

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON RULES

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, October 7, 2025
10:20 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL
COUNCILMAN ISAIAH THOMAS

BILLS: 250493, 250706, 250719, 250721

1 - - -

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
3 morning. This hearing is now
4 called to order. This is the
5 public hearing of the Committee on
6 Rules. Members and guests will
7 please take their seats and this
8 hearing is now called to order.

9 And I'll ask the Clerk
10 to now take the roll.

11 THE CLERK: Chairmember
12 Bass.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
14 Present.

15 THE CLERK: Vice-
16 Chairmember Squilla.

17 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
18 Present.

19 THE CLERK: Member
20 O'Neill.

21 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:
22 Present.

23 THE CLERK: Member
24 Gauthier.

1 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

2 Present.

3 THE CLERK: Member

4 Thomas.

5 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

6 Present.

7 THE CLERK: Member

8 Gilmore Richardson.

9 (No response.)

10 THE CLERK: And, Member

11 Jones.

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: A
14 quorum of the committee is present.

15 The Clerk will please
16 read the titles of the bills.

17 THE CLERK: Bill No.
18 250493, an ordinance to amend the
19 Philadelphia Zoning Maps by
20 changing the zoning designations of
21 certain areas of land located
22 within an area bounded by Roosevelt
23 Boulevard, 9th Street, Erie Avenue
24 and Broad Street. Introduced by

1 Councilmember Young.

2 Bill No. 250706, an
3 ordinance to amend the Philadelphia
4 Zoning Maps by changing the zoning
5 designations of certain areas of
6 land located within an area bounded
7 by Grange Avenue, Park Avenue, Chew
8 Avenue and Broad Street.

9 Introduced by Councilmember
10 Phillips.

11 Bill No. 250719, an
12 ordinance to amend the Philadelphia
13 Zoning Maps by changing the zoning
14 designations of certain areas of
15 land located within an area bounded
16 by Wilt Street, Gratz Street,
17 Montgomery Avenue and 19th Street.
18 Introduced by Councilmember Young.

19 Bill No. 250721, an
20 ordinance amending Section 14-500
21 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled
22 "Overlay Zoning Districts" by
23 amending Section 14-515, entitled
24 "Northeast Overlay District," and

1 making related changes, all under
2 certain terms and conditions.
3 Introduced by Councilmember
4 O'Neill.

5 There are no other bills
6 under consideration today.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

8 Thank you, Madam Clerk. And will
9 the Clerk please call the first
10 panel we have to testify today on
11 Bill No. 250493.

12 THE CLERK: Paula
13 Brumbelow Burns, Director of
14 Legislation for the Philadelphia
15 City Planning Commission.

16 (Witness approached
17 witness table.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
19 morning. Please state your name
20 for the record and proceed.

21 MS. BRUMBELOW BURNS: My
22 name is Paula Brumbelow Burns.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
24 morning.

1 MS. BRUMBELOW BURNS:

2 Good morning, members of the Rules
3 Committee. I'm Paula Brumbelow
4 Burns, Director of Legislation for
5 the Philadelphia Planning
6 Commission. I am here to testify
7 on Bill No. 250493, introduced into
8 City Council on May 8, 2025, by
9 Councilmember Young.

10 Bill No. 250493, amends
11 the Philadelphia Zoning Maps by
12 changing the zoning designations of
13 certain areas of land located
14 within an area bounded by Roosevelt
15 Boulevard, 9th Street, Erie Avenue
16 and Broad Street in the North
17 Planning District. This bill is a
18 direct result of the Community
19 Remapping Program, where the
20 Planning Commission staff works
21 closely with the neighborhood and
22 Council office to update zoning.

23 The existing zoning in
24 this area dates back to the

1 establishment of the City's first
2 zoning code in 1933. The
3 neighborhood aimed to concentrate
4 its density on blocks adjacent to
5 existing transit resources, right-
6 size zoning to match the scale of
7 existing residential neighborhoods
8 and encourage the redevelopment or
9 reuse of underutilized industrial
10 parcels.

11 The proposed amendment
12 to the bill will place the new
13 RTA-2, Residential Two-Family
14 Attached Zoning District, on the
15 city map. The Philadelphia City
16 Planning Commission considered Bill
17 No. 250493 at its public meeting on
18 June 5, 2025, and recommended the
19 bill for approval.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

21 Thank you very much for your
22 testimony.

23 Are there any questions
24 from members of the committee?

1 (No response.)

