

Committee on Rules
6/13/2022

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON RULES

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Monday, June 13, 2022
10:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ

BILLS: 220120, 220365, 220457

1 - - -

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
3 you very much. This is the Committee
4 on Rules, Monday, June 13, 2022.

5 I understand that the state
6 law currently requires that the
7 following announcement be made at the
8 very beginning of every remote public
9 hearing as follows: Due to the
10 current public health emergency, City
11 Council Committees are currently
12 meeting remotely. We are using
13 Microsoft Teams to make these remote
14 hearings possible.

15 Instructions for how the
16 public may view and offer public
17 testimony at the public hearings of
18 Council Committees are included in the
19 public hearing notices that are
20 published in the Daily News, Inquirer
21 and Legal Intelligencer prior to the
22 hearing and can also be found on
23 PHLCouncil.com.

24 Will the Clerk please call
25 the roll to take attendance. Members

1 that are in attendance will please
2 indicate that they are present when
3 their names are called. Also, please
4 say a few brief words when responding
5 so that your image will be displayed
6 on screen when you speak.

7 Clerk, please call the roll.

8 THE CLERK: Councilmember
9 Curtis Jones, Jr.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Mr. Chair,
11 Members, viewing public, I am present.

12 THE CLERK: Councilmember
13 Katherine Gilmore Richardson.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
15 RICHARDSON: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
16 Good morning, colleagues. I am
17 present.

18 THE CLERK: Councilmember
19 David Oh.

20 COUNCILMAN OH: Good morning,
21 Chair and colleagues. I'm present.

22 THE CLERK: Councilmember
23 Brian O'Neill.

24 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Good
25 morning, everyone.

1 THE CLERK: And,
2 Councilmember Cindy Bass.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
4 morning, Mr. Chairman and colleagues.
5 I'm present.

6 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
7 you. A quorum of the hearing is
8 present and this hearing is now called
9 to order. This is the public hearing
10 of the Committee on Rules regarding
11 Bill Nos. 220120, 220365, and 220457.

12 Will the Clerk please read
13 the titles of the bills.

14 THE CLERK: Bill No. 220120,
15 an ordinance continuing the Mt. Airy
16 Business Improvement District beyond
17 its determination date, in an area
18 that generally includes both sides of
19 Germantown Avenue from 6300 to 7631
20 and certain blocks of streets that
21 intersect that portion of Germantown
22 Avenue and for which the Mt. Airy
23 Improvement District, Inc., a
24 Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation, is
25 the Neighborhood Improvement District

1 Management Association for the
2 District; approving a final plan and
3 report for the District, including a
4 list of proposed improvements and
5 their estimated cost, and providing
6 for assessment fees to be levied on
7 the property owners within the
8 District.

9 Bill No. 220365, continuing
10 the Port Richmond Industrial
11 Development Enterprise Neighborhood
12 Improvement District beyond its
13 termination date in the area bounded
14 generally by the north side of
15 Allegheny Avenue, the west side of
16 Memphis Street between Allegheny
17 Avenue and East WestMoreland Street,
18 the south side of East WestMoreland
19 Street, property line of 3300 Agate
20 Street, and the back of the properties
21 facing west along the east side of
22 Tulip Street between Westmoreland and
23 Ontario Streets.

24 And Bill No. 220457,
25 authorizing the Public Property

1 Commissioner, on behalf of the City,
2 to execute all documents necessary and
3 appropriate, including conveyances of
4 easements, title, and other interests
5 and City-owned real estate, new leases
6 and amendments to existing leases to
7 facilitate and support the coordinated
8 and comprehensive development of the
9 Delaware River waterfront, Interstate
10 95, and Christopher Columbus Boulevard
11 formerly a portion of Delaware Avenue,
12 in the area bounded by Market Street,
13 Pemberton Street, Front Street and the
14 Delaware bulkhead line; and
15 authorizing the Philadelphia
16 Redevelopment Authority to execute
17 corresponding conveyances, amendments
18 and agreements, all under certain
19 terms and conditions.

20 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
21 you, Brett.

22 Before we begin to hear
23 testimony from the witnesses we have
24 for today, everyone who has been
25 invited to the meeting to testify

1 should be aware that this public
2 hearing is being recorded. Because
3 the hearing is public, participants
4 and viewers have no reasonable
5 expectation of privacy. By continuing
6 to be in the meeting, you are
7 consenting to being recorded.

8 Additionally, prior to
9 recognizing Members for their
10 questions or comments they have for
11 witnesses, I will note for the record
12 at this time that we will use the chat
13 feature available in Microsoft Teams
14 to allow Members to signify that they
15 wish to be recognized. In order to
16 comply with the Sunshine Act, the chat
17 feature must only be used for this
18 purpose.

19 Will the Clerk please call
20 the panel for Bill No. 220120.

21 THE CLERK: Sure. 220120, we
22 have Philip Green, Janis Risch and Ken
23 Weinstein.

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good
25 morning. Are you connected and ready

1 to proceed?

2 MR. GREEN: Yes. Philip
3 Green here.

4 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So
5 please state your name for the record
6 and you can begin, Philip.

7 MR. GREEN: Okay. My name is
8 Philip Green. Good morning, Chairman
9 Johnson and members of the Rules
10 Committees. I am a Corridor
11 Improvements Manager within the
12 Commerce Department and the
13 Department's liaison to Philadelphia's
14 14 Business Improvement Districts.
15 I'm here to testify in support of Bill
16 No. 220120.

17 This bill reauthorizes the
18 Mt. Airy's Business Improvement
19 District for an additional five years.
20 The legislation includes the Mt. Airy
21 BIDs plan for services and would allow
22 the BID to continue to levy assessment
23 fees on property owners within the
24 District to fund a variety of services
25 that make the business corridor

1 thrive.

