'm going to say this for the record I
18 hope that some folks here would respect.
19 We have over 25 witnesses that have
20 signed up to testify for the Land Bank
21 Strategic Plan today, and I want to thank
22 you all for your interest in these
23 issues, for taking the time to come out
24 and share your opinions. The Land Bank
25 Board is going to make a short

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2 presentation, and I say short, to the
3 Committee and then we will call members
4 of the public. I'm asking that you all
5 help the members of this Committee have a
6 productive dialogue by doing the
7 following when it is your turn to speak:

8 Limit your testimony to three
9 minutes or less.

10 If you have prepared, do not
11 read your prepared testimony. I will
12 make sure that the written testimony and
13 statements that you prepared will be
14 entered into the record instead.

15 Clearly state your name and any
16 affiliation that you might have and any
17 interest group when you are called.

18 I've broken the list down into
19 groups. Please listen carefully for your
20 name. If you want to check to make sure
21 that you're on the list, please see my
22 staff back to my left at the table.

23 I want to cut to the chase. We
24 want to know what you like about this
25 Strategic Plan and want to know what you

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2 don't like about this Strategic Plan. Be
3 specific and concise. Again, name, your
4 organization, what you like, and what you
5 do not like.

6 With that, is there anyone here
7 that wishes to testify on the resolution
8 from the Administration?

9 (Witnesses approached witness
10 table.)

11 MR. KOONCE: Yes. Good
12 afternoon, Chairman Henon and members of
13 the Committee. My name is Michael Koonce
14 and I'm the Chair of the Philadelphia
15 Land Bank Board. Thank you for the
16 opportunity to testify.

17 Philadelphia has approximately
18 40,000 vacant properties in the City. Of
19 those, about one-quarter are publicly
20 owned and a little more than half are
21 privately owned vacant and tax
22 delinquent. Last year, Council created
23 the Land Bank to reactivate these
24 properties that are in public ownership
25 or that are vacant and tax delinquent.

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2 The Land Bank subsequently developed a
3 Strategic Plan and submitted it to
4 Council. This plan was developed in an
5 open, collaborative, and data-driven
6 process that engaged stakeholders,
7 Council, and the public. And Alan Urek
8 will talk about the role of the City
9 Planning Commission in that process.

10 What will the Land Bank do
11 under the Strategic Plan? It will
12 acquire, manage, and dispose of vacant
13 and abandoned property. It will combat
14 blight on stable blocks. It will help
15 reverse blight in struggling
16 neighborhoods, support the provisions of
17 affordable housing. It will benefit
18 existing residents and businesses. It
19 will generate economic activity and jobs,
20 and it will strengthen the City
21 financially. Scott Page of Interface
22 Studio will provide more detail on these
23 topics in a moment.

24 It is important, however, to
25 note what the Land Bank will not do. It

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2 will not displace people. The Land Bank
3 can only acquire and dispose of vacant
4 properties. It will not create new
5 sources of funding. While the Land Bank
6 can be a powerful land use tool, it is
7 not a means of financing affordable
8 housing, commercial or any other kind of
9 development. It will, however, leverage
10 its land holdings into affordable units
11 in mixed-income developments.

12 Throughout this process,
13 Council remains a key partner. We're
14 asking you to approve the Land Bank
15 Strategic Plan and Disposition Policies,
16 and we look forward to meeting with each
17 District Councilmember to discuss
18 specific properties for transfer into the
19 Land Bank and the potential uses of those
20 properties. I hope you will pass this
21 resolution with a favorable
22 recommendation, and I look forward to
23 working with you and your colleagues to
24 implement the Land Bank.

25 I would be happy to answer

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2 questions.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

4 Please state your name for the
5 record and proceed.

6 MR. UREK: Good afternoon. I
7 am Alan Urek, Deputy Executive Director
8 of the City Planning Commission, and I am
9 here to testify in support of this
10 resolution to approve the 2015 Proposed
11 Strategic Plan and Disposition Policies
12 of the Philadelphia Land Bank.

13 As stipulated in the 2013
14 legislation establishing the Land Bank,
15 the City Planning Commission staff has
16 played an active role in the development
17 of the Strategic Plan and Disposition
18 Policies, and we fully support the Plan's
19 approach, goals, and recommendations. We
20 worked in close collaboration with Land
21 Bank and Redevelopment Authority staff to
22 craft the request for proposals for
23 consultant teams to undertake the work.
24 We participated in the selection of the
25 consultant team. We provided much of the

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2 base data on which the recommendations of
3 the Plan and Policies are made, and we
4 were and continue to be integral members
5 of the project's working group that
6 reviewed and contributed to the process
7 and substance of the consultant team's
8 work.

9 More important is the fact that
10 the Land Bank Strategic Plan and
11 Disposition Policies is closely aligned
12 with our ongoing Philadelphia 2035
13 planning work. As you know, Philadelphia
14 2035 is the City's long-range
15 comprehensive plan that the City Planning
16 Commission staff are preparing over time,
17 principally through strategic plans for
18 18 geographic districts across the entire
19 City. Each district plan serves as the
20 blueprint for guiding growth, change,
21 development, preservation, and public
22 investment in neighborhoods throughout
23 Philadelphia.

24 Specifically, the ten City
25 Planning Commission adopted and

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2 in-progress district plans greatly

3 informed preparation of the Land Bank

4 Strategic Plan and Disposition Policies.

5 I should note that each district plan is

6 not prepared in a vacuum. Each plan is

7 built upon a significant amount of public

8 outreach and participation through

9 multiple public meetings, steering

10 committee participation, and social and

11 traditional media to arrive at its

12 recommendations concerning future land

13 use, zoning, and public investment. This

14 civic engagement also served to guide

15 decisions and recommendations of the Land

16 Bank Strategic Plan and Disposition

17 Policies.

18 In reciprocal fashion, future

19 Philadelphia 2035 district plans will be

20 informed and guided by the Land Bank

21 Strategic Plan and Disposition Policies,

22 as well as ongoing public participation.

23 This cross-fertilization between our

24 respective planning efforts has enabled

25 and will continue to enable the Land

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Bank's decisions to demonstrate, quote,
3 consistency with planning provisions as
4 explicitly stated in the 2013
5 legislation.

6 The Philadelphia Land Bank's
7 2015 Proposed Strategic Plan and
8 Disposition Policies is an outstanding
9 example of a data-driven planning process
10 resulting in a useful decision-making
11 tool. We recommend Council's approval
12 and look forward to working with you, the
13 Land Bank, and other stakeholders to help
14 implement its recommendations over time.

15 Thank you for the opportunity
16 to testify.

17 MR. PAGE: Good afternoon. My
18 name is Scott Page. I'm a principal with
19 Interface Studio. We were asked to
20 coordinate the development of the
21 Strategic Plan. The rest of our team is
22 sitting here in the front, which included
23 V. Lamar Associates as well as Real
24 Estate Strategies.

25 I'm not going to give so much a

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2 presentation as really hit the highlights
3 of the Strategic Plan.

4 Certainly one of the things
5 that we were required to do in this
6 strategic planning process over the
7 summer and fall was to identify what,
8 where, how many potential Land Bank
9 properties are there in Philadelphia
10 based upon existing data, but also
11 identify neighborhood trends as well as
12 identify priority areas for acquisition
13 or disposition. We called them
14 opportunity areas in the Strategic Plan.

15 The development of the Plan
16 itself involved over 80 organizations in
17 a very short timeframe, talking with them
18 about their hopes, their goals for what a
19 Land Bank can and cannot do, and that was
20 really invaluable in helping to shape the
21 overall plan.

22 We provided some information
23 and materials to you, but just as a quick
24 summary, we think the Land Bank is an
25 opportunity to address a couple things.

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2 Vacancy in Philadelphia is a citywide
3 problem. There are certainly
4 neighborhoods with more concentrated
5 vacancy than others, but it is a citywide
6 problem, and the Land Bank is a citywide
7 opportunity to address a part of that
8 problem.

9 And one of the other
10 opportunities is the issue around land
11 assembly, site control. So there have
12 been too many good plans in this city
13 that have been frustrated in the
14 implementation process due to the
15 inability to acquire a vacant,
16 tax-delinquent property that may be
17 surrounded by already publicly owned
18 vacant properties. So we think this is a
19 powerful implementation tool that can be
20 used to support Council plans, City
21 Planning Commission district plans, and
22 neighborhood plans that have been driven
23 by a significant amount of community
24 input and accepted by the Planning
25 Commission. This is an implementation

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2 tool and a potentially very powerful one.

3 So in the process of putting
4 together the Plan, using existing data we
5 identified about 32,000 properties that
6 are what we call potential Land Bank
7 properties. Eight thousand of those are
8 publicly owned and vacant properties.

9 Another 24,000 are privately owned vacant
10 and tax-delinquent properties. In an
11 effort to map all of those properties, we
12 then undertook a data-driven analysis to
13 determine what are the potential
14 opportunities for reuse of those
15 properties as well as for concentration
16 of Land Bank activity, where should
17 acquisition occur, where can we look at
18 potential disposition.

19 There's a number of
20 opportunities I'll just quickly highlight
21 for you.

22 We identified over 1,100
23 opportunities for what we call individual
24 development opportunities. So it's that
25 one vacant building on an otherwise

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2 stable block that for some reason over
3 the years has been difficult to acquire.
4 That makes for a distinct quality-of-life
5 issue for those that are on that block,
6 but it's also a destabilizing force. So
7 citywide over 1,100 opportunities for
8 those.

9 There's certainly been
10 conversations and interests in side
11 yards. There are more than 2,000 side
12 yard opportunities across Philadelphia
13 where we have an individual vacant lot
14 adjacent to a qualified homeowner who
15 could take ownership of that lot.

16 We also looked at opportunities
17 for affordable housing, and of the 32,000
18 potential Land Bank properties, almost
19 21,000 of those are in locations that we
20 think are suitable for new affordable
21 housing, either because those
22 neighborhoods have changed very quickly
23 and there's a need to protect some level
24 of affordability or because they're good
25 locations for affordable housing due to

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2 transit access, access to parks, and
3 other amenities.

4 We have also identified a
5 number of properties in areas across
6 Philadelphia where we think there are an
7 opportunity to extend private investment.
8 So where there's already private
9 investment and interest from developers,
10 there are places within the City that the
11 Land Bank could provide some property for
12 either new market-rate development or
13 mixed-income development.

14 We looked specifically at
15 economic development, and this is really
16 focused on commercial corridors, looking
17 at the data as well as where we have
18 inventory, potential inventory, of Land
19 Bank properties, potential Land Bank
20 properties. There are 77 corridors
21 across the City that would benefit by
22 having the Land Bank play a role in
23 either helping existing businesses to
24 expand or to provide space for the
25 development of new businesses.

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2 We also looked at open space,
3 places in the City where there are
4 opportunities to support existing open
5 space initiatives, protect existing
6 gardens or to create new open spaces
7 utilizing the capacity on the ground to
8 do so.

9 So through this data analysis,
10 there's a number of opportunities in the
11 City, including assemblages, assemblage
12 of property both publicly owned and
13 private tax-delinquent property. There
14 are over 100 opportunities to assemble 11
15 or more properties for redevelopment.
16 This is a significant opportunity across
17 the City. And we think that the way that
18 the Strategic Plan is done as a
19 data-driven process is, it's really a
20 menu of options. We did not
21 pre-determine any use within the Plan.
22 We are there to support the existing
23 planning that's been done and to work
24 with Council on the end use as is
25 appropriate for each property.

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2 So with that, I will say thank
3 you.

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: Well, thank
5 you for your testimony.

6 Before I ask a few questions,
7 the Chair recognizes Councilwoman Maria
8 Quinones-Sanchez. And I want to thank
9 you for all of your time and your staff's
10 resources that have been put into Land
11 Bank, along with my office and my staff,
12 as well as Council President Clarke, in
13 getting to this point. So we look
14 forward to hearing from everybody today.

