

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA  
COMMITTEE ON RULES

- - -

Room 400, City Hall  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Wednesday, April 8, 2009, 10:20 a.m.

- - -

Bill 080901 - An ordinance continuing the  
Chestnut Hill Business Improvement District  
beyond its date of termination...

Bill 090128 - An ordinance continuing the East  
Passyunk Business Improvement District beyond  
its termination date...

(Full text of both bills attached hereto.)

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:

|                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Anna C. Verna, Chair      | W. Wilson Goode, Jr. |
| James F. Kenney, V. Chair | William K. Greenlee  |
| Blondell Reynolds Brown   | Jack Kelly           |
| Darrell L. Clarke         | Donna Reed Miller    |
| Frank DiCicco             |                      |

- - -

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good  
3 morning. Good morning, everyone.

4 This is the public hearing of  
5 the Committee on Rules. I would ask  
6 Mr. Erickson to please read the title of  
7 Bill No. 080901.

8 MR. ERICKSON: Bill No. 080901,  
9 an ordinance continuing the Chestnut Hill  
10 Business Improvement District beyond the  
11 date of termination of the District in  
12 the area that generally includes both  
13 sides of Germantown Avenue from 7640 to  
14 8705, both sides of Bethlehem Pike, from  
15 10 to 105, and certain blocks of streets  
16 that intersect that portion of Germantown  
17 Avenue, and for which Chestnut Hill  
18 Business Improvement District, Inc., a  
19 Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation,  
20 serves as the Neighborhood Improvement  
21 District Management Association for the  
22 District; approving a plan for the  
23 District, including a list of proposed  
24 improvements and their estimated cost,  
25 and providing for assessment fees to be

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2 levied on property owners within the  
3 District; authorizing the Director of  
4 Commerce, on behalf of the City, to  
5 execute an agreement with Chestnut Hill  
6 Business Improvement District, Inc.,  
7 relating to the District; and authorizing  
8 Chestnut Hill Business Improvement  
9 District, Inc. to assess property owners  
10 within the District a special property  
11 assessment fee to be used in accordance  
12 with the approved plan; all in accordance  
13 with the provisions of the Community  
14 Economic Improvement Act and under  
15 certain terms and conditions.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
17 you.

18 Do we have anyone to testify on  
19 this bill?

20 (No response.)

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Is  
22 there anyone here to testify on this  
23 bill?

24 (No response.)

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay.

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2 Seeing no one, I would ask Mr. Erickson  
3 to please read the title of Bill No.  
4 090128.

5 MR. ERICKSON: Bill No. 090128,  
6 an ordinance continuing the East Passyunk  
7 Avenue Business Improvement District  
8 ("District") beyond its termination date  
9 in an area that generally includes both  
10 sides of East Passyunk Avenue, from the  
11 south side of Federal Street to the east  
12 side of South Broad Street, certain  
13 blocks of streets that intersect that  
14 portion of East Passyunk Avenue, both  
15 sides of South Broad Street, and the  
16 south side of McKean Street to the north  
17 side of Snyder Avenue, and the west side  
18 of South Broad Street, from the south  
19 side of Mifflin Street to the north side  
20 of McKean Street, and for which East  
21 Passyunk Avenue Business Improvement  
22 District, Inc., a Pennsylvania nonprofit  
23 corporation, is the Neighborhood  
24 Improvement District Management  
25 Association; approving a final plan for

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2 and report concerning the District,  
3 including a list of proposed improvements  
4 and their estimated cost, and providing  
5 for assessment fees to be levied on  
6 property owners within the District;  
7 authorizing the Director of Commerce, on  
8 behalf of the City, to execute an  
9 agreement with East Passyunk Avenue  
10 Business Improvement District, Inc.  
11 relating to the District; and authorizing  
12 East Passyunk Avenue Business Improvement  
13 District, Inc. to assess property owners  
14 within the District a special property  
15 assessment fee to be used in accordance  
16 with the approved final plan, all in  
17 accordance with the provisions of the  
18 Community and Economic Improvement Act,  
19 under certain terms and conditions.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank  
21 you very much.

22 Is Mr. Frishkoff here to  
23 testify?

24 (Witness comes forward.)

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Good

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2 morning.

3 MR. FRISHKOFF: Thank you. Good  
4 morning, Madam Chairwoman and members of  
5 City Council. My name is Andrew  
6 Frishkoff. I'm the Director of  
7 Neighborhood Economic Development for the  
8 City of Philadelphia's Commerce  
9 Department.

10 I'm here today to provide  
11 testimony in support of Bill No. 090128.  
12 This bill will allow for the  
13 reestablishment of the East Passyunk  
14 Avenue Business Improvement District.

15 The creation of business  
16 improvements districts, or BIDs, as they  
17 are commonly known, is consistent with  
18 the Mayor's Philadelphia Plan, especially  
19 with the core-service areas of economic  
20 recovery and job creation and enhancing  
21 public safety.

22 BIDs strengthen commercial areas  
23 and the surrounding neighborhoods through  
24 cleaning, beautification, public safety,  
25 and marketing activities. BIDs are also

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2 consistent with the goals of our ReStore  
3 Philadelphia Corridors Program, designed  
4 to help revitalize neighborhood  
5 commercial corridors. BIDs offer  
6 significant opportunities for  
7 collaboration between the City and our  
8 neighborhood commercial corridors.

9 The East Passyunk BID is one of  
10 eight corridor organizations  
11 participating in the Commerce  
12 Department's Main Street Program. The  
13 BID is also working with Commerce on  
14 facade and streetscape improvements on  
15 East Passyunk Avenue. These activities  
16 improve the environment within which  
17 business owners and their customers live,  
18 shop, and work.

19 In these difficult economic  
20 times, efforts to keep East Passyunk  
21 Avenue competitive are more important than  
22 ever. Given the economic stresses  
23 currently confronting neighborhood  
24 retailers, we urge the BID to maintain  
25 high-quality services at the lowest

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2 possible cost to businesses and property  
3 owners. The Commerce Department is  
4 supportive of the BID's proposed services  
5 as long as they have the backing of the  
6 assessed businesses.

7 Well, I'll be happy, as always,  
8 to answer any questions that you may have.  
9 I would urge you to hear from the business  
10 people and community members who are here  
11 today; they are the experts and they are  
12 the ones who will be able to answer most  
13 of your questions

14 Thank you for your time and  
15 consideration.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
17 you.

18 Mr. Frishkoff, to your  
19 knowledge, and only to your knowledge,  
20 have any of the affected property owners  
21 objected to the continuation of the  
22 District?

23 MR. FRISHKOFF: I have heard  
24 that they have. The Commerce Department,  
25 however, which has an operating agreement

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2 with the BIDs in the City, is not a party  
3 to any of the communications. I think  
4 that there have been communications to  
5 Council concerning both support and  
6 opposition.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Okay.  
8 Paragraph 10 of Exhibit A states that the  
9 District's assessment fee will be 20  
10 percent of the taxes due on any  
11 commercial property within the service  
12 area. Is it the same amount that has  
13 been charged in previous years?

14 MR. FRISHKOFF: The rate, I  
15 believe, is the same, but there is a --

16 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Point of  
17 order, Madam President.

18 MR. FRISHKOFF: Yes, some  
19 clarification.

20 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Point of  
21 order, Madam President.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The  
23 Chair recognizes Councilman DiCicco.

24 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you,  
25 Madam Chair.

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2 I have an amendment that I will  
3 be offering today that will address that  
4 issue in the anticipation that there are  
5 tax increases and/or full value that will  
6 give protections as best we can to the  
7 existing BID and the rate at which  
8 they're paying today.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Great.

10 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So I'll be  
11 offering that amendment.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
13 you.

14 Are there any questions from  
15 members of the committee?

16 The Chair recognizes Councilman  
17 DiCicco.

18 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you,  
19 Madam Chair.

20 Good morning.

21 MR. FRISHKOFF: Good morning.

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Do you have  
23 the number of properties that are  
24 currently in the BID?

25 MR. FRISHKOFF: I don't have

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2 that here, no. I believe it's 300, but I  
3 don't have the -- it's in the ordinance,  
4 which I don't have in front of me.

5 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: All right.  
6 Miss Gillinger may have that, the  
7 executive director, when she comes up.  
8 So if she does, I'll wait for her.

9 (Councilman DiCicco confers off  
10 the record with legislative aide.)

11 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Okay, it's  
12 289. My legislative assistant just  
13 handed me the information. It's 289  
14 properties within the BID, and I just  
15 wanted to bring that to everyone's  
16 attention, to the Councilmembers'  
17 attention, because we'll see, as the  
18 testimony goes on, the number of people  
19 who are actually protesting the  
20 reissuance of the BID.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERA: Thank  
22 you.

23 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Madam Chair,  
24 I have a question.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERA: The

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2 Chair recognizes Councilman Kelly.

3 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you.

4 Mr. Frishkoff, you're from the  
5 City of Philadelphia; is that correct?

6 MR. FRISHKOFF: Yes, that's  
7 correct.

8 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Is there any  
9 members of the board or -- that they're  
10 operating the services right now? Are  
11 they present, or are they going to be  
12 testifying?

13 MR. FRISHKOFF: Yes, they'll --

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: They  
15 will be testifying.

16 MR. FRISHKOFF: Members of the  
17 board and staff who are here.

18 COUNCILMAN KELLY: All right.  
19 Thank you.

20 Then I have no questions, Madam  
21 Chair.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
23 you.

24 Thank you very much,  
25 Mr. Frishkoff, and you will remain?

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2 MR. FRISHKOFF: Yes, I will  
3 remain.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
5 you.

6 I would ask Mr. Erickson to  
7 please call the first witness.

8 MR. ERICKSON: Renée Gillinger.  
9 (Witness comes forward.)

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good  
11 morning.

12 MS. GILLINGER: Good morning.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Please  
14 identify yourself for the record and  
15 proceed with your testimony.

16 MS. GILLINGER: My name is Renée  
17 Gillinger, Executive Director/Main Street  
18 Manager of the Business Improvement  
19 District.

20 Good morning. Okay. Madam  
21 President and members of the committee, I  
22 want to thank you for the opportunity to  
23 offer testimony about the East Passyunk  
24 Avenue Business Improvement District.  
25 I've been the executive director of the

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2 BID since December of 2008.

3 The boundaries of the East  
4 Passyunk Avenue Business Improvement  
5 District run the length of the Avenue,  
6 intersecting streets from Federal to  
7 Broad Street and Broad Street to Mifflin  
8 and from Mifflin to Snyder.

9 Our services fall into three  
10 main categories: Promotions and  
11 marketing, business recruitment and  
12 retention, and beautification of the  
13 Avenue.

14 Previously, our top two budget  
15 items had been marketing and holding  
16 special events to attract new customers  
17 to the Avenue, such as our Flavors of the  
18 Avenue event, which you might have seen  
19 on the news last night, and also our  
20 beautification program.

21 However, the recent termination  
22 of Citizens Alliance services, effective  
23 as of last Friday, has caused us to lose  
24 a significant amount of funds from our  
25 special-events budget to our street-

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2 cleaning program.

3 Previously, the BID's  
4 contribution of street-cleaning was to  
5 employ a part-time worker to sweep the  
6 street and maintain the trashcans on the  
7 Avenue, of which there are about 15 right  
8 now, with the help of court-appointed,  
9 community-service workers, and we do this  
10 three days a week.

11 Citizens Alliance would then  
12 pick up the bagged trash, provide a  
13 garage for storage, manage the community-  
14 service workers, and purchase all  
15 materials for collection, including  
16 carts, trash bags, brooms, and pans.

17 EPA BID is now responsible for  
18 all aspects of street-cleaning on East  
19 Passyunk Avenue, and if you've been down  
20 there in the last couple of days, you  
21 will see the difference.

22 We have identified a garage,  
23 which will be vacated by the end of the  
24 week, and the pickup service -- and we  
25 hope to have all of the new systems in

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2 place by Monday. Given that we collect  
3 approximately 120 bags of trash a week  
4 right now, this is our number-one  
5 priority.

6 As a result, the budget for  
7 other programmatic work will need to be  
8 reevaluated to figure out how to stretch  
9 our funds further. While we are  
10 confident that we will continue most of  
11 our projects, we'll need to scale back on  
12 some things.

13 I believe that there are many  
14 advantages in having the BID, but I never  
15 felt a greater need for it than I do now,  
16 now that the organization will have full  
17 responsibility for maintaining the  
18 cleanliness of the Avenue. Missing one  
19 day on Monday -- to be clear, because we  
20 had no notice about Citizens Alliance  
21 closing on Friday -- it was supposed to  
22 be the end of the month, in April -- we  
23 had no garage to move into this week and  
24 no trash pickup service identified yet.  
25 So we had to give our street-cleaning

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2 service the week off.

3 So coming in to work on Monday  
4 and seeing one day of the effect of that  
5 on the Avenue, I think everybody that's  
6 here will attest, because they would have  
7 been here again this morning, that  
8 there's a huge difference to me.

9 I'm sorry.

10 I will also note that the  
11 advantage of having the Business  
12 Improvement District is the ability to  
13 apply for and receive public funds. The  
14 BID is a member of the Commonwealth's  
15 Main Street Program, which provides  
16 \$50,000 for salary and \$25,000 for  
17 facade-improvement grants each year.

18 We've also been awarded several  
19 grants from the State and City over the  
20 years, bringing in a total of over  
21 \$350,000 to the Avenue, which has been  
22 used for many of our programs, including  
23 lighting, marketing, cleaning, and  
24 beautification.

25 We are constantly looking for

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2 new funding opportunities and have just  
3 submitted a beautification grant on  
4 Friday. If successful, we will be  
5 partnering with the Mural Arts Program on  
6 two more murals for the Avenue and, with  
7 our local civic association, East  
8 Passyunk Crossing, put a community garden  
9 at the empty lot, which is currently  
10 cleaned out by Citizens Alliance, at East  
11 Passyunk and Morris Avenue. It's the  
12 center of the length of the Avenue. And  
13 a green space is something that our  
14 design committee and our board has been  
15 striving for for a very long time.

16 The BID also spends a fair  
17 amount of resources on advertising, but  
18 this is one of the areas of our budget  
19 most at risk for elimination and  
20 reduction when our potential assessment  
21 income is not met. It is our hope that  
22 in the future, we will be able to implement  
23 more long-term and far-reaching marketing  
24 campaigns.

