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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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COMMITTEE ON RULES

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Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Thursday, March 13, 2008
1:15 p.m.

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PRESENT:

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNA C. VERNA, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN DARRELL L. CLARKE
COUNCILMAN FRANK DiCICCO
COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE, JR.
COUNCILMAN WILLIAM GREENLEE
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN JACK KELLY

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BILL 080077 - An ordinance continuing a
neighborhood improvement district beyond the
date of termination of such district in an
area that generally includes both sides of
Ridge Avenue from Main Street...

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BILL 080082 - An ordinance to amend the
Philadelphia Zoning Maps by changing the
zoning designations of certain areas of land
located within an area bounded by Delaware
Avenue...

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good afternoon, everyone. This is the public hearing of the Committee on Rules.

I would ask Mr. Erekson to please read the title of Bill No. 080082.

THE CLERK: An ordinance to amend the Philadelphia Zoning Maps by changing the zoning designations of certain areas of land located within an area bounded by Delaware Avenue, former Marlborough Street right-of-way, the Delaware River and the former Shackamaxon Street.

(Witness approached witness table.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good afternoon. Please identify yourself for the record and proceed with your testimony.

MR. KRAMER: Good afternoon, Council President Verna and members of the Rules Committee. I am William Kramer, Division Director of the Development Planning Division of the

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 Philadelphia City Planning Commission. I
3 am here today to testify on Bill No.
4 080082, which was introduced by
5 Councilmember DiCicco on January 31,
6 2008.

7 This bill will rezone property
8 in an area bounded by Delaware Avenue,
9 adjacent to the former Marlborough
10 Street, from a current zoning designation
11 of G-2 General Industrial to a
12 designation of C-3 Commercial. The
13 purpose of the change is to allow for the
14 development of the property in a
15 residential capacity. The plan for the
16 site calls for the construction of a
17 32-story building containing 168 dwelling
18 units and 255 parking spaces. In
19 addition, the plan calls for the
20 developer to provide public access to the
21 waterfront and connect it to Penn Treaty
22 Park, which is the adjacent property.
23 The applicant will also be providing
24 public amenities for the users of Penn
25 Treaty Park, including public restrooms.

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82

2 Originally this was the subject
3 of Bill 050300, which was previously
4 approved by City Council and signed into
5 law by the Mayor on June 29, 2005. There
6 were technical errors in the legal
7 description of the property which
8 necessitated the introduction of Bill
9 080082.

10 The City Planning Commission at
11 its meeting of February 19, 2008
12 considered and approved Bill No. 080082.

13 This concludes my testimony. I
14 appreciate the opportunity to appear
15 today, and would be pleased to answer any
16 questions you may have.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
18 you very much, Mr. Kramer.

19 Can you tell us what type of
20 residential housing is being developed?

21 MR. KRAMER: Is being
22 developed?

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes.

24 MR. KRAMER: I believe the
25 developer is in the Council Chambers now,

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 but I do believe it to be condo
3 development.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: So
5 it's market rate?

6 MR. KRAMER: Yes, ma'am.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The
8 Chair recognizes Councilman DiCicco.

9 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you,
10 Madam President.

11 And thank you, Mr. Kramer.

12 Just for the record, Madam
13 President, I think it's important to note
14 that this project has been discussed for
15 quite some time now. I'm not sure of the
16 exact time. It might be as close to two
17 years or so.

18 Three years. Thank you. We
19 lose track of time sometimes around here.

20 And it's always been with the
21 cooperation of not only my office, but
22 with the community. There have been
23 several adjustments from the original
24 project to the current project that is
25 being presented.

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82

2 But I also think it's important
3 for this Committee to understand that a
4 few days ago when we had the Foxwoods
5 hearing there was a presentation made by
6 the Penn Praxis folks to talk about the
7 civic vision for the central Delaware
8 waterfront. The developer, at my
9 request, on that very same day actually
10 met in my office with the folks from Penn
11 Praxis to talk about the project and see
12 if there's any way in which
13 accommodations can be made to the current
14 plan to fit what we refer to as the civic
15 vision for this particular property.

16 So there's a cooperative effort
17 on both parties to continue to work on
18 the design features of this project to
19 make it fit as best we can with the civic
20 vision.

21 The thing we have to deal with
22 when we move forward on waterfront
23 development projects is that a lot of
24 these projects had been in the pipeline
25 for a number of years, long before the

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 Penn Praxis' mission was undertaken. So
3 we're trying to make that balance where
4 we don't keep developers who were in the
5 pipeline from moving forward, but at the
6 same time trying to see if we can fit in
7 their proposals with the Penn Praxis
8 vision. So I just wanted that to be
9 noted for the record.

10 Thank you, Madam President.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
12 you.

13 Are they also going to have
14 retail uses?

15 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I don't
16 think so, but maybe -- Mr. Mattioni and
17 the developer are here and they might be
18 able to answer that better. I don't
19 recall exactly.

20 (Witnesses approached witness
21 table.)

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good
23 afternoon. Please identify yourself for
24 the record.

25 MR. MATTIONI: Michael

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 Mattioni, the attorney for the developer.

3 MR. LABOV: Steve Labov,
4 developer.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: How
6 are you spelling your last name, sir?

7 MR. LABOV: L-A-B, as in baker,
8 O-V, as in Victor.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
10 you.

11 MR. MATTIONI: I think your
12 question was would there be retail.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes.

14 MR. MATTIONI: There will be
15 some retail/commercial component at the
16 ground level, probably a restaurant. We
17 did discuss that with Penn Praxis. They
18 had some things that they would like to
19 see on Delaware Avenue, and we're very
20 amenable to that.

21 There will be a C-3 -- if this
22 passes, it would be zoned C-3, so we have
23 a requirement to have some commercial
24 space there.

25 MR. LABOV: We always had

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 commercial off the lobby. After our
3 meeting with Penn Praxis, we went back
4 into redesign, and we now have a
5 substantial commercial piece on Delaware
6 Avenue so that it would be an attraction
7 on the northern end of Penn Praxis'
8 seven-mile waterfront piece.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
10 you.

11 The Chair recognizes Councilman
12 Kelly.

13 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you,
14 Madam Chair.

15 How close is this to Penn
16 Treaty Park?

17 MR. LABOV: It touches Penn
18 Treaty Park.

19 COUNCILMAN KELLY: It touches
20 there?

21 MR. LABOV: It does.

22 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Is it going
23 to have any adverse effect to the people
24 using Penn Treaty Park at all?

25 MR. LABOV: I think quite the

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 contrary. We're adding a museum in the
3 ground floor of our building. There is a
4 great deal of memorabilia about and no
5 place for it to reside, so we are putting
6 a small museum in the base of the
7 building so that people in the park can
8 wander into the museum right out of the
9 park. And one of the shortfalls in the
10 park we believe is no restroom
11 facilities. We've met with Fairmount
12 Park --

13 COUNCILMAN KELLY: That's
14 correct.

15 MR. LABOV: We've met with
16 Fairmount Park Commission. They're very
17 supportive of this project, and we have
18 agreed to put modern restrooms at the
19 ground floor of the building that open to
20 the park.

21 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Would there
22 be adequate parking?

23 MR. LABOV: For our building?

24 COUNCILMAN KELLY: For your
25 building, yes.

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82

2 MR. LABOV: Yes. As a matter
3 of fact, at the moment we're about one
4 and a half cars per unit, 50 percent over
5 the current zoning requirement. We've
6 been asked to reduce that slightly, and
7 that's part of the design that we've
8 started working on after the meeting in
9 the Councilman's office this week on
10 Monday.

11 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you.

12 MR. LABOV: I'm sorry. We've
13 also agreed to light the park for
14 evenings.

15 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Oh, okay.
16 Good.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The
18 Chair recognizes Councilman Clarke.

19 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you,
20 Madam President.

21 Good afternoon, gentlemen. I
22 just want to ask a question, particularly
23 because I've had the occasion over the
24 last year to have several meetings in
25 that particular community. I actually

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 represent the district adjacent to
3 Councilman DiCicco's, so I'm on the other
4 side of Ground Zero, as they call it.
5 It's a casino term.

6 But during the course of the
7 casino discussions about the SugarHouse
8 site, which is in very close proximity to
9 where you're proposing to build, there
10 were a number of issues raised about the
11 level of community discussion. Some
12 people even talked about a community
13 benefits agreement associated with the
14 high rises that were proposed along the
15 Delaware/Columbus Boulevard corridor.

16 What level of discussion have
17 you had with both the people from Ground
18 Zero and the official at that time
19 organization, which was FNA, Fishtown
20 Neighbors Association?

