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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

3

COMMITTEE ON PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL

4

AFFAIRS

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Room 400, City Hall

7

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

8

Wednesday, December 8, 2004, 10:20 a.m.

9

10 BILL 041037 - An Ordinance authorizing the
11 President of the Fairmount Park Commission,
12 the Executive Director of Fairmount Park, and
13 the Public Property Commissioner, on behalf of
14 the City of Philadelphia, to enter into a
15 ground lease with the School District of
16 Philadelphia....

17 BILL 041038 - An Ordinance authorizing the
18 Commissioner of Public Property, on behalf of
19 the City of Philadelphia, to accept a deed
20 from the School District of Philadelphia for
21 that certain parcel of land commonly known as
22 8730 Old Line Road...

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PRESENT:

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COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN

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COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE, JR.

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COUNCILMAN JAMES F. KENNEY

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COUNCILMAN FRANK RIZZO

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COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL

22

COUNCILMAN MICHAEL A. NUTTER

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COUNCILMAN DARRELL L. CLARKE

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1 12/8/04 - Bills 041037 & 041038 - Parks

2 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

3 Good morning. The City Council Committee on
4 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs is now
5 in a public hearing to hear testimony on Bill
6 Nos. 041037 and 041038.

7 We all should be advised that
8 Resolution No. 040912 is being held at the
9 request of the sponsor, Councilman Rick
10 Mariano. So if there are any guests in the
11 audience who are here to participate in the
12 hearings around the status of activity at the
13 stadiums, that resolution, No. 040912, is
14 being held by the sponsor.

15 Joining our Committee this morning
16 are Members of the Committee Vice Chair
17 Councilman W. Wilson Goode; Members of the
18 Committee Councilman Darrell Clarke;
19 Councilman Frank Rizzo, Majority Leader;
20 Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell. And also in
21 attendance are Councilman Michael Nutter. I
22 believe at one point I saw Councilman Jim
23 Kenney, and he's back joining us at this
24 hearing this morning.

25 We will now ask the clerk to read

1 12/8/04 - Bills 041037 & 041038 - Parks
2 the title of Bill Nos. 041037 and 041038.

3 THE CLERK: Bill No. 041037,
4 authorizing the President of the Fairmount
5 Park Commission, the Executive Director of
6 Fairmount Park and the Public Property
7 Commissioner, on behalf of the City of
8 Philadelphia, to enter into a ground lease
9 with the School District of Philadelphia under
10 which the School District will lease from the
11 City certain land in West Fairmount Park in
12 order to construct, maintain and operate a
13 high school; all under certain provisions and
14 conditions.

15 And Bill No. 041038, authorizing the
16 Commissioner of Public Property, on behalf of
17 the City of Philadelphia, to accept a deed
18 from the School District of Philadelphia for
19 that certain parcel of land commonly known as
20 8730 Old Line Road; and amending Title 15 of
21 the Philadelphia Code, entitled Parks and
22 Recreation, to place the parcel under the care
23 and jurisdiction of the Fairmount Park
24 Commission under completion of the conveyance
25 of the parcel to the City; all under certain

1 12/8/04 - Bills 041037 & 041038 - Parks
2 terms and conditions.

3 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
4 Thank you.

5 I would like to ask the Council
6 Member representing the Fourth Councilmanic
7 District, Councilman Nutter, in which this new
8 wonderful initiative will sit, to please
9 provide remarks at this time.

10 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you,
11 Madam Chair. You're most kind and gracious.

12 First, let me thank the Committee
13 for its expedient consideration of this
14 matter. It's usually a fairly long process to
15 get to this point, and we're at the tail end
16 of the year. We had a wonderful ceremony not
17 too long ago that Councilwoman Blackwell and I
18 and many others participated in.

19 We're kind of uniquely situated in
20 the park where everyone is kind of near it,
21 but no one lives next door, and the technical
22 location of the school is within the Fourth
23 District, but literally across the street is
24 our residents of the Third Councilmanic
25 District. So Councilwoman Blackwell and I

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2 have co-shepherded the legislation forward.

3 I'll have a couple of questions when
4 the witnesses come up, but I greatly
5 appreciate all of the cooperation. It's an
6 exciting opportunity for Philadelphia. It may
7 be situated in West Parkside, but all of
8 Philadelphia will benefit from this great
9 school. And I appreciate the School
10 District's vision, their partnership with
11 Microsoft and certainly the City of
12 Philadelphia, as well as the Fairmount Park
13 Commission.

14 There are a lot of players
15 participating in this, and sometimes when we
16 get to these moments, we assume that it all
17 just kind of came together. It most of the
18 time doesn't work that way. So there are a
19 lot of people who deserve a lot of credit,
20 many of whom will be at the table, and I just
21 appreciate the opportunity to introduce the
22 legislation.

23 Thank you, Madam Chair.

24 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
25 You're welcome, Councilman Nutter.