25 In addition to these larger

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2 projects to keep our avenue vibrant and  
3 clean, I spend part of every day helping  
4 the merchants and property owners with  
5 anything I am able to. In the past few  
6 months, I have:

7 Photographed a building for a  
8 zoning hearing;

9 Found a tenant for a rental  
10 property, working with several potential  
11 new store owners;

12 Attended a meeting with a  
13 merchant for possible funding for  
14 renovations for their store;

15 And have publicized openings and  
16 special events at the various businesses  
17 along the Avenue.

18 I also just started a new  
19 monthly LGBT -- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,  
20 Transgender -- social event, which, the  
21 first month, brought out 180 people to a  
22 restaurant, and last night, brought out  
23 over 150 people on a Tuesday night to a  
24 restaurant that typically serves only  
25 about 20 people on this particular

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2 evening. Many of these folks had never  
3 been in the neighborhood before.

4 None of this in my job  
5 description, none of this is in anything  
6 that I have to do as the manager of the  
7 BID, but I enjoy my work and I like to  
8 help folks as much as I can and try to  
9 find new ways to bring vibrancy and  
10 people to the Avenue.

11 We also maintain a website with  
12 a business directory, an e-mail list of  
13 close to a thousand merchants and  
14 shoppers, a newsletter for the merchants,  
15 which I produce every other month now,  
16 and flyers about issues of importance to  
17 the Avenue, which I probably distribute  
18 about once a month, given whatever the  
19 need is.

20 All of this -- special events,  
21 advertisements, the website, monthly  
22 nights out, facade-improvement grants,  
23 and street-cleaning would not take place  
24 without the East Passyunk Avenue Business  
25 Improvement District. It is my sincere

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2 hope that the property owners and City  
3 Council realize the importance of this  
4 organization and see that it is renewed.

5 Thank you for your time.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
7 you.

8 Are there any questions or  
9 comments from members of the committee?

10 The Chair recognizes Councilman  
11 Kelly.

12 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you,  
13 Madam Chair.

14 Miss Gillinger, what I just want  
15 to know is: How many board members do  
16 you have?

17 MS. GILLINGER: We currently  
18 have nine because we just had a  
19 resignation.

20 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Are they the  
21 ones that make the decisions on --

22 MS. GILLINGER: Yes.

23 COUNCILMAN KELLY: -- what goes  
24 on?

25 MS. GILLINGER: Yes. And we

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2 also have four working committees that  
3 meet monthly. So programmatically, it's  
4 broken down into design, beautification,  
5 promotions, economic development, and  
6 organizational structure and management.

7 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Are any  
8 business people on the board presently --

9 MS. GILLINGER: Yes, there are.

10 COUNCILMAN KELLY: -- that are  
11 paying the --

12 MS. GILLINGER: Yes.

13 COUNCILMAN KELLY: -- paying the  
14 assessed --

15 MS. GILLINGER: We have one,  
16 two, three... I think we have three  
17 property owners, three merchants -- two  
18 merchants maybe who, you know, are rental  
19 merchants. I'm sorry. I just need to  
20 think about this for a second.

21 So, yes. So we have a property  
22 owner who's also a merchant, another  
23 property owner who's also a merchant, a  
24 merchant, a merchant, Councilman DiCicco  
25 has a representative on the board,

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2 Councilman Kenney has a representative on  
3 the board. And Christian DiCicco is on  
4 our board as the head of Citizens  
5 Alliance; I don't know if that will  
6 change or not.

7 Yeah, that's everybody.

8 COUNCILMAN KELLY: It doesn't  
9 matter who.

10 You mentioned about the -- how  
11 much of the funding goes into street-  
12 cleaning?

13 MS. GILLINGER: Well, right --  
14 currently --

15 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Percentage-  
16 wise.

17 MS. GILLINGER: Currently, we  
18 spend about \$55,000 a year on the  
19 street-cleaning, and a little bit of  
20 money -- a little bit of that is --

21 COUNCILMAN KELLY: What is your  
22 budget per year; do you know?

23 MS. GILLINGER: Our potential  
24 budget is \$320,000 for the year, but  
25 that's assuming that everybody actually

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2 would pay their assessments.

3 Right now, what I operate on  
4 is -- I think I just passed it forward --  
5 \$230,000 for this year, is what I  
6 actually anticipate to collect from  
7 assessments. So that's what I -- that's  
8 for the --

9 COUNCILMAN KELLY: And that's  
10 lower than previous years; is that right?

11 MS. GILLINGER: No. That's  
12 average.

13 COUNCILMAN KELLY: It's about  
14 average?

15 MS. GILLINGER: Yeah, it's about  
16 average, yeah.

17 I mean, there's a -- I think  
18 everyone knows there's a lot less grant  
19 money out there right now.

20 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Right.

21 MS. GILLINGER: So, you know,  
22 we're really only receiving one grant  
23 from Main Street, and the rest of it is  
24 assessment money.

25 COUNCILMAN KELLY: So will you

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2 be taking money that -- I guess you'll be  
3 appropriating more money for street-  
4 cleaning since --

5 MS. GILLINGER: Yes.

6 COUNCILMAN KELLY: -- Citizens  
7 Alliance will no longer be providing that  
8 service.

9 MS. GILLINGER: Yeah. The  
10 budget for street-cleaning will increase  
11 by about \$20,000 because of the need of  
12 trash pickup. I'm trying to negotiate  
13 that to be a little lower.

14 And then also, there's the need  
15 for more special-project days. Like we  
16 did a street-cleaning on Saturday for the  
17 Mayor's cleanup program and --

18 COUNCILMAN KELLY: What other  
19 activities do you --

20 MS. GILLINGER: I'm sorry?

21 COUNCILMAN KELLY: What other  
22 activities do you plan to invest in?

23 MS. GILLINGER: Do I plan to...?

24 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Plan to  
25 invest in as far as supporting --

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2 MS. GILLINGER: Another one of  
3 our -- like I said, our big component is  
4 our special-events program. Now, we did  
5 just cancel Flavors of the Avenue because  
6 that event costs about \$20,000 to produce  
7 'cause there's a -- the rental fees for  
8 it alone are at least \$10,000.

9 But we have other events that we  
10 are going to maintain. We just did an  
11 Easter egg hunt last -- two weeks ago,  
12 which brought out over 200 families to  
13 the Avenue; that event only cost about  
14 \$2400 to produce. And most of the cost  
15 is because of advertising and printing  
16 and banners and all that.

17 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Do you  
18 receive any funding other than the  
19 property-tax assessment?

20 MS. GILLINGER: We receive money  
21 from the Main Street Program. As a  
22 member of the Main Street Program, we  
23 receive \$50,000 for salary and \$25,000  
24 for facade-improvement grants. And that  
25 money is sort of a pass-through. It's in

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2 our budget, but there's a pass -- it's  
3 pass-through money.

4 So merchants apply for facade  
5 improvement, which is up to \$5,000 for an  
6 individual to \$10,000 for a corner --

7 COUNCILMAN KELLY: And where is  
8 that money coming from?

9 MS. GILLINGER: That money  
10 comes -- it actually comes through the  
11 Commerce Department.

12 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Through the  
13 Commerce Department?

14 MS. GILLINGER: Yes.

15 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Oh, okay. So  
16 that's a grant, in other words?

17 MS. GILLINGER: That's a grant,  
18 yes.

19 COUNCILMAN KELLY: And that's --

20 MS. GILLINGER: Absolutely.

21 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Okay. And  
22 that pays for some of your overhead?

23 MS. GILLINGER: Yeah -- well,  
24 it's 50,000 for salary, and 25,000 goes  
25 directly to the stores for facade

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2 improvements. They submit an invoice, we  
3 submit an invoice, we get the check, we  
4 give them the check.

5 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Mm-hmm.

6 MS. GILLINGER: It's not money  
7 that we can spend in any other way,  
8 shape, or form.

9 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Okay, all  
10 right. Thank you.

11 Thank you, Madam President.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank  
13 you.

14 Are there any other questions or  
15 comments from members of the committee?

16 (No further questions or comments  
17 from committee members.)

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna:  
19 Hearing none, thank you.

20 MS. GILLINGER: Thank you.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: I  
22 would ask Mr. Erickson to please call up  
23 our next witness.

24 MR. ERICKSON: Cathy Lee.

25 (Witnesses come forward.)

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good  
3 morning.

4 MR. CRATIL: Good morning.

5 MS. LEE: Good morning.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Please  
7 identify yourself for the record.

8 MS. LEE: Good morning. We are  
9 here. This is my husband, Francis  
10 Cratil. We opened our restaurant on the  
11 1900 block of East Passyunk Avenue  
12 about -- it's going on 18 months.

13 MR. CRATIL: It's called  
14 Le Virtù.

15 MS. LEE: Yes. I would actually  
16 like to --

17 MR. CRATIL: Well, they just  
18 wanted us to identify ourselves.

19 MS. LEE: Yes.

20 MR. CRATIL: You just wanted us  
21 to identify ourselves at this point,  
22 right?

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes,  
24 please.

25 MR. CRATIL: So we're the owners

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2 of Le Virtù, at 1927 East Passyunk  
3 Avenue.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Please  
5 proceed with your testimony.

6 MR. CRATIL: Well, I have to say  
7 that without the BID, our business  
8 wouldn't exist. The only reason we had  
9 any confidence in investing in the high  
10 six figures to buy two properties and  
11 erect an entire building on East Passyunk  
12 Avenue was the sense of direction and  
13 purpose that the BID provided and that we  
14 could see the improvements in facades and  
15 the fact that someone was taking care of  
16 cleaning up on the Avenue and the events  
17 that the BID was having.

18 And we also live in that  
19 neighborhood, so we saw for years a  
20 general improvement and a -- I want to  
21 say a forward momentum. Things were  
22 looking up in a lot of ways. A lot of  
23 businesses that we really admired were  
24 opening up, and when we talked to them,  
25 they all spoke very highly of the BID.

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2 And in our meetings with the  
3 BID, the BID helped us, and it was  
4 invaluable in publicizing the opening of  
5 our place. Because we had delays due to  
6 zoning and delays due to -- we imported  
7 our chef from Italy, and we had delays  
8 with the federal government.

9 The BID kept word of our  
10 business alive and to the events like  
11 Flavors of the Avenue before we opened.  
12 We actually probably earned hundreds, if  
13 not thousands, of customers just from the  
14 stand we put up and the food that we  
15 produced for those kinds of events.

16 I shudder to think, you know,  
17 with all of the delays and all of the  
18 problems that we had, what kind of a  
19 situation we would have been in when we  
20 finally opened our business if not for  
21 the BID.

22 And now I just don't want to  
23 think about Passyunk Avenue without the  
24 cleaning services that the BID is going  
25 to have to provide, because, the previous

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2 speaker is absolutely correct: In just  
3 one day, you see the trash accumulate,  
4 and trash just seems to come out of  
5 nowhere.

6 But we have profited from almost  
7 all of the events, even up at the  
8 fountain, the market that was up for a  
9 while. I mean, when the BID would ask us  
10 to open for these events or to do  
11 something, we always received a response  
12 because people were walking up and down  
13 the Avenue because they came to an event,  
14 and we would do something to make them --  
15 you know, to present ourselves to make  
16 them come in. And because we are open, I  
17 think, to what the BID was asking us to  
18 do, we profited from it, I think,  
19 enormously.

20 And we've had a bunch of events  
21 since then like little pub crawls that  
22 have brought in customers that probably  
23 would have never come through the doors  
24 of our restaurant if not for the BID and  
25 its efforts.

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank  
3 you.

4 Any questions or comments from  
5 members of the committee?

6 The Chair recognizes Councilman  
7 DiCicco.

8 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you,  
9 Madam President.

10 Good morning and thank you for  
11 taking the time out of your busy schedule  
12 to be here this morning.

13 Francis, you mentioned that you  
14 reside in the neighborhood. How long  
15 have you lived in that community?

16 MR. CRATIL: I've lived in the  
17 neighborhood since 1996.

18 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And  
19 where do you -- do you live in proximity  
20 to the Avenue?

21 MR. CRATIL: Yes. We live on  
22 13th, between Tasker and Morris, so a  
23 block.

24 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: A block, a  
25 block or so off the Avenue.

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2 MR. CRATIL: Yeah.

3 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And the  
4 reason I ask you that is, as a resident  
5 for over a decade now, could you just  
6 speak to what the conditions were ten  
7 years ago on the Avenue and as it relates  
8 to how the Avenue is operating and the  
9 appearance of the Avenue today.

10 MR. CRATIL: Well, there was  
11 much less that we could do when we first  
12 moved here. Cathy worked at the Art  
13 Museum, I was busy during the day. A lot  
14 of businesses were not open, hours were  
15 sporadic. It was very difficult for us  
16 to -- Cathy never was able to shop on the  
17 Avenue due to -- somewhat due to hours.

18 But also, there were a lot of, I  
19 think, properties in decay that are now  
20 viable businesses that were attracted by  
21 the BID. I mean, there are a lot of  
22 businesses now that we frequent that  
23 didn't exist when we came to that  
24 neighborhood.

25 But it's beyond just Passyunk

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2 Avenue. A lot of our current neighbors,  
3 a lot of people who were attracted by the  
4 businesses that have opened since we  
5 moved to the neighborhood, probably a lot  
6 because of the BID, because we know all  
7 the -- a lot of these owners who have  
8 opened up businesses. And we have  
9 neighbors now who basically will come  
10 down, walk around the neighborhood, and  
11 get a very good feel for what was going  
12 on on East Passyunk Avenue and invest  
13 then in a house in our neighborhood.

14 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: You're  
15 speaking of residents?

16 MR. CRATIL: Residents.

17 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So the BID  
18 has actually had a twofold benefit.

19 MR. CRATIL: Oh, it has, without  
20 a doubt. I mean, and people -- there's  
21 also people, longtime residents in our  
22 neighborhood, who've completely redid  
23 their facades, redid their houses just  
24 out of a sense of optimism.

25 Because when we first moved to

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2 13th and Tasker, we had -- actually, the  
3 guy we bought our house from and people  
4 said, "You got here too late. It's  
5 over." Well, it wasn't over. In fact,  
6 it's been -- it's just been getting  
7 better and better every year we've been  
8 there.

9 And I don't think that it's  
10 possible to separate that from the  
11 activities of the BID.

12 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And that's  
13 important.

14 I just -- and I'm familiar with  
15 your restaurant; I go there, as you know,  
16 frequently. The building that you  
17 occupy, was that vacant, a vacant  
18 building?

19 MR. CRATIL: It was vacant.

20 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And next  
21 door -- I'm not sure -- my colleagues may  
22 not have been down there so I'm trying to  
23 give them a sense of what's going on, on  
24 the 1900 block at least.

25 And the building you operate now

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2 as a restaurant was once a vacant  
3 building.

4 MR. CRATIL: Yes.

5 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And you  
6 also have access to a green lawn type of  
7 space, property --

8 MR. CRATIL: Yes.

9 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- that was  
10 also the site of a vacant building that  
11 had been demolished?