15 Councilwoman.

16 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank
17 you, Mr. Chair, and I will be brief. I
18 do want to thank you for helping shepherd
19 this along. I wanted to just publicly
20 thank the hundreds of advocates, whether
21 you're a member of the Land Bank Alliance
22 or the Take Back Your Vacant Land, the
23 environmental public interest groups who
24 have been part of this, the private
25 sector, GPAR, BIA and others, for helping

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2 us get to this point.

3 As this panel has outlined,
4 since the passing of this legislation, I
5 think there's been a lot of thoughtful
6 work in putting together a strategic plan
7 to get the ball rolling. This is, by no
8 means, the end of the conversation.

9 We're still a long ways from having a
10 fully implemented process, but I think
11 the Strategic Plan is an excellent first
12 step in laying vital groundwork to the
13 work we're trying to do.

14 I particularly want to thank
15 the interim Board represented by Council
16 by Herb Wetzel; your Chief of Staff,
17 Courtney Voss; and Jennifer Kates for
18 helping us work with all of the advocates
19 who have been involved in this.

20 I want to ask the Committee to
21 pass this resolution. This is just one
22 more step in many more steps necessary
23 for us to move what our consultant just
24 outlined, some strategic opportunities
25 both for side lots and potential

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2 acquisitions of what has been chronic
3 nuisance properties in neighborhoods,
4 particularly stable neighborhoods, to
5 ensure that we can repurpose them as
6 quickly as possible. So I continue to
7 work with -- look forward to working with
8 you as Chairman of this Committee, the
9 Administration, and my Council colleagues
10 as we move this process forward.

11 So thank you.

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
13 Councilwoman.

14 I have a few questions and then
15 we can move on. Can you please describe
16 or somebody describe the relationship
17 between the Land Bank, PHDC, OHCD, and
18 the PRA.

19 MR. KOONCE: The Land Bank is a
20 City-related public agency that is
21 independent, for the most part --

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Pull
23 the mic up.

24 MR. KOONCE: I'm sorry.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: We can't

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 hear the speaker. If you could speak a
3 little closer to the mic.

4 MR. KOONCE: The Land Bank is a
5 City-related public agency that, for the
6 most part, is independent of the other
7 three housing agencies. It will accept
8 properties from the Vacant Property
9 Review Committee and the Redevelopment
10 Authority and PHDC. Currently, the
11 Vacant Property Review Committee is at
12 OHCD. So those properties -- it's
13 anticipated that the majority of those
14 will move over to the Land Bank. It's
15 anticipated that of the 2,000 properties
16 that are currently at the Redevelopment
17 Authority, the majority of those will
18 move over to the Land Bank. Some will
19 remain because they're income-producing
20 properties or they will remain because
21 they need better controls and the
22 Redevelopment Authority has the tools to
23 provide those. And all of the properties
24 at PHDC, I would advocate with the
25 District Council -- each District

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2 Councilperson to allow us to move each of
3 those, about 800 or 900, over to the
4 Philadelphia Land Bank.

5 The Land Bank going forward
6 will be the acquisition and disposition
7 arm for the Redevelopment -- I'm sorry;
8 for the City, especially as it relates to
9 affordable housing. Currently, the
10 funding for most affordable housing is
11 provided through the Office of Housing
12 and Community Development and it's
13 underwritten by the Redevelopment
14 Authority. The Land Bank would join in
15 that group and that lots of the
16 properties that are used for affordable
17 housing would be secured and disposed of
18 by the Philadelphia Land Bank. But it's
19 independent of PHDC, OH and PRA, with the
20 one exception being PHDC, which we hope
21 to enter into a management agreement that
22 would allow PHDC to actually staff the
23 Land Bank.

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. To
25 what extent is the Strategic Plan

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2 attempting to dictate the end use of
3 particular parcels?

4 MR. KOONCE: The Strategic Plan
5 is one tool that we would use. The other
6 tools would be, we would continue to
7 consult with City Planning, with existing
8 plans as they're created by City
9 Planning, and also with community groups
10 and with the District Councilperson. As
11 you know, no property can be disposed of
12 by the Land Bank without it first going
13 through Vacant Property Review Committee
14 and without a resolution of City Council.

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: What is the
16 next step for the Land Bank?

17 MR. KOONCE: The next step is
18 for us to begin to have conversations
19 with each of the District Council folks
20 about properties that they would like
21 transferred into the Land Bank.

22 COUNCILMAN HENON: As you know,
23 or you may not know, industrial uses has
24 been something I spent a lot of time and
25 energy trying to preserve and expand the

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2 industrial use and land preservation here
3 in the City, because industrial uses in
4 the proper location with the proper
5 dispositions and land preservations
6 create jobs, create jobs in
7 neighborhoods, and I do not see much --
8 or I don't see anything with the
9 industrial use in the Strategic Plan.
10 Can you tell me why?

11 MR. KOONCE: We would look to
12 the leadership of the Philadelphia
13 Industrial Development Corporation for
14 that, with the possible exception of the
15 77 or more commercial corridors that
16 we've identified, but that will just be
17 for commercial properties. For
18 industrial land uses, we would still look
19 to PIDC.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: That's
21 great. So you'll have that
22 intergovernmental type of collaboration
23 when it comes to that. I mean, just as
24 you had stated with District
25 Councilmembers, which is extremely

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2 important --

3 MR. KOONCE: Absolutely.

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: -- in
5 disposition as well as preservation.

6 MR. KOONCE: Absolutely.

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: So I'm glad
8 to handle that.

9 One last question and I'll turn
10 it over. Who is responsible for handling
11 the communications and social media and
12 website for Land Bank?

13 MR. KOONCE: We have a
14 collaboration between the Office of
15 Housing and Community Development's
16 communications department and we've
17 recently brought on board Sage
18 Communications. Together they've begun
19 to handle all communications.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: And was it
21 in the budget for Land Bank for its
22 initial transition?

23 MR. KOONCE: It wasn't in the
24 original budget. We created a line item
25 in the current budget of about \$100,000.

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2 COUNCILMAN HENON: And I'm sure
3 you plan on allocating certain resources
4 and budget items, line budget items, to
5 continue communication --

6 MR. KOONCE: Absolutely.

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: -- and the
8 website and reaching out to the
9 communities and having transparent and
10 open communications with the public and
11 the City in general; is that correct?

12 MR. KOONCE: Yes. And --

13 COUNCILMAN HENON: I think it's
14 critical as we move forward to
15 communicate with the community at large
16 and giving people the opportunity to
17 weigh in on some open dialogue and
18 conversation.

19 MR. KOONCE: And one entity
20 that I omitted was the Office of
21 Information Technology. They've helped
22 us tremendously with developing the
23 website.

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: Great.

25 Thank you.

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2 Is there any members of the
3 Board -- Councilwoman Blackwell.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
5 you.

6 Good afternoon. This is an old
7 question for me and, that is, where we
8 are with the employees all working from
9 all housing agencies with their salary,
10 with their benefits and all that, how
11 that was worked out for the Land Bank?
12 As you know, if a person is ready to
13 retire, then they're transferred, maybe
14 they've been there 24 years, they need to
15 work one more year. All those same old
16 employee issues, I wanted to ask where we
17 were in that regard.

18 MR. KOONCE: Well, I know I've
19 been working and so there are three
20 different housing agencies - PIDC, OH,
21 and PRA - that have been having ongoing
22 negotiations with Local 1971. We haven't
23 reached a final deal yet, but we're
24 hopeful that one will be reached shortly
25 that will not only bring the contract up

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2 to date, but also give us a transition
3 agreement that will allow us to
4 transition employees over in a fair and
5 equitable manner.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Then
7 what is expected of us today since we
8 don't have the employee ends worked out?
9 Where are we now, and how do we protect
10 those workers with regard to moving
11 forward?

12 MR. KOONCE: I would ask that
13 similar to previous years when we've been
14 in this position that we could -- that
15 the Land Bank bill could go forward and
16 we would agree not to transfer any
17 employees until we had an agreement with
18 the bargaining units.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you. Thank you, Mr. Koonce.

21 COUNCILMAN HENON: If I may for
22 the record. So do you have a transition
23 plan for the current employees with the
24 three agencies as you work towards an
25 agreement?

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2 MR. KOONCE: Yes, we do.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: You do?

4 MR. KOONCE: And we've begun to
5 share it with the bargaining unit. As a
6 matter of fact, I've had some discussions
7 even this morning, and we believe --
8 we're hopeful that we're very close on an
9 agreement.

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: So are you
11 closer to -- so nobody is going to get
12 laid off in the interim?

13 MR. KOONCE: No one is going to
14 lose their jobs.

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: Nobody is
16 going to lose their job, nobody is going
17 to lose their time or their seniority or
18 their healthcare, pension or anything
19 like that.

20 Are you closer today than you
21 were -- do you feel like you're closer
22 today to an agreement than you were a
23 couple weeks ago?

24 MR. KOONCE: Yes.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: All right.

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2 Any members have any other
3 questions?

4 The Chair recognizes Majority
5 Leader Jones.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
7 Mr. Chairman, so much for your
8 indulgence.

9 Quick question. I see the
10 composition of the interim Board of
11 Directors. That does not include
12 industrial individuals like PIDC or
13 Redevelopment Authority?

14 MR. KOONCE: It does include
15 Redevelopment Authority. As a matter of
16 fact, current Board member Brian
17 Abernathy is Chairman. So Brian is on
18 the Board, and we anticipate that there
19 will be ongoing participation from
20 Redevelopment Authority.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: What about
22 PIDC, Philadelphia Industrial Development
23 Corporation?

24 MR. KOONCE: We haven't reached
25 a final list of Board -- those who are

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2 Board members yet, and so that can still
3 be under consideration and we can
4 consider that.

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: Because as
6 Chairman Henon talked about, he has spent
7 a lot of time on preservation of
8 industrial manufacturing of properties in
9 the City of Philadelphia, and the quick
10 conversion often to residential uses is
11 an issue of his. So to balance that, we
12 need to look at folk who are in the
13 business of preserving that kind of
14 industry within the City of Philadelphia
15 to make sure that the highest and best
16 use for a parcel is done.

17 The other question I would
18 have, Mr. Chairman, is, how closely will
19 you guys be working with the Energy
20 Authorities and others? So as we start
21 talking about industrial tracts, whether
22 it's American Street or Hunting Park
23 Avenue or other old rustbelt locations,
24 retrofitting them as we've been talking
25 about with the Gas Commission issue or

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2 modernizing them so that they might be
3 able to be retrofitted so that
4 manufacturing might be drawn back to the
5 City of Philadelphia because of a modern
6 cogeneration facility on these sites. So
7 the question is, will you be working with
8 the Energy Authority?

9 MR. KOONCE: I think that is --
10 it's not our main priority this first
11 year. Our main priority is to assemble
12 the properties, develop a transparent and
13 equitable disposition process, and begin
14 the acquisition process of properties.
15 However, I think while that's going on,
16 there will be ample room and time for
17 those discussions to happen, and I thank
18 you for the suggestion.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: So for the
20 record, Mr. Chairman, I have about a
21 four-acre parcel right near 52nd and
22 Jefferson. It's abutted by Merion Avenue
23 and railroad tracks on the side.
24 Temporary use, we're talking about
25 vegetable gardens. A little longer term

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2 use, we're talking about expanding a
3 school. At the end of the day, the
4 highest and best use should be something
5 that generates more taxes and things like
6 that. So as we start to make those tough
7 decisions, I need somebody from that side
8 of the world to be represented as well.

9 MR. KOONCE: Great.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
11 Mr. Chairman.

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
13 Majority Leader.

14 Well, thank you for your time.

15 So we have a list, again, of
16 about 30 people who are going to come up
17 here in public. Please keep your
18 testimony short, brief, highlight your
19 testimony in favor or any of your
20 concerns that you might have to Land
21 Bank.