2 The Mt. Airy BID formed in
3 2007 to address conditions within the
4 historic and charming commercial
5 district along Germantown Avenue in
6 Mt. Airy. The BID is responsible for
7 cleaning and beautification and works
8 closely with Mt. Airy businesses. The
9 BID provides regular daily sidewalk
10 litter removal. It has also
11 implemented and maintains
12 beautification improvements, including
13 planters and banners, and it has also
14 created six planted pocket parks along
15 the Avenue over the last two years.
16 As you can imagine, these pocket parks
17 have been very popular and a vital
18 amenity during the pandemic.

19 The BID is guided by an
20 active and engaged Board comprised of
21 merchants, residents and neighborhood
22 stakeholders. Commerce has been
23 pleased to support the Mt. Airy BID by
24 using capital funds to plan a project
25 that will create new safe crosswalks

1 across Germantown Avenue and locations
2 within the District, enabling
3 neighbors and visitors to travel more
4 safely to visit businesses.

5 The commercial district in
6 Mt. Airy is an important shopping and
7 gathering place for nearby residents
8 and critical to the health and
9 vibrancy of Mt. Airy and nearby
10 neighborhoods. The Mt. Airy BID
11 provides a great example of the
12 positive change that can be possible
13 when neighborhood business owners,
14 property owners and residents lead,
15 guide and implement services and
16 projects to make their area better.

17 These worthy efforts deserve
18 your sup -- pardon me, deserve your
19 support. Thank you for the
20 opportunity to testify. I'm glad to
21 take any questions at this time.

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
23 you. Will the next panelist please
24 state your name for the record and
25 begin your testimony.

1 MS. RISCH: Yes. Good
2 morning, Chairman Johnson, members of
3 the Rules Committee. To start, I want
4 to acknowledge and thank Councilwoman
5 Cindy Bass's staff for the assistance
6 they provided. My name is Janis
7 Risch. I'm the Executive Director of
8 the Mt. Airy Business Improvement
9 District, and I've been in this
10 position for four and a half years.

11 It's a pleasure to be part of
12 the BID because Mt. Airy and the
13 Northwest has been my home since 2003,
14 because I work with a deeply committed
15 group of Board members who take their
16 fiduciary responsibility very
17 seriously and because I'm eager to
18 support the success of the small
19 businesses that invest in Mt. Airy
20 every day.

21 Mt. Airy, the community is
22 bounded to the north by Cresheim
23 Valley Drive, depending who you speak
24 to, to the south by Washington Lane,
25 to the east of by Stenton Avenue and

1 to the west by Fairmount Park. The
2 Business Improvement District covers a
3 lengthy two-mile stretch of Germantown
4 Avenue that serves as Mt. Airy's main
5 commercial corridor as well as the
6 unifying bridge between East and West
7 Mt. Airy.

8 It runs from Washington Lane
9 to Cresheim Valley Drive. It includes
10 several of the adjacent side streets
11 that maintain commercial activity,
12 including Allens Lane, Mt. Airy
13 Avenue, Nippon Street, Durham,
14 Mt. Pleasant. And with these two
15 miles, there's a mix of commercial,
16 historical, not-for-profit and
17 residential properties. The Business
18 Improvement District includes 247
19 commercial properties that run the
20 gamut from professional services to
21 retail and beverage.

22 Mt. Airy the community and
23 Mt. Airy's Germantown Avenue
24 commercial corridor are both
25 socioeconomically and racially

1 diverse, which is one of its greatest
2 assets and attractions. Mt. Airy is
3 seen as a middle neighborhood home to
4 both working class and middle class
5 residents and its Business Improvement
6 District has long exceeded the
7 national average in terms of the
8 number of businesses owned by people
9 of color. Nationally, it's around 4
10 percent. In Mt. Airy, it's closer to
11 50 percent.

12 And most excitingly, Mt. Airy
13 is part of a national trend that has
14 seen an uptick in the number of Black
15 women launching small businesses.
16 According to JP Morgan, in 2021 Black
17 women were the fastest growing
18 demographic of entrepreneurs in the
19 U.S. accounting for nearly 2.7 million
20 businesses nationwide.

21 In Mt. Airy in the past four
22 years, including during the pandemic,
23 many of the delightful new additions
24 to the Business Improvement District
25 include a garden center, a couple of

1 boutiques, a business center, a men's
2 spa, a restaurant and cider brewery
3 all with Black women at their helm. I
4 have no doubt that the cleanliness,
5 the beauty and the relative safety of
6 the commercial corridor is part of the
7 draw, but it takes effort to maintain
8 that.

9 Every day the BID's crew
10 collects an average of 3,000 gallons
11 of debris or over 100,000 gallons per
12 year. Investing in Mt. Airy's
13 commercial corridor by renewing the
14 Business Improvement District is an
15 important strategy for both City and
16 neighborhood stabilization as well as
17 supporting these entrepreneurs who are
18 bringing fresh energy to Mt. Airy,
19 while pursuing financial independence
20 and opportunity for themselves and
21 their families.

22 Ken Weinstein who is the
23 Board Chair for the Mt. Airy BID will
24 continue with our testimony. Thanks
25 very much.

1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
2 you very much.

3 Ken Weinstein, how you doing?

4 MR. WEINSTEIN: Good morning.

5 Good morning, Chairman Johnson,
6 Councilperson Cindy Bass and members
7 of the Rules Committee. I'm Ken
8 Weinstein, President of the Philly
9 Office Retail Mission Driven Real
10 Estate Development Company and founder
11 of Jumpstart Germantown Jumpstart
12 Philly, which is a community
13 development program that helps local
14 residents remove blight in their
15 neighborhoods.