12 MR. CRATIL: But the building we  
13 bought was vacant. Next to it was an  
14 abandoned property that had been  
15 demolished; there was nothing there but a  
16 muddy field. And then next to that is  
17 what is currently the large garden  
18 expanse.

19 And we erected a building on  
20 that. We remodeled the building we  
21 bought and we erected a building on what  
22 was the vacant property.

23 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

24 And let's just go back to your  
25 private residence, and I'm not asking for

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2 exact numbers, but what you paid for your  
3 house when you bought it in '97, would  
4 you agree that you've seen a significant  
5 increase --

6 MR. CRATIL: Fivefold.

7 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- in the  
8 value of your property?

9 MR. CRATIL: Fivefold.

10 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And do you  
11 think that the increase in your property  
12 value, aside from the fact that the  
13 economy was good up until we went in the  
14 tank recently, do you think that any of  
15 that is attributable to the BID and how  
16 the BID has made improvements to the East  
17 Passyunk Avenue corridor?

18 MR. CRATIL: I think a great  
19 deal of it is attributable to the BID,  
20 yes.

21 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.  
22 Thank you.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Any  
24 other questions or comments?

25 The Chair recognizes Councilman

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2 Kelly.

3 COUNCILMAN KELLY: I just had a  
4 question. You're currently paying the  
5 assessment for the services now?

6 MR. CRATIL: Yes.

7 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Would you  
8 have any objections if that fee was to be  
9 increased?

10 MR. CRATIL: No.

11 MS. LEE: No.

12 COUNCILMAN KELLY: You wouldn't  
13 have any objections to that.

14 MR. CRATIL: No. For the amount  
15 we've paid, what we've gotten back is --

16 COUNCILMAN KELLY: I know  
17 Councilman DiCicco mentioned something  
18 about amendments.

19 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Yeah. I --

20 COUNCILMAN KELLY: But we're  
21 speaking about now how there could be a  
22 property-tax increase. There could be;  
23 I'm not saying there will be, but based  
24 upon that --

25 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Point of

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2 order, if I can.

3 The amendment will adjust that  
4 so that there's not any significant  
5 increase.

6 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Okay.

7 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I think it  
8 will probably stay the same, but if there  
9 is an adjustment, it would be minimal at  
10 best.

11 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Okay. So you  
12 will adjust it in case there is.

13 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: That's what  
14 the amendment addresses.

15 COUNCILMAN KELLY: All right.  
16 Thank you.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
18 you.

19 Thank you very much.

20 MR. CRATIL: You're welcome.

21 MS. LEE: Thank you.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Our  
23 next witness, Mr. Erickson?

24 MR. ERICKSON: Michael Clausten.

25 (No response.)

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Call  
3 the name again, please.

4 MR. ERICKSON: Michael Clausten.

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Is  
7 Michael Clausten here?

8 MS. GILLINGER: I don't think  
9 he's here.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: I beg  
11 your pardon?

12 MS. GILLINGER: I don't think  
13 he's here.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: All  
15 right, fine. Then let's go to the next  
16 witness.

17 MR. ERICKSON: Walter Lucidi.

18 (Witness comes forward.)

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Good  
20 morning.

21 MR. LUCIDI: Good morning. I  
22 came here today to talk about --

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: I'm  
24 sorry. Please identify yourself for the  
25 record.

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2 MR. LUCIDI: I'm sorry. I  
3 forgot to identify myself. My name is  
4 Walter Lucidi. I have a store on  
5 Passyunk Avenue, and I also am employed  
6 by the City Department, at the Department  
7 of Human Services, so I'm not at my store  
8 every day; my store is only open part-  
9 time.

10 But, anyhow, I came here today  
11 because I heard that the Citizens  
12 Alliance is being shut down as of April  
13 30th and that we're no longer going to  
14 have street-cleaning. You know, to me  
15 street-cleaning is very important  
16 because, you know, I live on the Avenue  
17 and also have my business there.

18 So when everybody goes home on  
19 Saturdays and Sundays, I'm stuck picking  
20 up the trash and cleaning the streets.  
21 Anybody who knows me sees me out there  
22 every day with the broom, the mop, the  
23 hose, and everything else.

24 I saw Councilman Curtis Jones  
25 come in here a few minutes ago. You

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2 know, when Mr. Jones was in charge of the  
3 PCDC, I used to go up there because I  
4 used to run the association. I used to  
5 go up there and beg and borrow to try to  
6 get some services for our district. And  
7 Mr. Jones used to say to me you, you  
8 know, "You guys are on standby because  
9 you have a great corridor." You know,  
10 "You don't need any help from us."

11 Then I used to go to Front and  
12 Spring Garden and talk to Mr. Rocky  
13 Nelson to get the street cleaned, and we  
14 always got services. Then, all of a  
15 sudden, everything stopped, and the  
16 street became a pig pen.

17 So then this BID came along.  
18 And, at first, you know, I didn't see  
19 much improvement. Then they hired this  
20 guy Rocky, and the guy's out there three,  
21 four times a week cleaning the streets.  
22 Now I heard that they hired a Gold Medal  
23 Company to pick up the trash, and this  
24 guy Rocky still wants to continue to  
25 clean the street.

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2 So I came here today basically  
3 to talk about the street-cleaning. You  
4 know, for me, it's a pet peeve, whatever  
5 you call it. You know, it's important to  
6 me.

7 So Councilman...

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Kelly.

9 MR. LUCIDI: Mentioned something  
10 about \$50,000 or \$55,000. I don't know  
11 the figures. I don't know, you know, how  
12 much of the BID money goes here or there;  
13 I don't know.

14 All's I know is, today, before I  
15 came here, I did the math: I pay about  
16 275 a year. And to me, it comes out to  
17 about \$1.75 a day to pay this guy to  
18 clean my street. And to me, it's worth  
19 it, you know, to have the streets  
20 cleaned.

21 So that's what I'm here to  
22 testify to. I like the street-cleaning.  
23 You know, I think it's important as a  
24 resident and as a merchant on Passyunk  
25 Avenue, and I want it to continue.

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank  
3 you very much.

4 Any questions or comments from  
5 members of the committee?

6 (No questions or comments from  
7 committee members.)

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank  
9 you again.

10 MR. Lucidi: You're welcome.  
11 Thank you.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Our  
13 next witness?

14 MR. Erickson: Anthony Maugeri.  
15 (Witness comes forward.)

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Good  
17 morning.

18 MR. MAUGERI: Good morning,  
19 Council. My name is Anthony Maugeri. I  
20 own a store called Today's Styles. I  
21 also am a BID director.

22 I've been on Passyunk Avenue for  
23 almost 30 years now, as a store- and  
24 property-owner; I also own the property  
25 there. I used to own two properties

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2 there with another retailer, which I had  
3 closed down just recently.

4 The BID -- I seen Passyunk go  
5 from, in its heyday, when it was as busy  
6 as anything, to it going down. And in my  
7 view, we're back, starting to come back  
8 again.

9 And the BID has kept the streets  
10 clean, which is so important to retail.  
11 It has helped us project. People have  
12 talked that there's a buzz about the  
13 street. Retailers want to come here,  
14 people are looking at the street.  
15 Businesses are coming there, and fronts  
16 are being repaired. There's activity  
17 there.

18 And I think the BID has served a  
19 decent function in the last couple of  
20 years. We have put up lighting on the  
21 street, which are beautiful; people have  
22 complimented the lighting that we have  
23 put up there. So we do serve a function.

24 I understand that people are  
25 upset because we tax them. And at this

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2 time, anything that says taxes is not a  
3 favorable thing with people today. But I  
4 think for the amount of money that it  
5 comes to, it's so minimal that if we  
6 could get past that and realize how small  
7 of amount of money that is, that it's  
8 very beneficial to the street itself.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank  
10 you very much.

11 Any questions or comments from  
12 members of the committee?

13 (No questions or comments from  
14 committee members.)

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank  
16 you again.

17 Mr. Maugeri: Thank you.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Our  
19 next witness?

20 Mr. Erickson: Anthony Criniti.

21 (Witness comes forward.)

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Good  
23 morning.

24 Mr. Criniti: Good morning. My  
25 name is Anthony Criniti. I own a real

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2 estate on Passyunk Avenue as well as  
3 several properties on the Avenue, and  
4 I've been an investor and an owner since  
5 1984.

6 I'm here to say that I'm happy  
7 with the job that the BID has done. I've  
8 received money through the BID for facade  
9 programs on several of my properties.

10 And the streets are well-  
11 maintained. For a small amount of money,  
12 for a little over a dollar a day, I can't  
13 see what the problem is.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank  
15 you.

16 Are there any questions or  
17 comments?

18 Councilman DiCicco.

19 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you,  
20 Madam President.

21 Thank you also for being here  
22 today.

23 As a Realtor -- you heard my  
24 questions to Francis and Cathy earlier --  
25 do you see the benefit of the BID as it

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2 relates not only to individual businesses  
3 but to the corridor and the adjacent  
4 community?

5 MR. CRINITI: Oh, absolutely.

6 In '99, there was 14 properties on the  
7 Avenue for sale; everybody was leaving.  
8 Since the BID came about in, I'd say, in  
9 early 2000 or whenever, somewhere's in  
10 that area, they took these vacant  
11 properties, they renovated them, they  
12 created services for the Avenue, and they  
13 issued these facade programs. I mean, I  
14 took advantage of 'em; I don't know how  
15 many other people did, but I took  
16 advantage of it.

17 And I think it's made a big  
18 improvement. It brought in a new  
19 generation to an almost-dead corridor.  
20 You know, ten years ago, there was no  
21 young people on the Avenue, there was no  
22 interest in being there. The stores were  
23 closing and the people were leaving.

24 It could have been another  
25 Seventh Street, you know. And you know,

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2 you've been around long enough to know.

3 Seventh Street, back in the old days, was  
4 thriving. Forget it, it's been deserted  
5 for 40 years now.

6 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And how  
7 many properties you said were vacant at  
8 one time?

9 MR. CRINITI: Fourteen.

10 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Fourteen  
11 were vacant?

12 MR. CRINITI: Fourteen.

13 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Okay.  
14 Those are -- but they have all -- most of  
15 those properties, correct me if I'm  
16 wrong, have been purchased.

17 MR. CRINITI: Yes.

18 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Under the  
19 CA Holdings?

20 MR. CRINITI: Yes.

21 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And they  
22 have been renovated or are under --

23 MR. CRINITI: They've been  
24 renovated or are under renovation right  
25 now.

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2 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

3 And they'll be made available to  
4 entrepreneurs or whoever, correct?

5 MR. CRINITI: Yes.

6 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.  
7 Thank you.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
9 you.

10 MR. CRINITI: You're welcome.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Our  
12 next witness.

13 MR. ERICKSON: Rose Maria Gallo.

14 (Witness comes forward.)

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good  
16 morning.

17 MS. GALLO: Good morning. My  
18 name is Rosemary Gallo. I own and  
19 operate Alphabet Academy Child Care  
20 Centers, which now occupy four buildings  
21 located within the East Passyunk Avenue  
22 Business Improvement District.

23 I opened the first center in  
24 1998 on the 1500 block of East Passyunk  
25 Avenue. At that time, only two other

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2 storefronts were occupied by businesses;  
3 all the other storefronts were empty and  
4 in disrepair. It was dark, dirty, and  
5 seemed disconnected from the rest of the  
6 Passyunk Avenue corridor.

7 Today, every storefront is  
8 occupied. There are now nine additional  
9 businesses on my block, and the street is  
10 bright, active, and very clean. In my  
11 opinion, the Business Improvement  
12 District has played a vital role in the  
13 revitalization of my block and the entire  
14 business district.

15 Before the formation of the BID,  
16 the streets and sidewalks surrounding our  
17 daycare were full of trash. My staff and  
18 I swept every day in vain; it was  
19 impossible for us to keep up with the  
20 trash.

21 Thanks to the BID and the  
22 monumental assistance of Citizens  
23 Alliance for Better Neighborhoods, our  
24 streets and sidewalks are clean and  
25 pedestrian-friendly. Now it's my

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2 understanding that Citizens Alliance will  
3 no longer be providing the street-  
4 cleaning and trash removal; therefore, I  
5 think Passyunk Avenue needs the BID more  
6 than ever before.

7 It will be a huge challenge to  
8 keep our streets clean without Citizens  
9 Alliance, but I'm confident that the BID  
10 will work diligently to find an  
11 alternative solution. Without the BID,  
12 I'm equally confident that the streets  
13 are going to look like they did back in  
14 1998.

15 On the 1500 block alone, the BID  
16 and its dedicated board of directors have  
17 helped attract a BYOB restaurant, we have  
18 two coffee shops now, a gastro pub, and a  
19 day spa; and that's just on my block.  
20 Surrounding the fountain located at the  
21 intersection of 11th Street and Passyunk  
22 Avenue, we have a thriving farmers market  
23 annually, a local hardware store, two  
24 Italian BYOB restaurants, and an  
25 acclaimed sushi restaurant.

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2 Additionally, Sweat Gym has made  
3 a major capital investment on our block,  
4 and the BID was instrumental in helping  
5 the owners navigate through the  
6 Philadelphia zoning hurdles that they  
7 encounter.

8 I've been a volunteer at almost  
9 every event hosted by the BID, and I can  
10 attest to the fact that those events have  
11 brought hundreds of new faces to Passyunk  
12 Avenue.

13 Sorry.

14 My husband and I are lifelong  
15 residents of East Passyunk Avenue, and  
16 we've raised our two daughters here. We  
17 are committed to the success and  
18 continued improvement of our  
19 neighborhood. In 2004, we renovated and  
20 moved into the upper floors of our  
21 property located at 1510 East Passyunk  
22 Avenue. So I not only speak as a  
23 property owner and a business owner, but  
24 I'm also a resident as well.

25 My friends and neighbors at

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2 Today's Nails -- their business is at  
3 1504 East Passyunk Avenue -- have also  
4 renovated their property and moved into  
5 the residence above their business.  
6 Together, we have seen our property  
7 values increase, and they have remained  
8 stable despite the economic crisis  
9 plaguing the City.

10 In conclusion, I would like to  
11 see the Passyunk Avenue Business  
12 Improvement District continue its  
13 mission. In these difficult economic  
14 times, many businesses are struggling.  
15 Personally, we've recently lost clients  
16 because the parents are losing their  
17 jobs.

18 However, I do feel that the four  
19 assessments that I pay are part of the  
20 businesses' advertising and maintenance  
21 budgets; that's the way we consider it.  
22 It's imperative for us, as business  
23 owners, to have an organized business  
24 district to promote shopping, provide us  
25 free advertising on their website, and

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2 mainly to keep the streets clean and safe  
3 and consumer-friendly.