21 MR. LABOV: We have met
22 countless times with both the design
23 committee and the full membership of the
24 Fishtown Neighborhoods Association, both
25 their previous Board and their current

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 Board. We've made some changes to the
3 building on their recommendations. The
4 previous Board actually sat on the design
5 team of the original building for this
6 site so that they would feel comfortable
7 in what we're doing.

8 The building that was part of
9 the previous ordinance that was mentioned
10 and passed actually needed a small zoning
11 variance, and all of those groups came to
12 the zoning hearing and spoke in support
13 of this project. And the current Board
14 of Fishtown Neighborhoods Association
15 also is in support of this project.

16 On the redesign that we started
17 on Monday with Penn Praxis, the
18 neighborhood is already involved. We
19 will be meeting with them this coming
20 Tuesday, and I think they're on board. I
21 don't think there's anyone here in
22 opposition to this whatsoever.

23 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: You'll be
24 meeting with whom?

25 MR. MATTIONI: Fishtown

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 Neighbors.

3 MR. LABOV: Their design
4 committee, Tuesday night at 6 o'clock.

5 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Have you
6 included in those discussions the
7 residents from the very adjacent area?
8 Because sometimes organizations represent
9 broad areas, and the leadership and the
10 committee members may not necessarily be
11 the people that live right there.

12 MR. LABOV: We've been
13 advertised on their agenda at least five
14 times and gone to fairly large audiences
15 of neighbors that have come out to view
16 this project. Plus, for a three-block
17 radius from the project, I walked with my
18 plans and knocked on every door in the
19 neighborhood to talk to neighbors
20 individually, if they were wishing to
21 discuss it, to show them what we're
22 doing, where it would go.

23 We're very careful --
24 Marlborough Street, which has been
25 abandoned to the park, is still open as

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 you look down Marlborough Street to the
3 river. We bring nothing out that would
4 interfere with that view all the way to
5 the river. The neighbors were very happy
6 with that. So I think we've pretty much
7 covered the neighborhood, and we'll
8 continue to.

9 MR. MATTIONI: And we've also
10 met with the Friends of Penn Treaty Park
11 on numerous occasions and worked with
12 them and the Fairmount Park Commission
13 and Mr. Nix as well.

14 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Okay.

15 MR. MATTIONI: Oh, we met with
16 the New Kensington CDC as well.

17 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: That's --

18 MR. MATTIONI: We've also met
19 with them.

20 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: They're
21 part of the newly formed alliance up
22 there.

23 And you, by no means, impede
24 access to the riverfront, did I hear you
25 say?

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2 MR. LABOV: No. As a matter of
3 fact --

4 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: You enhance
5 it?

6 MR. LABOV: We enhance it. At
7 the eastern tip of our project, we have a
8 substantial piece that's been dedicated
9 to flow through our land for the park.
10 Immediately south of us is still a
11 commercial piece, which will some day
12 change, and there is no passage there,
13 but you wouldn't be able to tell the
14 difference between the park and our
15 property at our eastern end.

16 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Okay.
17 Great. What's your time line as it
18 relates to possible construction?

19 MR. LABOV: Three years ago I
20 would tell you we would have been 70
21 percent sold today and probably almost
22 done construction, but we got hit by the
23 Governor's moratorium on Delaware Avenue
24 and didn't come out with our riparian
25 until a month ago.

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2 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Oh, okay.

3 MR. LABOV: And at that point,
4 Penn Praxis was operating, and they had
5 some visions that they would like
6 incorporated into this project. So we're
7 actually now drawing again to accomplish
8 their visions, which we think we've done
9 this week.

10 I couldn't begin to tell you
11 based on the current market and finance
12 and bankability of any project, not only
13 in Philadelphia but all over the country.
14 We would hope to be in the ground within
15 18 months, but I think that's very
16 contingent upon marketability.

17 COUNCILMAN CLARKE:
18 Unfortunately, we're kind of in limbo
19 with a lot of development and I hope we
20 can quickly get to the point where we can
21 start moving some of these projects
22 forward.

23 MR. LABOV: We do, too.

24 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you.

25 Thank you, Madam President.

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

3 You're welcome.

4 Are there any other questions
5 from members of the Committee?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Do we
8 have anyone else to testify on this bill?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

11 Seeing none, I would think that our next
12 bill will take us some time, so I would
13 like to recess the hearing and go into a
14 public meeting.

15 The Chair recognizes Councilman
16 DiCicco.

17 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you,
18 Madam Chair. I move that Bill No. 080082
19 be reported out of this Committee with a
20 favorable recommendation and further
21 recommend that the rules of Council be
22 suspended so as to permit first reading
23 at our next regular session of Council.

24 (Duly seconded.)

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: It

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 has been moved and seconded that Bill No.
3 080082 be reported out of Committee with
4 a favorable recommendation; further, that
5 the rules of Council be suspended so as
6 to permit first reading at our next
7 session of Council.

8 All in favor will say aye.
9 (Aye.)

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Those
11 opposed?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The
14 ayes have it. The motion carries.

15 Thank you, gentlemen.

16 MR. LABOV: Thank you.

17 MR. MATTIONI: Thank you.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: We
19 will now resume the public hearing, and
20 at this time, I would ask Mr. Erikson to
21 please read the title of Bill No. 080077.

22 THE CLERK: An ordinance
23 continuing a neighborhood improvement
24 district beyond the date of termination
25 of such district in an area that

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 generally includes both sides of Ridge
3 Avenue from Main Street to 7220 Ridge
4 Avenue and certain blocks of streets that
5 intersect that portion of Ridge Avenue
6 and which is known as the Roxborough
7 District; continuing the designation of
8 the Roxborough Development Corporation, a
9 Pennsylvania non-profit corporation, as
10 the Neighborhood Improvement District
11 Management Association for the District;
12 approving a plan for the District,
13 including a list of proposed improvements
14 and their estimated cost, and providing
15 for assessment fees to be levied on
16 property owners within the District;
17 authorizing the Director of Commerce, on
18 behalf of the City, to execute an
19 agreement with the Roxborough Development
20 Corporation relating to the District; and
21 authorizing the Roxborough Development
22 Corporation to assess property owners
23 within the District a special property
24 assessment fee to be used in accordance
25 with the approved plan; all in accordance

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 with the provisions of the Community and
3 Economic Improvement Act, and under
4 certain terms and conditions.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Who
6 are we having testify for the
7 Administration?

8 (Witnesses approached witness
9 table.)

10 MR. FRISHKOFF: Good afternoon,
11 Madam Chairwoman and members of the Rules
12 Committee. My name is Andrew Frishkoff.
13 I'm the Director of Neighborhood Economic
14 Development for the City of
15 Philadelphia's Commerce Department. I am
16 here today to provide testimony on Bill
17 No. 080077. This bill will allow for the
18 approval of the re-establishment of the
19 Roxborough District as a neighborhood
20 improvement district.

21 The creation of neighborhood
22 improvement districts, also known as
23 NIDs, is consistent with the City's
24 Strategic Plan, especially with the core
25 service areas of jobs and economic

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2 development and healthy and sustainable
3 communities. NIDs strengthen local
4 business and residential communities
5 through cleaning, beautification, public
6 safety and marketing activities.

7 NIDs are also consistent with
8 the goals of our ReStore Philadelphia
9 Corridors program, designed to help
10 re-establish neighborhood commercial
11 corridors as central places to work, shop
12 and meet neighbors. The Commerce
13 Department will soon be working with the
14 office of Councilman Jones in the 4th
15 District and the Roxborough Development
16 Corporation to design streetscape
17 improvements on Ridge Avenue. The City's
18 streetscape design will leverage more
19 than \$1.7 million in state and federal
20 funds that will pay for the
21 implementation of the streetscape
22 improvements. Also, Commerce is in the
23 process of contracting with Roxborough
24 Development Corporation to provide
25 corridor management and business support

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 activities on Ridge Avenue through our
3 Targeted Neighborhood Support Grant
4 program.

5 NIDs are one of the best
6 examples of collaboration between the
7 City and our neighborhood commercial
8 corridors. Like their counterparts in
9 other NIDs throughout the City, the
10 Roxborough businesses and property owners
11 recognize the need to improve the
12 environment within which they and their
13 customers live and work. Their efforts
14 to make the Ridge Avenue commercial
15 corridor clean, safe and attractive will
16 directly impact the stability of the
17 entire community and will strengthen the
18 economic vitality of the commercial
19 center. The result of a successful
20 collaboration such as this can be a
21 dynamic neighborhood improvement district
22 that promotes the long-term growth and
23 viability of Roxborough. This worthwhile
24 effort deserves the support of the City.
25 I urge your support of Bill No. 080077.