16 As Janis said, I serve as
17 Chair of the Mt. Airy BID and would
18 like to acknowledge my fellow Mt. Airy
19 BID Board members who work to prepare
20 our five-year renewal for the
21 Mt. Airy -- who support our five-year
22 renewal for the Mt. Airy Business
23 Improvement District. Jen Low from
24 Frosted Fox, Cake Shop is here today,
25 Michael Schweisheimer from Primitive

1 World Productions, Yvonne Haskins from
2 Ariadne Properties, Libby Hawes from
3 the Cliveden of the National Trust,
4 Moneek Pines from ARTrageous Brush and
5 Flow Studio, and finally Wendy
6 Weinstein from Ground Zero Salons.

7 I appreciate the opportunity
8 to appear today before City Council's
9 Rules Committee to speak in favor of
10 this legislation. As a cofounder of
11 the Mt. Airy BID 15 years ago, I will
12 never forget that before the BID was
13 formed, I had to regularly pick up
14 trash and sweep outside my properties
15 in what seemed like a very futile
16 attempt to maintain and attract the
17 climate of business customers and
18 potential tenants.

19 After City Council initially
20 approved the Mt. Airy BID 15 years
21 ago, we set out to change the physical
22 nature of the Mt. Airy Business
23 District. Our goal was to clean,
24 beautify and provide safety to the
25 two-mile stretch of Germantown Avenue

1 from Cresheim Valley to Washington
2 Lane and its commercial side streets.
3 Fifteen years later, I'm proud to
4 report that we succeeded with our
5 mission to two full-time street
6 ambassadors removing litter six days a
7 week, sweeping up leaves and other
8 natural debris and removing graffiti
9 on a regular basis. Our members and
10 the public have come to expect clean
11 streets here in Mt. Airy.

12 Moreover, we've done much to
13 clean and beautify or green and
14 beautify the commercial corridor. We
15 recently completed as Philip said the
16 construction of six pocket parks at a
17 cost of more than \$250,000 that serve
18 as community gathering spots, which
19 were especially needed during the
20 pandemic. And we maintain an
21 award-winning hanging flower basket
22 program that's being replicated in
23 other parts of the City.

24 We've done much to improve
25 safety along our commercial corridor.

1 We've purchased and installed security
2 lighting on the sides and rear of more
3 than 50 properties in the District.

4 We serve as the eyes and ears of the
5 commercial corridor, regularly
6 reporting street light outages, short
7 dumping and other nuisances to the
8 City's 311 system. And we're now
9 working with the City's Commerce and
10 Streets Department to add pedestrian
11 crosswalks at seven key intersections
12 along Germantown Avenue. I think
13 that's going to make a really great
14 impact here.

15 To prepare for
16 reauthorization, the Mt. Airy BID
17 created a Steering Committee, helped
18 focus groups with property businesses,
19 nonprofit and community members and
20 sought feedback at our annual meetings
21 in a survey that was distributed
22 through snail mail, our e-news letter
23 and our website. The broad consensus
24 was that the BID should continue to do
25 what it's currently doing, focusing on

1 the physical infrastructure of the
2 commercial corridor through projects
3 that contribute to the cleaning,
4 beautification and greening and safety
5 of the business district.

6 We're here today before you
7 to seek another five years for the Mt.
8 Airy BID. We propose to keep our
9 boundaries the same. We propose to
10 continue street cleaning and graffiti
11 removal six days a week,
12 beautification and greening of the
13 business corridor. These services
14 supplement regular City services and
15 do not replace them. A modest change
16 to our assessment criteria is to
17 exclude residential owner-occupied
18 condos in commercially zoned
19 properties. This puts us in line with
20 the practices of other BIDs and
21 consistent with our intent to create a
22 favorable business climate.

23 In keeping with City
24 practices, we also propose an annual
25 budget that caps increases to 4

1 percent annually. We will continue to
2 leverage our precious dollars by
3 seeking government and private funding
4 to make further improvements to the
5 Avenue and expect to bring \$3 million
6 in government funding to the
7 commercial corridor over the next five
8 years.

9 An annual audit will continue
10 to be performed with reporting to all
11 assessed property owners, the City and
12 the state. Finally, we have done much
13 to revitalize the Mt. Airy Business
14 District. Through the efforts of our
15 hard-working staff, Janis has been
16 particularly wonderful and effective
17 to work with. Our Board members,
18 which are very representative of the
19 community, and other community
20 stakeholders, Mt. Airy is a different
21 place than it was 15 years ago.

22 Our property owners,
23 businesses, customers and neighbors
24 count on a high level of cleanliness
25 and beautification. We seek your

1 support for this ordinance introduced
2 by our Councilperson Cindy Bass to
3 continue to meet and surpass those
4 expectations. Thank you for your
5 time.

6 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
7 you, Ken. And before I turn it over,
8 I just want to acknowledge your team's
9 hard work. But most importantly, I
10 want to acknowledge the leadership of
11 your Councilwoman Cindy Bass who's
12 been a staunch advocate in terms of
13 improving the quality of life of
14 Mt. Airy and Germantown. And so, I
15 definitely support it because I know
16 she's day-in and day-out on the ground
17 addressing such quality-of-life
18 issues.

19 And so, I want to turn this
20 over to Councilwoman Cindy Bass from
21 the 8th Councilmanic District.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Well,
23 thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate
24 that and I appreciate your kind words.

25 I first off want to start off

1 saying I want to thank everyone for
2 all of the hard work that they do
3 around the Mt. Airy BID. It's just an
4 exemplary example of community working
5 together and what can be done, what
6 can be accomplished. Because one of
7 the things I just wanted to say as I
8 was hearing all of the great comments
9 of how wonderful it is now, I remember
10 when it wasn't so wonderful.