4 Thank you.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
6 you.

7 Any questions or comments from  
8 members of the committee?

9 (No questions or comments from  
10 committee members.)

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Again,  
12 I thank you.

13 Our next witness?

14 MR. ERICKSON: Lynn Rinaldi.

15 (Witness comes forward.)

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good  
17 morning and welcome. Please identify  
18 yourself for the record.

19 MS. RINALDI: My name is Lynn  
20 Rinaldi. I own two restaurants along  
21 East Passyunk Avenue: Paradiso, which I  
22 opened in November of 2004, and we just  
23 recently opened a Japanese restaurant on  
24 1601 East Passyunk Avenue.

25 When I started looking for

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2 property along the Avenue, I seen a lot  
3 of potential. I mean, it was 2003; there  
4 wasn't too much going on, there was still  
5 a lot of vacant properties.

6 But when I started to do a  
7 little bit of investigating, I found out  
8 that there was -- it was a Business  
9 Improvement District. And I have to say  
10 that's what attracted me to leasing and  
11 then purchasing my property, my first  
12 restaurant.

13 And for the amount of money that  
14 gets paid, I think all of the businesses  
15 and the community as a whole sees the  
16 benefit of the BID. And if I did not  
17 have confidence that the BID would  
18 proceed to make the Avenue grow, I would  
19 have never invested in a second  
20 restaurant.

21 So I just hope to see that the  
22 BID exists in the future.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERA: Thank  
24 you.

25 The Chair recognizes Councilman

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2 Kenney.

3 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you,  
4 Madam Chair.

5 Could you tell me what was in  
6 your -- in Paradiso restaurant prior to  
7 it being Paradiso?

8 MS. RINALDI: It was a vacant  
9 furniture store. I believe it was vacant  
10 for approximately five years.

11 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And when you  
12 opened your Izumi, the sushi restaurant,  
13 on the corner, what was in there?

14 MS. RINALDI: When I was  
15 younger, it was a dry cleaners, and then  
16 I believe it was an office.

17 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: What was it  
18 at the time you moved in?

19 MS. RINALDI: It was vacant.

20 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Okay, thank  
21 you.

22 MS. RINALDI: It was vacant.

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
25 you.

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2 Any other questions or comments?

3 (No questions or comments from  
4 committee members.)

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
6 you again.

7 MS. RINALDI: Thank you.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Our  
9 next witness?

10 MR. ERICKSON: Ken Brownell.

11 (Witness comes forward.)

12 MR. BROWNELL: Good morning. My  
13 name is Ken Brownell, and my business  
14 address is 1235-37 East Passyunk Avenue.  
15 Our family purchased that property last  
16 spring. And in July, my son opened it up  
17 for business as the South Philly Bar &  
18 Grill.

19 Our business plan provided for  
20 adequate working capital for a slow first  
21 year, but we could never have anticipated  
22 the devastating effects that the  
23 recession would have on our business  
24 operation. And, quite frankly, in these  
25 difficult times, we're struggling to

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2 survive.

3 During our first ten months of  
4 operation, we never received any  
5 information from the BID organization --  
6 no welcome packet, no letters, no  
7 information about the organization, which  
8 might help us understand what the BID  
9 organization was, how much it would cost,  
10 and how it would help improve our  
11 business area.

12 However, in March of this year,  
13 I received a tax bill from BID for \$2975.  
14 We are struggling to survive, and this  
15 assessment is significant. Given the  
16 deepening recession and the devastating  
17 toll it has already taken on the local  
18 business community, it would seem prudent  
19 that City Council would make every effort  
20 to protect small businesses from  
21 discretionary and/or expiring tax  
22 assessment programs.

23 Speaking for myself, I could  
24 really use the money to help keep our  
25 business afloat and help maintain our

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2 staff of employees and keep them  
3 gainfully employed. It is timely  
4 unfortunate that the BID District is up  
5 for renewal during this time of economic  
6 crisis.

7 And I'm grateful that I have the  
8 opportunity to voice my opinion. Thank  
9 you.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank  
11 you.

12 Councilman DiCicco.

13 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you,  
14 Madam President.

15 Good morning.

16 MR. BROWNELL: Good morning.

17 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm sorry.  
18 I didn't get your last name.

19 MR. BROWNELL: Brownell,  
20 B-R-O-W-N-E-L-L.

21 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Brownell.  
22 Thank you. Thank you for coming.

23 Your restaurant, is that the one  
24 that sits between Pat's and Geno's?

25 MR. BROWNELL: That's correct.

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2 Yes, sir.

3 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: It was -- I  
4 can't remember the prior name.

5 MR. BROWNELL: Anastasi's.

6 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Yeah,  
7 Anastasi's. Thank you. And they went  
8 out of business.

9 MR. BROWNELL: That's correct.

10 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And your  
11 family bought that at the auction?

12 MR. BROWNELL: That is correct.

13 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: At the  
14 auction, all right. I just wanted to  
15 make sure I was clear on that.

16 Did you say your tax assessment  
17 for the BID was \$2900?

18 MR. BROWNELL: \$2975.

19 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And I  
20 understand that business is bad, but I  
21 remember when Anastasi's was there -- and  
22 Anastasi had a popular name, if you will,  
23 'cause they own a restaurant a couple  
24 blocks north, and they were not able to  
25 succeed, and I hope you do succeed.

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2 MR. BROWNELL: Thank you.

3 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: The last  
4 thing we want to see is any more  
5 businesses fail.

6 But I think there's obviously a  
7 communication issue here. I don't know  
8 your family, no one contacted me -- not  
9 that they needed to -- as the Council  
10 representative for your community. I  
11 just think that it's an issue that you  
12 may want to talk to Renée Gillinger  
13 about, who's the executive director.

14 I think because when the change  
15 of ownership and the building had been  
16 vacant for a couple of years, there had  
17 been the auction, and there was a lag  
18 time from the time the auction was  
19 completed to the time you guys opened.  
20 So I think it kind of fell through the  
21 cracks.

22 And Renée has really only been  
23 there since December. So I think after  
24 this hearing, you may want to talk to  
25 Renée, if you haven't already done so.

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2 And we'll work on that communication  
3 problem if there's still -- you know, I  
4 don't think you'll have that, going  
5 forward.

6 But I would also like to point  
7 out that -- and I think you've heard some  
8 of the folks who are in favor of the  
9 BID -- obviously, you've been here for  
10 the hearing -- talk about the positives  
11 of this.

12 I can talk to that property when  
13 Pat's Steaks owned that probably 40, 50  
14 years ago, and I believe they had an ice  
15 cream parlor there. I think that the  
16 activity there not only that's generated  
17 from Pat's and Geno's, but there's a lot  
18 more activity on Passyunk Avenue from as  
19 far north as Bainbridge Street now  
20 extending as far south as McKean.

21 And a lot of it has to do with  
22 the BID, in my opinion. And I think  
23 you'll see a lot more younger faces and  
24 different folks who are not permanent  
25 residents of that community patronizing

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2 businesses.

3 And I think -- and I could be  
4 wrong -- that you may, your business may  
5 be, the benefactor of some of that new  
6 increase in clientele. I have not have  
7 been in your place since Anastasi was  
8 there, so I can't speak from personal  
9 experience, but I have to believe that  
10 you are getting some of that business.

11 And if you work out the  
12 communications issue -- as Renée said,  
13 they did a special night last night -- I  
14 think you could be part of that program.  
15 Your business could be part of that  
16 program, going forward.

17 MR. BROWNELL: Again, you know,  
18 we -- during our first night -- during  
19 our ten months of operation, we  
20 anticipated that it was going to be a  
21 startup and that we were going to need  
22 extra capital to help make it work. You  
23 know, the recession hit us very strongly  
24 in maybe September or October.

25 But during our initial phase of

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2 operation, I mean, they know the name --  
3 you know, the BID organization has to  
4 have information about us, know that the  
5 property was sold, and communicate with  
6 us.

7 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Well,  
8 again, I --

9 MR. BROWNELL: Again, that  
10 didn't happen, other than --

11 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And I'm not  
12 trying to make excuses. I mean,  
13 obviously, there's a communication  
14 problem, and I'm recognizing that. And I  
15 think that we -- going forward, I think  
16 that you could benefit by having those  
17 conversations with the new executive  
18 director, Renée.

19 MR. BROWNELL: Thank you.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The  
21 Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney.

22 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you,  
23 Madam President.

24 The other issue, as I look  
25 through the tax numbers, is that your

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2 building seems to be over-assessed. I  
3 mean, you're paying \$14,000 in  
4 real-estate taxes, and some other  
5 properties that are bigger than yours are  
6 a lot less.

7 So I would suggest -- and our  
8 offices could help you file a petition  
9 with the Board of Revision of Taxes to  
10 have that looked at. I think you really  
11 should do that because it really is out  
12 of whack with the rest of the properties  
13 on the block.

14 MR. BROWNELL: Thank you. I  
15 appreciate that.

16 The other thing that I would say  
17 is that it's a three-story building, and  
18 we really only occupy the first floor.  
19 So we're paying based on three floors but  
20 the fact is that --

21 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Which is  
22 another BRT issue.

23 MR. BROWNELL: Yes.

24 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So we'll be  
25 happy, before you leave today, to get you

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2 started on your tax appeal.

3 MR. BROWNELL: Thank you. I  
4 appreciate that.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
6 you.

7 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Madam Chair?

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I'm  
9 sorry. Just a minute.

10 The Chair recognizes Councilman  
11 Kelly.

12 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you,  
13 Madam Chair.

14 Councilman Kenney just gave me  
15 the answer. I was going to ask you about  
16 assessments. But 2975, was that for one  
17 year?

18 MR. BROWNELL: Yes.

19 COUNCILMAN KELLY: That was for  
20 one year?

21 MR. BROWNELL: Yes. That's the  
22 total assessment.

23 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Is that paid  
24 quarterly or is it paid --

25 MR. BROWNELL: I was sent a

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2 bill, and I believe it's due on April  
3 15th or April 30th.

4 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Have you  
5 contacted anyone from the organization to  
6 see if they could have payments broken  
7 down into --

8 MR. BROWNELL: No, we didn't. I  
9 did speak with Renée just the other  
10 night. I introduced myself and  
11 identified -- you know, identified our  
12 situation, but we have not --

13 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Were you  
14 located anywhere else in the City?

15 MR. BROWNELL: No, we're not.

16 COUNCILMAN KELLY: You weren't?  
17 So have you noticed any improvements  
18 because of the --

19 MR. BROWNELL: Again, only being  
20 in the community for --

21 COUNCILMAN KELLY: You can't  
22 compare it.

23 MR. BROWNELL: -- for less than  
24 a year, no, I really can't speak to that  
25 issue.

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2 I can say that we're kind of at  
3 the end of the BID district. And it  
4 seems like the lighting and a lot of the  
5 activities that go on end at, uh...  
6 Tasker Avenue or Tasker Street so that  
7 the east part of East Passyunk doesn't  
8 seem -- because there's not as much  
9 business there or business activity there  
10 except for Geno's and Pat's in that  
11 little pocket at the end, there doesn't  
12 seem to be that much attention paid to  
13 that area.

14 But, again, I don't have past  
15 experience.

16 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Okay. Thank  
17 you.

18 MR. BROWNELL: Thank you.

19 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Thank you,  
20 Madam Chair.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: You're  
22 welcome.

23 Thank you so much.

24 Our next witness?

25 MR. ERICKSON: Georgia A.

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2 Pasquarello.

3 (Witness comes forward.)

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Good  
5 morning. Welcome. Please identify  
6 yourself for the record and proceed with  
7 your testimony.

8 MR. PASQUARELLO: George Anthony  
9 Pasquarello, Shoe Barrel, 1812 East  
10 Passyunk Avenue. I've been in business  
11 there since 1977. And I want to thank  
12 the Council for hearing us today, and I  
13 appreciate it.

14 This improvement district, which  
15 actually was talked about in -- starting  
16 in 19, um, 98, 99, had quite a few  
17 meetings at Alladio's, an old restaurant  
18 on Passyunk Avenue, and Stephanie's  
19 Catering on the Avenue, attended by  
20 Mr. Frank DiCicco and Mr. Jim Kenney.  
21 And also, I believe a few times  
22 Senator Vincent Fumo -- former Senator  
23 Vincent Fumo was there, promising us a  
24 land of Utopia, that this was going to be  
25 a model for Business Improvement

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2 Districts after ours.

3 One question that amazes me is  
4 that when we talked about this, it was  
5 only going to be a 10 percent fee on our  
6 real-estate tax, which was, at that time,  
7 the highest in the City, talking about  
8 South Street or Manayunk or Roxborough,  
9 okay?

10 Somehow or another, we were sent  
11 paperwork out that it was a 20 percent  
12 increase in our taxes. We feel that  
13 we've been real-estate-taxed out to death  
14 20 percent for seven years.

15 Another thing in the bylaws,  
16 which is stated, is that they don't give  
17 us the right to vote on anything.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I'm  
19 sorry. The right to what?

20 MR. PASQUARELLO: They do not  
21 give us the right to vote --

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Oh.

23 MR. PASQUARELLO: -- on  
24 anything, whether it be board members,  
25 events, expenditures, and et cetera.

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2 Quite a few times, there was  
3 Wally Lucidi, who was here speaking, the  
4 jeweler. He was on the board. And in  
5 November, November of, let me see --  
6 November, November, November, November.  
7 In November of 2003, he faxed a letter  
8 to, at that time, Al Messino, which was  
9 chairman of the Business Improvement  
10 District, stating:

11 "I'm writing to you requesting a  
12 motion to amend and repeal Article 1,  
13 Section 13 of the bylaws governing the  
14 East Passyunk Avenue BID," which is  
15 stating of the no-right-to-vote, okay?

16 "This is my right to do so,  
17 under the Article 10, Section 102," which  
18 is a section only for board members.  
19 Only board members could request a change  
20 of the bylaws and et cetera; no one else,  
21 okay?

22 "I want this voted on at your  
23 next meeting, dated December 3rd. Wally  
24 Lucidi," okay?

25 Nothing was done. This is '03

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2 now, only a few months after this

3 Business Improvement District started.

4 In June, in another article in  
5 the paper, the Review of South Philly,  
6 Wally Lucidi is recommending and asking  
7 for the same. Nothing.

8 I requested at that time a few  
9 members of the board to let's go over  
10 this, we're all men here, okay? Hitting  
11 us for 20 percent is a lot of money,  
12 okay? Their excuse was, "Well, we are  
13 the longest district," which you are the  
14 longest district in the City, but too  
15 many residential homes that aren't  
16 paying.

17 Another thing here is the  
18 proposal improvements for the Business  
19 Improvement District, which is the first  
20 article back in 2003. Explore trolley  
21 loop via Broad Street. Never happened.

