

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

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, December 1, 2015
1:55 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON
COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

BILL 150792 - An ordinance renaming and designating Tolentine Community Center located at 1025-33 Mifflin Street as the "East Passyunk Community Recreation Center."

BILL 150807 - An ordinance authorizing the Public Property Commissioner and the Parks and Recreation Commissioner to execute a document and file it in the Recorder of Deeds office to extinguish a 25-foot easement in favor of the City...

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COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
afternoon. This hearing is called to
order. This is a public hearing of the
City Council Committee on Parks,
Recreation and Cultural Affairs, and the
purpose of this public hearing is to hear
testimony on Bills No. 150792 and 150807.

I recognize the presence of a
quorum of Committee members, and the
Committee members in attendance are
Councilman Bobby Henon, Councilman Mark
Squilla appointed by the Council
President, and also Councilwoman Maria
Quinones-Sanchez.

And the Clerk will now read the
title of the bill, Bill No. 150792.

THE CLERK: Bill No. 150792, an
ordinance renaming and designating
Tolentine Community Center located at
1025 to 33 Mifflin Street as the "East
Passyunk Community Recreation Center."

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Can we have
the first witness come forward to
testify. If the Clerk can call them

1 12/1/15 - PARKS - BILLS 150792 & 150807
2 forward.

3 THE CLERK: That's Patrick
4 Morgan.

5 (Witness approached witness
6 table.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And before
8 we begin, I want to recognize the
9 presence of Councilwoman Blondell
10 Reynolds Brown.

11 And please state your name for
12 the record and proceed with your
13 testimony.

14 MR. MORGAN: Sure. Good
15 afternoon, Chairwoman Bass and members of
16 the City Council Committee on Parks,
17 Recreation and Cultural Affairs. My name
18 is Patrick Morgan, Chief of Staff to
19 Deputy Mayor/Parks and Rec Commissioner
20 Mike DiBerardinis. I am pleased to
21 appear before you today to provide
22 testimony in support of Bill No. 150792,
23 renaming and designating Tolentine
24 Community Center as "East Passyunk
25 Community Recreation Center."

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2 In partnership with Councilman
3 Squilla, his staff, and the community,
4 the Department has made several
5 improvements to the center and is now
6 fully engaged with our Programs Division.
7 We look forward to continuing working
8 with the Councilman, his staff, and the
9 community to discuss programming
10 opportunities and community engagement to
11 support a facility which is safe, clean,
12 and ready to use for all.

13 Not in my prepared remarks, but
14 I'd just like to thank Mike Mecchella,
15 who is our Director of Operational
16 Standards. He is sitting right behind
17 me. He was really our point person
18 working with the Councilman, his staff,
19 and the community to really help to get
20 this to a good resolution. So I just
21 wanted to take an opportunity to thank
22 Mike for the record.

23 Therefore, I respectfully
24 request that this Committee vote this
25 bill out of Committee with a favorable

1 12/1/15 - PARKS - BILLS 150792 & 150807
2 recommendation and that the rules be
3 suspended to permit first reading at the
4 next City Council session.

5 Thank you very much, and I'd be
6 happy to take any questions that you
7 might have.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.
9 I want to recognize Councilman
10 Squilla.

11 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you,
12 Ms. Chair, Madam Chair.

13 I want to thank you, Patrick,
14 and especially Mike Mecchella. Thank
15 you, Mike. Through the transition, it
16 wasn't an easy process, but the
17 non-profit running the center at the time
18 had ownership of the name Tolentine and,
19 therefore, requested us to not use that
20 name on the new center. So we met with
21 the community and came up with a name
22 that's amenable to all, and the
23 transition process went as smoothly as
24 anything that -- better that can be
25 expected. So I want to thank Parks and

1 12/1/15 - PARKS - BILLS 150792 & 150807
2 Rec and especially Mike Mecchella for the
3 work that he has done on this and thank
4 you for your efforts.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
6 very much.

7 Any other comments from the
8 Committee?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I want to
11 recognize the presence of Councilman
12 Johnson and also Councilman David Oh.

13 And is there anyone else here
14 who has any comments, anyone else to
15 testify?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And if
18 there's no other witnesses to testify,
19 can we have the Clerk now read the title
20 of Bill No. 150807.