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2 Shall we ask Majority Leader

3 Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell, who, as you
4 said, co-shepherded this initiative.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We are
6 very excited. We have a lot of hearings all
7 day, as I said. This is a good one, a
8 positive one, and we're excited about the
9 opportunity to have this, quote/unquote,
10 School of the Future out there in an area
11 where my constituents and kids from the Third
12 District and the Fourth District share, as
13 well as citywide, the opportunity for this
14 great school.

15 School is always a good thing, and
16 to have a wonderful school like this is just a
17 win-win for us all. So we're happy to be a
18 part of trying to garner support among our
19 colleagues for this and thank everyone.

20 Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank
21 everyone for being here and being involved.

22 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
23 You're welcome, Councilwoman Blackwell.

24 With that, we will now ask our
25 testifiers to please come forward, and the

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2 first panel includes the following: Debra
3 Kahn, Secretary of Education; Karen Borski,
4 Executive Director for the Fairmount Park
5 Commission; Ellen Savitz, representing the
6 Philadelphia School District; and Joan
7 Schlotterbeck, Commissioner for Public
8 Property.

9 Please be seated. We'll start with
10 Debra Kahn, Secretary of Education. Please
11 state your name for the record and proceed
12 with your testimony.

13 MS. DEBRA KAHN: Thank you very
14 much. My name is Debra Kahn, Secretary of
15 Education for the City of Philadelphia.

16 Let me say good morning to the
17 Chair, Councilwoman Reynolds Brown; Vice
18 Chair, Councilman Goode, and the other members
19 of the Committee and Members of Council.

20 I too am absolutely very happy to be
21 here this morning on behalf our Administration
22 in support of the bills that have already been
23 read into the record and the titles as well.

24 As the Chair has already introduced,
25 with me at the table are Karen Borski, the

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2 Executive Director of Fairmount Park
3 Commission, and Ellen Savitz, the Chief
4 Development Officer of the School District,
5 who is spearheading this project at the School
6 District, and Joan Schlotterbeck, the
7 Commissioner of Public Property.

8 Let me please begin my testimony,
9 and with your permission, what I'd like to do
10 is just offer a brief introduction and then
11 have Ms. Savitz discuss and present some of
12 the highlights of the project, the main
13 features of the School of the Future and then
14 ask Ms. Borski to review the highlights of the
15 ground lease and actually the terms and
16 conditions of that transaction.

17 Let me begin by expressing our very
18 deep appreciation for the tremendous
19 collaboration that is underway among Microsoft
20 Corporation, the School District, the
21 Fairmount Park Commission, many City agencies
22 and the West Parkside community, which has
23 enabled the project to proceed to this point.

24 We appreciate Councilman Nutter's
25 comments. It's very correct, it didn't just

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2 happen. And we also really have appreciated
3 all along the way City Council's tremendous
4 involvement already, your knowledge of the
5 project, your attention to the information
6 that's been provided and the attendance of
7 many of you at the ground breaking, at the
8 ceremonial ground breaking, that occurred just
9 a few weeks ago. All of your suggestions and
10 comments have been very, very helpful along
11 the way.

12 Microsoft Corporation has shown
13 great confidence in Philadelphia by investing
14 its leadership, its reputation, its brain
15 power and its dedication to innovation in this
16 new venture, and as I think you will hear, we
17 really intend to make the most of this
18 opportunity.

19 The School of the Future is big news
20 for Philadelphia. It will be the first new
21 from-the-ground-up high school that's built by
22 the School District since Edison High School
23 opened in the late '80s. With Ms. Savitz
24 here, however, I'd be remiss if I didn't
25 include in that history our magnificent High

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2 School of the Creative and Performing Arts,
3 which was largely both a renovation and an
4 addition project. But the point is, this is
5 big news and not something that happens in
6 Philadelphia every year.

7 And for me, the excitement of this
8 project is really both symbolic and
9 substantive. It's symbolic because it
10 represents how far we've come to improve the
11 prospects for public education in our City.

12 It was only three short years ago
13 that Mayor Street reached an agreement with
14 Former Governor Schweiker to install a new
15 governing arrangement, obtained more funding
16 and improved the overall quality and
17 performance of our School District.

18 This cutting-edge project, which has
19 drawn the attention of businesses and
20 educators around the world, might not have
21 been dreamed even possible back then, but it
22 surely is a sign today that public education
23 in Philadelphia is forward thinking and on the
24 right track.

25 Substantively, I think the School of

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2 the Future is even more exciting. In every
3 aspect, as you will hear, the design, the
4 technology, the approach to instruction, will
5 break new ground. For the students who are
6 fortunate to attend, this partnership promises
7 to offer them a much-improved educational
8 experience and that those lessons will be
9 spread around the School District and indeed
10 around the world to all of the other students
11 who learn and teachers, the teaching and
12 learning lessons that we gain through the use
13 of technology, so that Philadelphia's
14 graduates will be competitive in a 21st
15 century that we can only begin to imagine.

16 The school will also offer, we
17 think, great benefits adults as a community
18 meeting and learning facility. We anticipate
19 that there will be great interest in using the
20 school's public spaces, and our Administration
21 has urged the School District to be especially
22 accommodating to these requests.