22 Install more trashcans.  
23 Trashcans happened during the summer, a  
24 few months ago, whatever. Six years we  
25 were out trashcans.

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2 Sidewalks. We sweep the --  
3 under the agreement with the Philadelphia  
4 BID that this -- that this sidewalk-  
5 sweeping capacity, trained staff and  
6 motorized equipment. Well, Citizens  
7 Alliance came down for a year with the  
8 equipment and accessory. Then it was  
9 turned over to, of course, Rocky.

10 Also, Wally made a point that  
11 the streets were getting a little dirty  
12 at the time and et cetera. Well, back  
13 in, I think, '97, '98, we were granted  
14 \$400,000 for the Avenue, which, at that  
15 time, was only four blocks, Broad and  
16 Passyunk to now the existing fountain,  
17 okay?

18 We were supposed to get trees,  
19 special lighting, coordinating 15-foot --  
20 which is pedestrian lighting. Spruce it  
21 up.

22 Had a meeting at Alladio's again  
23 and et cetera. City officials down  
24 there, doing an aerial view of what the  
25 Avenue was going to look like in the four

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2 blocks -- trashcans, benches and et  
3 cetera. It never happened. Why didn't  
4 it happen? Supposedly, the money was  
5 taken by highway -- 200,000 here, 50,000  
6 there. Didn't leave us with anything.

7 At that point, being frustrated  
8 and whatever, we still had a street  
9 sweeper at that time, okay? coming down  
10 two, three times a week. It wasn't cut  
11 off immediately; it was gradually didn't  
12 see the guy anymore. Hey, where you  
13 going? Well, they transferred me to  
14 Bella Vista. Now, we all know, at that  
15 time, Bella Vista was being built up.

16 In the bylaws, it states here:  
17 "No City service shall be decreased or  
18 eliminated to create this BID." They  
19 took the street sweeper away to create  
20 their own street-sweeping endeavor, okay?

21 I mean, there -- there are a lot  
22 of things here that I have to go over.

23 Also, what's really interesting  
24 here is the no-personal services or  
25 treatment of patients, which is Bill

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2 No. -- which was created October 9, 2003,

3 Bill No. 030657, okay? No personal

4 service, which means personal service

5 treatment of patients, a lending service

6 store we have there that's not supposed

7 to be there, okay? Allstate Insurance,

8 which is not supposed to be there. An

9 accountant, which is not supposed to be

10 there. A block up the street, another

11 accountant isn't supposed to be there.

12 Also, we have five, I think,

13 four or five Alphabet Academies.

14 MS. GALLO: Four.

15 MR. PASQUARELLO: Okay? Now,

16 the -- four? Okay, so I said "four or

17 five." We have four, okay?

18 And the only reason why is, when

19 I spoke to the Business Improvement

20 Districts of South Street, Manayunk,

21 Roxborough, they put these establishments

22 on the second- or third-floor level or

23 side streets so it doesn't interrupt

24 their retail space.

25 Now, what happens with these

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2 establishments on a Saturday and it's the  
3 busiest day -- the busiest day -- of the  
4 week for retailers, these establishments  
5 are closed. So you're taking a good  
6 dozen spots away from retailers, retail  
7 sites, but they let this continually go  
8 on.

9 Street lighting. It says  
10 here -- not street lighting, Christmas  
11 decorations or holiday decorations for  
12 the full length of the district, which  
13 runs from Passyunk and Federal to Broad  
14 and Snyder. Christmas lights are only  
15 put up for four blocks, but yet you want  
16 X-amount of dollars to decorate all of  
17 these streets you're not decorating,  
18 okay?

19 The -- I mean, I could go on and  
20 on and on. And it -- it's a shame.

21 And the only thing I'm saying is  
22 what Frank DiCicco said in his statement  
23 here, I believe, in the South Jersey  
24 Inquirer -- I'm from Bellmawr, New  
25 Jersey -- and it's stated here in the

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2 summer: "To the Rules Committee for  
3 gambling, we'd like to have an  
4 opportunity to control our destiny."

5 It's right here. That's all we  
6 want.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank  
8 you.

9 MR. PASQUARELLO: If we're not  
10 involved with our own destiny, we've got  
11 a problem --

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank  
13 you very much.

14 MR. PASQUARELLO: -- and I hope  
15 the Council could check it over, send an  
16 independent group down there --

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank  
18 you.

19 (Indiscernible; parties talking  
20 over each other.)

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: I see  
22 Councilman DiCicco has his light on and  
23 --

24 MR. PASQUARELLO: I appreciate  
25 him --

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Just a  
3 moment, please.

4 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Relax,  
5 relax.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: The  
7 Chair recognizes Councilman DiCicco.

8 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you,  
9 thank you, thank you.

10 Good morning. And thank you for  
11 being here.

12 MR. PASQUARELLO: Good morning.

13 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You covered  
14 a lot of territory in your comments, so  
15 I'm going to try to remember some of  
16 those that are highlighted in my mind.

17 You referenced meetings with me  
18 and Councilman Kenney and possibly  
19 Senator Fumo that took place in 1997,  
20 '98?

21 MR. PASQUARELLO: No, no, no. I  
22 would say about '98, '99.

23 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: '98, '99.

24 MR. PASQUARELLO: '99, yeah.

25 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: That's

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2 prior to the BID; is that correct?

3 MR. PASQUARELLO: It's prior to  
4 the BID. I --

5 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: The BID --

6 MR. PASQUARELLO: I'm sorry.

7 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Let me --

8 MR. PASQUARELLO: Yeah, I'm  
9 sorry.

10 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Here's how  
11 it works: I ask a question, you answer.

12 MR. PASQUARELLO: No problem,  
13 you got it.

14 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: All right?  
15 We listened to you, you have to --

16 MR. PASQUARELLO: I'm yours.

17 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Who ran the  
18 Passyunk Avenue Businessmen's Association  
19 prior to the BID? Were you a member of  
20 that board?

21 MR. PASQUARELLO: No, I wasn't a  
22 member of the board, but --

23 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Did you --

24 MR. PASQUARELLO: -- there was  
25 Michael -- Michael Giordano was president

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2 of the board at that and --

3 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: But you  
4 attended meetings and you were operating  
5 a business at that time.

6 MR. PASQUARELLO: Right.

7 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So you  
8 played no role in any of the decision-  
9 making at that time?

10 MR. PASQUARELLO: We --

11 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You were  
12 not a board member?

13 MR. PASQUARELLO: Well, we  
14 didn't leave it up -- basically up to the  
15 board. We had meetings every --

16 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No, I'm  
17 asking you: Were you a board member?

18 MR. PASQUARELLO: I wasn't a  
19 board member.

20 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You were  
21 not a board member.

22 Were you a volunteer on any of  
23 the committees at the time?

24 MR. PASQUARELLO: Sure. We had  
25 a decoration committee, event committee,

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2 sure.

3 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You  
4 mentioned a \$400,000 street improvement  
5 grant that you've really never seen  
6 anything happen as a result of that?

7 MR. PASQUARELLO: Nothing  
8 that -- oh, the only thing we did receive  
9 from that was the --

10 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Well --

11 MR. PASQUARELLO: No, I'm  
12 saying, was the street -- you asked me if  
13 I received anything about it, and I'm  
14 telling you we received the street  
15 lighting, which is the --

16 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: But in your  
17 testimony, you said there was no street  
18 lighting.

19 MR. PASQUARELLO: No, no, no.  
20 I'm talking about the -- the lights --

21 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: The  
22 pedestrian streetlights.

23 MR. PASQUARELLO: We did the  
24 30-footers for the traffic at night to go  
25 on --

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2 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And that  
3 was all a part of the streetscape  
4 improvement --

5 MR. PASQUARELLO: Yes.

6 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- that I  
7 was able to earmark money from the  
8 Commerce Department for those  
9 improvements.

10 MR. PASQUARELLO: Yeah.

11 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So you got  
12 street lighting. You didn't get  
13 pedestrian street lighting; you got  
14 street lighting for the --

15 MR. PASQUARELLO: Pedestrian  
16 street lighting, 15-footers, right.

17 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You  
18 received -- trees were planted. There  
19 were sidewalk improvements and benches.  
20 Is that accurate?

21 MR. PASQUARELLO: No.

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No? Well,  
23 how did the benches get there?

24 MR. PASQUARELLO: Well, you only  
25 got two benches for four blocks.

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2 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Are they  
3 benches?

4 MR. PASQUARELLO: We only got  
5 two --

6 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Did you get  
7 street lighting?

8 MR. PASQUARELLO: No. I  
9 wouldn't consider that. No, I wouldn't  
10 consider --

11 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Well, what  
12 do you --

13 MR. PASQUARELLO: The street  
14 lighting was complained about for years,  
15 that nobody --

16 (Indiscernible; parties talking  
17 over each other.)

18 MR. PASQUARELLO: Excuse me,  
19 Frank, that the lights weren't working,  
20 they weren't working.

21 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Now, you  
22 said you got nothing out of the \$400,000,  
23 and you were a part of an organization  
24 that oversaw those improvements. So I  
25 don't follow your logic here.

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2 MR. PASQUARELLO: I don't know  
3 what --

4 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You're  
5 condemning the BID --

6 MR. PASQUARELLO: There -- there  
7 was no improvements to be had.

8 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You're  
9 condemning the BID --

10 MR. PASQUARELLO: Yeah.

11 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- of which  
12 it had nothing to do with the  
13 improvements of 1998, 1999.

14 MR. PASQUARELLO: There's no  
15 improvements. There was supposed to be  
16 improvements of everything. You're  
17 supposed to have an archway over the  
18 Passyunk Avenue indicating Passyunk  
19 Avenue --

20 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: We were  
21 discussing --

22 MR. PASQUARELLO: -- five  
23 stores, catering, to family affair.  
24 Okay? And that never happened, Frank.

25 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm going

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2 to --

3 MR. PASQUARELLO: If you're

4 telling me --

5 (Indiscernible; parties talking  
6 over each other.)

7 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: George,  
8 George, George --

9 MR. PASQUARELLO: There was  
10 nothing here that --

11 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: George, let  
12 me ask you a question.

13 MR. PASQUARELLO: There was  
14 lighting there that was depleted for  
15 years. We complained to the City.

16 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: George --

17 MR. PASQUARELLO: And to the  
18 chief --

19 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: George --

20 MR. PASQUARELLO: I know, Frank,  
21 I know.

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No, you  
23 don't know 'cause I didn't ask the  
24 question yet.

25 MR. PASQUARELLO: I know, okay.

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2 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I attended  
3 a meeting a few months ago at the Older  
4 Adults Center.

5 MR. PASQUARELLO: Mm-hmm.

6 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And you had  
7 some similar concerns that you've had for  
8 about the 15 years that I've been  
9 involved with Passyunk Avenue.

10 MR. PASQUARELLO: Mm-hmm.

11 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Did you  
12 volunteer for any of those committees as  
13 a result of that last meeting?

14 MR. PASQUARELLO: Did I  
15 volunteer?

16 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Yeah.

17 MR. PASQUARELLO: For any of the  
18 meetings? (Shakes head.)

19 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Are you on  
20 any committees?

21 MR. PASQUARELLO: They don't  
22 want to listen to me because I --

23 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No, no. I  
24 asked if you were on a committee.

25 MR. PASQUARELLO: I --

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2 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Did you  
3 volunteer to be on any committee?

4 MR. PASQUARELLO: No, I didn't  
5 volunteer.

6 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: All right.  
7 And I just want to point out one thing,  
8 'cause you're quoting things out of  
9 newspapers. In Jimmy Tayoun's paper, you  
10 were recently quoted as saying:

11 "When they are starting to gear  
12 up for the dinner hour" (meaning the  
13 restaurants) "I am starting to close."

14 Now, how do you expect to do  
15 business if you're closing your business  
16 at the peak hour of pedestrian traffic?

17 And you talk about Saturday  
18 being the busiest day of the week; it's  
19 really Sunday. And are you open on  
20 Sundays?

21 MR. PASQUARELLO: Am I open  
22 Sundays? No.

23 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Okay.  
24 Thank you.

25 MR. PASQUARELLO: No.

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2 Yeah, Frank, a follow-up on  
3 that: Explain to me why on my block of  
4 1800 East Passyunk, when this Business  
5 Improvement District started, there were  
6 no empty retail stores. Now, we have  
7 seven. Now we have seven empty stores.

8 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And they're  
9 all being renovated as we speak.

10 MR. PASQUARELLO: Well -- they  
11 are?

12 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: George --

13 MR. PASQUARELLO: They're  
14 finished, Frank.

15 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: George --

16 MR. PASQUARELLO: They're all  
17 finished being renovated or whatever, but  
18 there's no rent signs and there's no sale  
19 signs.

20 Tell me one thing, Frank: Do  
21 you know Steve Debacco? He owns -- he  
22 owns the biggest store. Listen, the  
23 three-store occupancy on the Avenue next  
24 door to me, okay, and he's still on the  
25 board. And that building's been empty

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2 for two-and-a-half years, Frank, with no  
3 sale sign, with no rent sign, and this  
4 guy is still on the Business Improvement  
5 District Board.

6 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: George --

7 MR. PASQUARELLO: What -- what  
8 is he doing for the business on the  
9 Avenue?

10 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: George, you  
11 think you're at a community meeting;  
12 you're not.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: All  
14 right.

15 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Could you  
16 just relax a little bit, please.

17 MR. PASQUARELLO: All right.

18 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And George  
19 --

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: All  
21 right. Thank you.

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- what do  
23 you propose that we do with Allstate and  
24 the other businesses that you say don't  
25 fit into the BID that were preexisting

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2 businesses?

3 MR. PASQUARELLO: They were not  
4 preexisting businesses.

5 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Oh, they  
6 weren't? Okay.

7 Thank you, George.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
9 you.

10 MR. PASQUARELLO: They were not  
11 preexisting, Frank.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: All  
13 right. Thank you.

14 COUNCILMAN KELLY: I just had --  
15 before you -- well, I don't have a  
16 question for George. It's something that  
17 he said. And I don't know; maybe  
18 Miss Gillinger could be able to explain  
19 it.

20 You mentioned something about a  
21 20 percent assessment and that in other  
22 areas it's only 10 percent, and I just  
23 wanted to get a --

24 MR. PASQUARELLO: (Inaudible,  
25 off-mic.) ...to Manayunk yesterday.

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2 Theirs is 7 percent; a few years ago,  
3 they were still at 7.

4 Spoke to South Street:  
5 10 percent up to a few years ago,  
6 10 percent also. They're at that steady  
7 level right now.