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82

2 Thank you for your
3 consideration. I'm happy to answer any
4 questions you may have.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
6 you.

7 As I understand it, there is a
8 different assessment to be provided in
9 the central district than for the whole
10 district based on the additional services
11 provided in the central district; is that
12 so?

13 MR. FRISHKOFF: I think
14 representatives of the Roxborough
15 Development Corporation, the NID, could
16 address that directly, but, yes. The
17 answer is yes.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Can
19 you tell us -- you're going to be
20 testifying on this, aren't you?

21 MR. FRISHKOFF: Excuse me?

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
23 You're testifying on this?

24 MR. FRISHKOFF: I'm testifying
25 on behalf of the Commerce Department in

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 our support of this.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Can
4 you tell us what the difference is in the
5 property uses within the central district
6 from those in the whole district?

7 MR. FRISHKOFF: I would defer
8 to the proponents from the district on
9 that part. The Commerce Department is
10 generally testifying in favor of NIDs as
11 a general approach, and this is an
12 example of the approach. But this is
13 something that has come up from the
14 community and the business community that
15 we are supporting.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: So
17 maybe we should hear from the community
18 at this time and then I'll ask my
19 questions.

20 (Witnesses approached witness
21 table.)

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good
23 afternoon. Please identify yourself for
24 the record.

25 MR. DAVIS: Madam President, my

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 name is John Davis. I'm a business owner
3 on Ridge Avenue, 6639 Ridge Avenue to be
4 exact. I've been there for over eight,
5 almost nine years full time. I am a
6 lifetime resident of Roxborough. Less
7 than a thousand yards from my business is
8 where I grew up. I moved to Fountain
9 Street right off Ridge Avenue and I have
10 been there for over 35 years. My
11 business is local and Center City and all
12 different. I'm a small mom-and-pop shop.

13 I was asked as a business owner
14 to come on in 2001 in the very beginning
15 starting the first part of the BID, and I
16 learned a lot. It was something that I'm
17 excited about, and since I've known what
18 Ridge Avenue back in the '80s and '90s
19 was, it was in very poor condition. It
20 was dirty. No one walked Ridge Avenue at
21 night. Today they're walking their dogs.
22 They're just walking to enjoy the
23 evening.

24 We have a couple of
25 establishments that do stay open at

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 night, a coffee house to be exact, and
3 it's there and people come in at all
4 times.

5 I know that being on the
6 steering committee since 2001 other
7 residents, property owners, and it was
8 like between 57 and 60 people throughout
9 the community, including officials from
10 Philadelphia, the development -- there
11 are two development corporations,
12 lawyers, property owners, a consultant we
13 had, and without their help in a whole,
14 this wouldn't have gotten off the ground.
15 And it took many, many meetings.

16 The Business Association was
17 overwhelmed with what we needed to do,
18 and with the support of Roxborough
19 Development Corporation made it all come
20 together.

21 Being a non-profit, as far as
22 the Business Association, they did not
23 have the funding or backing. Trying to
24 keep the community in a loop, we have a
25 newsletter. We have e-mails as much as

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 possible, but still trying to get what
3 the BID is all about, what I've learned
4 over these six years -- or seven years
5 rather, it's just so hard to -- some
6 people want to listen, some people don't
7 even want to listen. As soon as that
8 little bit of money they take, they don't
9 understand what that little bit of a BID
10 creates for us. And our job is to keep
11 the business owners and property owners
12 in communications at all times. That's
13 what's going to make it all happen.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
15 you.

16 The Chair recognizes -- can we
17 hear from the other witness so that if
18 one doesn't have an answer of what we
19 want, we can hear from the other.

20 Please identify yourself for
21 the record.

22 MR. McELROY: Yes. Good
23 afternoon. My name is Charles McElroy.
24 I'm Community Relations Manager at
25 Roxborough Memorial Hospital. Our

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 hospital has been on Ridge Avenue since
3 1890, and we know and continue to know
4 that we're a vital part of the community,
5 and we're proud to support the Roxborough
6 Development Corporation in their efforts
7 to maintain the business improvement
8 district and, in general, improve things
9 on the Ridge.

10 The RDC has done many positive
11 things. I know since the first BID was
12 established back in, I believe, 2003,
13 they provide street cleaning, which is
14 extremely important on a busy street like
15 the Ridge Avenue. They've been
16 instrumental in providing new street
17 lighting, banners, promotional
18 activities, flowers in the springtime and
19 things like that to just make the street
20 look good for everyone.

21 There are many more things I
22 know that they would like to do, such as
23 replacing some of those banners that at
24 this point they can only replace once a
25 year, doing it twice a year, promoting

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 more local businesses, doing some more
3 advertising, adding more special events,
4 but they are limited because I believe
5 their annual budget is just a little bit
6 over \$233,000.

7 Continued funding through the
8 renewal of this BID process can help them
9 do those things that they're doing now
10 and more. We believe the BID is fair and
11 equitable. I know it's a debatable
12 point, but it's my understanding that 94
13 percent of the property owners have paid
14 the BID in the initial BID that was
15 established back in 2003. We don't
16 believe -- and I personally would not
17 believe -- that a volunteer system of
18 paying for something like this would be
19 nearly as effective as it has been in the
20 first five years. It would result, I
21 would think, in a lot fewer people paying
22 and, in that case, a lot fewer people
23 paying for the good of everyone, and that
24 wouldn't seem to be fair.

25 I think the current BID

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2 assesses all businesses equitably, and I
3 think our hospital is a great example of
4 that, because ours naturally because of
5 our properties and because of the size of
6 our business paid, I believe, 22 percent
7 of the total -- of the BIDs in the first
8 five years, but we're supportive of it as
9 a hospital.

10 We are now part of a for-profit
11 system called Solis Healthcare, and at
12 the beginning of the first BID process,
13 we were part of Tenet Healthcare. Tenet
14 sold to Solis back in July, and it's just
15 important to us to be a good member of
16 the community and we think this is
17 certainly a way to do that.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
19 you very much.

20 The Chair recognizes Councilman
21 Greenlee.

22 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
23 you, Madam President.

24 Good afternoon, gentlemen.
25 Just so I'm clear here, this was first

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 established in 2001; is that what you
3 said?

4 MR. DAVIS: That's when the
5 first committees were asked to meet. It
6 was like 57 people in this one room, and
7 I was really, really impressed by how
8 many people wanted to get up at 7:30 in
9 the morning and be there, because they
10 wanted to do it before work and because
11 they were concerned citizens and business
12 owners.

13 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And most
14 of those people at the time were in
15 support of it at least in concept, would
16 you say?

17 MR. DAVIS: There were a couple
18 there early on that were in very much
19 support of it, because I think they were
20 familiar with other BIDs that were going
21 on or in the process of. I remember
22 there was one gentleman early on that was
23 not, but he was there to find out for
24 himself what was going on, and now he's
25 one of our leading --

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2 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:

3 Stalwarts?

4 MR. DAVIS: And he's got a lot
5 of properties on Ridge Avenue and he's
6 very much in support.

7 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Now, on
8 those properties, would you say since
9 this has been established that you've
10 seen -- have you seen improvements in the
11 properties themselves? I know you said
12 about the streetscape and all, but have
13 people as a result put more into their
14 properties, too, because they feel it's
15 more --

16 MR. DAVIS: Well, with being
17 able to communicate more as much as
18 possible, having like the facade
19 improvement available up to \$5,000 per
20 frontage, we have had more people in the
21 last, I think, two years that we've
22 noticed that have established and
23 realized that they're going to get monies
24 to help their front look better, and
25 there are people even with our flower

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2 pots, that if you've asked to have one in
3 front of it, we have people now watering
4 them themselves. It's a neat thing.
5 It's a turnaround.

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I
7 understand.

8 MR. DAVIS: It's great.

9 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Have
10 there been any new businesses established
11 since this has been going on? Have some
12 moved in?

13 MR. DAVIS: Yes, we have.
14 Incredible Edibles. I couldn't
15 imagine -- Incredible Edibles, they have
16 a -- of course, our Crossroads
17 Coffeehouse. That came up -- I think
18 that's in there a little over two years,
19 and that draws young people at night.
20 During the week, Thursday and Friday
21 nights that they come, they have
22 guitarists. And I was just asked this
23 morning that what does that do for Ridge
24 Avenue. I said, it makes it come alive.
25 We need that.

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2 If you've been down Ridge
3 Avenue early on, it was dark, and the new
4 lighting that we were able to afford by
5 having the BID has lit up the businesses
6 at the lower level, not the top of the
7 houses or the upper properties.

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And I
9 assume those new businesses are
10 supportive of this, right?