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And
3 seeing none, I will ask Madam Clerk
4 to please call up the next bill to
5 be heard on today.

6 THE CLERK: Bill No.
7 250706, Paula Brumbelow Burns,
8 Director of Legislation for the
9 Philadelphia City Planning
10 Commission.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
12 Thank you. Please state your name
13 for the record and proceed.

14 MS. BRUMBELOW BURNS: I
15 am Paula Brumbelow Burns, Director
16 of Legislation for the Philadelphia
17 City Planning Commission. I am
18 here to testify on Bill No. 250706,
19 introduced into City Council on
20 September 11, 2025 by Councilmember
21 Phillips. Bill No. 250706 amends
22 the Philadelphia Zoning Maps by
23 changing the zoning designation in
24 an area bounded by Grange, Park,

1 Chew Avenues and Broad Street.

2 This area is located in the Olney
3 neighborhood of the Upper North
4 Planning District.

5 This bill will change
6 the zoning designation from CMX-2.5
7 to CMX-3, Commercial Mixed-Use for
8 the property located at 5751 North
9 Broad Street. This zoning change
10 will facilitate a new urgent care
11 facility that will serve the
12 surrounding neighborhood.

13 The Philadelphia City
14 Planning Commission will consider
15 Bill No. 250706 at its public
16 meeting on October 16, 2025, where
17 the staff recommendation will be
18 for approval of the bill. I'll be
19 happy to answer any questions at
20 this time.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

22 Thank you for your testimony.

23 Any questions from the
24 committee?

1 (No response.)

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And
3 seeing none, let me ask you is
4 there anyone here who would like to
5 testify on this bill?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And
8 seeing none, thank you very much
9 for your testimony.

10 Madam Clerk, please call
11 the next panel to testify on Bill
12 No. 250719.

13 THE CLERK: Paula
14 Brumbelow Burns, Director of
15 Legislation for the Philadelphia
16 City Planning Commission.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
18 morning. Please state your name
19 for the record and proceed.

20 MS. BRUMBELOW BURNS: I
21 am Paula Brumbelow Burns, Director
22 of Legislation for the Philadelphia
23 City Planning Commission. I am
24 here to testify on Bill No. 250719,

1 introduced into City Council on
2 September 11, 2025, by
3 Councilmember Young. Bill No.
4 250719 amends the Philadelphia
5 Zoning Maps by changing the zoning
6 designation of land located in area
7 bounded by Wilt Street, Gratz
8 Street, Montgomery Avenue and 19th
9 Street in the North Central
10 Philadelphia neighborhood of the
11 Lower North Planning District.

12 This bill will change
13 the zoning designation for several
14 properties on the north side of the
15 1800 block of Montgomery Avenue.
16 The zoning designation will change
17 from RSA-5, Residential Single-
18 Attached, to CMX-2, Commercial
19 Mixed-Use, in order to facilitate a
20 project for Habitat for Humanity.

21 The Philadelphia City
22 Planning Commission will consider
23 Bill No. 250719 at its public
24 meeting on October 16, 2025 and

1 staff will recommend approval of
2 the bill. I will be happy to
3 answer any questions at this time.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

5 Thank you very much for your
6 testimony.

7 Are there any questions
8 by members of the committee?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And
11 seeing none, is there anyone else
12 here to testify regarding this
13 bill?

14 THE CLERK: Will Ed --

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
16 Clerk, please call the next witness
17 to testify.

18 THE CLERK: Ed McCauley,
19 Director of Real Estate Development
20 for Habitat for Humanity
21 Philadelphia.

22 (Witness approached
23 witness table.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good

1 morning.

2 MR. McCAULEY: Good

3 morning, Madam Chair and members of
4 the Committee. My name is Ed
5 McCauley and I am Director of Real
6 Estate Development for Habitat for
7 Humanity Philadelphia. Madam
8 Chair, thank you for allowing us to
9 testify today. We would also like
10 to thank Councilmember Jeffrey
11 Young for his sponsorship of Bill
12 No. 250719 and for his ongoing
13 support of Habitat for Humanity
14 Philadelphia. Thank you also to
15 the Planning Commission for its
16 support of the bill.