22 The Clerk, would you please
23 read the first panel.

24 THE CLERK: Mario Stagliano,
25 Shane Claiborne, and Allan Domb.

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2 COUNCILMAN HENON: And, again,
3 if we seem to be redundant, let's try not
4 to be redundant about the same topic and
5 support, but we want to hear from you.
6 Thank you.

7 (Witnesses approached witness
8 table.)

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: You could
10 join the spotlight. State your name for
11 the record and proceed with your
12 abbreviated testimony, which we will
13 submit for the record. Thank you.

14 MR. DOMB: Thank you. Allan
15 Domb, President of the Greater
16 Philadelphia Association of Realtors.
17 First, I want to thank everyone for this
18 great, I think, historic event, passing
19 Land Bank. We are in support of the
20 resolution. We think it's great. If you
21 look at it as a perspective of any
22 company that has 570,000 properties and 8
23 percent of them are vacant, the first
24 thing you want to do is put them on the
25 books and get them operating properly.

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2 We think it's also a great
3 opportunity, maybe now or down the road,
4 to look at the idea of offering a 20-year
5 tax abatement for homes under 250,
6 because this will really help the Land
7 Bank properties and maybe even raise the
8 values of those properties.

9 So the Greater Philadelphia
10 Association of Realtors is in support of
11 it. We thank everyone for their help on
12 this. We think it's a great thing. We
13 also -- I will say this: I've been
14 involved in this business for 35 years.
15 I just want to applaud City Council. You
16 guys are the best I've seen in the last
17 35 years. So thank you on behalf of
18 GPAR.

19 Thank you.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

21 Please state your name and
22 proceed with your testimony.

23 MR. CLAIBORNE: My name is
24 Shane Claiborne and I am the founder of
25 The Simple Way and the current President

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.
2 of Simple Homes. We create affordable
3 housing. I've been working in Kensington
4 for the last 20 years.

5 I'm going to make it shorter.
6 You've got some pictures, nice colored
7 pictures of some of the restoration we've
8 done in the neighborhood over the last 20
9 years. But the biggest obstacle to us
10 has been acquiring the vacant lots and
11 abandoned houses to renovate.

12 I'm here in support of the Land
13 Bank because we believe it will remove
14 unnecessary bureaucratic barriers to
15 development in a way that neither
16 displaces low-income families with
17 irresponsible gentrification nor
18 maintains the status quo of abandonment
19 and degradation.

20 The model we use to create
21 affordable housing is a national model
22 that's proved effective, measurable, and
23 scalable in 60 cities around the country
24 and 16 countries around the world.

25 In Philadelphia, we acquire

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2 houses for less than \$10,000, which makes
3 the Land Bank an incredible potential
4 partner, and we spend between \$20,000 and
5 \$30,000 to restore them. All houses sell
6 for zero profit, zero interest, typically
7 less than \$50,000 a home. Homeowners pay
8 no more than a third of their household
9 income, often \$300 or less, and can pay
10 off their home in ten years, typically
11 for less than they're paying in rent.

12 We finance the homes as a
13 non-profit through donations and hold a
14 lien on the property to prevent predatory
15 lenders and bank foreclosures. And to
16 renovate the homes, we use a combination
17 of licensed local contractors,
18 volunteers, and the homeowners
19 themselves, who put in over 300 hours
20 into their own home. In addition to
21 local labor, we're able to support local
22 businesses with thousands of dollars
23 spent on materials each year.

24 So we have incredible families
25 that are waiting in line to own their

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 first home. We have funders ready to
3 finance the renovations and contractors
4 knocking down the doors to renovate these
5 houses. We just need your help in
6 acquiring the abandoned, vacant lots and
7 houses, and we believe the Land Bank is a
8 great way forward. With your help, we
9 can build a better Philadelphia one house
10 at a time.

11 Thank you very much.

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
13 for your testimony.

14 (Applause.)

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: Next panel,
16 Clerk.

17 THE CLERK: Gary Hawkins, Chris
18 Naylor, Nora Listach, and Connie Morrow.

19 (Witnesses approached witness
20 table.)

21 COUNCILMAN HENON: Ladies
22 first. Please state your name for the
23 record and proceed.

24 MS. MORROW: Yes. Good
25 afternoon, Councilman.

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2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Sorry, Gary.

3 MS. MORROW: My name is

4 Constance Morrow. I'm a lifelong
5 resident of Philadelphia. I always lived
6 in the 5th or 7th District. I'm a
7 parent, a grandparent, and I'm a block
8 captain. I'm very active in my
9 community.

10 As a long resident of North
11 Philly, I always lived in a blighted
12 community, and that's just not fair.
13 It's 2014 going on 2015. Everyone in the
14 City should have an opportunity to live
15 in a decent, safe, affordable
16 neighborhood, and the Lank Bank should
17 make this possible.

18 I'm here today to say that I'm
19 disappointed that the Strategic Plan does
20 not include tactics for economic
21 development. My block is one of the
22 famous city dumps because of the vacant
23 lots, and it frustrates me. One day it's
24 clean; the next day it's dirty.

25 The other night I was woken up

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2 at 4 o'clock in the morning by the sound
3 of a truck. For example, I woke up that
4 morning and went outside and I had saw
5 that someone had backed their truck up
6 and dumped this pile of bricks. Then
7 another man saw the pile of bricks, so he
8 decided to dump his trash too.

9 The hard thing about me living
10 in this blight is that my grandchildren,
11 who I love and enjoy, brought so much joy
12 to my life, have left my home because
13 they got tired of living in the blighting
14 environment, and they don't want me to
15 live there either. They always asking me
16 to move. But I won't move. I will not
17 leave the house that I've been living in
18 for 34 years.

19 Excuse me.

20 As the cost of housing is
21 raising in my neighborhood and
22 development is rising, I am looking to
23 see the Land Bank get up and running.
24 Without real tactics of affordable
25 housing, how would I be able to stay in

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2 my community? The Land Bank originally
3 is committed to affordable housing, but I
4 feel that the Strategic Plans have not
5 committed to these land uses. By leaving
6 out defined tactics to ensure affordable
7 housing, you are leaving me and my
8 neighbors at risk of being displaced for
9 lifelong residents. The Philadelphia
10 Affordable Coalition and Development
11 Without Displacement -- can I say that
12 again -- the Development Without
13 Displacement Campaign expects that all
14 parts of the legislation will be held
15 accountable for transparent and community
16 input. I will be paying close attention
17 to the work of the Land Bank and
18 announcement forms report. We want to
19 make sure that the community is included
20 in the tactics in next the Strategic
21 Plan.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. NAYLOR: Chris Naylor,
24 Political Legislative Coordinator, United
25 Food and Commercial Workers Unions, Local

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2 1776. I'll be very brief. We're also a
3 member of the Take Back Vacant Land
4 Coalition. Don McGrogan, our Executive
5 Vice President, is also on the interim
6 Philadelphia Land bank Board, and he
7 couldn't be here today because of
8 scheduling conflicts, but he did want to
9 commend City Council's work, the Land
10 Bank Board. The strategic planners have
11 done a very good job with what we have so
12 far.

13 I just want to make a very
14 brief point before asking for adoption of
15 the Strategic Plan today, some of what
16 Connie said as well. We do believe as we
17 understand more of our inventory, more of
18 the data questions are answered, a lot
19 more unanswered questions, a lot more
20 information is available, that there
21 should be some more specific goal-setting
22 around it, but we do believe with what we
23 have right now that we think this is a
24 very good first step, that this shows a
25 lot of things that the Land Bank can do.

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2 We're very excited by this process. Our
3 members -- we have a lot of members in
4 Philadelphia very excited by this
5 process.

6 So we are asking for adoption
7 of the resolution today, but as we do
8 understand more about our inventory, what
9 land will actually be in the Land Bank,
10 some more specific questions will have to
11 be answered, but as I think some people
12 have already said today, we know this is
13 going to be an evolving process. So a
14 lot to learn. We're learning a lot more
15 every single day about this process.

16 So asking for adoption of this
17 resolution and more work to be done in
18 the future and looking forward to that.

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

20 MR. HAWKINS: Good afternoon,
21 Chairman Henon and members of the
22 Committee. My name is Gary Hawkins. I
23 am President of Local 1971. Local 1971
24 represents approximately 90 employees
25 employed by the three housing agencies

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2 currently providing land acquisition and
3 distribution services to the City. The
4 three agencies are, one, PRA,
5 Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority;
6 two, PHDC, Philadelphia Housing and
7 Development Corporation; and, three,
8 OHCD, the Office of Housing and Community
9 Development.

10 Local 1971 members have been
11 performing land acquisition and
12 distribution services for the City for
13 over 40 years, and we have been the only
14 employees performing this work. These
15 employees have an absolute legal right to
16 continue performing that work, but that
17 point is not really in dispute. Even
18 Land Bank recognizes that these employees
19 represent a valuable resource, a ready,
20 willing, and able complement of employees
21 able to expertly perform the tasks
22 required to make Land Bank successful.

23 Local 1971 and its dedicated
24 employees it represents are eager and
25 willing to help make Land Bank a success

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2 that will benefit everyone. Before we
3 can adequately do so, however, we need to
4 know under what terms and conditions we
5 will be working.

6 In this regard, we have been
7 working without a contract at the three
8 agencies since June 30th, 2004, over ten
9 years, with no wage increases or benefits
10 improvements. Before we can help Land
11 Bank, we need to get these contracts
12 resolved.

13 To the Mayor, to City Council,
14 and to the Land Bank Board, we say help
15 us help you. Help us get these contract
16 matters resolved so we can all focus on
17 making Philadelphia more beautiful.

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: Is there
19 anyone else?

20 There's no hiding in the back
21 there.

22 MS. SENSENIG: Thank you. I
23 want to thank Chairman Henon and the
24 members of this Council for the
25 opportunity to testify today. My name is

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Rachel Sensenig. I'm a pastor with
3 Circle of Hope. We meet at Broad and
4 Washington. We're a growing church of
5 four congregations who represent almost
6 every neighborhood in the City. We are
7 long-term residents who are interested in
8 making Philadelphia a better place to
9 live, and I appreciate that that's the
10 goal of this Council too. I'm also part
11 of the Coalition To Take Back Vacant
12 Land, and it's been a great experience to
13 work with you in forming what could be
14 the largest Land Bank in the country. I
15 appreciate all the hard work and good
16 thinking that's gone into this process.

17 The Land Bank ordinance was an
18 important step to get land back into the
19 hands of the community. I'm glad for
20 that first step and hopeful about the
21 adoption of this Strategic Plan today,
22 because the blight in my Northwest
23 neighborhood continues to attract crime
24 and drain money from the City. As a
25 parent, that concerns me, because I want

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2 my children and others to be safe walking
3 to and from school, for example, and as a
4 taxpayer and homeowner it concerns me,
5 because vacant and abandoned property in
6 Philadelphia has required \$20 million in
7 annual upkeep, deprived City coffers of 2
8 million in annual tax revenue, and reduce
9 the value of our homes by an average of
10 \$8,000.

11 I would like to see us be able
12 to unleash the invested community groups
13 and individuals who are ready to
14 transform the vacant land into urban
15 farms, safe places for kids to play, and
16 affordable housing.

17 Circle of Hope has discovered
18 how urban agriculture in particular has
19 helped to create some much-needed peace
20 and restoration in contentious areas by
21 bringing neighbors together around the
22 goal of improving their community and
23 expanding access to healthy food. In
24 order to make these positive and
25 necessary changes in our neighborhoods,

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2 we need defined annual targets for
3 equitable development, as the ordinance
4 calls for. We have the responsibility to
5 decide what type of development will
6 occur on the acquired land and to develop
7 five-year goals that maintain the
8 legislation.

9 I appreciate the length of the
10 process as the Land Bank Board continues
11 to take inventory and collect important
12 data, especially from the community, but
13 I'm disappointed that there are currently
14 no targets for Year 1 of the Plan, and
15 I'm concerned about maintaining the
16 long-term affordability and developments
17 in development that our neighborhood
18 needs. I'm asking this Council to commit
19 to including targets in the next
20 Strategic Plan that will ensure equitable
21 development here in Philadelphia.