11 MR. DAVIS: Yes, they are. I
12 would think so, because they know it does
13 make a difference.

14 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Now, I
15 know we're going to hear probably from
16 some opponents, but the people who are
17 opposed that have expressed it to you,
18 has it been just the cost or has it been
19 they don't think it's working right?

20 MR. DAVIS: Well, the few that
21 I've bumped into, I don't think they knew
22 the whole story, and to have them stand
23 there and have us go through it and try
24 to depict what it's worth, I don't think
25 that they realize that when getting a

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 BID, the little bit of money that comes
3 out from each property only adds up to
4 like \$90-some thousand.

5 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Can you
6 define a "little bit," like what do
7 you --

8 MR. DAVIS: Only what I know.
9 I mean, the statistics that Bernard gets,
10 our Director gets, he has for you. But
11 as far as that little bit of a BID opens
12 so many doors of more monies from the
13 city, the state. I mean, I believe
14 there's like a \$500,000 check that's
15 getting ready to come to us to do more of
16 the sidewalks, curbs, improvement of
17 different -- I don't know the breakdown
18 completely for that monies. I'm not that
19 into the --

20 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: No. I
21 understand.

22 MR. DAVIS: But I'm excited,
23 because I have seen what it was, and to
24 see just within that five years of our
25 first BID the cleanliness -- I mean, I'm

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 on a committee for Roxborough High School
3 from RDC and I represent my church, which
4 is less than a hundred feet from Ridge
5 Avenue. Roxborough High School had a
6 tremendous -- and I'm sure you've heard
7 it. If there's a school within a
8 business district, that kids come out and
9 they just come straight through, it's
10 bedlam. Well, in the past year, the new
11 principal has been on top of things. He
12 has been communicating with Roxborough
13 Development, the civic groups. With all
14 that in place, these kids are in another
15 world now. It's totally, totally
16 different. They walk down. They're
17 pleasant. They're courteous, because
18 they have to be, and they realize they're
19 going through a community that they want
20 to be in. They don't want to go home
21 right away. They come down to have
22 lunch, have an early dinner, and we
23 understand that, but the principal with
24 his zero tolerance, amazing man.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: It's a

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 big difference.

3 MR. DAVIS: Amazing man.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I
5 appreciate it. And, look, I generally
6 think neighborhood improvement districts
7 have done exactly what it said, it's
8 improved the neighborhood. So I'm there
9 with it.

10 One last question. Just help
11 me with geography. I'm familiar with
12 Ridge Avenue, but the numbers. It's Main
13 Street to 7220 Ridge Avenue. About where
14 is that? Where is 7200?

15 MR. DAVIS: Main Street is
16 right there at the --

17 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I know
18 where Main Street is, yeah.

19 MR. DAVIS: You're going
20 straight up to Domino Lane.

21 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Domino
22 Lane, okay.

23 MR. DAVIS: Ivy Ridge Shopping
24 Center.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Got you.

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2 Thank you. Thank you, sir.

3 Thank you, Madam President.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

5 You're welcome.

6 The Chair recognizes Councilman
7 Jones.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
9 Madam President.

10 A couple of questions. Welcome
11 to City Council.

12 Ridge Avenue has some history
13 to it, as I understand it, and learning,
14 having spent some quality time on Ridge
15 Avenue, it goes back to the Revolutionary
16 War. There were some battles. Could you
17 talk about that for a moment, quick
18 moment, some of the history?

19 MR. DAVIS: The history -- in
20 fact, I'm redoing a sign. It's a
21 four-by-eight sign that is going to be
22 posted at Roxborough Avenue and Ridge
23 Avenue for -- it used to be a church,
24 Grace Lutheran. It's right across from
25 Kendrick Recreation Center. That is

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 established in 1706.

3 One of the wars that Roxborough
4 was involved in, there was a major fight.
5 It used to be a barn of some type before
6 it became a church, and in that point
7 right there, it's now historical. And
8 there's an MRI in the church, Open MRI
9 Corporation, that's in that church as of
10 this time. They have never touched a
11 piece of wood in that church, because
12 they don't want to. That's how nice it
13 is. But it's now a business of type.
14 The church couldn't stay open.

15 But as far as the history,
16 there's a lot of history. In fact,
17 there's a sign at the property -- the
18 building that I am in was built before
19 the Revolutionary War. It's over 200
20 years old. It used to be a tavern that I
21 know. And there are other buildings
22 within Ridge Avenue that are historical
23 that --

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: Just to
25 follow up on that, Ridge Avenue opens the

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82

2 far end on Montgomery County. It is the
3 gateway all the way into Center City
4 traveling through even down to your
5 district, Councilman Clarke.

6 Is that correct?

7 MR. DAVIS: Yes, it is.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: How many
9 cars, vehicles, travel on Ridge Avenue a
10 month? Do we have any --

11 MR. DAVIS: I think there was a
12 study done. I wasn't involved with that.
13 Eighteen thousand cars --

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: This is --

15 MR. DAVIS: -- a day.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: So Ridge
17 Avenue is a gateway from Montgomery
18 County to Center City?

19 MR. DAVIS: Without question.
20 I have so many people who actually come
21 into my business and say, Oh, I didn't
22 know you were here until I drove by, I
23 saw your sign. And it's easier for them
24 to drop off and pick up their business at
25 my shop rather than in Center City,

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 because there's nowhere to park.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Just to
4 follow up, I just want to give some
5 perspective to this.

6 This is, Andy, one of ten BIDs
7 in the City of Philadelphia?

8 MR. DAVIS: We are one of ten
9 BIDs in Philadelphia, yes.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Andy, would
11 you define on a scale of one to ten its
12 success in a number of quantitative
13 measures?

14 MR. DAVIS: What I've been told
15 outside the people who I sit with on the
16 Roxborough Development Corporation, we
17 are -- I think we're the anchor, one of
18 the few early on, who are now redoing our
19 BID, and we've got so much great stuff to
20 show for it, you know, and which you'll
21 get a chance to hear from others.

22 MR. FRISHKOFF: Just to respond
23 to the Councilman, I think the one piece,
24 without sort of trying to rank in terms
25 of the quality of the services, but if

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2 you look at the rate of payment of 94
3 percent is at the high end, and that
4 suggests that there's customer
5 satisfaction. So that's one of the key
6 things we look at, is the fact that so
7 many people are paying into it, and we
8 have some others that have a much lower
9 pay rate. So that's a suggestion of the
10 success.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: Councilman
12 Wilson Goode in another life worked in
13 the Commerce Department and has some
14 experience at commercial corridor
15 development, which I learned from his
16 vast experience in my tenure as
17 President. I remember the Avenue when it
18 was less than desirable, and one of the
19 qualities, I think, on Ridge Avenue is
20 that unlike a lot of corridors, it has a
21 small town feel to it.

22 What is the percentage of
23 family-owned businesses in that area?
24 When I say "family owned," small shops
25 that are independent of franchises.

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2 MR. DAVIS: Well, I get an
3 opportunity as a printer -- I'm actually
4 the only printer in Roxborough that I
5 know of, and I do see a lot of the
6 business owners. I see a lot more from
7 off Ridge Avenue, which I can get
8 confused of, because a lot of our
9 businesses are owned by family.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: And many of
11 them live in the Roxborough area?

12 MR. DAVIS: Most of them do,
13 yes. Yes.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. What
15 types of events have you had? I'm
16 familiar with the Antique Car Show. I
17 was at the parade on Roxborough. What
18 other marketing activities do you do up
19 there?

20 MR. DAVIS: I am very, very
21 proud to mention that we have a 5K run
22 coming the 12th of April. We have a car
23 show that closes Ridge Avenue. It's our
24 sixth annual. All the money that is
25 raised through all the businesses, we

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 have -- this is just an idea of what kind
3 of business participation through our car
4 club, and it's a local Ridge Runners car
5 club. The booklet that we put
6 together -- we have two different
7 printers in our club. The monies that
8 is -- just by that book alone, it's a
9 flat \$50 fee per page. We raise over
10 \$3,000 just from the local businesses on
11 Ridge Avenue. That's how much support we
12 have. And it's a great thing. I got
13 goose pimples thinking about it. It's
14 our sixth year.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

16 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Point of
17 information.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes.
19 The Chair recognizes Councilman Goode.

20 COUNCILMAN GOODE: I actually
21 remind Councilman Jones that I actually
22 wrote my first economic development
23 briefing memo 16 years ago, in March of
24 1992. It was actually an analysis of a
25 business service district and business

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 improvement district models, and that was
3 my first memo I wrote for me as Manager
4 of Neighborhood Commercialization to the
5 President of PCDC at that time.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Can
7 you tell us if the tax-exempt property
8 owners have offered any in-kind services?