17 Bill No. 250719 seeks to
18 amend the zoning designations of
19 certain areas of land located
20 within an area bounded by 19th
21 Street, Wilt Street, Gratz Street
22 and Montgomery Avenue. The
23 proposed zoning designations will
24 be amended from RSA-5 to RM-1 and

1 CMX-2, zoning designations.

2 Such remapping of these
3 certain parcels owned for many
4 years by Habitat for Humanity
5 Philadelphia will allow Habitat to
6 fulfill its mission to create new
7 affordable housing and
8 homeownership opportunities as well
9 as develop long vacant and
10 underutilized lots.

11 Habitat envisions
12 providing affordable residential
13 dwellings as well as commercial
14 space that will allow Habitat to
15 expand its offices to better serve
16 the community and the residents
17 through programs and educational
18 workshops. The development
19 proposes approximately 20 new
20 affordable housing units,
21 strengthening the fabric of the
22 community as well as office space,
23 which will include a larger meeting
24 room that may accommodate community

1 meetings and various programs,
2 including owner-occupied home
3 repair and affordable
4 homeownership.

5 In conclusion, Habitat
6 respectfully requests that the
7 Committee recommend passage of the
8 bill to allow this important and
9 vital development project to move
10 forward. Thank you.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
12 Thank you very much for your
13 testimony.

14 Are there any questions
15 from the committee?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
18 Okay. Seeing none, thank you
19 again.

20 Madam Clerk, is there
21 anyone else here to testify on this
22 bill?

23 THE CLERK: No, there is
24 not, Madam Chair.

1 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And
2 I'll just publicly ask is there
3 anyone here to testify on Bill No.
4 250719 whose name has not been
5 called?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And
8 seeing none, I want to thank you
9 for your testimony.

10 Madam Clerk, please call
11 the witness for the next bill.

12 THE CLERK: Will Paula
13 Brumbelow Burns, Director of
14 Legislation for the Philadelphia
15 City Planning Commission, please
16 approach the witness table.

17 (Witness approached
18 witness table.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
20 morning again.

21 MS. BRUMBELOW BURNS:
22 Good morning.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
24 Please state your name for the

1 record and proceed.

2 MS. BRUMBELOW BURNS:

3 And as I finish up on this one, I
4 am still Paula Brumbelow Burns,
5 Director of Legislation for the
6 Philadelphia City Planning
7 Commission. I am here to testify
8 on Bill No. 250721, introduced into
9 City Council on September 11th by
10 Councilmember O'Neill.

11 Bill No. 250721 amends
12 The Philadelphia Zoning Code by
13 amending Section 14-500, entitled
14 "Overlay Zoning Districts" by
15 amending Section 14-515 entitled
16 "The Northeast Overlay District,"
17 which covers parts of the Central
18 Northeast, Far Northeast and North
19 Delaware Planning Districts.

20 This bill will prohibit
21 personal care homes and group
22 living uses within the RSD,
23 Residential Single Family Dwelling
24 Districts, RSA, Residential Single-

1 Attached Districts, and the RTA-1,
2 Residential Two-Family Attached.
3 The Zoning Code presently does not
4 permit these uses within the RSD
5 districts and requires a special
6 exception in the RSA and RTA
7 districts. This will still require
8 applicants to attend the Zoning
9 Board, but they will be required to
10 prove a hardship for a variance
11 instead of merely showing that they
12 will have no significant impact.

13 With a special
14 exception, the group living use
15 category addresses unit types that
16 feature communal kitchen and dining
17 facilities, including Greek
18 organization living, group homes
19 and temporary overnight shelters.
20 Personal care homes are a
21 subcategory of group living that
22 provides housing where food,
23 shelter and personal assistance are
24 offered for a period of over 24

1 hours to four or more adults who
2 are not related to the operator.
3 They are not considered long-term
4 licensed care facilities, but
5 residents need assistance with
6 personal care and/or financial
7 management. These facilities would
8 not be permitted in the proposed
9 bill.

10 The Philadelphia City
11 Planning Commission will consider
12 Bill No. 250721 at its public
13 meeting on October 16, 2025. I'll
14 be happy to answer any questions at
15 this time.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
17 Chair recognizes Councilman
18 O'Neill.