22 God bless you and thank you for
23 your time.

24 (Applause.)

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 for your testimony.

3 The Chair -- Gary, Mr. Hawkins,
4 just a few quick questions, then I'll
5 recognize Councilwoman Blackwell.

6 You heard some testimonies and
7 some questions, responses from the
8 Administration regarding a contract. And
9 believe me, I want to thank you and all
10 your membership and all the three
11 agencies for their dedicated service and
12 hard work that they do every day. And
13 ten years is way too long for working
14 without a contract. That is
15 unacceptable. I want to state that for
16 the record.

17 But my question here is, do you
18 feel comfortable in the progress that has
19 been made moving towards some sort of
20 contract as a part of your negotiations,
21 without specifics?

22 MR. HAWKINS: I'm going to say
23 I represent three housing agencies. With
24 one of the agencies we have talked often
25 and I'm pretty certain that we can come

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2 to some type of resolution. The other
3 two agencies we've moved a little slower.
4 The talks have been less frequent.

5 I am confident, if the time is
6 placed aside, we can come to an agreement
7 at all three agencies. My hope is just
8 that the appropriate time is invested so
9 that we can reach a resolution quickly so
10 that we can move forward.

11 COUNCILMAN HENON: Absolutely.
12 And I think -- correct me if I'm wrong --
13 just from my observation, ten years going
14 without a contract, the creation of the
15 Land Bank Board has spurred negotiations,
16 getting people to the table and start
17 some real contract negotiations. So I
18 hope that the transition and nobody loses
19 a job, which has been stated for the
20 record, is the end goal here and making
21 sure that there's less disparity or equal
22 for the type of job responsibilities as
23 things come together for Land Bank.

24 MR. HAWKINS: Right. And,
25 again, my hope is that with all three

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2 agencies, the talks continue. Again,
3 with OH and PH the conversations have
4 been less frequent. I want to say maybe
5 we've spoken last in October. So we'd
6 like to continue to have those
7 conversations, because, again, I believe
8 that we can come to a resolution that
9 will satisfy everyone.

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: Anything
11 that I can do as Chair of this Committee,
12 anything that City Council can do to
13 help --

14 MR. HAWKINS: Yes.

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: -- speed
16 this up --

17 MR. HAWKINS: Just encourage
18 that we get back to the table as quickly
19 as possible. My negotiating team, we're
20 ready. We're ready tomorrow. We're
21 ready on Wednesday. We're ready on
22 Thursday. So we'd like to get back to
23 the table as quickly as possible for all
24 three agencies so that we can come to an
25 amicable resolution.

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2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Because
3 without all three agencies, we can't move
4 the City forward to where we need to be.
5 So thank you for your time.

6 The Chair recognizes
7 Councilwoman Blackwell.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
9 you.

10 As you know, we asked
11 Mr. Koonce -- and, Michael, could you
12 come forward too.

13 And we want to ask that
14 question. Are you authorized to continue
15 negotiations this week with the union?

16 MR. KOONCE: Yes, I am.
17 However, I do want to also add that I
18 have been meeting with leadership. I met
19 with leadership last week. So it's not
20 that -- we didn't meet with the full
21 negotiating team, but there were things
22 that we've been trying to iron out over
23 the last two weeks so that we can have
24 more fruitful negotiations. But the
25 answer to that is yes.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: So
3 therefore -- and, Mr. Hawkins, are you
4 satisfied? You heard Mr. Koonce. I
5 trust Mr. Koonce. I've known him
6 forever, many, many, many years, and if
7 he says he's authorized to move forward
8 this week, then I'm sure that will
9 happen. And you also heard his testimony
10 about us moving forward on this
11 legislation, but that he would not move
12 forward until a contract is consummated.
13 Are you satisfied with what has happened
14 and what we've said in this hearing
15 today?

16 MR. HAWKINS: I'm satisfied
17 with that information. I am satisfied
18 with that information. I'll be more
19 satisfied when we sit down at the table
20 this week to talk.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
22 Mr. Koonce?

23 MR. KOONCE: Yes.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: All
25 right. He's committed that that will

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2 happen this week. We're here. We do not
3 want to move forward. It's too hard.
4 It's 2014. We don't want to move forward
5 unless everybody is represented. It's a
6 labor town. We all know it. We want to
7 make sure that you are fine and, as
8 always, we want to make sure that
9 inclusion is on the table for everything
10 we do.

11 Thank you both.

12 MR. KOONCE: Thank you.

13 MR. HAWKINS: Thank you.

14 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

15 Clerk, could you read the next
16 panel, please.

17 THE CLERK: Nancy Goldenberg,
18 Anne Fadullon, Robyn Mello.

19 (Witnesses approached witness
20 table.)

21 COUNCILMAN HENON: Please state
22 your name for the record and proceed with
23 your testimony. Thank you for coming.

24 MS. GOLDENBERG: Good
25 afternoon, Chairman Henon and Committee

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2 members. My name is Nancy Goldenberg. I
3 am Chief of Staff at the Pennsylvania
4 Horticultural Society. PHS is the oldest
5 and largest horticultural society in
6 America with over 64,000 members, most of
7 whom are concentrated in the Philadelphia
8 region. I am delighted to offer PHS's
9 strong support for Resolution 140915.

10 PHS's mission is to motivate
11 people to improve the quality of life and
12 create a sense of community through
13 horticulture. We are well known for
14 producing the longest continuously
15 running flower show in the country, but
16 it is perhaps our community greening work
17 that began in earnest in the mid '70s
18 that has had the greatest impact on
19 Philadelphia's residents and particularly
20 our LandCare and Community LandCare
21 programs, which are nationally recognized
22 programs developed in partnership with
23 and supported by the City's Office of
24 Housing and Community Development and
25 community-based organizations.

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2 Over the last 15 years, PHS has
3 cleaned and greened and maintained more
4 than 6,000 vacant lots, which is more
5 than 10 million square feet of land in
6 Philadelphia. We have worked with
7 community groups to stabilize another
8 2,100 lots. This approach has taught us
9 that there's no one-size-fits-all
10 approach to mitigating Philadelphia's
11 vacancy problem, and the Strategic Plan
12 for the Philadelphia Land Bank smartly
13 highlights the diverse partnerships
14 needed among City agencies and
15 non-profits in order to accomplish
16 successful outcomes. The Plan recognizes
17 that different communities have different
18 needs and that green space, growing
19 space, urban agriculture, community
20 gardens, and parks are essential elements
21 to be included in our City's land
22 allocation. Most significantly, the Plan
23 places a premium on community-managed
24 open space, something that's crucial
25 especially in rapidly developing

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2 neighborhoods where open space may now or
3 soon be at a premium.

4 PHS has particularly strived
5 for a smart, equitable set of tools to
6 return Philadelphia's vacant land to
7 productive use. We believe that the
8 driving principles behind the Strategic
9 Plan as it's written, particularly the
10 goal of reinforcing open space
11 initiatives and urban agriculture, will
12 be tremendously valuable in our City's
13 push to reduce vacant land.

14 PHS's 64,000 members are very
15 concerned that greening and open space
16 issues are considered as Philadelphia
17 mitigates its vacancy challenges, and we
18 believe that the Strategic Plan addresses
19 those considerations well by prioritizing
20 community uses of vacant land, while
21 never inhibiting the development needed
22 in the City's neighborhoods.

23 PHS looks forward to working
24 with City Council, the Land Bank, and all
25 the other departments and agencies

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2 involved to help ameliorate

3 Philadelphia's vacant land challenges and

4 build stronger neighborhoods and a more

5 economically competitive city. I

6 encourage your favorable consideration of

7 this resolution and would be happy to

8 answer any questions.

9 Thank you.

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank

11 you.

12 Whoever would like to go next.

13 MS. MELLO: Good afternoon,

14 Councilmembers. My name is Robyn Mello

15 and I'm here today wearing a few hats,

16 first as Education and Outreach Director

17 for the Philadelphia Orchard Project, a

18 non-profit which has worked with

19 community partners to plant 37 free

20 food-producing fruit and nut orchards

21 throughout the City over the past eight

22 years; second, as a new homeowner in

23 Norris Square with a potential side yard

24 on a block just on the fringes of major

25 development from Northern Liberties,

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2 Temple, and Fishtown; and, third, as an
3 independent gardening advocate who has
4 helped communities to start almost a
5 dozen gardens in tax-delinquent lots
6 throughout the City within the last four
7 years.

8 I am proud of and excited by
9 the amount of language, photos, and maps
10 included in the Strategic Plan that
11 highlight the need for the Land Bank to
12 transfer lots as community gardens,
13 market farms, side yards, and community
14 open space. I cannot stress enough the
15 importance of these land uses being
16 prioritized on equal footing with
17 affordable housing and market-rate
18 development in written policy but mostly
19 in the Land Bank's actual
20 decision-making, and especially in
21 neighborhoods such as mine where the
22 potential for housing, commercial
23 development, and green space greatly
24 overlap and people will soon be clamoring
25 for real estate. Without this equal

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2 prioritization, I worry that market-rate
3 development could greatly overshadow
4 existing community uses and change the
5 general flow of neighborhoods without
6 their consent.

7 There must be a high level of
8 transparency and notice, especially
9 through public posting on lots and in
10 easily accessible forms of media when
11 Land Bank properties are to be developed.
12 I also believe that more security for
13 open spaces through the Land Bank will
14 translate to higher investment in them.
15 Gardens, side yards, and community spaces
16 that are secured through stable long-term
17 leases or purchased for below market
18 rates by their stewards will naturally
19 result in lower maintenance costs and an
20 improved tax base for the City, greater
21 food productivity, more aesthetically
22 pleasing structures, the ability for
23 residents to become more self-sufficient
24 or profitable over time, and allow for
25 more support from greening organizations.

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2 For example, long-term leases,
3 conservatorships, and ownership of vacant
4 lots would translate to more orchards
5 that the Philadelphia Orchard Project
6 could plant, because orchards and food
7 forests take many years to design and
8 mature. Imagine a Philadelphia in ten to
9 20 years with free orchards overflowing
10 with a diverse array of food in every
11 neighborhood.

12 I understand the need for new
13 and rehabilitated homes and businesses as
14 well as the bolstered revenue base for
15 the City through those uses. However, I
16 represent a new wave of residents
17 following in the footsteps of generations
18 of Philadelphians who cherish our small
19 patches of earth, where we gather with
20 friends and family, grow our own food,
21 and sit comfortably under trees catching
22 summer breezes when the heat is
23 unbearable. Don't underestimate the
24 importance of preserving those small
25 patches of earth for community health and

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2 happiness, improved communication and
3 visibility among community members,
4 retention of active citizens, and
5 attraction of new residents.

6 I have spent a lot of time in
7 major cities in the U.S. and I chose to
8 buy a home in Philly because I believe
9 that this is a space where I can make a
10 mark and grow. I want to be part of
11 shaping a Philadelphia that's socially
12 progressive, that's striving to actually
13 be the greenest city in the country in
14 word and in deed, and where young people
15 like me are excited to mold homes,
16 careers, and families and grow into
17 existing communities that care for each
18 other.

19 Please don't forget about the
20 multiple generations of mostly silent
21 food growers and open space lovers as you
22 work with the Land Bank Strategic Plan
23 and Disposition Policies.

24 Thank you.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:

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2 Ms. Fadullon.

3 MS. FADULLON: My name is Anne
4 Fadullon. I'm President of the Building
5 Industry Association, which represents
6 the region's residential home builders,
7 residential contractors and suppliers.
8 I'd like to thank the members of the
9 Committee for allowing us to testify
10 regarding the Strategic Plan for the Land
11 Bank.