9 MR. DAVIS: I'd have to ask.
10 Bernard?

11 MR. GUET: I'm not sure I
12 understand that question.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Have
14 tax-exempt property owners offered any
15 in-kind services?

16 MR. GUET: (Witness speaking
17 without microphone.)

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
19 You're going to have to come up to the
20 table.

21 (Witness approached witness
22 table.)

23 MR. GUET: Yes, it has happened
24 a couple of time that some exempt
25 companies --

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I'm
3 sorry. You're going to have to identify
4 yourself.

5 MR. GUET: My apology. My name
6 is Bernard Guet. I'm the Executive
7 Director for the Roxborough Development
8 Corporation.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: All
10 right. Would you answer the question
11 now, please?

12 MR. GUET: Yes. In a couple of
13 occasion, there has been organization
14 that has given us money, but it's only
15 two occasion. So it's very limited the
16 fund that we have received from
17 non-profit organization. It's always
18 very difficult for non-profit to give
19 money.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Do
21 you have any indication as to how many
22 tax-exempt owners there are?

23 MR. GUET: Tax exempt? No, I
24 don't have that information. I would
25 say -- it would be a guess. It would be

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 a guess.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
4 That's fine. If you could just give me
5 some general idea.

6 MR. GUET: Tax exempt are all
7 the churches. Private residents are not
8 tax exempt.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay.
10 Has anyone objected to the continuation
11 of the district? If so, what percentage
12 of property owners do they represent?

13 MR. GUET: I don't know the
14 answer. There has been few objection
15 that I'm aware of that have objected to
16 it and have talked to me, yes.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The
18 proposed operating budget for the first
19 fiscal year is projected to be \$233,400.
20 Does this constitute the entire amount of
21 the assessments that the district
22 believes it will collect?

23 MR. GUET: That's correct.
24 That's the total assessment, yes.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Very

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 well.

3 Are there any other questions
4 from members of the Committee?

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Is
7 there anyone else that would like to
8 testify?

9 (Witnesses approached witness
10 table.)

11 MR. LACHEEN: Sorry if I'm not
12 organized.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good
14 afternoon.

15 MR. LACHEEN: I'm here at the
16 last minute. My name is Stuart Lacheen.
17 I'm one of the business owners on Ridge
18 Avenue. I own the United States Post
19 Office, the building that they rent, and
20 several stores next to it.

21 I have a long list. I hope
22 that's okay.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
24 That's fine.

25 MR. LACHEEN: And I have some

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 questions.

3 The BID is a very nice thing.
4 I mean, a lot of good things are
5 happening from it, but I have some
6 complaints that I'm hearing up and down
7 Ridge Avenue.

8 I used to be a store owner or I
9 ran a business on Ridge Avenue. I don't
10 agree that there's more people walking up
11 and down Ridge Avenue buying as there
12 used to be. It's probably, at best, 50
13 percent. I know that because of the
14 dollars I'm hearing, the change in
15 business from business owners that I rent
16 to.

17 Most of my complaints are not
18 about the BID being a good thing. I
19 think it's actually a very good thing for
20 the neighborhood. I am not happy with
21 the way the people running the BID are
22 elected. I do feel that it should be by
23 the business owners and the people that
24 are actually paying the taxes to run the
25 BID. And a lot of the people that are

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 not here today are probably not here
3 because they're afraid to speak or come
4 forward, and what I'm going to be
5 bringing up are things that are being
6 mentioned to me by many business owners
7 that I'm friends with on Ridge Avenue.
8 Is that okay?

9 I'd like to know why there's no
10 City Council member or State
11 Representative that ever sits on the
12 Board of any of these BIDs or somebody
13 with any -- that checks out what they're
14 doing is correct and legal. That's a
15 question.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
17 Councilman Jones.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: That's a
19 good question. Sixty-five days on, I
20 think we can correct that. I've only
21 been here 65 days. I'd like to be a part
22 of the BID, and, in fact, my staff and I
23 plan to walk door to door to get a better
24 sense of what's going on there.

25 MR. LACHEEN: That's great.

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2 What I'm more concerned with is checking
3 what they're doing with this money. Are
4 they supposed to be buying properties and
5 fixing them up and renting to the Board
6 members?

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: I think that
8 might be something that we take a look
9 at.

10 MR. LACHEEN: Okay. I'd be
11 glad to talk to you about that. And I'll
12 talk further about that in a few minutes.

13 Are Board members supposed to
14 just switch from Secretary to President
15 and President to Vice-President and
16 around so it's always the same four
17 people that are in charge?

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: I don't
19 think that that's probably the best way
20 to run an organization.

21 MR. LACHEEN: I would agree.

22 There's really no retail
23 experience on the Board. And the fine
24 gentleman that was up here being a
25 printer, I mean, I agree that that's a

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 retail business, but it's more of a
3 service. I do not see a lot of Board
4 members who are actual retail businesses
5 on the Board that can bring to the table
6 the things that the actual retail
7 businesses need.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Actually,
9 printing is a business, but go ahead.

10 MR. LACHEEN: It's more of a
11 wholesale and a service.

12 Most of the people in the
13 neighborhood that run a business are
14 feeling like they're not really having a
15 say on what the BID does. It's like
16 whatever they decide, that's the way it
17 is.

18 If there's a meeting, we're not
19 invited. We don't get notification early
20 enough so we know to go to the meeting.
21 I've never been to a meeting because I
22 never knew when it was going to happen.

23 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Point of
24 order.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82

2 Chair recognizes Councilman Clarke for a
3 point of order.

4 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you,
5 Madam President.

6 Madam President, can I ask a
7 question? Because I don't think it's
8 fair to Councilman Jones, who is a
9 relatively new member of Council, because
10 it sounds like --

11 MR. LACHEEN: I'm not really
12 meaning to point it at him. I'm sorry.

13 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: No. I
14 understand. What I think -- and I don't
15 know as it relates to -- because it
16 sounds like you're talking about certain
17 guidelines and criteria associated with
18 business improvement districts, and I
19 think it would either be best answered by
20 a member of the government, because we
21 kind of, to some degree, oversee them, or
22 I don't know if there are any established
23 guidelines, one size fits all, as it
24 relates to BIDs.

25 Maybe, Andy, could you kind

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 of -- or do various --

3 MR. LACHEEN: I think it's in
4 the bylaws.

5 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: But I'm
6 saying, are there bylaws established by
7 individual organizations to have the
8 level of flexibility for their particular
9 communities or is there certain
10 guidelines that everybody must follow?

11 MR. FRISHKOFF: The state
12 authorization law that allows these types
13 of business improvement districts is the,
14 if you will, general blueprint about what
15 is required. Other than that, it is
16 specific to the ordinance that you would
17 pass here in terms of the particulars of
18 the assessment rates, the participation
19 of the Board members. So as long as
20 whatever is passed within the ordinance
21 fits within the state guidelines, that's
22 really then where you would have the
23 flexibility to spell this out.

24 I believe the Chairwoman had
25 asked previously about the different

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 rates for assessment, and that's
3 something that, again, in the proposal
4 the community or the business owners
5 would have just made a decision that's
6 usually that some core area, the main
7 street, for instance, is going to receive
8 more services and so the property owners
9 would pay more there. But that's
10 absolutely customized for each district,
11 but it's determined by the ordinance
12 itself that you would pass.

13 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: So the
14 Councilperson, Councilman Jones
15 representing that particular district,
16 working along with the business
17 association or the members of the BID,
18 can in this instance, say, for instance,
19 could make amendments to reflect the
20 changes established to fit that
21 particular business corridor? That's
22 something that we can do --

23 MR. FRISHKOFF: Absolutely.

24 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Okay.

25 Thank you.

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2 Sorry for the interruption.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: That was
4 welcomed commentary.

5 MR. LACHEEN: I mean, I just
6 feel that there should be somebody that
7 the people that are paying the taxes get
8 to vote, whether it's part of the Board,
9 all of the Board, but I just every year
10 see the same people running it. I don't
11 see them reaching out to see who else
12 would like to be a member of the Board,
13 and I think that if the businesspeople on
14 Ridge Avenue who are paying this extra
15 money had a choice, I think that we might
16 put some other people in there. Not to
17 say that anybody is doing a bad job, but
18 maybe some new blood, maybe it wouldn't
19 be as stale.

20 And I'm only about ten percent
21 into this and I'm sorry if I'm not that
22 organized. I just --

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: That's quite
24 all right.

25 MR. LACHEEN: -- found out I

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 was coming here this morning.

3 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: That's
4 okay. I just wanted to find out what
5 parameters we were operating under and
6 what level of flexibility that the
7 District Councilperson has.