11 I've worked along that
12 corridor many years. And there were a
13 number of us, myself and Ken and some
14 others who were I would say sort of in
15 the forefront of ground zero when it
16 wasn't so nice and it didn't feel safe
17 and it was not really clean. And I
18 heard I think it was Janis mention
19 that it was -- Janis, I think you said
20 something like historic and charming.
21 And I was like, boy, we've come a long
22 way baby, because it wasn't so
23 charming back in the late '90s, early
24 2000s before the BID got under way.
25 It was pretty rough.

1 I remember there was sort of
2 like this little triangle where there
3 was like a nuisance bar, you know, a
4 spot where the guys sold drugs and
5 then a spot where guys gambled. That
6 was about it along our commercial
7 corridor, so we've come a long way.
8 We've come a long way by working
9 together, to be quite honest.

10 And even though it's not a
11 perfect -- I would say it's near
12 perfect. We've done great work.
13 We're on the move and spreading the
14 services down the Avenue. At one
15 point it was a challenge, and I
16 believe we've tackled that as well.
17 So I think that we're doing good work
18 and for all those involved, keep up
19 the good work and I am just glad to be
20 supportive of this effort.

21 And also, I think Janis or
22 maybe it was Ken, I don't know,
23 mentioned someone from the Frosted
24 Fox, which I want to give a shout-out
25 to which is one of my favorite sweet

1 shops in the City of Philadelphia. As
2 someone with a very strong sweet
3 tooth, the Frosted Fox does an
4 incredible job.

5 So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Well,
7 thank you. And my favorite restaurant
8 is CinCin.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Oh,
10 yes -- well, not by this BID. That's
11 Chestnut Hill. But nonetheless --

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Oh, see,
13 my bad. That was my South
14 Philadelphia and --

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: That's
16 okay.

17 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: --
18 conversation. No problem.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: They'll
20 be coming before you soon enough.
21 That's Chestnut Hill Business
22 Improvement District, so you'll be
23 seeing them as well.

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So, Ken,
25 when I used to go to your spot at the

1 Trolley Car, that's the area, correct?

2 MR. WEINSTEIN: That is
3 correct. That is the northern most
4 part of the BID, yes.

5 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Got you.
6 Understood. Understood.

7 MR. WEINSTEIN: And if I
8 could just say, Councilwoman, I
9 remember when you worked at 23
10 Sturm(ph), so I know you were on the
11 Avenue every day, and we also not very
12 fondly remember that drug triangle
13 that you just described accurately.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It was
15 rough. It was a rough block, so
16 things do change. Thank you for all
17 of your work, everyone who's involved.
18 Thank you.

19 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Well,
20 you do have a pizza shop that sells
21 vegan pizza, but the --

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yeah --

23 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: -- took
24 me some time ago on the right-hand
25 side of you're going downtown.

1 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: That
2 is -- I think that's Fino's. Is that
3 Fino's --

4 MR. WEINSTEIN: That's
5 correct.

6 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Fino's
8 right at Carpenter Lane. And across
9 the street is the Breakfast Boutique,
10 which is also one of my favorite
11 spots. Councilman, I don't know if
12 you've been there, but you might want
13 to check that out for everyone who's
14 listening. That's another great spot.
15 Newer, but great breakfast spot on the
16 Avenue.

17 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Awesome.
18 Awesome. Any other comments from
19 members --

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Point of
21 information.

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON:
23 Councilman Jones.

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: I'm going
25 to shout out to the old Rib Crib.

1 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Oh, yes.

2 Oh, yes.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: And I
4 remember when I was at PCDC we did
5 Chef Ken's.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Chef
7 Ken's --

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: On the
9 Avenue --

10 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yes.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: So I
12 understand how that is like a melting
13 pot up there to be replicated
14 throughout the City.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I would
16 say that there are a considerable
17 number of African American-owned
18 eateries along this corridor that
19 haven't really received a full amount
20 of attention and promotion that I
21 think that they deserve, because
22 they're really, really good spots.
23 And so, we want you to, Councilman,
24 leave the 4th District and come up
25 here as much as you possibly can with

1 your dollars and spend along
2 Germantown Avenue and along the
3 corridor. There's a few other spots I
4 want to connect you with as well.

5 And I know that this is not
6 the focus of the hearing, but one last
7 thing is that I spoke with Kimberly
8 Gray, Mr. Gray's daughter from the Rib
9 Crib last week, and she is working on
10 reopening that location. So we're all
11 looking forward to that I think.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
13 you, everyone.

14 Any other comments from
15 members of the Committee?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Hearing
18 none, I want to thank all the
19 panelists for their testimony, and I
20 am going to have the Clerk call the
21 next panel.

22 THE CLERK: For Bill No.
23 220365, we have Philip Green, Rich
24 Hoffman and Joseph Bennett.

25 MR. GREEN: Hi again. It's

1 Philip Green from the Commerce
2 Department. I'm here to testify in
3 support of Bill No. 220365. This bill
4 reauthorizes the Port Richmond
5 Industrial Development Enterprise also
6 known as PRIDE for an additional five
7 years. The legislation includes
8 PRIDE's plan for services and would
9 allow the BID to continue to levy
10 assessment fees on property owners
11 within the District to sustain vital
12 cleaning and safety programs.

13 The PRIDE District is home to
14 a cluster of manufacturing and
15 industrial businesses located within a
16 16-block area of Port Richmond. It
17 was formed in 2000 and was created to
18 provide services and improvements to
19 ensure that the area remains a clean
20 and safe location for the
21 manufacturing and industrial
22 businesses located there. Its
23 services also maintained the quality
24 of life for neighbors nearby.