12 The BIA has been a longtime
13 proponent of creating a Land Bank in
14 Philadelphia, and we're proud of our part
15 in advocating for the enabling
16 legislation and now working with other
17 stakeholders to realize the Land Bank's
18 potential during this important
19 implementation stage.

20 The Strategic Plan should seek
21 to make the most of that potential by
22 providing a smart, comprehensible path
23 for consolidating public land acquisition
24 and swift disposition that accounts for a
25 variety of public policy goals, including

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2 promoting both market-rate and affordable
3 housing development, as well as other
4 types of development. We also believe
5 that the inclusion of implementation
6 benchmarks is essential to determining
7 the overall success of the Land Bank once
8 it is up and running.

9 The BIA's goal since we first
10 called for the creation of a Land Bank
11 has been to provide a predictable,
12 accountable process for the development
13 of vacant land. The legislation that
14 created the Land Bank was a defining
15 moment for our city. Every effort should
16 be made to make the most of its
17 implementation, including the Strategic
18 Plan. Those responsible should embrace
19 accountability, not hide from it, and
20 provide clear benchmarks for themselves
21 and obvious metrics for the public to be
22 able to measure how successful a tool the
23 Land Bank can be.

24 The members of the Building
25 Industry Association look forward to

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2 continuing to work with the Lank Bank
3 Board and City Council to reduce vacant
4 land and eliminate tax delinquency to
5 serve the development needs of the City
6 of Philadelphia.

7 Thank you.

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
9 you.

10 No questions or comments?
11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank you
13 all.

14 Mr. Creelman, our next panel.

15 THE CLERK: Tiffany Green,
16 Benjamin Leech, Islam Sharif, and Beth
17 McConnell.

18 (Witnesses approached witness
19 table.)

20 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I want to
21 keep repeating the Chairman's comments.
22 Please try to be brief. We still have a
23 number of people who would like to
24 testify. We are backed up by another
25 hearing already.

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2 So whoever would like to start,
3 please identify yourself and proceed.

4 MR. LEECH: I can start?

5 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Whoever.
6 Go ahead.

7 MR. LEECH: Ben Leech. I'm the
8 Director of Advocacy for the Preservation
9 Alliance for Greater Philadelphia. I'll
10 try to be brief.

11 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Please.

12 MR. LEECH: The Preservation
13 Alliance is the City's primary
14 not-for-profit historic preservation
15 advocacy organization. As such, we
16 recognize the dire need for a
17 comprehensive strategy to promote the
18 productive reuse of vacant and abandoned
19 property across the City. The Land Bank
20 as it's currently envisioned includes
21 9,000 vacant buildings that are
22 potentially eligible for inclusion in the
23 program.

24 What we like about the bill or
25 about the Land Bank program is that it is

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2 a potentially powerful neighborhood
3 stabilization tool and a mechanism to
4 prevent the loss of these historic
5 buildings.

6 What we are concerned about is
7 what we don't know. There are
8 approximately 10,000 properties that are
9 on the Philadelphia Register of Historic
10 Places or in districts and 20,000 that
11 are on the National Register or national
12 registry districts, and we don't know how
13 many of these are included in the 9,000
14 that might be eligible for Land Bank
15 acquisition. It would be a relatively
16 simple exercise to cross-reference the
17 potential properties with these historic
18 designations, and with that sort of order
19 of magnitude known -- we don't know right
20 now if it's five or 50 or 500 -- we can
21 better plan for appropriate acquisition
22 and disposition policies that would take
23 these historic certifications into
24 account. That could include eligibility
25 for tax credits, protection against

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2 unnecessary demolition, planning for
3 appropriate maintenance and
4 stabilization, et cetera.

5 So it's a fantastic start. We
6 would look forward to seeing more
7 attention given to how this will
8 interface with historic properties moving
9 forward.

10 Thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
12 you.

13 Whoever would like to go next.

14 MR. SHARIF: Good afternoon.
15 My name is Islam Sharif.

16 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: You can
17 pull that a little closer, make it a
18 little easier for yourself.

19 MR. SHARIF: Good afternoon.
20 My name is Islam Sharif. I'm a member of
21 the Philadelphia Masid Incorporated at
22 4700 Wyalusing Avenue. I'm also a member
23 of the Board of Directors of the
24 Philadelphia Masid. I'm also the
25 Director of the non-profit organization

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2 Blind Faith 4U2, and I'm the Executive
3 Director of the non-profit corporation
4 GHETTO Incorporated, which means Getting
5 Homes, Education, Technical Training, and
6 Equal Opportunity. But we are here to
7 recognize the Philadelphia Association of
8 Community Development, which we are a
9 member, and we want to recognize them for
10 their efforts, their hard work, and we
11 want to support them in this resolution.

12 We have recognized them as
13 being very strategic and supportive in
14 the building and development of all sorts
15 of projects in the City. And I know the
16 City has known them much as I do, as well
17 as I do. And we want to give them our
18 support and recognize them for their
19 efforts. And we are asking you to make
20 the resolution true and to give them the
21 support that they need so that they can
22 continue their work.

23 We are also asking for your
24 help, because we want to be a community
25 developer ourselves. We want to build a

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2 senior citizen home/veteran home on the
3 900 block of 47th Street, and we need
4 your help and support like you're giving
5 to Universal City with Kenny Gamble, with
6 (unintelligible) at 42nd and Wallace
7 Street, with the Nicetown projects. We
8 want to thank the Philadelphia
9 Association of Community Development,
10 which was really valuable in getting
11 these projects done, and we want to walk
12 in the footsteps of some of these giants
13 that have gone forth.

14 We want to thank you and
15 recognizing the Philadelphia Corporation
16 of Community Development.

17 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
18 you, sir.

19 MR. SHARIF: Thank you very
20 much.

21 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
22 you.

23 Ms. McConnell.

24 MS. McCONNELL: Thank you.

25 Good afternoon, members of Council.

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2 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

3 My name is Beth McConnell, Policy

4 Director with the Philadelphia

5 Association of Community Development

6 Corporations. As you know, PACDC was one

7 of many groups that advocated for the

8 creation of a Land Bank over a five-year

9 campaign. So we're very pleased to be

10 here today.

11 We want to start by applauding

12 certainly Councilwoman Sanchez for her

13 leadership and getting the bill through

14 City Council and also the Nutter

15 Administration and its consultant team

16 that developed the Strategic Plan. This

17 team consistently engaged PACDC and our

18 members, as well as members of the Philly

19 Land Bank Alliance over the many months

20 that this plan was developed. They

21 listened to stakeholder input and made

22 many changes based on feedback they

23 heard.

24 So we believe the plan that was

25 developed establishes a strong vision for

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 a Philadelphia Land Bank that
3 strategically and proactively turns
4 vacant properties into assets.

5 We urge Council to approve
6 Resolution 140915 before the end of this
7 year and work to approve in early 2015
8 ordinances that will transfer existing
9 publicly owned properties into the Land
10 Bank's inventory so it can begin this
11 important work.

12 The Plan balances the need to
13 use vacant properties for affordable and
14 market-rate homes, as well as to create
15 more mixed-income communities; to create
16 economic opportunities on our
17 neighborhood commercial corridors; and to
18 preserve and create new green space. It
19 uses smart data to establish focus zones
20 where those needs and opportunities are
21 particularly strong, while directing the
22 Land Bank to be open to unique
23 opportunities in any part of the City.
24 And it respects the neighborhood planning
25 processes that have already been

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2 completed with strong resident input.

3 The Plan also establishes
4 five-year goals for property disposition
5 and acquisition that are both
6 aspirational and realistic if all
7 stakeholders do their part, including the
8 Administration, Council, developers, and
9 community groups.

10 The appendix of the Strategic
11 Plan also contains revised disposition
12 policies. We are very pleased to see
13 revisions in those policies that remove
14 the requirement that entities that get
15 site control be responsible for the cost
16 of insurance, maintenance or utilities.
17 This will help reduce the need for
18 additional public subsidies for
19 non-profit projects.

20 We also support new language in
21 the policies that recognizes that
22 potential purchasers should not be
23 disqualified if they hold other
24 properties with municipal liens that
25 should have been cleared by the City long

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2 ago but remain in place due to backlogs.

3 PACDC advocated for language in
4 the policies to provide greater
5 transparency to the public about the
6 methodology used to determine discounted
7 prices for public land. While the final
8 sale price will be disclosed, there is no
9 clear guidance on how full or partial
10 discounts are calculated. While we're
11 disappointed those changes weren't made,
12 we'll continue to advocate that the Land
13 Bank make that information available even
14 though it's not required in the policies.

15 In closing, establishing a
16 Philadelphia Land Bank that is
17 accountable, transparent, efficient, and
18 equitable is a big job, and the Strategic
19 Plan puts us well on our way. We hope
20 the quality of the Plan deepens the
21 commitment of the Administration and
22 Council to make the Land Bank a success,
23 which will require that Council transfer
24 into the Land Bank every vacant surplus
25 property for which there is not an active

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2 disposition process already in place.

3 Thank you very much for the
4 opportunity to testify.

5 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
6 you. Thank all three of you.

7 Please come forward. Please
8 identify yourself and proceed.

9 MS. GREEN: Hi. Tiffany Green,
10 Concerned Citizens of Point Breeze. This
11 is Marie Ortiz and she's from the Point
12 Breeze community as well. She wants to
13 speak.

14 Good day, everyone. I want to
15 speak on this because I have great
16 serious concerns as to the land banking
17 bill as it stands right now. Real quick,
18 let's talk about some issues that may
19 take place.

20 There's a community now called
21 G-Ho, and back in 2000, the poor and
22 minority rates, according to the census,
23 was approximately over 7,000 residents
24 that were living in that area. Within
25 ten years, by 2010, the poor and minority

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2 rate had reduced down to about 2,300.

3 Within ten years, these people have been
4 moved out of their communities.

5 This land banking bill is not
6 taking into consideration the massive
7 gentrification that will come to each and
8 every one of your areas. Point Breeze
9 has been down here for a while, to the
10 point where I feel that we're dinosaurs
11 at this point. However, I think at this
12 particular point, that you do not really
13 understand our plight. So when it comes
14 to your backyard, you will understand now
15 what we have been talking about all
16 along.

17 Real quick, what this land
18 banking bill does not address, one, there
19 is no incentive for a developer to build
20 low-wage affordable housing. We cannot
21 sit here and depend on non-profit
22 developers, for-profit developers, and
23 non-profit and CDCs to build affordable
24 housing, because the funding is drying up
25 all over the place. So, therefore, if

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2 they don't have the funding to build,
3 then who is going to build?

4 Developers right now have
5 stated and a known developer just stated
6 in the Daily News on November 28th, I
7 think it was, stating that they only want
8 to build market-rate housing. They only
9 want to build three stories, three type
10 of mini mansions, market-rate housing.
11 So where is the incentive for them to
12 build with these 32,000 parcels you're
13 talking about that's going to reach into
14 each one of our areas and you have no
15 incentive for them to build low-wage
16 housing?

17 On top of that, what about the
18 ten-year tax abatement? All these people
19 are getting ten-year tax abatements.
20 When are you going to address this?
21 They're going to have ten-year tax
22 abatements. But when these people build
23 these houses and they move people in
24 there, who is going -- you guys are going
25 to have additional trash pickup, police

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2 services, fire services. Who are going
3 to pay for all this? You have not
4 addressed the ten-year tax abatement
5 issue here. So how can you sit here and
6 say we're going to pat each other on the
7 back regarding 32,000 parcels and we're
8 going to move forward with community
9 gardens and all this? Who is going to
10 pay for all these services that are going
11 to bring these people into the community?

12 The other thing, no demolition
13 regarding demolition and environmental
14 safety when these buildings are knocked
15 down. Right now you're only testing for
16 asbestos. You're not testing for
17 contamination and all of these other
18 issues that go along with these
19 industrial buildings as well as
20 residential buildings. Who is going to
21 pay for all that contamination bill? You
22 don't have anything in your bill
23 regarding demolitions to even address the
24 contaminations that may come from some of
25 these buildings that have been sitting

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2 there for years and years and years.