8 COUNCILMAN KELLY: And  
9 Roxborough?

10 MR. PASQUARELLO: Excuse me,  
11 sir?

12 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Roxborough?

13 MR. PASQUARELLO: I don't really  
14 know. I've just gotten a few. I mean, I  
15 have things written down here that are a  
16 little sketchy that I can go over.

17 But the average between --

18 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Yeah, I know  
19 there's one in Germantown also, and  
20 there's one in --

21 MR. PASQUARELLO: Oh, yeah.  
22 There's about, I would say, 15 to 17  
23 business districts as it stands now.

24 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Yeah.

25 MR. PASQUARELLO: Ours is --

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2 COUNCILMAN KELLY: And most of  
3 them are 10 percent or lower? Most of  
4 them are --

5 MR. PASQUARELLO: Most of them  
6 are between 7 and 10 percent, okay? And  
7 10 percent is the highest at that point.  
8 Ours right now exceeded double that  
9 amount. I don't know. We've asked  
10 questions, never got anything.

11 Also, I was very (indiscernible)  
12 is, like, we're supposed to receive a  
13 financial statement at the end of every  
14 year. No one has ever received it. You  
15 could ask any property owner here; they  
16 never received any financial statement.

17 And it also states in the bylaw  
18 that Council is supposed to receive a  
19 financial statement also. I don't know  
20 if you guys ever received any. Does  
21 anybody review the --

22 I'm not knocking you, Council,  
23 don't get me wrong, but how can you write  
24 up something and say "Go get 'em, guys,"  
25 and if somebody doesn't pay their --

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2 their BID tax, you guys put a lien on  
3 their property.

4 I'm in the shoe business. I  
5 don't pay for a case of shoes until the  
6 case of shoes come.

7 I'm sorry to interrupt you, but

8 --

9 COUNCILMAN KELLY: That's all  
10 right.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
12 you.

13 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Maybe  
14 Mrs. Gillinger could be able to explain  
15 that, why it's 20 percent.

16 MR. PASQUARELLO: I just don't

17 --

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I  
19 think -- I think --

20 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Before she  
21 gets up here, I just have one question.

22 MR. PASQUARELLO: Okay.

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: What is your  
24 BID assessment?

25 MR. PASQUARELLO: My BID

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2 assetment [sic]?

3 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Assessment.

4 What's the number?

5 MR. PASQUARELLO: It's 300.

6 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Are you up  
7 to date on your BID payments?

8 MR. PASQUARELLO: Excuse me?

9 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Have you  
10 paid your BID payments?

11 MR. PASQUARELLO: Have I paid  
12 it? No.

13 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Oh.

14 MR. PASQUARELLO: I don't -- I  
15 don't --

16 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So it really  
17 isn't costing you anything then, is it?

18 MR. PASQUARELLO: Hey, listen.  
19 I have no problem with that.

20 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Well, you  
21 haven't paid the BID assessment once.

22 MR. PASQUARELLO: I haven't paid  
23 it since day one.

24 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So then it  
25 hasn't cost you anything.

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2 MR. PASQUARELLO: Oh, yes.

3 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: What has it  
4 cost you?

5 MR. PASQUARELLO: You guys put  
6 liens on my property.

7 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: What?

8 MR. PASQUARELLO: It cost me.

9 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But you're  
10 not putting cash out of your pocket.

11 MR. PASQUARELLO: I could  
12 eliminate that. I could eliminate that.

13 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: All right.

14 MR. PASQUARELLO: It's not the  
15 money issue, Jim. Seriously, it's not  
16 the money issue.

17 It's that when a group of people  
18 come down here and they start buying  
19 property in '99, 2000, 2001 and tell you  
20 this is going to be a Utopia, okay?

21 (Indiscernible; parties talking  
22 over each other.)

23 MR. PASQUARELLO: I don't know,  
24 Jim. I'm sorry.

25 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I don't

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2 think I ever used the word "Utopia." I  
3 don't think that's --

4 MR. PASQUARELLO: They said that  
5 this was going to be a model for every  
6 Business Improvement District hereafter.

7 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But you  
8 haven't paid --

9 MR. PASQUARELLO: But you got to  
10 bang everybody 20 percent of their  
11 real-estate tax --

12 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But you  
13 haven't paid it.

14 MR. PASQUARELLO: -- and sleep  
15 with that --

16 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Have you  
17 paid the BID tax?

18 MR. PASQUARELLO: I don't, I  
19 haven't, and I won't.

20 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Then it's  
21 not going to cost you anything.

22 MR. PASQUARELLO: And I won't.  
23 That's not the point.

24 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Yes, it is.

25 MR. PASQUARELLO: It's not the

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2 point. It's not going to happen --

3 (Indiscernible; parties talking  
4 over each other.)

5 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: It's about  
6 the extra cost is what you're saying.

7 MR. PASQUARELLO: Nah. It --  
8 it -- listen, it's -- not when you have  
9 it -- the only thing you've done in these  
10 bylaw that you did do is bang everybody  
11 20 percent of their real-estate taxes.

12 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Except you.

13 MR. PASQUARELLO: And that's  
14 everything else --

15 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Except you

16 --

17 MR. PASQUARELLO: Everything  
18 else here --

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: -- 'cause  
20 you don't pay it.

21 MR. PASQUARELLO: -- you haven't  
22 done.

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Okay.

24 MR. PASQUARELLO: Okay?

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank

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2 you.

3 MR. PASQUARELLO: You're  
4 welcome.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
6 you very much.

7 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Well, I just  
8 wanted to know what the 10 percent is. I  
9 just wanted to get an idea.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA:  
11 Ms. Gillinger, would you please approach  
12 the witness table.

13 (Ms. Gillinger returns to witness  
14 table.)

15 COUNCILMAN KELLY: I just don't  
16 understand it, why -- why it's 20 percent  
17 for this...

18 MS. GILLINGER: Yeah. When I  
19 first started the job, I also said, you  
20 know, 20 percent. I had heard that South  
21 Street was 7 percent from speaking to the  
22 merchants.

23 So I went and looked on the BRT  
24 to find out, what does 7 percent mean to  
25 South Street? and what does 20 percent

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2 mean to the BID?

3 So I looked up a few properties.

4 Also, I called Manayunk. Manayunk  
5 charges a little over 9 percent, but they  
6 actually would like to increase their  
7 rate.

8 For a similar-size property,  
9 square footage, a property in Manayunk  
10 assessed at 9 percent would pay \$370 in  
11 our business district.

12 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Mm-hmm.

13 MS. GILLINGER: Because our  
14 property taxes are so much lower, it  
15 would be \$317.

16 On South Street, a 7 percent tax  
17 on a similar property on the 700 block of  
18 South Street, where I've had two offices  
19 in the last few years and have seen no  
20 street-cleaning, no services, no  
21 lighting -- and I know they just put some  
22 stuff in. But that would be \$500 for the  
23 exact same-size property.

24 So while the percentage is lower  
25 elsewhere and it is higher where we are,

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2 the actual dollar-amount that they pay is  
3 lower.

4 COUNCILMAN KELLY: It's due to  
5 the assessments, its assessed value.

6 MS. GILLINGER: It's based on  
7 the property tax value, absolutely.

8 The numbers come from the BRT.  
9 And 20 percent is still less than  
10 9 percent in Manayunk or 7 percent on  
11 South Street or 6 percent in Center City.

12 So it's -- that's -- that's, I  
13 think, the real -- the real number to  
14 look at.

15 COUNCILMAN KELLY: In another  
16 area that George mentioned, do you submit  
17 an audit to the City about expenses?

18 MS. GILLINGER: I -- I -- I'm  
19 audited by an accountant every year, and  
20 we actually just completed our up-to-2008  
21 audit. Yeah, I mean, it's available for  
22 anybody that'd like to see it.

23 I have -- I'm audited through  
24 every year.

25 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Do you submit

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2 it to the City, though?

3 MS. GILLINGER: I have not. I'm  
4 sorry. I've only been there since  
5 December, and I didn't know if I was  
6 supposed to. But they are welcome to it  
7 if they would like it, yeah. I have  
8 copies of everything.

9 COUNCILMAN KELLY: You do?

10 MS. GILLINGER: Yes, absolutely.  
11 Oh, yeah. We're audited up through 2008,  
12 which, I think, is pretty good,  
13 considering it's only March or April.

14 Anything else that you would  
15 like me to address?

16 COUNCILMAN KELLY: No.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
18 you.

19 MS. GILLINGER: Thank you.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Our  
21 next witness?

22 MR. ERICKSON: Anthony Nicosia.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: And  
24 who would be after him?

25 (No response.)

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Tom,  
3 who would be after him?

4 (Witness comes forward.)

5 MR. NICOSIA: Good morning,  
6 people on the board.

7 I'm a business -- my name is  
8 Anthony Nicosia. I have a body shop,  
9 A&M Auto Body, Passyunk and Federal.  
10 Been there 28 years or so. And I'm a  
11 property owner and a business owner.

12 And the thing is, is, you know,  
13 the first I ever heard of this -- this  
14 organization was when I got a bill in the  
15 mail for, like, you know, and then I  
16 started inquiring about it. Now my  
17 bill's going to be about 750 or over  
18 \$700, which my business is off 60  
19 percent.

20 We're in the -- we're -- I'm in  
21 the Italian -- I always thought we were  
22 in the Italian Association, you know,  
23 Ninth Street and all of that, because --  
24 and, you know, I thought we were a part  
25 of that.

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2 And the way my business is and  
3 the way the taxes are going to be for  
4 another year and things are inflation, I  
5 don't know how much longer my son is  
6 going to -- wants to continue on in the  
7 business. I don't know how much more I'm  
8 going to be able to afford these taxes.  
9 Sleeping at night, worrying about paying  
10 my taxes first is really a burden.

11 And the thing is, is that these  
12 facilities, these things that they're  
13 saying that they're supposed to do,  
14 street-cleaning, most of the time, it's  
15 Joey Vento and Geno's Steaks and Pat's,  
16 you know, they clean up. And all  
17 businesses should clean their own facade  
18 and actually maintain it. To get the  
19 government to actually do that, you know,  
20 isn't really our business.

21 Lights. We never even seen  
22 streams of lights. I mean, like, to be  
23 considered -- we're right on the corner  
24 of Passyunk and Federal. Really, like,  
25 you know, these things they're talking

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2 about I'm not aware of. I mean, we got a  
3 flag one time; it's nothing there now.  
4 And once in a while, we did see, like,  
5 one or two guys come and, you know, sweep  
6 a little bit.

7 But the thing is -- my biggest  
8 thing is, is being taxed as much as I am,  
9 I don't know how much more -- if I -- if  
10 my son wasn't there, honestly, I would  
11 close up and move out.

12 I mean, you know, everything's  
13 going up. And it might not be a lot for  
14 other people, like \$200, \$300, but  
15 it's -- especially if the Mayor raised  
16 the taxes, that other 20 percent is  
17 really going to really hurt me.

18 There's a lot of people here  
19 that are not here that are speaking on my  
20 behalf, but for other reasons or  
21 whatever, like, I have -- I got to go  
22 right back to work. I got a business,  
23 and a lot of people couldn't leave,  
24 which, this is the way not -- you know,  
25 it's been down here.

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2 And I thank you for listening to  
3 me and taking my time.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
5 you. We appreciate you coming in to  
6 testify.

7 Any questions?

8 (No questions or comments from  
9 committee members.)

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
11 you.

12 Our next witness?

13 MR. ERICKSON: Joey Vento.

14 (Witness comes forward.)

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good  
16 morning, welcome.

17 MR. VENTO: Hi. Joey Vento.  
18 Welcome. Good morning, Council.

19 I'm not going to make no issue  
20 because if we get in a controversy, we'll  
21 be here for day and night arguing, so I'm  
22 not -- I'm not arguing about taxes.

23 My concern is, I'm being charged  
24 \$2,000 a year. Now, on East Passyunk  
25 Avenue, I guess, from Dickinson to

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2 McKean, maybe they're the kind of people  
3 that have to have somebody come up and  
4 say, "We'll clean up and you can open up  
5 a business."

6 I started my business in 1966.  
7 I had \$6, a broken-down building. It's  
8 43 years later. My place is cleaned  
9 daily by my employees, both sides of  
10 Passyunk up to Federal Street, from my  
11 store, both sides of Ninth Street.

12 As far as this is a committee, I  
13 don't belong to any committee, I have no  
14 knowledge of how they do it. I pay the  
15 tax and don't open my mouth. All I'm  
16 saying is, they do nothing for Geno's  
17 Steaks.

18 And as far as advertising, I  
19 believe Geno's Steaks draws a lot of  
20 people from my lines of thousands of  
21 people on a daily basis, and I think  
22 that's helping East Passyunk Avenue,  
23 'cause all over the world, you say,  
24 Philadelphia, Joey Vento with Geno's  
25 Steaks. So I think I'm promoting

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2 Philadelphia pretty well.

3 And as far as the lighting goes,  
4 I don't know what they're talking about.  
5 I never seen anybody light up. If I shut  
6 my lights, they might not be able to find  
7 Passyunk Avenue.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. VENTO: I mean, seriously.

10 I believe every business owner,  
11 you have to be guaranteed somebody's  
12 going to clean your mess up to open up a  
13 store or you're not going to open it?  
14 You don't deserve to be in business then.  
15 I make my mess from my customers; it's my  
16 obligation to keep that neighborhood  
17 clean.

18 The people that did come down  
19 once in a while, I seen 'em come past at  
20 11 o'clock, 10:30. They walk right by.  
21 Why? 'Cause there's nothing to pick up.  
22 You want to prove that it's worth it for  
23 my 2,000? Come around 4, 5 o'clock in  
24 the morning and I'll give you something  
25 to clean, and then I could say that's

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2 justified, but the way it is now, believe  
3 me, it's not justified.

4 And it has nothing to do with  
5 money. I got a great business and all,  
6 but I'm fighting for the people that are  
7 really struggling. I'm telling ya, my  
8 business is terrific. I mean, it's  
9 getting bigger and bigger. And I think  
10 I'm an asset to Philadelphia and the East  
11 Passyunk Avenue.

12 But the section that is being  
13 taxed from Reed Street down to Federal,  
14 there's virtually nothing there. It's  
15 been existing -- you got garages, you  
16 got -- now, I got five properties, so  
17 you -- I'm being taxed on five  
18 properties. I do business out of one.  
19 One holds my cycles, one's a warehouse,  
20 but I'm paying on all of them. I think  
21 that's what a lot of people are bugged  
22 about.

23 And they really don't come down  
24 and clean like they say, and they don't  
25 do any lighting. What, once a year, they

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2 come down and you see 'em put a flag up  
3 on a pole? I put flags -- I do my own  
4 advertising. You want a band, you want  
5 music? We provide it. We generated our  
6 own clientele as far as advertising and  
7 business. I don't need anybody to  
8 advertise for me.