8 MR. LACHEEN: I was told that
9 we can ask for an amendment to this to
10 allow us to be able to vote some of the
11 Board members in through the
12 businesspeople that are paying this tax
13 to the business owners.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: That's fine.

15 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you,
16 Madam President.

17 MR. LACHEEN: One of the other
18 problems I have with the BID is, I'm
19 very -- I own a lot of real estate. I do
20 business with a lot of contractors on
21 Ridge Avenue, and some of them even are
22 people paying into this BID, and they've
23 all come to me when I've hired them and I
24 said, Why haven't you put in to get one
25 of the jobs that the RDC is putting out

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 there, and everybody says to me, Well, we
3 know we're not going to get it because
4 it's going to go to the Vice-President,
5 who is on the Board and gets most of the
6 jobs, does all the plowing, does all the
7 construction.

8 It's very hard to compete
9 against somebody that has the inside
10 information if it's a true bid on a job.
11 I think there should be something in the
12 bylaws that say that nothing can be done
13 in this organization that benefits the
14 people that are running it. It's a
15 conflict of interest, and I can give you
16 several examples. I mean, I don't
17 mind -- I pay my taxes every year, but
18 I'm to the point right now where I'm
19 starting to think I'm going to be putting
20 the money towards the RDC in escrow, like
21 a few other people, because I feel that
22 my money is being used to buy coffee
23 shops, to buy abandoned bars and remodel
24 them and give them to people that
25 actually work for the RDC to run at a

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2 very low rental fee. And these things
3 are criminal.

4 Now, it's alleged, it's hearsay
5 on the Ridge, but I need somebody to
6 check it out. There has to be some kind
7 of audit on what goes on inside this RDC.
8 Who audits the RDC? That's my question.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES:
10 Representative for the Commerce
11 Department?

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: We're
13 trying to read your bylaws as we're
14 speaking.

15 MR. FRISHKOFF: Two comments.
16 Again, there's an audit required under
17 the state-enabling law and, therefore,
18 it's included in each ordinance. It's
19 not an audit that is conducted by
20 government, but is required by act of
21 Council to be done by each BID.

22 The other piece I would just
23 add is that in terms of the process,
24 there is a specified process, again,
25 under the state law. This is the first

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2 step of that process, the public
3 notification and first public hearing.

4 Again, the Chairwoman asked
5 previously about what the level of
6 support or what the level of objections
7 were as known. There is a particular
8 process that will be followed where all
9 of the affected property owners would
10 have to vote or in the case of if they
11 wanted to not be included, to pose that
12 they were objecting to this.

13 So this is the very early phase
14 of this and it's very much in the
15 community's hands and the District
16 Councilperson's hands to shape the
17 process, and it will eventually come back
18 to this body either amended or as is, but
19 just to remind everybody involved, this
20 is the first step of a prescribed
21 state-mandated process.

22 MR. LACHEEN: Well, one of the
23 questions I have, it's very --

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Just
25 a moment, please.

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2 The Chair recognizes Councilman
3 Greenlee.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
5 you, Madam President.

6 Just so I'm clear here,
7 Mr. Frishkoff, you may be able to answer
8 this. These bylaws that I'm looking at
9 now that's part of a bill, were they the
10 same bylaws? I mean, we're
11 reestablishing, so I assume these are the
12 same bylaws?

13 MR. FRISHKOFF: I believe that
14 these are the same bylaws, and they,
15 again, can be amended as required.

16 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Amended,
17 I understand that.

18 Now, it does say in here, sir,
19 it says -- I won't obviously read the
20 whole thing. But at the annual meeting,
21 the Board of Directors shall appoint a
22 new Board of Directors for the following
23 year from a list of nominees, and all
24 Directors shall serve for a term of one
25 year.

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2 Has anybody -- because I know
3 there are organizations. I'm not
4 defending this or knocking it one way or
5 the other, but it's not unusual that some
6 organizations, a lot of civic groups, a
7 lot of organizations, do what you were
8 describing, Vice-President becomes the
9 President, President becomes the
10 Treasurer, because there's only so many
11 people that want to do it.

12 Now, I'm not saying that's
13 happening. I'm just giving you a
14 description.

15 Do you know, have you or anyone
16 tried to apply to have one of these
17 positions?

18 MR. LACHEEN: Well, one of the
19 things that would help -- the world has
20 changed. Everything runs in e-mail
21 nowadays, and they give us the lists of
22 all the members and we can't really
23 contact each other because we don't have
24 telephone numbers. Only the BID has all
25 the contact information.

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2 If I was to want to go and
3 contact everybody and see who else wants
4 to run, it's really very hard to do this.
5 I think that the data that they have
6 should be available to all business
7 members, so if I wanted the list of all
8 the e-mail addresses so I could contact
9 everybody, I feel I should be allowed to
10 do that. If I wanted the telephone
11 numbers to everybody that owns a property
12 in this BID area, I should be allowed to
13 do that. And I have really no access to
14 it, and I do believe if I went there, I'd
15 get the run-around.

16 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Wait a
17 minute. Let me stop you there. You said
18 you believe if you went there. Did you
19 ever ask that question?

20 MR. LACHEEN: I know people
21 that have. I mean --

22 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And what
23 were they told?

24 MR. LACHEEN: We'll have to see
25 if we have it. But they have it when

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2 they send it out for themselves.

3 We have no -- there's no real
4 good communication between all of the
5 people that are in this area to be able
6 to get together and make sure that the
7 people that are elected are people that
8 we choose, and I don't believe that the
9 business owners and property owners are
10 the people that choose the Board members,
11 which I think is greatly unfair. I mean,
12 I'm not saying that anybody on the Board
13 members is doing anything -- maybe
14 unethical, but not criminal. I mean,
15 they're probably stretching things as far
16 as they can, some of the members. And I
17 don't agree with it, but I don't even
18 know how to go up against them, because
19 I'm not in the small group of people that
20 make these decisions.

21 I think that there's a lack of
22 communication of what's really going on
23 and how to change it within the group,
24 and that's why you have the same four or
25 five people every year. I mean, I don't

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2 even know when there's a meeting. Years
3 ago when it was run by the gentleman that
4 owned the car dealership, they would
5 announce the meeting, where it was, and
6 plenty of people showed up. I haven't --
7 I don't even know where the meetings are.
8 I never get notified. The only
9 notification I received in a year came in
10 this envelope and it was the BID process.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

12 Excuse me.

13 Miss, is there something that
14 you'd like to add to this? Because I see
15 that your hand has been up.

16 MS. BETHUNE: Yes, ma'am.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Would
18 you come up to the witness table, please.

19 (Witness approached witness
20 table.)

21 MS. BETHUNE: Good afternoon,
22 honorable people. My name is Jeanne
23 Bethune and I work for the Philadelphia
24 Department of Commerce, and the
25 Roxborough Business Community is part of

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2 my responsibility. I represent their
3 business interests. I ensure full
4 delivery of City services.

5 I have played a very active
6 role in the BID development. I was there
7 day one. One of my assignments was,
8 there was a grant given to the RDC
9 Corporation to engage a consultant to
10 explore the opportunity of becoming a
11 business improvement district, and, in
12 fact, they did hire Larry Houston. He is
13 here present in Council today. And part
14 of my responsibility was to ensure that
15 those dollars were well spent.

16 I never missed a meeting. The
17 meetings started at 7:00. There was very
18 active participation on the part of
19 stakeholders, residents, people in
20 general. There was a huge outreach. I
21 even participated in getting folks
22 interested in being concerned about the
23 development and beauty, crime and safety
24 of their community.

25 With all due respect to these

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 gentlemen sitting here that I do know,
3 particularly this gentleman here, he is a
4 stakeholder in the community and there
5 was an outreach, a huge outreach, through
6 the media. Even I got out there on the
7 street to ask the stakeholders and
8 retailers to participate and show up, and
9 how they could benefit in the long term
10 if an organization like a BID could be
11 formed. And I even talked to Lenny a
12 half a dozen times to come join the
13 Board, and he can admit to that. I
14 just --

15 MR. BRACALE: I was there.

16 MS. BETHUNE: I'm hoping that
17 by my sitting here today that you will
18 recognize that the business improvement
19 district made a concerted effort to get
20 people involved, and even I did as well.
21 So --

22 MR. LACHEEN: Excuse me. I've
23 been in Roxborough for 15 years and own
24 four properties, and I've never met you
25 once.

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2 MS. BETHUNE: No. I never met
3 you, but --

4 MR. LACHEEN: It's nice to meet
5 you.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: All
7 right.

8 MR. LACHEEN: And I'm not
9 arguing about --

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
11 Excuse me. I don't think we're going to
12 have a conversation here.

