COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PROPERTY AND PUBLIC WORKS

City Hall, Room 400
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Thursday, April 24, 2025
1:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

CHAIRWOMAN QUETCY M. LOZADA
VICE CHAIR MARK SQUILLA
COUNCILMAN MICHAEL DRISCOLL
COUNCILMAN JIM HARRITY
COUNCILMAN JEFFREY YOUNG, JR.

GIANNA LEE, Clerk

P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIR LOZADA: Good afternoon, everyone.

Welcome to the City of Philadelphia Committee on Public Property and Public Works. I now note that the time has come. Will the clerk please call the roll and take attendance. Members that are present, please indicate that you're here by saying aye when your name is called.

(Short pause.)

Good afternoon, everyone.

Welcome to Philadelphia City Council's Committee on Public Property and Public Works. I now note that the time has come.

Madam Clerk, would you please call the roll? Members that are in attendance, please indicate that you are present by saying aye when your name is called.

THE CLERK: Chair Lozada?
CHAIR LOZADA: Present.
THE CLERK: Vice Chair Squilla.
COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Present.
THE CLERK: COUNCILMAN Driscoll.
COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: Present.
THE CLERK: COUNCILMAN Harrity.
COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Present.
THE CLERK: COUNCILMAN Young.
COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Present.
CHAIR LOZADA: I note for the record that a quorum for this committee is present and this hearing is now called to order.
This is a hearing for public -- a public hearing for the

Committee of Public Property and Public Works regarding Bill Nos. 240581, 250067, 250068, 250149, 240750 and 250323.

Will the clerk please call -- please read the title of the bills on the agenda for today.

THE CLERK: Bill No. 240581, introduced by COUNCILMAN Jones, titled an Ordinance Formally Renaming the Overbrook Park Branch Library, located at 7422 Haverford Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19151, as the Robert A. Brady Library to honor the dedication and service of former United States Congressman and Chair of the Philadelphia Democratic Party, the Honorable Robert A. Brady.

And Bill No. 250067, introduced by COUNCILMAN O'Neill, titled an Ordinance Authorizing the Commissioner of Public Property on

behalf of the city to acquire from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania a perpetual right and easement on, over and across a certain tract of land at the intersection of Southampton Road and Roosevelt Boulevard for roadway and related improvements, under certain terms and conditions.

And Bill No. 250068, introduced by Councilman O'Neill, titled an Ordinance Authorizing the Commissioner of Public Property and the Streets Commissioner, on behalf of the city to own and maintain a bridge to be constructed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, also known as PennDOT, to carry Byberry Road over certain railroad tracks between Evans Street and Worthington Road, and placing said bridge carrying Byberry Road on the city plan

pursuant to the terms of an agreement between the city and PennDOT, all under certain terms and condition.

And Bill No. 250149, introduced by COUNCILMAN Driscoll, titled an ordinance authorizing the Commissioner of Public Property on behalf of the city to acquire fee, title or lesser real estate interest, including a leasehold estate for all or portion of the premises bounded by State Road, the Penny Pack Creek, the Delaware River and former Hartle Avenue to enter into a lease or sublease agreement with the Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development at said premises for the development of a facility to enter into an intergovernmental with Paid for the development of the facility, and to take title to the completed facility

from Paid, all under certain terms and conditions.

And Bill No. 240750 introduced by Councilwoman Bass, titled an ordinance renaming and designating the property commonly referred to as the Water View Recreation Center, located at 5826 McMahon Street as the Donna Reed Miller Recreation Center. In the City of Philadelphia.

And Bill No. 250323 introduced by Councilwoman Gauthier on behalf of Council President Kenyatta Johnson, titled an ordinance authorizing the Commissioner of Public Property on behalf of the City of Philadelphia to intern to a sublease agreement with the Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development for use by the City of premises located at 4101 Market Street Philadelphia, PA,

under certain terms and conditions.