19 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:
20 Thank you. First of all, I'd like
21 to clarify for the record that
22 while I introduced this bill, it
23 was co-sponsored by our 6th
24 District Councilman Mike Driscoll

1 and also that it covers his
2 district as well, but there's a
3 couple things I'd like to say for
4 the edification of the committee as
5 well as anybody listening or
6 hearing about this matter. And it
7 has less to do with personal care
8 homes, although they become a major
9 issue in Councilman Driscoll's
10 District, and they're starting to
11 become an issue in mind. And, that
12 is, what is a special exception.

13 And if you look here at
14 the testimony, Paula, this will
15 require applicants to attend the
16 Zoning Board of Adjustment hearing.
17 But unlike where they have to prove
18 a hardship, and the community goes
19 down there assuming they want to
20 learn more about it, they want to
21 oppose it, which happens often in
22 zoning cases, and I take issue with
23 they have to prove -- you say it in
24 the letter, the applicant has to

1 prove that they will have no
2 significant impact on the
3 neighborhood. That's not true.
4 That's not true.

5 What happens is -- and
6 I've been to a lot of special
7 exception hearings over the years.
8 It's a fraud on the community and
9 the neighbors of any property that
10 is under a special exception,
11 because this is what happens.
12 We're going to go to the Zoning
13 Board. We want to fight this.

14 Whatever it is, people
15 come down, they start the hearing.
16 Everybody's waiting for the
17 applicant to put their case on.
18 There's no case to put on. It's
19 deemed legal. It is deemed legal.
20 The burden is on the community,
21 usually with no lawyer to show that
22 this will basically destroy their
23 neighborhood because it's very
24 subjective contrary to the health,

1 safety and welfare of the
2 neighborhood, their community.

3 You and I may disagree
4 on all of this and anybody up here
5 may have a disagreement as to
6 whether this is -- but these
7 neighbors are fighting it and they
8 have nothing to fight with, because
9 they've been brought down thinking
10 they were going to fight this.
11 It's deemed legal. They do not
12 have to put testimony on of any
13 kind. And I don't want special
14 exceptions in my District for that
15 reason.

16 And I apologize to the
17 Committee that this was in my
18 District because it would have been
19 out a long time ago. All right. I
20 still don't know how it got in.
21 But we're here today to remove the
22 special exception, make it a
23 variance where the community has
24 input. That's all. And most of

1 the time variances get worked out
2 with the community. I mean, that's
3 just been my experience. When it
4 doesn't get worked out, it's really
5 bad.

6 But the Zoning Board is
7 there and the law gives the
8 community some importance in terms
9 of the applicant's burden and this
10 doesn't, so it's not just personal
11 care homes. It is the special
12 exception provision itself. And I
13 would ask every District
14 Councilmember to look hard at
15 special exceptions because it might
16 as well have a why.

17 And if you want it to
18 have a why, put a why on it because
19 that's really what it is and the
20 community gets misled every time
21 one comes up. Thank you.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
23 Well, thank you, Councilman. And I
24 want to thank you for your

1 explanation. And the theory and
2 the thought process behind the
3 legislation sounds like it's all
4 around making sure that there is
5 input from the community or
6 actually I will say meaningful
7 input. One of the things that we
8 hear over and over again is that
9 folks don't feel that their input
10 really can change anything, and it
11 really dissuades them from
12 participating on any level in, you
13 know, any governmental decisions.
14 So, Councilman, we thank you for
15 that explanation.

16 Any other comments from
17 the committee?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: All
20 right. Thank you very much for
21 your testimony.

22 Is there anyone else
23 here to testify on Bill No. 250721?

24 (No response.)

1 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

2 Okay. Seeing none, we want to
3 thank everyone for being here and
4 we're now going to go into our
5 public meeting. We will now go
6 into a public meeting shortly to
7 consider the action of the bills to
8 be taken before the committee
9 today.

10 Can we have a quorum
11 check, Madam Clerk?

12 THE CLERK: Chairmember
13 Bass.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
15 Present.

16 THE CLERK: Vice-
17 Chairmember Squilla.

18 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
19 Present.

20 THE CLERK: Member
21 O'Neill.

22 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:
23 Present.

24 THE CLERK: Member

1 Gauthier.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

3 Present.

4 THE CLERK: Member

5 Thomas.

6 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

7 Present.

8 THE CLERK: Member

9 Gilmore Richardson.

10 (No response.)