13 Would you finish your
14 testimony, please.

15 MS. BETHUNE: Yes. I am
16 sitting here today because I would like
17 to emphasize that there was a huge effort
18 to get people involved continually, and I
19 personally spoke with Lenny many times to
20 ask him to get involved, to help in the
21 decision-making during the development of
22 the business improvement district.

23 Now, I also want to say that
24 for a fact there were stakeholders that
25 were in the leadership position in the

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2 form of the Board. Kelly Erb, who has a
3 law firm, she was President.

4 So you were saying that the
5 Board is not representative of the
6 stakeholders. We have a young woman who
7 has a business who actually expanded her
8 business through -- who sits on -- she's
9 a stakeholder and she sits on the Board.

10 There has been an active effort
11 to reach out to people to get them to
12 participate in the decision-making in
13 this BID, very active.

14 And I'm sorry, sir, if you were
15 overlooked, but believe me, I personally
16 sent letters and e-mails and things to
17 try to get people to participate. So I
18 just wanted --

19 MR. LACHEEN: I am not
20 saying --

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
22 you.

23 MR. LACHEEN: -- you haven't
24 done your job.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

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2 Excuse me.

3 I really appreciate your coming
4 up to testify at this time.

5 MS. BETHUNE: Thank you.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And
7 the Chair will recognize Councilman
8 Jones.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
11 Please be seated.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
13 Madam Chair.

14 What I would suggest here, I
15 think one thing for sure, everybody
16 agrees that the BID is a good thing.
17 What I hear clearly is that we have a way
18 to go to be inclusive of all people in
19 light of full discovery and transparency
20 and good things like that, that there
21 might be a chance for us in this Council
22 to improve upon a good thing by maybe
23 changing and strengthening the guidelines
24 and bylaws and electoral process, that we
25 can make people a little more comfortable

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2 with how notice is given and how
3 participation is encouraged.

4 I don't think that it will do
5 us any good to continue on back and forth
6 introducing people. We have work to do,
7 clearly, and I'd like you to allow us the
8 time that's already built into this
9 hearing process and then discovery
10 process and then rehearing process to
11 allow us to fix what we think might be
12 made better.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I was
14 going to suggest that we were going to
15 have to, under any circumstances,
16 continue this until April the 30th. I
17 don't see any reason why this can't be
18 worked out with the community in your
19 working with them, Councilman, to come to
20 some conclusion by April the 30th.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: I think we
22 can do that.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: With
24 that being said, I see that there are a
25 number of people who have been sitting

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2 here for some time. I don't know whether
3 you would like to add to the record today
4 your testimony or whether you want to
5 wait until April the 30th.

6 Do you want to come forward,
7 sir?

8 (Witness approached witness
9 table.)

10 MR. GIDARO: Good afternoon.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good
12 afternoon. Please identify yourself for
13 the record.

14 MR. GIDARO: My name is Marco
15 Gidaro. I'm a resident of the
16 neighborhood. I have no affiliation with
17 the Roxborough Development Corporation,
18 nor do I have any affiliation with any
19 business on the Ridge. I'd like to speak
20 to the effects of the BID over the last
21 five years.

22 My wife and I -- I've been a
23 resident there for about 13 years. My
24 wife and I will walk the Ridge now
25 because of this BID. Clearly, there have

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 been improvements to the Ridge because of
3 this funding.

4 I disagree with the gentleman's
5 statement that he came up with a number
6 of 50 percent increase in traffic. I
7 think the number clearly is above that.
8 There's many, many, many people walking
9 the Ridge because it's safer, it's
10 cleaner and there's many businesses that
11 are open later.

12 So I'd like for the Council to
13 take that into consideration when they
14 vote on this in April.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
16 you very much.

17 Are there any questions or
18 comments from members of the Committee?

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
21 you again for your patience and coming in
22 to testify.

23 MR. GIDARO: Thank you.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
25 you.

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2 MR. BRACALE: Hello,
3 Councilwoman.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Do
5 you want to identify yourself for the
6 record?

7 MR. BRACALE: My name is
8 Leonard Bracale. I own a couple
9 properties on there.

10 The other question and concern
11 that I have is that the types of
12 properties which are assessed, if it's
13 residential, commercial. I don't know if
14 the gentleman, Andrew, from the Commerce
15 Department can answer this, but
16 multi-unit properties are being assessed
17 when there's no active day-to-day
18 business being taking place. Is there
19 any way by April 30th can we -- is that
20 something also that we can work on?

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
22 Again, I think there will be a follow-up
23 meeting on this with the community, with
24 the businesspeople, with the Councilman,
25 with the people from Commerce. Whatever

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2 questions you have, I believe that would
3 be the time to ask them and work things
4 out to the best of everybody's
5 satisfaction.

6 At this time, the Chair
7 recognizes Councilman DiCicco.

8 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you,
9 Madam President.

10 Good afternoon, sir. Did you
11 say you are a property owner?

12 MR. BRACALE: Yes.

13 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You own
14 several properties?

15 MR. BRACALE: Yes.

16 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Are they
17 rental properties?

18 MR. BRACALE: One is a rental
19 property. Matter of fact, they're both
20 rental properties, and I also own a
21 business.

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: The rental
23 properties, are they commercial/retail or
24 are they residential?

25 MR. BRACALE: They are zoned

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2 commercial. It's a six-unit apartment
3 building. There's no active day-to-day
4 business taking place.

5 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: But
6 they're revenue-producing properties?

7 MR. BRACALE: Yes.

8 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Because
9 you mentioned something that -- I think
10 you said that you didn't see the purpose
11 of or you would rather not see properties
12 that are not retail/commercial being
13 assessed?

14 MR. BRACALE: When you pay the
15 business use and occupancy, when you look
16 through the code, they determine -- like
17 if we had a parking lot and we're renting
18 space for a parking lot, it's a
19 day-to-day active business. If I had an
20 office where I solicited renters, it's an
21 active day-to-day business.

22 There's no active day-to-day
23 business there, and it's pretty much
24 outside the business corridor, so,
25 therefore, I think there's some kind of

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2 leeway that if you want to be in it, if
3 you want to benefit in the BID, you
4 should be able to pay and reap the
5 benefits. If not, you do not reap the
6 benefits. And from what I understand
7 from Andrew -- I think he's City
8 Commerce -- that other BIDs, some of
9 those properties are not included in the
10 tax. Ours just happens to include
11 everything, vacant land, mixed use, that
12 type of thing.

13 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: There are
14 different formulas in different
15 neighborhoods. I have in my district a
16 number of business improvement districts
17 and they all -- in their growing stages,
18 in their infancy stages, there are
19 similar complaints and concerns, but over
20 the long haul, any time we had to do
21 renewals, there was no opposition, very
22 little opposition, if any, and all of the
23 places that in the 12 years that I've
24 been here that I've been a party to in
25 creating these districts, the benefits

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2 have certainly outweighed any negatives,
3 if there are any, and everybody wins,
4 whether it is a commercial/retail
5 property or an investment property with
6 apartments, because a better quality of
7 life that is brought to the community as
8 a result of these BIDs benefits everyone
9 in terms of property values and the
10 clients that you're looking to rent your
11 properties to. And I just wanted to make
12 sure that I heard you right, because even
13 though you may not fit into that retail
14 categorization or classification, your
15 properties are revenue-producing
16 properties. And there's nothing wrong
17 with that, but they're businesses. I
18 look at residential rental as a business.
19 So I just wanted to make sure I heard you
20 clear on that.

21 MR. BRACALE: Yeah. I just
22 looked in the business use and occupancy
23 and that's what it stated.

24 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO:
25 Understand. Thank you.

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2 MR. BRACALE: And also with the
3 buying -- with the BIDs buying
4 properties, there has to be some concern.

5 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Well --
6 Madam Chair, with your permission --
7 again, in the southern part of my
8 district along the East Passyunk Avenue
9 corridor, but for the fact that the BID
10 and a non-profit were in a position to
11 purchase properties and get that critical
12 mass to begin to market the commercial
13 corridor properly, the improvements that
14 we've seen in the last two, three years
15 with an interest of people wanting to
16 open up businesses and stay open longer
17 hours would not have been successful.

18 There are growing pains,
19 there's no question about it, that you go
20 through when you do these things, but
21 they're all meant for one purpose and one
22 purpose only, to make it a better
23 community, a safer community and a
24 community in which you will not only
25 retain people but attract new people to

1 3/13/08 - RULES - BILLS 080077 and 82
2 come to. And if you're ever down in
3 South Philly, I would suggest you go down
4 to the East Passyunk --

5 MR. BRACALE: I go to Marra's
6 all the time.

7 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Well, you
8 see Marra's has fixed up their front, the
9 first time in a hundred years?