There are no further bills being heard today, Madam Chair.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you. Will the clerk please call the first witness to testify on Bill No. 240581?

THE CLERK: The first witness to testify on this bill today is Kelly Richards, the President of the Free Library of Philadelphia. However, she is not present today and would like to submit her testimony for the record.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you. Are there -- although the witness is not here to testify, are there any comments or -- from the members of this committee?

COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Thank you, Chairwoman. Councilman Harrity. I'd like to speak in support of 240581, renaming the

library after Congressman Brady. You know, I've been working with congressman for 35 years a long, long time. And I'm just so happy to see that we're going to honor him with this library naming while he's still here to get his flowers.

You know, it's no secret that he's like another father to me, one of my mentors, 35 years we spent together. So I'm just honored, I was one of the co-sponsors on this and just honored that we're finally going to do something like this for him.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you. The Chair recognizes COUNCILMAN Driscoll.

COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: Thank you, Madam Chair. I, too, like Councilman Harrity, just thrilled that that we're honoring Congressman Brady, Chairman Brady. And we've

saw what he's done in his public career. But we've witnessed, Jimmy and I have witnessed behind the scenes, you know, the negotiations he did to get labor contracts satisfied. And we've just marveled at him and he just never, never wants to thank you.

And so he didn't ask for this. We're going to bestow this to him if it passes and we hope it does. And so I was just thrilled to be a supporter of this bill.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you so much. Are there other members? The Chair recognizes COUNCILMAN Young.

COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to echo the sentiments of my colleagues. You know, Chairman Brady has done a lot for this city. Being a ward leader in this particular area as well. So I just

think it's, you know, it's only right that we honor him. You want to give folks their flowers while they can still smell them, and I think that this is the perfect opportunity to honor and recognize the service that everybody has done for our city.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you.

I just echo in on what everyone else said.

Are there other members or is there anyone else in this chamber that would like to make a comment regarding Bill No. 240581?

There being none. Will the clerk please call the next -- the first witness to testify on Bill No. 2500067?

THE CLERK: Richard Montanez, Deputy Commissioner of Transportation to the Department of Streets will be testifying on this

bill today.

CHAIR LOZADA: Good afternoon. State your name for the record and begin with your testimony.

COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ:

Good afternoon, Chairman Lozada, members of the Public Property Committee. My name is Richard Montanez. I am the Deputy Commissioner of Transportation for the Department of Streets.

I'm here to offer testimony on Bill No. 250067 introduced by Councilman O'Neill. This bill authorizes the Commissioner of Public Property to accept on behalf of the City of Philadelphia a right-of-way easement in the intersection of Southampton Road and Roosevelt Boulevard from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, acting through its Department of Conservation and

Natural Resources.

Roosevelt Boulevard is a state owned highway the above reference intersection is located within Benjamin Rush State Park. The easement area is approximately 14,318 square feet.

The city will purchase the right of way easement for $1.00. The city will maintain the easement area and provide for and maintain traffic improvements within the easement area.

By way of background, a large scale development project will be constructed adjacent to Benjamin Rush Park, requiring revisions to the line and grades of Southampton Road at its intersection with Roosevelt Boulevard. As a result of the development project and streets revision, traffic safety improvements will be needed to be

constructed and installed within the intersection.

Pursuant to the passage of this bill an execution of the Roe Easement Agreement, the Commonwealth has agreed to transfer to the city of Philadelphia a right-of-way easement to allow the city to construct and maintain traffic improvements within Roosevelt Boulevard.

The Department of Streets and the Department of Public Property Support Bill No. 250067 and ask for your approval. We also request a suspension of the rules to allow the first reading at the next session of Council.

This concludes my testimony. I'll be happy to answer any questions you have.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you so much. Before I open it up for

questions to my colleagues or members of this committee, I have a few questions.

What is the specific -- what specific roadway and pedestrian walkway improvements are planned for this intersection? How would they enhance traffic flow and safety?

COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So Southampton Road was identified when the city and the state did a planning study under the Tiger grants by the federal government. What we're planning to do here is what we call the English style left. So we're going to widen Southampton Road on both sides of Roosevelt Boulevard, allowing us to then remove what we feel is a conflict of the left turning lanes. And it will be similar to what we call an English style left turn.

So it is going to be new,

it is one of the identifying projects we chose when we did the study. And we were fortunate enough to be able to do this by using developer dollars.

CHAIR LOZADA: And you've worked close enough with me over the course of the years to know that I really encourage community input. Has there been any engagement with community residents to talk about this project and the potential impact that it will have and what the timeline is going to be?

COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So the outreach is over 10 years old right now. It was one of the -- it was proposed when we first did the Roosevelt Boulevard -- rethinking Roosevelt Boulevard, and this project was identify as one of the early action projects for 2025. So we have not gone out to the

community since we first what, but we do plan to go back out to the neighboring community to explain what we're planning to do.

CHAIR LOZADA: Awesome. Thank you very much.

Are there questions from any members of this committee?

There being none. Thank you for your testimony today.

Will the clerk please call the next panel to testify on Bill No. 25000 -- 250068.

THE CLERK: Once again, Richard Montanez, Deputy Commissioner of Transportation for the Department of Streets will be testifying on this bill today.

COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ:

Good afternoon, Chairman Lozada and members of the Public Property Committee. My name is Richard Montanez. I am the deputy

Commissioner of Transportation for the Department of Streets. I'm here to offer testimony on Bill No. 250068, introduced by Councilman O'Neill.

This bill authorizes the Commissioner of Public Property to accept on behalf of the city of Philadelphia, ownership of the Byberry Road Bridge from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The Byberry Road Bridge crosses the tracks of CSX Railroad in the city of Philadelphia. The Byberry Road Bridge has deteriorated and is in serious condition and is in need of replacement.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania therefore intends to construct at its sole cost a replacement bridge. Upon passage of this bill and construction of the replacement bridge, the Commonwealth

will transfer ownership of the replacement bridge to the city of Philadelphia pursuant to a bridge transfer agreement.

The city will thereafter be responsible for maintenance of the new Byberry Road Bridge and its approaches.

The Department of Streets and the Department of Public Property support Bill No. 250068 and ask for your approval. We also request a suspension of the rules to allow for the first reading at the next section of Council.

This concludes my testimony. I'll be happy to answer any questions.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you. You know I have issues with bridge closures. I have two currently in my district. I see the frustration. I see the challenges that

communities face everyday as a result of them.

Are we -- are we proactively looking at all of the bridges in the city? Are we trying to figure out when they're closed, are we communicating with community residents before it becomes an emergency situation? How do we better plan for bridge closures in communities?

COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So we currently have a a federal grant that's allowing us to study all the bridges, those especially over key quarters such as the Northeast Amtrak corridor, which is commerce between Washington and New York. At the same time, PennDOT has graciously helped the city. They are bringing in their consultants, their trucks, and we're trying to do a rapid inspection of all the

bridges within the city of Philadelphia to determine the rate of deterioration, and then to create a replacement schedule for them.

The current bridge we are talking about on Byberry is a temporary military Bailey bridge that the city purchased from the Navy in 1972. Don't quote me on that, I was born, but not here yet. And it is limited to 3 tons.

There are schools right here and currently we have school buses crossing this bridge, which we feel is an unsafe condition.

CHAIR LOZADA: How long is this project going to take?

COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: So PennDOT has already the plans. We've had multiple community meetings. We're actually improving. We're putting sidewalk, we're widening the bridge.

One of the reasons we were delayed in doing all this is because CSX has asked for us to be able to raise the bridge up as in the height of it as we build it because they want to put double decker tracks when they're sending their freight. So once we had design done we had to come back and redesign it to be able to raise the bridge another 10 feet in order to be out of there.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you. Are there any questions from members of the committee?

COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Are we required to do that? Are we required to do the ask of CSX?

COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: Raise the bridge?

COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER MONTANEZ: It was ordered -- it was required by the PUC.

COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Okay. Just asking. Thank you.

CHAIR LOZADA: Are there any other questions from anyone?

There being none. Thank you for your testimony on Bill No. 250068.

Will the clerk please call the next witness to testify on Bill No. 250149?

THE CLERK: The witness here to testify on this bill is Aparna Palatino, Director of the Capital Program Office of the city of Philadelphia.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you for being with us this afternoon. Please state your name for the record and begin with your testimony.

DIRECTOR PALATINO: Good afternoon, Councilperson Lozada and members of the Committee on Public

Property and Public Works. My name is Aparna Palantino, and I'm the Director of the Capital Program Office for the city of Philadelphia. I'm here today to testify in support of. Bill No. 250149, sponsored by COUNCILMAN Driscoll.

Bill No. 250149 will allow the City of Philadelphia to enter into a lease or sublease agreement with the Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development at said premises for the development of a facility to enter into an intergovernmental agreement with Paid for the development of the facility and to take title to the completed facility from Paid, all under certain terms and conditions.

The ordinance introduced in conjunction with the Mayor's office allows for construction and ongoing renovations to the Riverview

Wellness Village, located on the grounds of the prison complex in the Holmesburg section of Northeast Philadelphia.

The new Wellness Village facility will ultimately be permitted to have up to 340 beds to serve those who are coming out of in-patient treatment programs and will provide them with housing, healthcare, job counseling and other services.

Councilman Driscoll in whose district this facility is located is supportive of this legislation. The Capital Program Office supports this measure, and accordingly, I respectfully request that City Council approve Bill No. 250149.

I'm also requesting a suspension of the rules to allow for first reading at the next session of

Council.

Thank you. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have about this ordinance.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you for your testimony. Are there any questions on behalf of the committee?

There being none. Thank you. Have a good afternoon.

DIRECTOR PALATINO: Thank you.

CHAIR LOZADA: Will the clerk please call -- is there anyone else in the chamber that is here to testify on this bill?

Will the clerk please call the first witness to testify on Bill No. 240750?

THE CLERK: Susan Slawson, Commissioner of the Department of Parks and Recreation will be testifying on this bill. However,

she is not here today and would like her testimony written -- I mean, submitted for the record.

CHAIR LOZADA: Is there any comments that need to be made on behalf of this Committee for Bill No. 240750?

We'll note for the record that Commissioner Slawson has submitted her testimony in writing. There being no other witnesses to testify on Bill No. 240750, will the clerk please call the first witness to testify on Bill No. 250323?

THE CLERK: Joseph Brasky, Commissioner of Public Property, will be testifying on this bill today.

CHAIR LOZADA: Good afternoon. Thank you for being with us. Please state your name for the record and begin with your testimony.

COMMISSIONER BRASKY: Good afternoon, Chair Lozada and members of the Committee of Public Property and Public Works. My name is Joe Brasky, Commissioner of Public Property. I'm here today to testify in support of Bill No. 250323 authorizing the Department of Public Property on behalf of the city of Philadelphia to enter into a sublease agreement with Philadelphia Authority Industrial Development for use by the city for all or a portion of the premises located at 4101 Market Street, under certain terms and conditions.

As you may know, the city's current Forensic Science Center is located at 8th and Poplar Streets and contains a DNA lab for hair, blood, fiber, shooting range, ballistics analysis and chemistry lab for drug analysis.

Unfortunately the current facility, which has been built in 1920s and renovated in two 2006 is almost at capacity and is expected to require specialized structural repairs and other significant improvements over the next decade just to remain operational.

As such, Public Property and PIDC under the direction of the MDO's office released an RFP during the summer of 2023 to explore all available opportunities in hopes to potentially addressing PPD's need for updated forensics lab facility.