25 PRIDE provides cleaning in

1 partnership with impact services who
2 remove litter and report short dumping
3 and report illegal dumping. PRIDE
4 promotes security by maintaining
5 relationships with the 24th Police
6 District and has partnered with
7 property owners and businesses to
8 install more than 30 cameras within
9 the District using the Commerce
10 Department's Business Security Camera
11 Program.

12 PRIDE has implemented signage
13 and infrastructure improvements and
14 organize district-wide clean-ups.
15 PRIDE's efforts are more important
16 than ever given the impact of the
17 opioid crisis on the area. I urge
18 your support of PRIDE so that it may
19 continue to benefit its businesses,
20 its workers and its neighbors. Thank
21 you again for the opportunity to
22 testify. I'm glad to take any
23 questions at this time.

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
25 you very much.

1 And the next panelist, please
2 say their name and begin their
3 testimony.

4 MR. HOFFMAN: Good morning.
5 Rich Hoffman from HR Benjamin
6 Electrical Contractors.

7 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You can
8 begin, Richard.

9 MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you and
10 good morning, Chairman Johnson and
11 members of the Committee on Rules.
12 I'm Rich Hoffman, President of HR
13 Benjamin Electrical Contractors like I
14 stated in Port Richmond. First, let
15 me just say unfortunately we don't
16 have very many fancy restaurants in
17 our District, pardon the pun, but we
18 do go to some of those restaurants
19 mentioned and they're wonderful.
20 Sorry. I'm here today to testify in
21 support of Bill No. 220365 to
22 determine the reauthorization for an
23 additional five years, a neighborhood
24 industrial district known as PRIDE.
25 Currently I'm the President

1 of PRIDE and have been involved with
2 PRIDE almost all of the 20 years it
3 has been authorized. I welcome the
4 opportunity to speak today and
5 identify the contributions PRIDE has
6 made to the success of our need and
7 businesses within its boundaries. Our
8 company is a small electrical
9 contractor started in the basement of
10 my parents' home and has been steadily
11 operating in the City since 1985.

12 We only employ about a dozen
13 employees full-time. However, the
14 building we are in which spans about a
15 City block has many companies as
16 tenants. These include a sizable
17 radio manufacturer distributor,
18 industrial bag manufacturer
19 distributor, multiple wood-working
20 manufacturers, multiple distributors
21 of contractors.

22 The building is home to
23 approximately 125 total employees and
24 dates back to the 1920s. It was home
25 to Penn Valley Manufacturing for many

1 decades and we were told had almost
2 1,000 employees in it at one time. As
3 you know, PRIDE area as well as many
4 other areas in the City have been
5 steadily losing industrial buildings
6 to residential development and our
7 group was founded on trying to
8 maintain and increase industrial jobs
9 in our District.

10 Over the last 20 years, PRIDE
11 has been and continues to provide
12 positive influence in Port Richmond.
13 We're engaged in cleaning and security
14 throughout the approximate one-mile
15 square for all its members for the
16 betterment of the businesses and
17 residents. In part, this has been
18 paid for by our own taxation and part
19 paid for by grants that were secured
20 to improve the District.

21 The nonprofit organization
22 PRIDE has rebuilt many of the street
23 corners that were damaged by
24 industrial traffic, better secured the
25 properties, cleaned up much trash,

1 established better security and
2 improved the overall safety in
3 coordination with the City's Commerce
4 Department, Police and Managing
5 Director's Office, all while providing
6 jobs for services and service and
7 security personnel in the area.

8 PRIDE continues to upgrade,
9 install and replace security camera
10 systems at member's buildings as the
11 technology changes and we will shortly
12 be up to 50 high-quality security
13 cameras in the PRIDE District. I'm
14 here in support of all those efforts.
15 Over each of the multiple five years
16 reauthorizations, our internal tax
17 rate has varied greatly for many
18 reasons.

19 In this coming
20 reauthorization, the PRIDE Board is
21 now recommending and requesting the
22 reauthorization at a greatly reduced
23 percentage property tax at 3.75
24 percent. Many reasons for this as
25 follows: PRIDE's vendors that

1 maintain cleanliness and security
2 believe they can maintain minimal
3 cross-increases throughout the five-
4 year reauthorization. The City's
5 industrial property taxes have been
6 steadily increasing and this is which
7 the basis PRIDE assessments are
8 calculated. PRIDE has been successful
9 in collecting delinquent assessments
10 that will be used in this five-year
11 cycle to offset some of the new cost.

12 The PRIDE Board has been
13 assuming and will continue to receive
14 additional grant monies is the
15 assumption and in these challenging
16 economic times, we obviously want to
17 minimize any additional burden and
18 taxation to all of the PRIDE
19 companies. The PRIDE Board continues
20 to believe that by assisting the
21 City's own efforts, cleaning and
22 security throughout the neighborhood
23 in our District can only improve the
24 conditions for employees, businesses
25 and residents throughout Port

1 Richmond.

2 There are over 1,000
3 manufacturing and support jobs in the
4 PRIDE area, which by themselves
5 provide significant tax revenue to the
6 City of Philadelphia. An additional
7 large percentage of employees in all
8 of the PRIDE companies are folks from
9 the surrounding neighborhoods. This
10 bill and the reauthorization continues
11 to strengthen that focus.

12 I strongly encourage Council
13 to approve Bill No. 220365 for the
14 PRIDE group for an additional five
15 years. Thank you. And P.S., I wanted
16 to give a special thanks to Commerce
17 and Dennis Murphy, Karen Fegley,
18 Philip Green and the whole team as
19 well as Councilman Squilla, Sean
20 McMonagle and their teams as well.
21 Thank you again.