10 MR. BRACALE: Beautiful.

11 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: It's
12 catching on.

13 MR. BRACALE: My father had a
14 business down there.

15 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: There are
16 a number of restaurants that have opened
17 up, and it's all as a result of the BID
18 and the CDC working together to make it a
19 better environment. It's really --

20 MR. BRACALE: And I'm all for
21 that. It's when you buy property and you
22 rent it to Directors -- I think there's
23 like five Directors -- and what's the
24 rent is he paying, who put the lighting,
25 the cappuccino machine. It's got to be a

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2 \$6,000 cappuccino machine. All these
3 questions, not that I've raised them, I
4 have different -- there's a baker on the
5 street. There's a pizza guy on the
6 street. You know, they all ask. I'm
7 kind of in the middle of it. You know,
8 you see they're working. I'm in the
9 middle of this, and that's why I'm
10 voicing my opinion.

11 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: They're
12 legitimate questions that should be
13 brought up not only here but at the BID
14 meetings.

15 MR. BRACALE: Bernard, the
16 Executive Director, he told me that the
17 BID, that they paid for all that stuff
18 because it's their property.

19 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Well, the
20 BID again in South Philadelphia at
21 Passyunk Avenue has purchased and done
22 some renovations to properties as well.

23 MR. BRACALE: But did they put
24 like refrigeration?

25 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I think

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2 they may have. I'm not absolutely sure.
3 I'm not involved in the day-to-day, but
4 there are certain things that -- if
5 improvements are made to a building for
6 the purpose of making it more attractive
7 for a potential renter, then you would do
8 that. It's a business decision.

9 MR. BRACALE: So what happens
10 when you go to sell the building? Say,
11 if one of the Board members wants to buy
12 it?

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Let
14 me just say this --

15 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I can't
16 speak to all of this.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: -- I
18 don't think this is the forum to be
19 addressing your concerns and your issues.
20 I am sure that in the very near future
21 there will be a meeting arranged.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Without a
23 doubt. We would like to meet with both
24 sides of this.

25 Again, let me reemphasize that

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2 in most of the business associations I've
3 been involved with, one of the healthier
4 signs about them is when there is
5 contention sometimes between factions,
6 and in the best-case scenario, that those
7 concerns get addressed and that they work
8 it out and we move forward. Because I
9 didn't hear not one person today say that
10 that BID was not a good idea. I think
11 inclusion, transparency are issues and
12 some questions that you have that are
13 legitimate need to be answered.

14 So I'd like to provide a forum
15 by which they get those concerns
16 addressed, bring it back to this body and
17 then we'll decide from there.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Very
19 good.

20 The gentleman in the back would
21 like to be recognized. Would you please
22 approach the witness table.

23 (Witness approached witness
24 table.)

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:

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2 Identify yourself for the record, please.

3 MR. COOLEY: Thank you. My
4 name is Michael Cooley, C-O-O-L-E-Y. I'm
5 a real estate developer and I was born
6 and raised in the neighborhood of
7 Roxborough. My company currently owns or
8 is the equitable owner of approximately
9 16 properties along the Ridge Avenue
10 business district. And these are not
11 small properties. These properties
12 encompass almost seven acres of land
13 along Ridge Avenue and almost a couple
14 thousand lineal feet. And what I'd like
15 to do is simply state my position that
16 this BID process is vital to the
17 long-term success and the quality of life
18 in Roxborough.

19 I started developing properties
20 in Roxborough in the last five years and
21 have recently completed, I would say, one
22 of the largest projects that have
23 occurred in the last 30 years.

24 My father still lives in the
25 house we grew up in. He's been living

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2 there for 50 years, and I was fortunate
3 enough as a child to be able to walk to
4 the shops, as some of the previous people
5 testified said. I used to be able to
6 walk to the shops on Ridge Avenue and
7 shop as a young child with my family to
8 buy the goods and services needed as a
9 family. Since then -- that was over 25,
10 30 years ago. Since then, in the past 15
11 or 20 years, Ridge Avenue has somewhat
12 deteriorated into a state where we have
13 dilapidated properties, abandoned
14 properties, vacant businesses, and it is
15 a shame to have seen these properties get
16 to that condition.

17 I am fortunate enough to be in
18 a position where I'm developing these
19 properties and am now attracting
20 businesses of national retail level, down
21 to regional business levels and local
22 business levels, to bring them back into
23 the community to make it a much more
24 vibrant community for the businesses and
25 the residents.

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2 So my position is simply that
3 this is a vital component for the
4 long-term success of this neighborhood.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
6 you very much. We appreciate your coming
7 in to testify.

8 MR. COOLEY: Thank you.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
10 you.

11 Does anyone else want to be
12 recognized?

13 Please approach the witness
14 table.

15 (Witness approached witness
16 table.)

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
18 Kindly identify yourself for the record.

19 MS. MARTIN: Good afternoon.
20 My name is Christine Martin. I'm a
21 business owner and 30-year resident of
22 Roxborough, and I just came in to give my
23 support for the BID.

24 I moved my business onto Ridge
25 Avenue about three or four years ago

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2 because I was already seeing the
3 improvements that were happening because
4 of the BID that was in place. I just see
5 more and more possibilities. And the
6 lighting, my store has benefited from the
7 lighting. They were placed every so many
8 feet, and it just enhances the whole
9 feeling and it makes you have some hope
10 that the street will return and be the
11 viable meeting place for everybody in the
12 community that it used to be.

13 Thank you.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
15 you. Thank you very much.

16 MR. BRACALE: That stems from
17 our question, is that the Vice-President,
18 he installs all these lights. He has the
19 contract. He installs the lights, the
20 Vice-President of the RDC. That's one of
21 our concerns.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: We
23 are really not in a position at this
24 point in time to be dealing with your
25 concerns. As I said previously, it's up

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2 to the community, the businessmen, the
3 Councilperson representing that area and
4 someone from the Department of Commerce.
5 You all have to get together and decide
6 what it is you want to do.

7 Yes, Ms. Martin?

8 MS. MARTIN: I'm sorry. One
9 thing I also wanted to say was that I've
10 been involved with the RDC before I even
11 moved up onto the corridor. Part of it
12 was, I was interested. I wanted to get
13 involved. I wanted to be on committees.
14 I went up, What committee can I -- so you
15 have to be willing to put something out
16 and put your face in and say, How can I
17 help you first, instead of necessarily,
18 Well, what are you doing for me. And I
19 just wanted the Council to know, too,
20 that I think it's important to put
21 yourself out if you want to be involved
22 and you really want the transparency and
23 that kind of thing. Because I've seen
24 the budget. I've been there for all
25 sorts of different events within the RDC.

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2 So it's only a matter you really have to
3 put yourself out.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And I
5 would encourage you to stay involved.

6 MS. MARTIN: Thank you.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank
8 you.

9 Do we have anyone else to
10 testify?

11 MR. LACHEEN: I just wanted to
12 say one last thing.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Do
14 you want to testify?

15 (Witness approached witness
16 table.)

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes?

18 MR. LACHEEN: I just want to
19 say, I'm not against the RDC. I just
20 want to make sure it's run properly.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Well,
22 then I suggest --

23 MR. LACHEEN: And that's what
24 we will discuss --

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: --

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2 sir, that you go to the meeting.

3 MR. LACHEEN: If we're notified
4 about the meetings, we'll be there.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Well,
6 I'm sure you will be. And before you
7 leave today, see the Councilman or his
8 legislative assistant, give your name,
9 address and telephone number, and I'm
10 sure that they would be very happy to
11 notify you of the next meeting.

12 Please identify yourself for
13 the record.

14 MR. KLINE: Good afternoon. My
15 name is Dale Kline. I'm a business owner
16 on Ridge Avenue.

17 Four years ago I opened up a
18 business and I wanted to become involved.
19 I saw that the RDC had advertisements for
20 volunteers in the local newspaper. I
21 went there. I volunteered. I put in my
22 time for two years and I got asked to be
23 on the Board. I did not know anybody on
24 the Board, and I'm currently the Board
25 President.

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good
3 for you. Thank you.

4 MR. KLINE: Thank you.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Do we
6 have anyone else to testify?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:
9 Seeing no one, this Committee will stand
10 in recess until April the 30th at 10:00
11 a.m. And, again, I suggest those of you
12 who have been involved, stay involved.
13 Those of you who have not, I encourage
14 you get involved before the 30th.

15 (Committee on Rules adjourned
16 at 2:40 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 on March 13, 2008, and that
this is a true and correct transcript of same.

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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