3 On top of that, right now most
4 of the people in the community cannot
5 really even afford -- you have people
6 making low wage, like 7.75 up to maybe
7 \$12 an hour. So they may not even be
8 able to afford to purchase these houses.
9 What do you have in place?

10 We're asking for community
11 boards, number one. According to the
12 CDC, in order to keep the health concerns
13 of people living in gentrified areas,
14 they need to be a part of the process.
15 We're asking for community boards. These
16 are people who help you get elected.
17 We're talking about block captains.
18 We're talking about committee people.
19 We're talking about residents. You do
20 not have them as part of the process.
21 You have these sophisticated
22 organizations who are sitting up here who
23 want to get these -- many of them do not
24 even live in the neighborhood.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Ms.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Green, I'm going to have to ask you to
3 wrap up. Okay?

4 MS. GREEN: I'm going to finish
5 up.

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Because
7 we want to be fair to everybody.

8 MS. GREEN: Excuse me. You
9 asked us to give you what is wrong with
10 the bill. I'm going to give you. I'm
11 going to finish up.

12 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: We want
13 to give everybody the same amount of
14 time.

15 MS. GREEN: My point is, is
16 that we're asking for a community bill --
17 real quick. I just want to get my
18 five-phase plan.

19 I think community boards, and
20 one is that we set up land banking
21 subcommittees in each areas. And this
22 will allow that once you have a community
23 board, the people will come to the
24 community board and they would then say
25 what they want to do with the properties

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2 in the area. At that particular point,
3 the community board would decide if
4 they're going to move them forward
5 downtown to be heard in front of the, I
6 guess, larger board at that particular
7 point.

8 One, people who are taking care
9 of the property for -- there have been
10 people who have been taking care of
11 gardens who are very angry because the
12 properties were sold from underneath
13 them, and we're saying they should get
14 first choice. Second choice should go to
15 near neighbors, near neighbors or
16 neighbors who live on the block or live
17 in the area. They should be able to get
18 these properties first if they can afford
19 it and they have the money with a plan.

20 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Ms.

21 Green, I have to call you on time,
22 because we want to be fair to everybody.

23 MS. GREEN: Real quick. One
24 more time.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I got to

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 call you on time.

3 MS. GREEN: I'm done.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
5 you.

6 Ms. Ortiz, before you go, I'm
7 going to ask Mr. Creelman, because you
8 were scheduled for the next panel, I'm
9 going to ask Mr. Creelman to call the
10 other names for that same panel.

11 MS. GREEN: Thank you very
12 much. I'll submit that into you.

13 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Please.

14 MS. GREEN: You always cut me
15 off, but you didn't cut anybody else off.

16 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Well, you
17 were going a little longer than most.

18 MS. GREEN: No, I'm not going
19 longer than anybody else.

20 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:
21 Mr. Creelman.

22 THE CLERK: Nicole Sugarman,
23 Thomas Earle, Jeff Carpenter.

24 MS. GREEN: Don't be biased.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Ms. Ortiz, stay there. That's what I was
3 saying, you're part of this panel. In
4 fact, you can start. Please identify
5 yourself and proceed as the other members
6 are coming up.

7 MS. GREEN: I think you should
8 keep your personal bias to yourself. I
9 don't appreciate you cutting me off.
10 Thank you.

11 MS. ORTIZ: My name is Marie
12 Ortiz. I'm in the South Philadelphia
13 area. I don't have nothing written down
14 on paper, but --

15 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Just a
16 little closer to the microphone.

17 MS. ORTIZ: I have nothing
18 written down on paper, but I'm talking
19 about what's going on all over the City.
20 My thing is, I'm a grandmother, mother.
21 My kids went to college and everything.
22 I live in South Philly. There's not
23 enough affordable homes. We have a
24 developer building high-end houses, and
25 he also said he's not building affordable

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2 housing. What are you doing to protect

3 me as a long-term citizen, who has been

4 putting into my area and the schools?

5 Because there's no school in the area.

6 They done closed them down. My

7 grandchild has to go all the way to

8 Center City, Northeast to school. These

9 things need to be addressed.

10 I mean, the land banking should

11 be for the people who live within the

12 community. If not, what I'm asking is,

13 when these developers do come into the

14 area, make it so they can build

15 affordable housing. If they got a

16 billion dollar -- if they're making \$85

17 billion, each of them should at least

18 build 20 homes, affordable homes, for

19 somebody who is making 7.50 and 10.50.

20 That's all I'm asking.

21 We need help. We say we're a

22 city of brotherly love. What I've been

23 seeing, money. Money is not the issue.

24 We got to remember, each of us is getting

25 older and each of us want to live in our

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2 home, and if we keep bringing these
3 billion dollar conglomerate into the
4 neighborhood all over the City, we're
5 lost out, and that's all I'm asking,
6 something to be considered for
7 low-income, working-class people all over
8 the City that need help, not with all
9 high-end houses and nobody wants to build
10 affordable housing. That's what I'm
11 asking for.

12 Thank you and bless you.

13 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
14 you.

15 Whoever would like to go.

16 MR. EARLE: Thank you. Good
17 afternoon, Councilman Henon, Chairperson
18 of the Committee, and fellow
19 Councilmembers. My name is Thomas Earle.
20 I am the CEO of Liberty Resources, which
21 is the Center for Independent Living for
22 people with disabilities living in
23 Philadelphia. I'm also testifying today
24 as the current Chairperson of the
25 Philadelphia Commission on Human

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2 Relations, because accessible and
3 affordable housing for seniors, working
4 families, and people with disabilities,
5 including low-income households, is very
6 important to the Commission and its
7 Community Relations Division.

8 The majority of consumers that
9 Liberty serves want to live independently
10 in their own homes and remain in the
11 community, but their ability to do so
12 often depends on the availability of
13 safe, affordable, and physically
14 accessible housing throughout all areas
15 of the City.

16 Another obstacle to remaining
17 in the community is financial. Many of
18 the consumers that Liberty Resources
19 serves are people with physical
20 disabilities that live on low fixed
21 monthly incomes, such as Social Security
22 income and Social Security disability
23 income.

24 One of our top priorities is
25 also helping people with disabilities

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2 move out of nursing homes, like
3 Philadelphia Nursing Home, and the lack
4 of affordable housing is often an
5 obstacle. Liberty Resources' Housing
6 Development Corporation to this end has
7 developed very affordable housing with
8 the assistance of Councilman Jones at
9 55th and Vine Street, 13 accessible
10 units, and also a new project with the
11 support of Councilwoman Blackwell at 55th
12 and Poplar that will build 24 units of
13 affordable housing, six of which will be
14 accessible to people with disabilities.
15 It's innovative approaches like this,
16 reusing City property that sits vacant or
17 blighted that can be put to good use,
18 that is a prudent policy that the
19 Strategic Plan addresses.

20 However, while we support the
21 Strategic Plan, we'd like to recommend a
22 friendly amendment today that will
23 address specific sections under
24 16-709(a), which requires an analysis
25 that shall, not may, but shall

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2 specifically evaluate the relative need
3 and availability for affordable or mixed
4 income housing that is accessible or
5 visitability.

6 Another section, 16-709(c),
7 requires specific goals that shall
8 include defined targets for the share of
9 future housing units to be built on
10 public properties affordable to different
11 income ranges of very low, low, and
12 moderate income.

13 These specific goals are absent
14 from this Plan. It's something that can
15 be easily fixed, and we ask that it be
16 amended or that the future plans be
17 developed in a way that address these
18 specific income goals.

19 The housing crisis in
20 Philadelphia, as some folks have
21 testified earlier, is not because there's
22 a lack of moderate to high-income
23 housing. There's a lack of affordable
24 housing for people with disabilities and
25 other low-income working families.

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2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Mr. Earle,
3 if you can kind of wrap it up here.

4 MR. EARLE: Yes.

5 And for this reason, we do
6 support the Plan and we're excited to be
7 part of not only the Take Back Vacant
8 Land Campaign, but also the Philadelphia
9 Coalition for Affordable Communities.

10 Thank you very much.

11 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.
12 You can submit your requests over to the
13 table behind me. Thank you.

14 Can you state your name for the
15 record and proceed, please.

16 MS. SUGARMAN: Good afternoon.
17 My name is Nicole Sugarman and I have
18 been an urban farmer and food educator
19 for nine years. As the Director of Food
20 Access for the East Park Revitalization
21 Alliance, I tend vegetable gardens and
22 help kids and adults learn to grow food
23 and maintain their own gardens. I work
24 with both the Philadelphia Coalition for
25 Affordable Communities and the Healthy

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2 Foods Green Spaces Coalition, because I
3 am passionate about supporting a diverse,
4 equitable, and healthy city.

5 I am excited to support a Land
6 Bank that prioritizes equitable
7 community-led land uses, especially in
8 neighborhoods undergoing gentrification.

9 I find my work as an urban farmer and
10 food educator worthwhile, not only
11 because of the tangible benefits that
12 growing or accessing local foods brings
13 to people's lives, including improved
14 health and money saved on grocery bills,
15 but because of gardens' incredible
16 ability to build community and bring
17 people together.

18 One garden I support was
19 started close to 30 years ago by a
20 veteran of the Korean War and his wife
21 who have lived on the same block in
22 Strawberry Mansion since the 1950's. As
23 they age, they need more help to maintain
24 the garden, and I was particularly
25 worried one week last summer because the

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2 wife, who does the bulk of the gardening
3 since her husband's eyesight has been in
4 decline, had just returned from emergency
5 heart surgery. I hurried over to her
6 garden to make sure she had the help she
7 needed and that she wasn't straining
8 herself too much when she's supposed to
9 be resting. To my joy and relief, I
10 found the whole block pitching in to
11 support her. A middle-aged man who
12 enjoyed hot peppers from the garden was
13 weeding. The woman next door with whom
14 she shared greens was helping to harvest
15 tomatoes and eggplants. And a middle
16 school-aged girl from down the block was
17 planting kale transplants under the older
18 woman's supervision.

19 Seeing the whole block come
20 together to support the garden and its
21 caretakers reminded me why I feel so
22 strongly that gardens are important. The
23 gardens become spaces where people meet
24 new neighbors, learn from each other, and
25 end up working together, both in the

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2 garden and without.

3 Community gardens' benefits are
4 both broad and remarkable. Peer-reviewed
5 studies have found that gardens have been
6 linked to reductions in crime, trash
7 dumping, fires, violent deaths, mental
8 illness, and stress, as well as increases
9 in residents' perceived feelings of
10 safety and community civic engagement.

11 I would like to praise the Land
12 Bank Strategic Plan for prioritizing the
13 preservation of existing gardens as well
14 as working with new gardeners to obtain
15 land through lease or purchase. Creating
16 a garden, farm or green space requires
17 considerable outputs of time, physical
18 and mental energy, and money. I would
19 like to emphasize the importance of
20 long-term, non-revocable leases and
21 encouraging gardeners and community
22 groups to invest in the piece of land.

23 I am excited about the Land
24 Bank as a means to build resilient
25 un-averse communities that meet the needs

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2 of their members, including new and
3 existing gardens and farms, affordable
4 accessible housing, and job creation.

5 While I have confidence that the Land
6 Bank ordinance was written to support
7 community needs, the Strategic Plan does
8 not altogether reflect that. The
9 Strategic Plan does not define annual
10 targets for equitable development, a step
11 that creates an important opportunity for
12 community input and transparency.

13 Setting clear, specific targets for land
14 disposition will ensure long-term
15 affordability and the creation of
16 community gardens and farms.

17 I look forward to supporting
18 and working with the Land Bank that makes
19 equity, transparency, and accountability
20 real priorities as it operates. I ask
21 that you make a commitment to include
22 targets in the next Strategic Plan that
23 will ensure equitable development and
24 land use.