9 And I'm sure these other people,  
10 like the body shop and all, he doesn't  
11 need that kind of advertisement. And I  
12 think I speak for the bar owner Lou from  
13 Passyunk and Federal, has Louie's Bar  
14 there. I believe I speak for him. He's  
15 in the audience there.

16 We do our own cleaning. You can  
17 come down there anytime. You might find  
18 a napkin once in a while, you know what I  
19 mean? But we have our trashcans. I  
20 don't depend on anybody there.

21 We power-wash every day; I mean,  
22 I'm known for that. You want to nit-pick  
23 me? Yeah, that's possible, you can do  
24 that all the time.

25 But I really believe BID -- is

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2 that what their name is? I don't even  
3 know what the name of it is. Is that  
4 what it is, BID?

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes.

6 MR. VENTO: They do not benefit  
7 me in any way, shape, or form.

8 I mean, that's all I could say.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. VENTO: I mean --

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
12 you.

13 MR. VENTO: -- I know the  
14 challenge is out here. Who wants to -- I  
15 mean, everybody's looking at me, "There  
16 he goes."

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: No,  
18 no. I don't think anybody is prepared to  
19 argue.

20 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I --

21 MR. VENTO: Yeah, Frank?

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I will say,  
23 Joe -- and Joe and I go back a long time.

24 MR. VENTO: Oh, yeah, a real  
25 long time.

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2 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: If every  
3 business, Joe, did what you did, you  
4 probably wouldn't -- we probably wouldn't  
5 need a BID to do any cleaning. You are  
6 an exception to the rule. And I'm not  
7 saying that to make points with you. You  
8 are an exception to the rule.

9 MR. VENTO: But --

10 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Let me  
11 finish. There's no question about it.

12 But having said that, I live at  
13 11th and Federal, and I don't expect you  
14 to clean at 11th and Federal. But, Joe,  
15 there's probably not a day that doesn't  
16 go by that I don't have a Pat's or a  
17 Geno's wrapper in particular.

18 (Applause.)

19 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And I'm not  
20 condemning you for that. It's just --  
21 it's unfortunate that you have people who  
22 don't respect communities. You know, the  
23 half-eaten steak, by the time they get to  
24 11th Street, it seems like that's the  
25 place it goes.

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2 And I'm not faulting you for  
3 that; I want to say that again. But  
4 there are people who walk up and down  
5 Passyunk Avenue who may leave your  
6 establishments or Frank Oliveri's, Pat's  
7 Steaks establishment, carrying their  
8 food, and they do drop and discard that  
9 as they're walking.

10 It's not your fault. I'm not  
11 complaining to you that you should put a  
12 police patrol and follow those people.  
13 But the folks who run businesses and live  
14 in those adjacent streets, especially on  
15 Passyunk going south and north, benefit  
16 by that cleaning from trash that is  
17 generated not only by Pat's and Geno's  
18 but by some of the other merchants as  
19 well.

20 And the further along you go,  
21 especially the 1300 block of East  
22 Passyunk Avenue, it was probably the  
23 filthiest block in the City of  
24 Philadelphia.

25 (Applause.)

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2 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm not  
3 exaggerating. It's not all with Pat's  
4 and Geno's wrappers, but the stuff that  
5 just is generated by businesses and  
6 people who are irresponsible and don't  
7 have any respect for communities.

8 And that's where the benefit of  
9 the BID is. You may not need the lights,  
10 I agree. You have lights, Pat's has  
11 lights. I think our lights -- the BID  
12 lights probably wouldn't fit in to what  
13 you have. So maybe it's better that  
14 they're not there. I'm not making any  
15 excuses, but maybe it's better.

16 So understand -- and as someone  
17 who's had his differences with some  
18 people in this government over the years,  
19 and we've had discussions about that --

20 MR. VENTO: I don't know who  
21 that is.

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No, no, no.

23 MR. VENTO: Okay.

24 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: We've had  
25 discussions about that. You're a good

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2 businessperson, you are a good neighbor  
3 in the general sense because you have  
4 done a lot of good. You've contributed,  
5 you've put on events for our police,  
6 fallen officers.

7 But you're also, in that same  
8 vain, you do that, in my opinion, because  
9 you want to be a good neighbor, and you  
10 are a good neighbor in that respect.

11 So we're just saying, yeah,  
12 you're going to pay a few dollars more,  
13 but it's all a part of really what you  
14 are, is being a good neighbor and helping  
15 those other blocks that don't have the  
16 ability or personnel to do the things  
17 that you do from your business, and that  
18 is in particular cleaning streets.

19 MR. VENTO: Now, could I say  
20 something? Now, the 1300 block you said  
21 is so filthy, which I agree; how about we  
22 start fining the people that live on that  
23 block and they don't take care of their  
24 property. Why punish people that do  
25 well? And the scumbags, youse give them

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2 a pass or a free ride, or a guy like me  
3 has to pay for it.

4 So you -- now -- and now we talk  
5 about the littering, Geno's wrappers. I  
6 agree with all that, don't get me wrong.  
7 That's what police officers are for.  
8 That's called littering.

9 Wait a minute now. If everybody  
10 did their job so you want to -- let's do  
11 it the right way now. Everybody should  
12 do their job. Joey Vento cleans up, a  
13 guy across -- that should go right down  
14 the line or we wouldn't be having this  
15 problem right now.

16 Now, how about my trash?  
17 McDonald's cups --

18 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Absolutely.

19 MR. VENTO: -- I got --

20 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I agree.

21 MR. VENTO: -- burgers -- so I  
22 have the same problem.

23 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I agree.

24 MR. VENTO: So I go to them and  
25 say listen --

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2 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No.

3 MR. VENTO: -- you got to  
4 contribute to help me clean? No. I take  
5 it up, I clean it up.

6 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: But  
7 understand, if we -- and I agree 'cause  
8 I'm a bit of a cleaning fanatic myself  
9 that -- and my mother made me that way.  
10 I believe that we should have stepped-up  
11 enforcement.

12 MR. VENTO: Right.

13 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And we've  
14 been talking about that, but I'll be the  
15 first to tell you, as soon as those  
16 property owners start getting tickets for  
17 not sweeping their sidewalk, my office,  
18 the Council President's office, Jimmy's  
19 office are going to hear: "What are they  
20 doing? They're picking on South Philly.  
21 Why don't they go to some other  
22 neighborhood?"

23 So we're always in this no-win  
24 situation.

25 MR. VENTO: Well, listen --

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2 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And

3 business improvement districts, which is  
4 what BID is, have been very beneficial in  
5 controlling some of those problems that  
6 we have experienced over the years with  
7 people -- businesspeople in particular --  
8 who don't take the time to do what you  
9 do.

10 MR. VENTO: All right, but

11 let -- see, I'm going to be 70 years old,  
12 so I agree. You know, I go back to a  
13 generation where the people themselves  
14 daily came out, scrubbed their own steps,  
15 and kept in front of their house.

16 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: That --

17 MR. VENTO: That's all we got to

18 get back to. Let people do the basics.  
19 Take care of the small things, and the  
20 big ones are going to take care of  
21 themselves.

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And you're

23 absolutely right.

24 MR. VENTO: Everybody is

25 accountable in this thing; not just a

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2 certain group, everyone.

3 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And you're  
4 absolutely right. I agree with that.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. VENTO: Ya know --

7 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thanks for  
8 coming in.

9 MR. VENTO: You're getting rid  
10 of me. Okay, all right.

11 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you  
12 very much.

13 MR. VENTO: Anybody else? All  
14 right.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
16 you.

17 MR. VENTO: Have a good one.

18 (Applause.)

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Our  
20 next witness?

21 MR. ERICKSON: Joseph F. Marino.

22 (Witness comes forward.)

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good  
24 morning.

25 MR. MARINO: Good morning,

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2 members of City Council. Joseph F.  
3 Marino, the Co-Chair of East Passyunk  
4 Crossing Civic Association and Town  
5 Watch.

6 We are the residents of the East  
7 Passyunk Avenue area that the BID crosses  
8 through. I am a lifelong resident of  
9 South Philadelphia. I am in the home  
10 that belonged to my aunt, my  
11 grandparents, and my great-grandparents.  
12 I'm invested in this neighborhood, and my  
13 family has been.

14 As a matter of fact, one could  
15 argue that the parishes of the East  
16 Passyunk Avenue area were built on the  
17 Marino family. Walk through them and  
18 you'll see the statues and other  
19 placards.

20 I helped form EPX about three  
21 years ago; although, officially, we'll be  
22 three years old in September of this  
23 year.

24 In that time, I've had the  
25 opportunity to become new Philadelphia as

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2 well as old Philadelphia. I've had the  
3 opportunity to meet with the residents  
4 who now live in our area who are from  
5 other areas of Philadelphia and other  
6 areas of the country and other areas of  
7 the world and to see how they mesh quite  
8 well with my relatives and friends and  
9 lifelong neighbors who are in their  
10 eighties and nineties.

11 To that end, EPX, as we call  
12 ourselves, the abbreviation, has used the  
13 East Passyunk Avenue BID as the go-to  
14 group when we've had trash issues, sign  
15 issues, and nuisance-property issues.  
16 And their board and their merchants have  
17 been incredibly gracious to us.

18 Their merchants also support us  
19 individually at both of our fund-raisers,  
20 our basket raffle that's a major part of  
21 our spring fundraiser and with gift  
22 certificates to the restaurants and shops  
23 for our major fundraiser, an art auction  
24 in the fall.

25 East Passyunk Avenue is

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2 crucially interwoven with its residents.

3 Our residents live above their  
4 properties, whether they live in their  
5 properties or not. Our residents live  
6 beside their properties, whether the  
7 business owners live in their properties  
8 or not. So it's quite a closely-knit  
9 group of neighbors, old and new.

10 East Passyunk is where we shop,  
11 it's where we dine, it's where we live.  
12 And we're happy with the situation the  
13 way it is now. We were unhappy, and I  
14 personally was unhappy, years ago, which  
15 is one of the reasons we formed the civic  
16 associations that we formed in South  
17 Philadelphia, including EPX, in the sense  
18 that the neighborhoods were not cleaning  
19 up, were not safe enough, were not well  
20 lit, and did not provide an opportunity  
21 for us to shop and dine and meet our  
22 needs.

23 And to some extent, some  
24 merchants of the BID still do not comply  
25 with what the neighbors need. I

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2 understand they own their properties, I  
3 understand that they don't necessarily  
4 need the additional income of working.

5 But this is not 1960. Our  
6 residents work. Women and men work, get  
7 home at 5, 6, 6:30, 7 o'clock at night  
8 and need shops open into the evening.  
9 The BID has helped to provide that to  
10 some degree, asking that the businesses  
11 stay open later and later, and stay open  
12 on Saturdays and Sundays.

13 Again, this is not 1960. We  
14 need to provide viable shops, services,  
15 and restaurants that go well into the  
16 evening for all of our residents, even  
17 the long-term residents who may live a  
18 more traditional lifestyle and be able to  
19 shop during the day. But they might want  
20 that during the day to be Saturday or  
21 Sunday, when their younger children are  
22 off from work and can take them to shop.

23 To that end, EPX will continue  
24 to work with whatever the Council  
25 decides, whether the individual

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2 merchants, who we're very fond of and  
3 have been very gracious to us or whether  
4 the official BID. But we wanted to make  
5 our position clear that we are happier  
6 with the situation the way it currently  
7 exists.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Thank  
9 you very much.

10 Any questions or comments from  
11 members of the committee?

12 (No questions or comments from  
13 committee members.)

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Again,  
15 thank you.

16 MR. Marino: Thank you.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT Verna: Our  
18 next witness?

19 MR. Erickson: Michael Miraglia.

20 (Witness comes forward.)

21 MR. Miraglia: Hi. Michael  
22 Miraglia, owner of Mikes Bikes, in  
23 Philadelphia. I want to thank everybody  
24 for being here today and obviously the  
25 people that couldn't wait to hear other

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2 people out.

3 I started my business many, many  
4 years ago, selling collectible bikes. I  
5 worked for the guy that had the property  
6 before me. The business has been on line  
7 since 1988.

8 In the last seven years or so,  
9 all I seen was vindictiveness of the EP  
10 BID towards all of the merchants and what  
11 have you. If you don't own your  
12 building, you kind of have no kind of  
13 say. I pay the taxes in my building.  
14 Unfortunately, I don't own it because the  
15 owner won't sell, so that goes to that  
16 point there. I do pay the tax for the  
17 BID every year.

18 It should fall upon owners to  
19 clean up their own stoop and what have  
20 you. The EP BID actually bypasses my  
21 corner on every occasion, okay? It  
22 started about -- I would say about a year  
23 ago, when there was a certain politician  
24 here had his son running for another  
25 seat, and if you didn't have a sign of

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2 his son's in your window, you were  
3 discriminated against all the -- all the  
4 time.

5 And you could laugh all you guys  
6 want.

7 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I --

8 MR. MIRAGLIA: It divided the  
9 Avenue, which --

10 (Applause.)

11 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Listen --

12 MR. MIRAGLIA: You know, youse  
13 could laugh all youse want.

14 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Madam  
15 President.

16 MR. MIRAGLIA: But we are the  
17 people --

18 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Madam  
19 President, I just -- a point of order, if  
20 I may.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Yes.

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You can use  
23 my name.

24 MR. MIRAGLIA: Okay.

25 Mr. DiCicco.

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2 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Feel free  
3 to use my name, please. Okay?

4 MR. MIRAGLIA: Okay.

5 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Okay?  
6 Thank you.

7 MR. MIRAGLIA: Well, duly noted  
8 that the board members that were here  
9 today for the EP BID all benefit --  
10 benefited from Citizens Alliance's  
11 holdings, which was found to be a corrupt  
12 organization ran by Vince -- Senator  
13 Vincent J. Fumo.

14 Everybody that's on the board  
15 now benefited from it. The rest of the  
16 real people, which I represent here,  
17 never get anything done. We don't need  
18 the trashcans, we don't need your  
19 lighting.

20 I won My Fox Philly's Best of  
21 Philadelphia bicycle shop. I'm a little  
22 mom-and-pop. I compete against multi-  
23 million-dollar operations; we still won.  
24 And no mention on the website, no  
25 acknowledgment.

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2 Renée has been totally  
3 vindictive towards me, hasn't -- she's  
4 been in my store one time since she's  
5 been -- you know, since December.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. MIRAGLIA: You know, I don't  
8 understand the hierarchies that be can  
9 allow the other people to gouge us for  
10 taxes when they don't do anything about  
11 it.