21 THE CLERK: Bill No. 150807,
22 entitled "Authorizing the Public Property
23 Commissioner and the Parks and Recreation
24 Commissioner to execute a document and
25 file it in the Recorder of Deeds office

1 12/1/15 - PARKS - BILLS 150792 & 150807
2 to extinguish a 25-foot easement in favor
3 of the City along former Hamilton Street
4 between Eighteenth and Nineteenth Street,
5 under certain terms and conditions.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

7 And can we have the first
8 witness come forward. Please state your
9 name for the record and begin with your
10 testimony.

11 (Witness approached witness
12 table.)

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOCHT:

14 Good afternoon, Councilwoman Bass and
15 members of the Committee. Mark Focht,
16 First Deputy Commissioner, Philadelphia
17 Parks and Recreation.

18 It is my pleasure to appear
19 before you today to testify in favor of
20 Bill 150807 authorizing the Public
21 Property Commissioner and the Parks and
22 Recreation Commissioner to execute a
23 document and file it in the Register of
24 Deeds office to extinguish a 25-foot
25 easement in favor of the City along

1 12/1/15 - PARKS - BILLS 150792 & 150807
2 former Hamilton Street between 18th and
3 19th Streets, under certain terms and
4 conditions.

5 The City of Philadelphia has
6 held for many decades a 25-foot-wide
7 easement within the former Hamilton
8 Street right-of-way between 18th and 19th
9 Streets in the Logan Square neighborhood
10 along the northern boundary of Matthias
11 Baldwin Park. As part of the current
12 development of Museum Towers II, the City
13 permitted the relocation of public
14 utilities from within the former
15 right-of-way to an area of land along the
16 northern edge of Baldwin Park.
17 Therefore, the right-of-way is no longer
18 required by the City and can be
19 extinguished.

20 I ask that you move Bill 150807
21 out of Committee with a favorable
22 recommendation and ask the rules of
23 Council be suspended to permit first
24 reading at the next meeting of Council.

25 I'd be happy to answer any

1 12/1/15 - PARKS - BILLS 150792 & 150807
2 questions.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
4 for your testimony.

5 Are there any questions from
6 the panel?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Anyone else
9 here to testify?

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: All right.
12 And if there's no one else to testify on
13 this bill, that concludes the public
14 hearing on Bills No. 150792 and 150807.

15 We will now go into a public
16 meeting to consider the action to be
17 taken on these bills, and the Chair
18 recognizes Councilman Henon for a motion
19 on Bill No. 150792.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
21 Madam Chair. I make a motion that Bill
22 No. 150792 be reported out of Committee
23 with a favorable recommendation and
24 further move that the rules of Council be
25 suspended to permit first reading at our

1 12/1/15 - PARKS - BILLS 150792 & 150807

2 next Council session.

3 (Duly seconded.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It's been
5 moved and properly seconded that Bill No.
6 150792 be reported from this Committee
7 with a favorable recommendation and
8 further moved that the rules of Council
9 be suspended to permit first reading at
10 the next session of Council.

11 All those in favor of this
12 motion will signify by saying aye.

13 (Aye.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Anyone
15 opposed?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: The ayes
18 have it and the motion carries. Bill No.
19 150792 will be reported from this
20 Committee with a favorable recommendation
21 with a request that the rules of Council
22 be suspended to permit first reading at
23 the next session of Council.

24 And I'd also want to again
25 recognize Councilman Henon for a motion

1 12/1/15 - PARKS - BILLS 150792 & 150807
2 on Bill No. 150807.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
4 Madam Chair. I move that Bill No. 150807
5 be reported out of Committee with a
6 favorable recommendation with a rules
7 suspension as to be permitted at our next
8 Council session.

9 (Duly seconded.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It's been
11 moved and properly seconded that Bill No.
12 150807 be reported from this Committee
13 with a favorable recommendation and
14 further moved that the rules of Council
15 be suspended to permit first reading of
16 this bill at the next session of Council.

17 All in favor signify by saying
18 aye.

19 (Aye.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Anyone
21 opposed?

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: The ayes
24 have it and the motion carries. Bill No.
25 150807 will be reported from this

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2 Committee with a favorable recommendation
3 with a request that the rules of Council
4 be suspended to permit first reading at
5 the next session of Council.

6 And with that, this concludes
7 the business of this Committee. Thank
8 you for coming.

9 (Committee on Parks, Recreation
10 and Cultural Affairs concluded at 2:05
11 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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