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
23 you.

24 Will the Clerk please call
25 the next panelist.

1 THE CLERK: I believe the
2 next panelist should be Joseph
3 Bennett, but I'm not sure if he was
4 able to connect. Joseph Bennett, if
5 you are on, please you may unmute and
6 begin testimony.

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
9 It seems like he's not on.

10 Any other questions or
11 comments from members of the
12 Committee?

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
15 Hearing none, thank you everyone for
16 their testimony.

17 Will the Clerk please call
18 the next panel.

19 THE CLERK: For Bill No.
20 220457, we have Elizabeth Lankenau,
21 John Mondlak and Joe Forkin.

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: John,
23 you want to say your first and last
24 name and begin your testimony.

25 MR. MONDLAK: Sure,

1 Councilman. Good morning, Chairperson
2 Johnson and members of the Rules
3 Committee. My name is John Mondlak
4 and I am the Deputy Director for
5 Development Services in the Department
6 of Planning and Development. I'm here
7 to offer up an amendment to Bill
8 220457.

9 The amendment simply
10 clarifies the specific agreement that
11 the Philadelphia Redevelopment
12 Authority is authorized to change
13 pursuant to this bill and be in
14 compliance with the urban
15 redevelopment law. The changes are
16 fairly technical. They identify the
17 agreements that Redevelopment
18 Authority is part of and which ones
19 they can change.

20 In no way does it affect any
21 other aspect of the project, the park
22 or any of the other agreements with
23 PennDOT. I respectfully request that
24 the amendment be considered at this
25 Committee hearing. And in conclusion,

1 I'm here to answer questions.

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
3 you very much.

4 Will the Clerk please call
5 the next panelist.

6 THE CLERK: The next panelist
7 we have is Elizabeth Lankenau.

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON:
9 Elizabeth, are you connected?

10 THE CLERK: Councilmember,
11 she is connected. We may have to take
12 a brief pause because she was going to
13 present. I know she was on a moment
14 ago so there might have been
15 connection issues, but she was going
16 to present something.

17 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
18 Any other panelists for this
19 particular bill?

20 THE CLERK: We have Joe
21 Forkin.

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
23 Mr. Forkin, can you say your name.

24 MR. FORKIN: Good morning,
25 Chairperson Johnson and members of the

1 Rules Committee. My name is Joe
2 Forkin and I am the President of the
3 Delaware River Waterfront Corporation,
4 the nonprofit organization charged by
5 the City of Philadelphia to transform
6 the Central Delaware River Waterfront
7 into a dynamic and vibrant destination
8 for the benefit of all Philadelphians.

9 I'm here today to testify in
10 support of Bill No. 220457, an
11 ordinance authorizing the Commissioner
12 of Public Property to execute all
13 documents necessary to facilitate the
14 coordinated rebuilding of the Chestnut
15 Street and Spruce Street covers over
16 Interstate 95 and the extension of the
17 South Street Pedestrian Bridge to --

18 (Background
19 interruption.)

20 MR. FORKIN: This bill
21 represents --

22 (Background
23 Interruption.)

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: It's
25 some feedback going on. I'm not sure

1 where that feedback is coming from.

2 But go ahead, sir.

3 MR. FORKIN: Sure. This bill
4 represents some of the final technical
5 steps needed to realize what we
6 believe is a once-in-a-generation
7 opportunity to reconnect the City of
8 Philadelphia to its Delaware River
9 Waterfront. A reminder for everyone,
10 this project has been in planning for
11 just over 10 years since the adoption
12 of the Master Plan for the Central
13 Delaware by the City of Philadelphia.
14 And in that plan, DRWC's role was
15 really to look at how to cure the
16 psychological and physical
17 disconnection caused by the Interstate
18 95 and severed the waterfront off from
19 connecting with the City of
20 Philadelphia.

21 And this thought, among many
22 other thoughts of parks and trail
23 systems, to reconnect one block of the
24 City substantially between Chestnut
25 and Walnut Street and Front Street and

1 the River as the keystone gathering
2 place in the Central Delaware River
3 Waterfront for all Philadelphians sort
4 of really took hold in the public's
5 mind.

6 Since that time in over 10
7 years, we've engaged thousands of
8 Philadelphians from across the entire
9 city through a really creative public
10 outreach effort, and that public
11 outreach effort had realized a lot of
12 the thoughts and aspirations for the
13 entire City through both the design of
14 the new park, through the programming
15 that would take place there, even in
16 park policies and rules and how
17 welcoming the space could be. And
18 we're thrilled today to say that this
19 is one of the final steps needed to
20 leverage a wonderful partnership
21 through the Commonwealth of
22 Pennsylvania represented by PennDOT,
23 the City of Philadelphia through the
24 capital budget which was authorized to
25 support this project and through DRWC

1 and philanthropic partners like the
2 William Penn Foundation, the Knight
3 Foundation and Pew Charitable Trusts
4 as well as other donors that raised
5 \$25 million to support this effort.

6 I know that Liz has some
7 slides here and some really nice
8 renderings to show the public feedback
9 and sort of the dynamic space that has
10 been created through this effort
11 outreach and sort of to conclude my
12 testimony, I just want to say together
13 we couldn't be more excited at PennDOT
14 with our partners at the City at
15 PennDOT and with the support of
16 William Penn Foundation, the Knight
17 Foundation, the Pew Trusts and the
18 thousands of Philadelphians who have
19 participated in community efforts to
20 transform Penns Landing.