12 And then Councilman James Kenney  
13 hears that I said something about  
14 something that was in an open forum,  
15 that's supposed to be in an open forum.  
16 He comes to my store and then threatens  
17 me with physical violence, and he's going  
18 to sit there and say he did not? He  
19 won't even acknowledge me? He's not  
20 going to look at me?

21 If I had -- you know you did it.

22 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Council  
23 President, let me --

24 MR. MIRAGLIA: You know you came  
25 in my store.

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2 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: -- make sure  
3 the record's clear.

4 I threatened no one. The  
5 gentleman --

6 MR. MIRAGLIA: You're going to  
7 tell me you didn't come in my store --

8 (Indiscernible; parties talking  
9 over each other.)

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Just a  
11 minute, please. We can only --

12 (Indiscernible; parties talking  
13 over each other.)

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Just a  
15 minute. We'll speak one at a time,  
16 please.

17 Councilman Kenney.

18 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: The  
19 gentleman was going around telling people  
20 that I was paid \$30,000 to be a member of  
21 the BID Board. I went into his store and  
22 asked him why he was saying that --

23 MR. MIRAGLIA: You didn't ask  
24 anybody.

25 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And I didn't

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2 say --

3 (Indiscernible; parties talking  
4 over each other.)

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Please.

6 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I asked him  
7 why he was saying it, and he said he  
8 didn't say it. I asked him, if he was  
9 saying it, to please stop 'cause it  
10 wasn't true.

11 Additionally, Mr. George, Shoe  
12 Barrel, was saying the same thing  
13 allegedly, and I had a lawyer send him a  
14 letter to ask him to please cease and  
15 desist. That's all.

16 I didn't threaten anyone with  
17 physical violence. I'm 50 years old; I  
18 don't fight anybody.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. MIRAGLIA: And then --

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: I'm  
22 sorry.

23 MR. MIRAGLIA: Okay. But,  
24 anyway, you know, you guys had time to  
25 hear the first five or six people speak.

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2 The first five or six speak -- speakers  
3 all benefited from Citizens Alliance,  
4 which would be properties that were  
5 gotten with ill-gotten money that was  
6 already -- the State of Pennsylvania  
7 already prosecuted this gentleman.

8 Citizens Alliance Holdings is a  
9 farce, Citizens Alliance is a farce.  
10 It's all a farce to keep money in their  
11 families' pockets and keep it away from  
12 the common business folk like myself.

13 I don't care if I have to fold  
14 my business when I leave here today; it  
15 really doesn't matter to me, but the  
16 people need their money back. We need  
17 our services that we don't get. We need  
18 a new merchants association free of  
19 political hierarchy.

20 And that's all I got to say.

21 Thank you.

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Excuse me,  
23 excuse me.

24 (Applause.)

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Just a

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2 moment, please. Just a moment.

3 The Chair recognizes Councilman  
4 DiCicco.

5 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you,  
6 Madam Chair.

7 Good morning.

8 You just made a statement that  
9 there is some financial benefit to  
10 certain people who are either directly  
11 involved with Citizens Alliance or  
12 politically connected?

13 MR. MIRAGLIA: Mm-hmm, yes, I  
14 did.

15 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Could you  
16 be more specific.

17 MR. MIRAGLIA: If events go on  
18 at their restaurants -- they're --  
19 they're -- everything that they have  
20 mostly, okay?

21 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Who's --  
22 who is "they"?

23 MR. MIRAGLIA: Anybody that has  
24 anything to do with any of the Citizens  
25 Alliance holdings and properties that

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2 were ill-gotten from the first point.

3 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Who --

4 MR. MIRAGLIA: They all get --  
5 they get to have all the venues. That  
6 so-called advertising benefits six  
7 different properties down there except  
8 ourselves.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You're  
10 going to want this on the record.

11 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Yeah, I  
12 don't understand -- that's why I want it  
13 on the record, 'cause I'm being -- I  
14 think I'm being accused, or my family's  
15 being accused, of being corrupt.

16 So would you be more specific as  
17 to what benefits Councilman DiCicco,  
18 Frank DiCicco, derives out of Citizens  
19 Alliance --

20 MR. MIRAGLIA: We're not talking  
21 about Councilman Frank DiCicco.

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Well, who  
23 are you talking about?

24 MR. MIRAGLIA: We're talking  
25 about the EP BID and we're talking about

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2 Citizens Alliance and then their for-  
3 profit holding association, which is  
4 Citizens Alliance.

5 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: That's a  
6 nonprofit.

7 MR. MIRAGLIA: And that's what I  
8 was talking about.

9 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: That's a  
10 nonprofit.

11 MR. MIRAGLIA: Well, no, they  
12 have a for-profit entity, which allows  
13 them to buy buildings; am I correct?

14 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: CA  
15 Holdings.

16 MR. MIRAGLIA: Yes.

17 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And who's  
18 benefiting directly from that?

19 MR. MIRAGLIA: Oh, well,  
20 there's -- obviously, none of us are.

21 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No, no.  
22 You're saying that people at Citizens  
23 Alliance --

24 MR. MIRAGLIA: No, anybody that  
25 bought properties from their initial buy,

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2 in 2002, 2003, whatever it may be --

3 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm not  
4 clear --

5 MR. MIRAGLIA: -- they  
6 benefited.

7 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- on what  
8 you're trying to tell everybody here.

9 You're making some serious  
10 accusations, and so I would like for the  
11 record -- for you to be specifically  
12 clear --

13 MR. MIRAGLIA: I'm speaking of  
14 the two people that bought --

15 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- on who  
16 is --

17 MR. MIRAGLIA: -- Citizens  
18 Alliance Holding properties.

19 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: What was  
20 the benefit?

21 MR. MIRAGLIA: You should know  
22 that.

23 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No, I don't  
24 that; that's why I'm asking you. And if  
25 you know, put it on the record.

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2 MR. MIRAGLIA: Can I ask you  
3 another question away from the --

4 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No, no. I  
5 asked you a question. You're making some  
6 serious accusations --

7 MR. MIRAGLIA: Yeah.

8 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- that  
9 involve either myself, people I'm  
10 associated with, or members of my family.  
11 And I would like for you to put on the  
12 record what you believe is the truth.

13 MR. MIRAGLIA: Well, the truth  
14 is, like I said, anybody that had  
15 anything to do with the initial buy of  
16 the Citizens Alliance properties that was  
17 --

18 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Passyunk  
19 Avenue properties.

20 MR. MIRAGLIA: -- Passyunk  
21 Avenue properties, which the EP BID had  
22 the control over, I'm saying that the  
23 people initially that had the authority  
24 to buy the CA Holdings properties, it was  
25 corrupt from the beginning, which you

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2 obviously see.

3 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You're  
4 still not answering my question.

5 John Doe buys a property from CA  
6 Holdings. Who benefits from CA Holdings  
7 personally from that? 'Cause that's what  
8 sounds -- it sounds to me that that's  
9 what you're saying.

10 MR. MIRAGLIA: Well, the money  
11 goes back into the kitty. In the  
12 all-around bigger picture of the scheme,  
13 it does. You know, the money goes back  
14 to the kitty.

15 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: What  
16 scheme?

17 MR. MIRAGLIA: What scheme?  
18 What -- what -- what -- the problem that  
19 we have here today is, there's no  
20 business plan. The EP BID has nothing  
21 stated in their office that what they're  
22 going to do with this avenue.

23 You're forcing people to be open  
24 at night, you're forcing all the people  
25 to --

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2 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: How do they  
3 force you --

4 MR. MIRAGLIA: -- change our  
5 ways because you --

6 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Do you --  
7 are you open at night?

8 MR. MIRAGLIA: Sometimes I am.

9 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Are you  
10 forced to open at night?

11 MR. MIRAGLIA: No, I'm not  
12 forced to open at night. I --

13 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Are you  
14 forced to close at a certain time?

15 MR. MIRAGLIA: I'm not forced to  
16 do anything other -- other than keep my  
17 place clean and do what I have to do.

18 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Nobody's  
19 forcing you to do any of that. I'm just  
20 still --

21 MR. MIRAGLIA: Nobody has  
22 to force me to do anything.

23 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm just  
24 still curious as to who is benefiting  
25 financially --

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2 MR. MIRAGLIA: Well, I guess --

3 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- as a  
4 result of all of this corrupt stuff --

5 MR. MIRAGLIA: Like I said --

6 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- that you  
7 keep referring to.

8 MR. MIRAGLIA: Like I said,  
9 Citizens Alliance Holdings has benefited,  
10 and we have on paper bridge loans between  
11 the EP BID and Citizens Alliance. I  
12 don't understand --

13 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: For buyers  
14 of properties?

15 MR. MIRAGLIA: No. For -- for  
16 Citizens Alliance putting money back and  
17 forth between the EP BID and Citizens  
18 Alliance, which your son, he's the  
19 president of the EP BID and the president  
20 of Citizens Alliance. How could somebody  
21 lend money to themselves?

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: He --

23 MR. MIRAGLIA: I don't  
24 understand it.

25 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Are you

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2 saying my son lent money to himself?

3 MR. MIRAGLIA: Both of the  
4 entities that he's the president of  
5 benefited back and forth between it.

6 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Did my --

7 MR. MIRAGLIA: And we have it on  
8 paper.

9 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Are you  
10 suggesting that my son, Christian DiCicco  
11 --

12 MR. MIRAGLIA: No, he's the  
13 president. I'm saying --

14 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Let me  
15 finish.

16 MR. MIRAGLIA: Just the entity  
17 --

18 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Let me  
19 finish.

20 MR. MIRAGLIA: -- of the  
21 president.

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Let me  
23 finish, please.

24 MR. MIRAGLIA: Go.

25 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Are you

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2 suggesting that my son, Christian  
3 DiCicco, has personally benefited  
4 financially from transactions between  
5 Citizens Alliance, EP -- whatever you  
6 call it, East Passyunk Avenue BID, and CA  
7 Holdings?

8 MR. MIRAGLIA: I'm not saying  
9 that he benefited directly but --

10 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Then who  
11 did?

12 MR. MIRAGLIA: Well --

13 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: 'Cause  
14 that's what you're suggesting.

15 MR. MIRAGLIA: The money's in  
16 the same handbag, in so many words.

17 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Then who,  
18 in your opinion, has benefited  
19 financially from this?

20 MR. MIRAGLIA: I -- you know  
21 what I mean, I keep my business the way  
22 it is, and like I told --

23 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No, no, I'm  
24 not asking about your business. You've  
25 accused my --

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2 MR. MIRAGLIA: The Citizens  
3 Alliance benefited.

4 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You're  
5 accusing my son and other --

6 MR. MIRAGLIA: The Citizens  
7 Alliance benefited.

8 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Citizens  
9 Alliance benefited.

10 MR. MIRAGLIA: Oh, of course  
11 they did.

12 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: A  
13 nonentity, but he didn't -- you're  
14 suggesting he benefited personally.

15 MR. MIRAGLIA: No, he's the  
16 president. I'm talking about the  
17 president.

18 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Oh. So  
19 you're not saying that --

20 MR. MIRAGLIA: No, no, I'm not  
21 saying your son --

22 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Oh, okay,  
23 all right. I just wanted to get the  
24 record straight.

25 Thank you.

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2 MR. MIRAGLIA: (Indiscernible.)

3 ... 'cause he's the president of both  
4 organizations.

5 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Right.

6 MR. MIRAGLIA: So now --

7 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And I'm on  
8 maybe a dozen boards throughout --

9 MR. MIRAGLIA: Okay. So now --

10 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So now  
11 what?

12 MR. MIRAGLIA: Now we have a  
13 new, you know, a city -- whatever -- we  
14 have a new bylaws or whatever getting put  
15 into play that we have to abide by. And  
16 Councilman Kenney's name is taken off the  
17 bill this time. And is that a -- is  
18 there a different bill that we got to --  
19 that we're signing for today or  
20 something?

21 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: This is a  
22 reauthorization. This hearing is being  
23 held for the purpose of hearing and  
24 getting testimony and for this committee  
25 to decide whether to reauthorize the East

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2 Passyunk Avenue BID.

3 MR. MIRAGLIA: Okay.

4 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: That's the  
5 law.

6 MR. MIRAGLIA: Okay.

7 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: That's what  
8 we're doing.

9 MR. MIRAGLIA: And a direct  
10 question to you: What benefits are we  
11 going to get out of this for another 10  
12 years at 20 percent that we -- you know,  
13 if you ask anybody around here, the --  
14 all the people that testified just now,  
15 the services are just not happening.

16 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And there  
17 are those who believe -- testimony was  
18 given this morning by those who believe  
19 that the BID has been a benefit to the  
20 East Passyunk Avenue corridor.

21 MR. MIRAGLIA: Of course, 'cause  
22 they got --

23 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And that's  
24 a matter of opinion.

25 MR. MIRAGLIA: -- a benefit from

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2 it themselves.

3 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

4 MR. MIRAGLIA: Okay.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank  
6 you.

7 Our next witness?

8 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm at a  
9 loss.

10 MR. ERICKSON: There's nobody's  
11 else who's out to testify.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Do we  
13 have anyone else to testify? Is there  
14 anyone else interested to testify on this  
15 bill?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Seeing  
18 none, the Committee on Rules will now  
19 conclude its public hearing. We will now  
20 go into our public meeting.

21 And the Chair recognizes  
22 Councilwoman Miller regarding Bill No.  
23 080901.

24 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you,  
25 Madam Chair.

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2 I move that Bill No. 080901 be  
3 reported out of this committee with a  
4 favorable recommendation.

5 (Motion duly seconded.)

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: All in  
7 favor will indicate by saying aye.

8 Those opposed?

9 The ayes have it and the motion  
10 carries.

11 The Chair recognizes Councilman  
12 DiCicco regarding Bill No. 090128.

13 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you,  
14 Madam President.

15 I offer an amendment to Bill No.  
16 090128.

17 (Motion duly seconded.)

18 COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: A copy has  
19 been distributed to all members of this  
20 committee.

21 (Motion duly seconded.)

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: It has  
23 been moved and seconded that the  
24 amendment be adopted.

25 All those in favor will say aye.

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2 Those opposed?

3 The ayes have it, and the  
4 amendment is adopted.

5 This bill will be continued to  
6 the call of the Chair.

7 Thank you very much. And thank  
8 you all for coming in.

9 (Proceedings end at 11:50 a.m.)

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1  
2 C E R T I F I C A T E  
3

4 I HEREBY CERTIFY that the  
5 proceedings of the City of Philadelphia  
6 Council Committee on Rules are contained fully  
7 and accurately in the stenographic notes taken  
8 by me on Wednesday, April 9, 2009, and that  
9 this is a true and correct statement of same.  
10  
11  
12

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13 JOSEPHINE CARDILLO

14 Registered Professional Reporter  
15  
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