25 I appreciate the extremely hard

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2 work that has gone into this
3 legislation's plan, and I am excited to
4 continue to work with you.

5 Thank you for your time.

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
7 for your testimony.

8 Clerk, last panel.

9 THE CLERK: We got one more.

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: Oh, we got
11 one more?

12 I got to apologize. If you
13 could summarize --

14 MR. CARPENTER: Yeah. I'm here
15 to honor your earlier request. I'm not
16 going to read my bit. Jeff Carpenter.

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.
18 It will be submitted for the record.

19 MR. CARPENTER: Jeff Carpenter,
20 President of Arcadia Commons, a
21 non-profit organization that was formed
22 three years ago to try and acquire 16
23 empty lots in East Kensington to make a
24 park and urban farm.

25 I think that the Strategic Plan

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2 as proposed is great for its intention
3 and those things that it says it will do.
4 We've heard testimony earlier that it
5 actually won't do the things that it says
6 it will do. The various agencies that
7 hold City-owned lots right now won't
8 necessarily turn them all over as the
9 Strategic Plan says it will, but more
10 specifically, I'm worried about
11 methodology of acquiring these lots.

12 We have experience of putting
13 into Sheriff Sale two lots two years ago,
14 and we were told that they would go
15 through the legal process. Linebarger
16 would do the necessary work within six to
17 nine months. Two years later it still
18 had not happened. And during that time,
19 what had been a blighted neighborhood
20 suddenly became of interest to
21 developers. The frontier had moved up
22 Frankford corridor and arrived, and
23 suddenly lots that were empty lots that
24 were valued at \$3,000, selling at \$3,000,
25 one of our lots sold for \$35,000, and

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2 there was no way that we could address
3 the issue of those lots that were going
4 into Sheriff Sale, which were suddenly
5 being picked off by developers even
6 though we had the support, the avid
7 support, of our Councilperson, Mark
8 Squilla, to put these lots into a
9 condemnation process. As we were in
10 discussion, a developer went and actually
11 found these absentee owners and bought
12 these lots out from underneath us.

13 So I think that the City
14 Council should form some sort of
15 appropriate investigation into the legal
16 process that will be concomitant with any
17 kind of strategy, any kind of plan, and
18 to see if there's a way to reform this
19 turgid process, which can take so long
20 for legal clearing that's necessary for
21 any of this. And I suggest that you add
22 an amendment that the Land Bank be able
23 to freeze the sale of any lot that it
24 expresses an intention on, so that during
25 this legal process, nothing gets taken

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2 out from under you.

3 The intention -- obviously
4 there's good intentions and bad. Sorry.
5 There's intentions towards the community
6 and towards developers. Those intentions
7 that are towards the community, make sure
8 they don't get away from you.

9 Thank you.

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
11 for your time.

12 Clerk, last panel.

13 THE CLERK: Elisa Ruse
14 Esposito, Diane Corman-Levy, Jenny
15 Greenberg, and Amy Cahn.

16 (Witnesses approached witness
17 table.)

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: Before you
19 start the testimony, is there anyone else
20 that wishes to testify here?

21 MR. ALI: Yes.

22 COUNCILMAN HENON: Please get
23 ready to come up next.

24 State your name.

25 MS. LEVY: Thank you. Good

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 afternoon. My name is Diane Corman-Levy.

3 On behalf of the Mayor's Food Policy

4 Advisory Council, known as FPAC, I

5 strongly recommend that City Council

6 approve the 2015 Proposed Strategic Plan

7 and Disposition Policy of the

8 Philadelphia Land Bank.

9 Our biggest concerns are that
10 the Land Bank be fully resourced so it
11 may fulfill the promises of the Strategic
12 Plan and the Land Disposition Policies be
13 implemented consistently across
14 land-holding agencies to finally create
15 the predictable and equitable process
16 that we need.

17 In order to facilitate
18 implementation, we encourage the Mayor
19 and City Council to consider appointing
20 to the permanent Land Bank Board an
21 individual with expertise on open spaces
22 like greening, gardening, and other forms
23 of urban agriculture.

24 The FPAC was appointed by Mayor
25 Nutter in 2011 and tasked with advising

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2 the City on how to be a productive
3 partner in the regional food system and
4 how to improve food access. We see the
5 potential of the Land Bank to advance the
6 goals of FPAC, the Philadelphia Food
7 Charter, and Greenworks.

8 In particular, FPAC values the
9 commitment outlined in the legislation to
10 ensure that public land be used to
11 enhance and create benefits for the
12 public. The Land Bank ordinance and now
13 the Strategic Plan recognizes urban
14 agriculture as one of the end uses
15 essential to creating healthy and
16 sustainable communities, and you
17 certainly have heard from several people
18 saying how important that is. It also
19 will build on the progress of
20 Philadelphia's new Zoning Code to create
21 a framework and enhance opportunities for
22 local production of healthy, affordable,
23 and culturally appropriate food.

24 The Land Bank Strategic Plan
25 could do significant work to move urban

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agriculture and community-managed open
space opportunities forward in the City
of Philadelphia. Portions of the Plan
that are critical to this work include
the following:

In Goals 1 and 5 and throughout
the document, the Plan recognizes
Philadelphia residents as active land
stewards and the investment put into
community-tended spaces as well as the
fragility of spaces that are not legally
secured.

In Goal 1, the Plan defines the
objective to preserve existing community
gardens, and in Goal 6 creates guiding
criteria such that properties already in
use as active and maintained community
gardens and market farms will be
protected.

In Goals 1 and 5, the Plan
creates frameworks for new projects,
including larger scale market farms and
destination gardens that could serve
residents throughout the City. These

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2 goals respond to ongoing community need,
3 interest, and capacity for growth.

4 Finally, the Plan draws a
5 connection between community manager of
6 agriculture and green stormwater
7 management projects, a connection that
8 has potential to expand opportunities for
9 both.

10 FPAC's mission has been
11 integrated into the equity goal in
12 Greenworks, the Mayor's Office of
13 Sustainability's citywide Comprehensive
14 Plan to make Philadelphia the greenest
15 city in the country. Several of the
16 goals in the Land Bank Strategic Plan
17 align with Greenworks' Target 10, to
18 provide walkable access to affordable
19 healthy food for all Philadelphians.
20 Goal 5 will contribute directly to Target
21 10 by supporting the creation of new
22 gardens, farms, and farmers' markets on
23 vacant land. Goal 4 highlights the issue
24 of food deserts and the critical role
25 supermarkets play in these areas, a role

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2 that represents the intersection of
3 economic development equity. Finally,
4 Goal 6 emphasizes the importance of
5 transparent public discourse and
6 participation regarding current and
7 future Land Bank plans and operations.

8 In keeping with the Greenworks
9 equity goal, FPAC emphasizes the
10 importance of public meetings, printed
11 documents, on-site notices, and targeted
12 outreach to registered community
13 organizations serving Philadelphia
14 neighborhoods to ensure that those with
15 limited Internet access continue to have
16 a voice.

17 FPAC encourages the Land Bank
18 to work with the Office of Innovation and
19 Technology to ensure to make Land Bank
20 data sources open and accessible, and
21 FPAC encourages the development of
22 strategies to engage residents in
23 neighborhoods that have not had the
24 opportunity to develop a district area or
25 community-based plan.

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2 We appreciate your
3 consideration of our recommendations and
4 we urge Council to pass this resolution.

5 Thank you.

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

7 MS. PRESTON: Hello. My name
8 is Anne Preston and I'm the Program
9 Assistant for the FarmPhilly program of
10 Philadelphia's Department of Parks and
11 Recreation. I'm speaking on behalf of
12 Elisa Ruse Esposito, FarmPhilly's Program
13 Manager, who lost her voice today.

14 I'd like to thank City Council
15 and Interface for crafting such a
16 thoughtful Strategic Plan that really
17 emphasizes public input and would like to
18 encourage City Council and the Land Bank
19 to prioritize public input in the
20 implementation process as much as it has
21 been integral to the planning process.

22 Guided by the Greenworks plan
23 and under the direction of Deputy Mayor
24 and Philadelphia Parks and Recreation
25 Commissioner Michael DiBerardinis, we

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2 have created an urban agriculture program
3 within the City of Philadelphia that
4 upholds gardening, not only as a
5 recreational activity but seeks to
6 protect it as a valued community asset.

7 The subsequent program, FarmPhilly, has
8 many components. We have a youth farming
9 program, Junior Farmers, that serves over
10 600 youth in recreation centers around
11 the City, and we will be doubling in size
12 to serve over 1,200 youth at 30 different
13 garden sites in 2015.

14 But most relevant to the Land
15 Bank, we are working to create
16 preservation pathways for community
17 gardens across all neighborhoods in
18 Philadelphia. Philadelphia Parks and
19 Recreation seeks to become the front door
20 for urban ag on public land by helping to
21 craft supportive public policies and
22 systems that will help citizens gain
23 access to land, water, and resources for
24 the purpose of improving their
25 communities through gardening and open

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2 space.

3 Philadelphia's Land Bank will
4 be a great partner in advancing this
5 work. The Land Bank provides an
6 incredible opportunity to preserve
7 long-term community assets, protect open
8 space, and prioritize public use as the
9 City grows and changes.

10 The original bill emphasizes
11 the importance of urban agriculture, and
12 the Strategic Plan continues to establish
13 gardening as a valuable long-term land
14 use for the benefit of the public good.

15 It's important that Land Bank
16 implementation carries out the original
17 purpose and intent of the Land Bank
18 bill - putting vacant land into
19 productive and positive public uses.

20 FarmPhilly and Parks and
21 Recreation are looking forward to working
22 with the Land Bank staff to advance these
23 projects and are excited to see this
24 entity achieve its full potential.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 for your testimony.

3 MS. CAHN: Hi. My name is Amy
4 Laura Cahn. I'm a staff attorney with
5 the Public Interest Law Center of
6 Philadelphia. Thank you for the
7 opportunity to testify today. I will try
8 to be quick. My blood sugar is low too.

9 This past summer my office
10 convened Philadelphia gardeners and
11 farmers to participate in the Land Bank
12 Strategic Plan process. I'm here today
13 to voice my support for the Proposed
14 Strategic Plan and Policies.

15 There are others who have
16 talked today about the substance. I want
17 to spend a moment on the process.

18 This Strategic Plan was the
19 result of significant public
20 participation. In fact, this planning
21 process exceeded expectations. Interface
22 Studio and the Land Bank staff worked
23 hard within a condensed schedule to
24 provide multiple opportunities to offer
25 feedback and suggestions. Furthermore,

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2 the process culminated in a large and
3 well-attended public hearing. The SEPTA
4 boardroom was packed, and many provided
5 verbal and written testimony, including
6 several who spoke about urban ag and open
7 space.

8 As you consider whether to pass
9 this resolution, it's important to know
10 that the Plan evolved because individuals
11 and organizations stepped up to
12 participate and the planners listened.
13 The Plan directly reflects meaningful
14 changes made as a result of public
15 feedback. I think that's hugely
16 important as you consider this Plan.

17 Now as to what happens next.
18 You heard from several about the need --
19 the fact that the Plan lacks targets for
20 each of the priority end uses and that
21 subsequent plans should include these
22 targets. I agree. Even modest targets
23 will help the public understand how the
24 Land Bank Board views the different
25 priorities relative to each other and how

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2 they intend to allocate resources across
3 different uses.

4 Second, we need a permanent
5 Land Bank Board. We need that Board
6 to -- that could consist of the existing
7 interim Board, but we need that Board
8 made permanent to shepherd the Strategic
9 Plan into action.

10 I also will suggest, as I
11 believe Diane did as well, that the Board
12 needs someone with expertise on urban ag
13 and open space to reflect the priorities
14 set up by the Plan.