21 I also want to especially
22 thank Councilmember Squilla for being
23 a tireless advocate for the Waterfront
24 for this project. Without his
25 support, I don't know that this

1 collaboration could have been
2 possible.

3 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Awesome.

4 Any other questions or comments from
5 members of the Committee?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.

8 Hearing none --

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Excuse me,
10 Mr. Chairman.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON:
12 Councilman Jones.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: Just very
14 quickly, I was there for the
15 announcement of that ambitious
16 project. At the time I think it was
17 quoted for about \$90 million. I was
18 wondering if the pandemic since supply
19 chain, since inflationary impacts on
20 the material, what is the current
21 total project cost for that
22 overhanging?

23 MR. FORKIN: So thank you for
24 that question, Councilmember Jones.
25 It has escalated, the project. And

1 just to be clear, the City's portion
2 of this was \$90 million. 20 million
3 of that in the construction of what's
4 called the on-road trial segment that
5 connects Washington Avenue to Spring
6 Garden Street, that is built,
7 Councilmember. That is built and now
8 open and very successful. And the
9 other \$70 million in support of the
10 park features, the pavilion, the ice
11 rink, the gardens, the amphitheater
12 where we hold the PECO multi-cultural
13 series and the jazz series and the
14 fireworks, that is what the City's \$70
15 million supports.

16 PennDOT's cost did go up, but
17 they have covered that so they're at
18 about \$200 million for their cost and
19 DRWC has raised the extra 25 million.
20 Through the latest cost estimate that
21 we have we are covered, and we are
22 prepared to move forward once this
23 bill is approved.

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: What is
25 the time frame for the completion of

1 the project?

2 MR. FORKIN: So we're very
3 hopeful to break ground in early 2023.
4 And from there, we're looking at about
5 a four-year construction project.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
7 Mr. Chairman.

8 And thank you for this
9 ambitious transformation of the
10 Waterfront. Thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
12 you very much.

13 We have Elizabeth back.
14 Elizabeth, do you want to go ahead and
15 do your testimony.

16 MS. LANKENAU: Yes. Thank
17 you. I apologize. I'm calling
18 through my phone so I won't be able to
19 show the graphics until Teams catches
20 up. Good morning, Chairperson Johnson
21 and members of the Rules Committee.
22 My name is Elizabeth Lankenau and I am
23 the Director of Infrastructure Program
24 Coordination at the Office of
25 Transportation, Infrastructure and

1 Sustainability.

2 I am here today to testify in
3 support of Bill No. 220457, an
4 ordinance authorizing the Commissioner
5 of Public Property to execute all
6 documents necessary to facilitate the
7 coordinated rebuilding of the Chestnut
8 Street and Spruce Street covers over
9 Interstate 95 and the extension of the
10 South Street Pedestrian Bridge.

11 For more than two decades,
12 the City has worked with PennDOT to
13 reconstruct I-95. As part of that
14 reconstruction project, the existing
15 1.5 acre park-like cover that bridges
16 I-95 at Chestnut Street requires
17 replacement. Rather than replace it
18 in kind, PennDOT has agreed to expand
19 it to a 4 acre cover to bridge both
20 I-95 and Christopher Columbus
21 Boulevard.

22 In addition, PennDOT will
23 rebuild the public space at Penns
24 Landing connecting it to this new
25 expanded cover. This will create a

1 continuous nearly 12 acre public
2 space, the new Penns Landing Park,
3 extending from Front Street to the
4 Delaware River between Chestnut and
5 Walnut Streets.

6 Once PennDOT completes the
7 infrastructure that spans these two
8 roads and connects Front Street
9 directly to the Waterfront, the
10 Delaware River Waterfront Corporation
11 will install landscaping and build the
12 cafe, public bathrooms and modest
13 public building to create a
14 transformational civic space that
15 conceals a portion of I-95 and
16 reconnects this area of the City to
17 its waterfront.

18 Joe Forkin, thank you very
19 much for your testimony earlier today.
20 And -- okay. The covers over I-95 in
21 the vicinity of Spruce Street may also
22 need to be replaced as PennDOT
23 rebuilds that portion of I-95. But
24 similar planning designed in
25 reconstruction needs as the Chestnut

1 Street cover for Penns Landing Park.
2 This ordinance would also authorize
3 the agreements necessary to allow
4 PennDOT to rebuild the Spruce Street
5 covers.

6 In addition to rebuilding the
7 covers over 95, this ordinance will
8 authorize the City to work with
9 PennDOT to extend the South Street
10 pedestrian bridge, which crosses I-95
11 and terminates currently at a parking
12 lot on the west side of Christopher
13 Columbus Boulevard. The extension
14 which will terminate at a newly
15 completed section of the Delaware
16 River Trail will create another new
17 direct and safe access point to the
18 Waterfront.

19 The creation of this new
20 multi-million Penns Landing Park is
21 cost-shared with funding from the
22 City, PennDOT and the Delaware River
23 Waterfront Corporation. At the outset
24 of the project, the City committed \$90
25 million to be used toward the

1 construction of the Delaware River
2 Trail between Washington Avenue and
3 Spring Garden Street and the
4 improvements that will turn the
5 PennDOT bill infrastructure into the
6 12 acre Penns Landing Park.

7 Of this amount, the first \$20
8 million has been expended on the now
9 complete trail with the remaining
10 amount programmed in the capital
11 budget for expenditure on the park by
12 the Delaware River Waterfront
13 Corporation with oversight by the
14 City. The financial commitments by
15 the City have already been authorized.
16 This ordinance only authorizes the
17 execution of documents necessary to
18 facilitate the coordinated rebuilding
19 of the area as described.

20 The Department of Public
21 Property and the Office of
22 Transportation, Infrastructure and
23 Sustainability support this measure.
24 And accordingly, I respectfully ask
25 that City Council approve Bill 220457.