11 THE CLERK: And, Member

12 Jones.

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

15 Okay. Thank you for your patience.

16 We will now go into a public

17 meeting. Will the -- we already

18 called the roll. I note for the

19 record that a quorum of the

20 committee is present.

21 The Chair now recognizes

22 Councilmember Squilla for a motion

23 on Bill No. 250493.

24 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

1 Thank you, Madam Chair.

2 I move that Bill No.
3 250493 be reported from this
4 committee with a favorable
5 recommendation and further move
6 that the rules of Council be
7 suspended as to permit the first
8 reading of this bill at the next
9 session of Council.

10 (Duly seconded.)

11 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It
12 has been moved and properly
13 seconded that Bill No. 250493 be
14 reported from this committee with a
15 favorable recommendation and
16 further remove that the rules of
17 Council be suspended to permit
18 first reading of this bill at the
19 next session of Council.

20 (Duly seconded.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: All
22 those in favor of the motion will
23 signify by saying aye.

24 (Aye.)

1 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

2 Anyone opposed?

3 (No response.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: The
5 ayes have it and the motion
6 carries.

7 Chair now recognizes
8 Councilman Squilla for a motion on
9 Bill No. 250706.

10 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

11 Thank you, Madam Chair.

12 I move that Bill No.
13 250706 be reported from this
14 committee with a favorable
15 recommendation and further move
16 that the rules of Council be
17 suspended as to permit the first
18 reading of this bill at the next
19 session of Council.

20 (Duly seconded.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It
22 has been moved and properly
23 seconded that Bill No. 250706 be
24 reported from this committee with a

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

6 All those in favor of
7 this motion will signify by saying
8 aye.

9 (Aye.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Is
11 there anyone opposed?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
14 Okay. The ayes have it and the
15 motion carries.

16 Chair now recognizes
17 Councilmember Squilla for a motion
18 on Bill No. 250719.

19 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
20 Thank you, Madam Chair.

21 I move that Bill No.
22 250719 be reported from this
23 committee with a favorable
24 recommendation and further move

1 that the rules of Council be
2 suspended as to permit the first
3 reading of this bill at the next
4 session of Council.

5 (Duly seconded.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It
7 has been moved and properly
8 seconded that Bill No. 250719 be
9 reported from this committee with a
10 favorable recommendation and
11 further move that the rules of
12 Council be suspended to permit
13 first reading of this bill at the
14 next session of Council.

15 All of those in favor of
16 this motion will signify by saying
17 aye.

18 (Aye.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
20 Anyone opposed?

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: The
23 ayes have it and the motion
24 carries.

1 And I now recognize
2 Councilmember Squilla for a motion
3 on Bill No. 250721.

4 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
5 Thank you, Madam Chair.

6 I move that Bill No.
7 250721 be reported from this
8 committee with a favorable
9 recommendation and further move
10 that the rules of Council be
11 suspended as to permit the first
12 reading of this bill at the next
13 session of Council.

14 (Duly seconded.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It
16 has been moved and properly
17 seconded that Bill No. 250721 be
18 reported from this committee with a
19 favorable recommendation and
20 further move that the rules of
21 Council be suspended to permit
22 first reading of this bill at the
23 next session of Council.

24 All those in favor of

1 the motion will signify by saying
2 aye.

3 (Aye.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Is
5 there anyone opposed?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: The
8 ayes have it and the motion
9 carries.

10 And if there are no
11 additional remarks from the
12 committee or our guests, this
13 concludes the business of the
14 Committee on Rules for today.
15 Thank you all very much for your
16 attendance.

17 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
18 Thank you, Madam Chair.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
20 You're welcome.

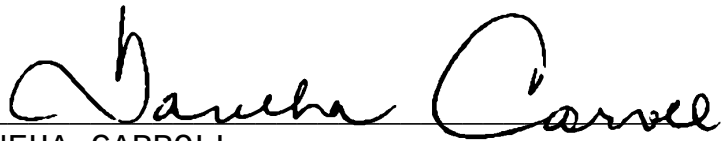
21 (Committee on Rules
22 concluded at 10:55 a.m.)

23

24

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

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Taneha Carroll". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Taneha" and the last name "Carroll" clearly distinguishable.

TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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