15 Third, we need opportunities
16 for community engagement and education
17 about the Land Bank. My testimony
18 includes a quote from the Center for
19 Community Progress study about land banks
20 and the need for community input. I
21 won't read that, but we'll just say that
22 our office, along with PHS and the
23 Healthy Foods Green Spaces Coalition and
24 other partners, are hosting a vacant land
25 201 workshop tomorrow. We have 99 people

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2 signed up. People are clamoring for this
3 information about how to get legal access
4 to land and to fully understand the
5 impact of the Land Bank -- the impact
6 that the Land Bank may have on their
7 neighborhood.

8 Councilwoman Quinones-Sanchez
9 began offering Land Bank town halls in
10 her district, and I want to recommend
11 that as a model, as well as using the
12 district planning process, because people
13 need to understand and have engagement to
14 ensure equitable access to land itself
15 and to build trust in the Land Bank's
16 role in our city.

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Ms. Cahn,
18 can you --

19 MS. CAHN: Yes.

20 And, finally, I just want to
21 ask that you all buy in. You need to use
22 Land Bank for us to be able to use it as
23 well.

24 Thank you very much.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 very much.

3 State your name for the record
4 and proceed with your testimony.

5 MS. GREENBERG: Good afternoon.
6 My name is Jenny Greenberg. I serve as
7 the Executive Director of the Neighbors
8 Garden Trust. Thank you for the
9 opportunity to speak.

10 NGT is the largest land trust
11 in the City of Philadelphia. It's our
12 mission to acquire and preserve community
13 gardens and shared open spaces in order
14 to enhance the quality of life in
15 neighborhoods throughout the City. I'm
16 here to speak in support of Resolution
17 140915.

18 NGT has acquired and preserved
19 34 gardens since our inception by holding
20 the lease or long-term -- deed or
21 long-term lease for these properties.
22 NGT provides gardens with assistance in
23 the form of liability insurance,
24 technical assistance, as well as funding
25 for capital improvements and maintenance.

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2 We were pleased recently to
3 have the opportunity to provide input
4 into the Year 1 Strategic Plan for the
5 Philadelphia Land Bank. I'd like to
6 extend our appreciation to the Plan's
7 authors for the strong work that they did
8 to incorporate the input of gardeners
9 into this Plan.

10 On behalf of NGT, I support the
11 adoption of the Plan and, in particular,
12 endorse its recognition of community
13 gardens as an important piece of the
14 puzzle in the return of land to
15 productive use in the City of
16 Philadelphia.

17 Successful community gardeners
18 and other open spaces should not solely
19 be viewed as transitional uses, but
20 permanent ones that serve as a community
21 anchor and leverage neighborhood
22 revitalization. Community gardens
23 beautify our city and enhance its
24 sustainability. They create
25 opportunities for urban residents to

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2 engage with one another and to reconnect
3 with the land.

4 NGT is poised to work with the
5 Philadelphia Land Bank, other City
6 agencies, and the Pennsylvania
7 Horticultural Society to realize several
8 goals set forth in the Strategic Plan.

9 These include the acquisition and
10 preservation of existing gardens that
11 have support and a track record, but do
12 not have secure site control for the
13 future; the consolidation of property
14 ownership for gardens that sit atop land
15 owned by multiple owners under one owner;
16 and the establishment of new
17 community-driven open spaces and greening
18 projects, including passive park spaces,
19 community gardens, urban agriculture, and
20 green stormwater infrastructure projects.

21 We look forward to the
22 opportunity to work in partnership with
23 the Philadelphia Land Bank in the coming
24 months.

25 Thank you for the opportunity

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2 to make comment today.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
4 for your testimony.

5 Last panel.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
7 Mr. Chairman, might I add that we have
8 Michael Johns, Philadelphia Housing
9 Authority, who is here with us. Thank
10 you for being here.

11 MR. ALI: Thank you for
12 allowing me to come up. Although I did
13 register on your website, I don't know
14 why my name wasn't there. By the way, I
15 think you have an excellent website,
16 Councilman Henon.

17 Good afternoon, Chairman and
18 members of the Public Property and Public
19 Works Committee. My name is Jihad Ali.
20 I'm a citizen of Philadelphia. I'm here
21 to give testimony on City Council
22 adoption of 140915, the Strategic
23 Disposition Policy.

24 I want to thank Councilwoman
25 Sanchez and you also, Councilman Henon,

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2 because something occurred this summer.

3 I can't tell you the exact date, but

4 there was a meeting with the Land Bank

5 professional, the consultant, across the

6 hall, and when the consultant had told

7 you and the Councilwoman that they were

8 of the opinion that they were going to

9 meet with the 80 stakeholders and that

10 then they were just going to move to the

11 next stage, it was you that said, Hold up

12 for a minute, slow down, I think you need

13 to bring this in front of the people. So

14 as a result of that, we had the hearing

15 on July the 15th.

16 So on July 15th at that

17 hearing -- now, what I'm about to say

18 will mean absolutely nothing to anybody

19 in here unless you know the Act that the

20 State Legislature passed, unless you know

21 the bill that the Council passed, unless

22 you read all the other supplemental

23 documents that accompany various reports

24 online about land banks.

25 But at that meeting, when we

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2 had this Land Bank, the Board of the Land
3 Bank -- you picked 11 people -- or 10 and
4 the 11th one was picked by you. The
5 Board says -- the Act says that a
6 majority of the Board members have to
7 make decisions. Well, we had the hearing
8 on July 15th. There was three Board
9 members there - Michael Koonce, Jennifer
10 Kates and -- I can't think who the other
11 person was right now. But at the end of
12 the day, it was only three out of 11, and
13 we had a public hearing and all the same
14 people here came.

15 I am in support of the Land
16 Bank. I think the Land Bank is a great
17 tool. I think it gives this Council
18 tremendous opportunities.

19 I'm kind of concerned about --
20 President Reagan said it like this. He
21 said, it's not what you know that
22 concerns me; it's what you think you know
23 that's not so. And by that I mean, when
24 I heard the testimony of the officials
25 from OHCD talk, you asked them what is

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 your relationship with PHDC. Well, what
3 I heard them say was, Well, we're -- the
4 Land Bank is a quasi agency. Well,
5 that's exactly what the Act says. It's a
6 quasi agency. But you asked what is the
7 relationship with PHDC. Well, PHDC --
8 Mr. Koonce is the Executive Vice
9 President of PHDC. However, he's the
10 Chairman of the Land Bank. But also at
11 PHDC is Deborah McColloch and Ken
12 Weinstein, who is an important figure to
13 think about in the City because he's a
14 developer. But he's the President of
15 PHDC.

16 So then we look at OHCD. You
17 got John Carpenter and the rest of their
18 people there. Then you have Brian
19 Abernathy at the RDA.

20 So we move forward and we do
21 all this stuff. This Council had a big
22 fight. Ms. Sanchez, she went tooth and
23 nail with the Council President a year
24 ago, almost 364 days ago or 362 days ago
25 from today. But they had a big fight,

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 and the community came out full force.

3 We had 11 meetings over this, and at that

4 time, the whole issue was did you want

5 councilmanic prerogative. You wanted it;

6 they didn't want it. So at the end of

7 the day, there was a compromise. You

8 kept it. You kept the VPR board. You

9 kept all that, because that's what the

10 Act wanted to do.

11 The Act, as approved by the

12 legislators, was to give City Council

13 power. It wasn't to give power to the

14 quasi agencies. Because, Councilman

15 Henon, I'm sure you're familiar with John

16 Taylor, and there's no way in your mind

17 that you know that John Taylor wanted to

18 give the Mayor power over that Board. In

19 fact, if you go back and look at how the

20 bill came through the Legislature up

21 there, you'll see numerous times when it

22 was crossed out "the Mayor," "the Mayor,"

23 "the Mayor." It was crossed out, because

24 it was not only crossed out for

25 Philadelphia, but the entire state,

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 because this Act is supposed to give
3 power to the people. In fact, we're
4 supposed to have a citizen on that
5 committee that can voice the concerns of
6 everything that you heard here today.
7 But what we have, we have the Vice
8 President of PHDC on the Board and we
9 have the -- who is the Chairman, and then
10 we have the President, who is Paul
11 Bender. Who is Paul Bender? What name
12 have you heard is Paul Bender? Well,
13 he's a member of BIA. BIA is not even a
14 non-profit. They're a business league,
15 and their sole purpose of the business
16 league is to look out for the affairs of
17 their members.

18 So at the end of the day, if
19 you want to see where we're going, look
20 back where we came. We had a year of
21 organizational structure where nothing
22 went down. Then we come into -- we talk
23 about transparency.

24 I got two paragraphs.

25 We talked about transparency.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 We hear time after time transparency, but
3 the Act itself that you passed talked
4 about public access to records. The Act
5 that's passed by the Senate talks about
6 public records that Section 65 of the
7 Pennsylvania Statute said, Chapter 7,
8 this is an open meeting. That should be
9 in the language. It's not in your
10 language. It also says at the Act of
11 Public Law 6, No. 3, February 14th, 2008,
12 the right to know. That's not in the
13 language.

14 But the most important thing
15 that you're getting ready to pass right
16 now, if you think you're passing
17 something for the Land Bank to dispose of
18 properties, the documents are right in
19 front of you. It says that the Strategic
20 Disposition Policy will be -- the
21 committee will have a real estate review
22 committee, and a real estate review
23 committee are the agencies of the Office
24 of Community Development, Redevelopment
25 Authority, Public Property, PHDC, City

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 Planning, and the Land Bank. They're the
3 ones that make the decisions.

4 So at the end of the day, the
5 bottom line is this: This is a Strategic
6 Disposition Plan that's a final brilliant
7 strategy to take the power away from City
8 Council and give complete control to the
9 Mayor and his appointees on various
10 housing agencies. If you pass this out
11 without holding this up in committee and
12 demanding the oversight of your body to
13 comply -- to have this Board comply with
14 the Land Bank Act as authorized by the
15 state and your own City Council
16 resolution as amended on the floor on
17 12/5/2013, you will be acknowledging to
18 the citizens of Philadelphia that you are
19 not as informed as you should be. And
20 you will also be reaffirming what
21 President Reagan said. It's not what you
22 know that concerns me; it's what you
23 think you know that's not so.

24 You need to really check out
25 this Act before you pass it.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
3 Mr. Ali.

4 Are there any other testimonies
5 here that wish to be heard?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: With that,
8 seeing none, we will move into our public
9 meeting.

10 The Chair recognizes Vice Chair
11 Greenlee for a motion on Resolution No.
12 140915.

13 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
14 you, Mr. Chairman. I move that
15 Resolution No. 140915 be reported out of
16 this Committee with a favorable
17 recommendation.

18 (Duly seconded.)

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: All those in
20 favor?

21 (Aye.)

22 COUNCILMAN HENON: So moved.
23 Resolution No. 140915 will be reported
24 out of Committee with a favorable
25 recommendation.

1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 The Chair recognizes Councilman
3 Greenlee on an amendment to Bill No.
4 140897.

5 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
6 you, Mr. Chairman. I move the adoption
7 of the amendment to Bill No. 140897.

8 (Duly seconded.)

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: All those in
10 favor?

11 (Aye.)

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: The ayes
13 have it. Bill No. 140897 is amended.

14 The Chair recognizes Councilman
15 Greenlee.

16 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
17 you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the
18 following bills be reported out of this
19 Committee with a favorable recommendation
20 and that the rules of Council be
21 suspended to allow for first reading at
22 our next session of Council: Bill Nos.
23 140229, 140275, 140800, 140885, 140897 as
24 amended, 140940, 140946, and 140949.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Do I hear a

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1 12/1/14 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 140229, etc.

2 second?

3 (Duly seconded.)

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: It's been

5 moved and seconded.

6 All those in favor?

7 (Aye.)

8 COUNCILMAN HENON: The ayes

9 have it. The bill numbers as read and as

10 amended reported out of Committee with a

11 favorable recommendation, with a rules

12 suspension, as to be read at our next

13 Council session.

14 Thank you all for your time.

15 Thank you all for your patience.

16 (Committee on Public Property

17 and Public Works concluded at 3:50 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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