1 I am requesting the suspension of the
2 rules so as to allow first reading at
3 the next session of Council. Thank
4 you. I will be happy to answer any
5 questions you may have.

6 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
7 you very much.

8 Any questions or comments
9 from members of the Committee?

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
12 Thank you for your testimony.

13 Is there anyone else here to
14 testify on any of the bills that have
15 been put forward today?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Hearing
18 none, this concludes the hearing. We
19 will now take a pause and go into our
20 public meeting.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-
22 SANCHEZ: Mr. Chair, this is
23 Councilmember Sanchez. I just would
24 like to let you know that I have been
25 present. I haven't been able to

1 access the chat room.

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.

3 The Chair officially recognizes
4 Councilwoman Maria Quinones-Sanchez as
5 present.

6 I want to thank all the
7 panels of witnesses for their
8 participation today. We value your
9 input. I now invite all panels of
10 witnesses to please disconnect from
11 the meeting as we go officially into
12 our public -- from the hearing before
13 we go officially into our public
14 meeting. This concludes the public
15 hearing on the Committee and we will
16 now convene the public meeting.

17 Will the Clerk please call
18 the roll to take attendance. Members
19 that are in attendance will please
20 indicate that they are present when
21 their names are called. Also, please
22 say a few brief words when responding
23 so that your image will be displayed
24 on screen when you speak.

25 THE CLERK: Councilmember

1 Curtis Jones, Jr.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Mr. Chair,
3 colleagues, I am present.

4 THE CLERK: Councilmember
5 Katherine Gilmore Richardson.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Good morning, Mr. Chair
8 and colleagues. I am present.

9 THE CLERK: Councilmember
10 David Oh.

11 COUNCILMAN OH: Good morning,
12 Chair. I'm present as well.

13 THE CLERK: Councilmember
14 Brian O'Neill.

15 (No response.)

16 THE CLERK: Councilmember
17 Cindy Bass.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
19 morning. I am still present. Thank
20 you.

21 THE CLERK: And,
22 Councilmember Maria Quinones-Sanchez.

23 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-
24 SANCHEZ: I am here and present.

25 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank

1 you.

2 The Chair recognizes
3 Councilwoman Katherine Gilmore
4 Richardson for a motion on Bill No.
5 220120.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 I move that Bill No. 220120
9 be reported from this Committee with a
10 favorable recommendation and further
11 move that the rules of Council be
12 suspended to permit first reading of
13 this bill at the next session of
14 Council.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Second.

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: The
17 Chair notes for the record that
18 Councilman Curtis Jones seconds the
19 motion. It has been moved and
20 properly seconded that Bill No. 220120
21 be reported from this Committee with a
22 favorable recommendation and further
23 move that the rules of Council be
24 suspended to permit first reading of
25 this bill at the next session of

1 Council.

2 All those in favor of the
3 motion will signify by saying aye.

4 (Ayes.)

5 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Opposed?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: The ayes
8 have it and the motion carries.

9 The Chair recognizes
10 Councilwoman Katherine Gilmore
11 Richardson for a motion on Bill
12 No. 220365.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15 I move that Bill No. 220365
16 be reported from this Committee with a
17 favorable recommendation and further
18 move that the rules of Council be
19 suspended to permit first reading of
20 this bill at the next session of
21 Council.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Second.

23 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: The
24 Chair notes for the record that
25 Councilwoman Cindy Bass seconds the

1 motion. It has been moved and
2 properly seconded that Bill No. 220365
3 be reported from this Committee with a
4 favorable recommendation and further
5 move that the rules of Council be
6 suspended to permit first reading of
7 this bill at the next session of
8 Council.

9 All those in favor of the
10 motion will signify by saying aye.

11 (Ayes.)

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Opposed?

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: The ayes
15 have it and the motion carries.

16 The Chair recognizes
17 Councilwoman Katherine Gilmore
18 Richardson for a motion on the
19 amendment to Bill No. 220457.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22 I offer an amendment to Bill
23 No. 220457. A copy of the amendment
24 has been circulated to all members of
25 the Committee. I move that the

1 amendment to Bill No. 220457 be
2 approved.

3

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Second.

5 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: The

6 Chair notes for the record that

7 Councilwoman Cindy Bass seconds the

8 motion. It has been moved and

9 properly seconded that the amendment

10 to Bill 220457 be approved.

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

13 (Ayes.)

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Opposed?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: The ayes
17 have it and the motion carries.

18 The Chair recognizes

19 Councilwoman Katherine Gilmore

20 Richardson for a motion on Bill No.

21 220457 as amended.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24 I move that Bill No. 220457

25 as amended be reported from this

1 Committee with a favorable
2 recommendation and further move that
3 the rules of Council be suspended to
4 permit first reading of this bill at
5 the next session of Council.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Second.

7 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: The
8 Chair notes for the record that
9 Councilwoman Cindy Bass seconds the
10 motion. It has been moved and
11 properly seconded that Bill No. 220457
12 as amended be reported from this
13 Committee with a favorable
14 recommendation and further move that
15 the rules of Council be suspended to
16 permit first reading of this bill at
17 the next session of Council.

18 All those in favor of the
19 motion will signify by saying aye.

20 (Ayes.)

21 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Those
22 opposed?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: The ayes
25 have it and the motion carries. This

1 concludes this hearing, and I just
2 want to personally thank everybody for
3 taking time out of your schedule in
4 participating in this Rules hearing.
5 Thank you very much.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
7 Mr. Chairman.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're
11 welcome. Take care.

12 (Committee on Rules concluded
13 at 10:27 a.m.)

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

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

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TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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