Built in 2023, near some of the Philadelphia's most notable academic and scientific centers, 4101 Market Street offers a life science enabled building infrastructure and other modern building qualities considered ideal for construction of a new laboratory

space.

The building was designed with emphasis on energy reduction and environmental impact with the goal of providing a cleaner, healthier and more productive work environment for future employees.

Having already received Leed Platinum and Well Platinum certifications, this building brings the latest state-of-the-art amenities, including a rooftop park to improve air quality, conserve energy and reduce storm water runoff.

The focus on sustainability and wellness during the design phase not only creates an overall work environment that is expected to be very attractive for hiring purposes, but also includes efficient building systems that will significantly lower the city's operating and

maintenance costs.

4101 Market Street brings the latest in design and construction standards and is equipped to provide PPD with the modern resources the department has been patiently waiting for and that they are currently -- that their current facility cannot provide.

The Department of Public Property supports this measure, and accordingly, I respectfully ask that City Council approved Bill 250323.

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

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you for your testimony. Are there any questions on behalf of the committee?

The Chair recognizes COUNCILMAN Young?

COUNCILMAN YOUNG: It's not

a question, but just more of a statement about this particular lab. This is something that is well overdue. You know, there is one currently located in my district in the 5th District and I do think that making sure that we have, you know, 21st century amenities is something that is imperative for our city. So I'm just, you know, excited that this is finally moving forward. So I just want to put That on the record.

COMMISSIONER BRASKY: Thank you. Appreciate it.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you so much. Thank you for your testimony. Is there any question? Thank you. Thank you for being with us today.

COMMISSIONER BRASKY: Have a great day.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you. Is there anyone in this chamber that

would like to testify on any of the bills that we have heard today?

There being none, this hearing -- we will now transition to public comment.

Will the clerk please call any members of the public present for comment on any of the bills heard today?

THE CLERK: There are no speakers on the public comment list today, Madam Chair.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you. This concludes the hearing and we will go into a public meeting.

We will now convene the public meeting to consider the action to be taken on the bills before this committee today.

Will the clerk please call the roll with members of this committee and will you please acknowledge your presence when your

name is called.

THE CLERK: Chair Lozada.

CHAIR LOZADA: Present.

THE CLERK: Councilman Driscoll. Sorry. Councilman Driscoll.

COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: Aye.

THE CLERK: Councilman Harrity.

COUNCILMAN HARRITY: Present.

THE CLERK: Councilman Young.

COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Present.

THE CLERK: Vice Chair Squilla.

COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Present.

CHAIR LOZADA: Thank you. I will now note for the record that a quorum for this committee is present. The Chair recognizes Councilman Squilla for a motion on

all of the bills heard today.

Bill No. 240581, 250067, 250068, 250149, 240750, 250323.

COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that Bill Nos. 240581, 250067, 250068, 250149, 240750 and 250323 be reported from this committee with a favorable recommendation and further move that the rules of Council be suspended to submit the first reading of this bill at the next session to Council.

COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: Second.

CHAIR LOZADA: It has been moved and properly second that all of the bills read into the record be reported from this committee with a favorable recommendation and further moved that the rules of Council be suspended to permit first reading of all of these bills at the next

session of Council.

All those in favor signify by saying aye. Those opposed? The ayes have it and the motion carries.

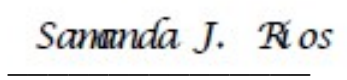
There being no further questions from members of this committee and no further witnesses to testify, this concludes the business before this Committee on Public Works and Public Property.

Thank you all for being with us today and for your attendance. Have a good afternoon.

(Meeting for the Committee on Public Property and Public Works concluded at 2:00 p.m.)

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

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me of the above case, and this copy is a correct transcript of the same.



Samanda J. Rios

Court Reporter
Notary Public of PA & DE

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

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