23 The School District leadership
24 approached our Administration early on in the
25 planning process for assistance in securing a

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2 site for this special school. At the Mayor's
3 suggestion, because of the significance of
4 this project, we took the unusual step of
5 exploring the use of parkland and settled on
6 the location at 40th and Parkside because of
7 its many advantages for this project.

8 Though the site offers natural
9 beauty, the School of the Future will not
10 really be isolated. It will be part of the
11 West Philadelphia community and complement the
12 development work that's been underway in
13 Parkside.

14 We are very grateful to the
15 neighbors for taking an interest in the
16 project and offering their advice and support,
17 and to the School District for its commitment
18 to be a good neighbor in the park and in the
19 community.

20 The location is also accessible to
21 students throughout the City, a factor that's
22 very important in fulfilling the enrollment
23 plan for the school, which is to serve young
24 people within West Philadelphia and also
25 citywide.

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2 Lastly, the site presents
3 opportunities for sharing public spaces
4 between the school and the park, principally
5 the athletic fields, which will be utilized by
6 students during school hours and by the
7 general public in the evenings and on
8 weekends.

9 The School of the Future is on a
10 tight timetable, as are you in City Council
11 today, in order to meet the goal of opening in
12 September of 2006, and for this reason, we are
13 respectfully requesting approval of the
14 ordinances and again express our appreciation
15 to you for hearing these ordinances today so
16 that final adoption can occur on December 16th
17 and the construction that's planned by the
18 School District for February can begin.

19 Thank you very much, and now I'd
20 like to have Ellen Savitz describe the
21 project.

22 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
23 Thank you for your testimony.

24 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Good morning
25 again, Madam Chair and Members of the Council

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2 Committee.

3 I can't begin to tell you how
4 grateful we are for the support that we
5 received from all of you. This is one of
6 those projects, again, where it's sort of an
7 eclipse and all the planets have to line up,
8 or whatever it is. All of the planets had to
9 line up perfectly and all the forces had to
10 come together, and you've done it. And so
11 despite a million reasons why this couldn't
12 happen, this is happening, with your support
13 and the support of many.

14 So we're really excited about this
15 being a collective project of many, many
16 people and everybody feeling that this is a
17 real win for the City.

18 I want to mention that I have with
19 me Charles Allen, my colleague, who is the
20 Project Manager for the education side of
21 this, and he has some information that he'd
22 like to have distributed, if someone can come
23 down and take these folders and give them to
24 you. And while that's happening, I'll
25 continue to go on in the interest of time.

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2 I also want to mention I have Mary
3 Cullinane with me. Mary is the Technology
4 Architect for Microsoft that has been loaned
5 to this project for three years and has been
6 incredible in forcing us to challenge our
7 beliefs and really put in place not only
8 what's possible but what is appropriate and
9 right to do.

10 We expect that the learnings that we
11 get from the School of the Future will raise
12 the level of debate about education throughout
13 the United States, as well as the world.

14 To give you an idea what a big thing
15 this is for Philadelphia, the little
16 ground-breaking ceremony that we had several
17 weeks ago to symbolically announce the school
18 got 4 million media hits. Everyone in the
19 world is interested in this project and
20 looking at this project, because this is about
21 a new way to teach kids and a discovery of
22 what education should be in the 21st century.

23 We have drilled down into the
24 classroom and the teaching and learning
25 process in and out of the classroom and

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2 thought about what makes education relevant
3 and continuous and adaptive for kids, what we
4 can do using technology as a tool but using
5 basic instructional methods that will produce
6 best practices.

7 So besides the beautiful building,
8 which clearly has been designed with the
9 community and with the education department
10 and with our design and construction folks to
11 really serve the end users, we have a lot
12 going on in terms of creating a new way of
13 looking at teaching and learning that we
14 expect to share and Microsoft, of course,
15 expects to share with the world as we go
16 forward.

17 I want to talk about the community
18 briefly, and if you don't mind, I'm going to
19 go up here so I can actually show you.

20 The first floor of the building was
21 designed very much to meet community needs.
22 There are community basketball courts and so
23 on in Memorial Hall, which will be lost as it
24 gets renovated into the Please Touch Museum.
25 So we worked hard to try to provide that so

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2 that there wouldn't be a loss of those kinds
3 of bids.

4 So this is the first floor. You
5 walk in, and over here is -- we're calling it
6 the Interactive Learning Center. What you
7 would think of is a library, but this is for
8 adults and kids to be able to come in and
9 either learn technology, use technology, work
10 together. There's a wonderful little small
11 room here where kids can just gather, and this
12 will be available to the community perhaps
13 during the day on a scheduled basis, but
14 certainly after school.

15 There is a fitness center here for
16 both the community and the kids in the
17 building, two gyms back here, which will be
18 scheduled for a variety of community
19 activities.

20 During the day, the cafeteria, food
21 court for the kids. It has an outside little
22 balcony where for good weather they will have
23 tables, and that will be a great meeting place
24 for various people from the community, large
25 and small.

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2 And then over here is the theatre,
3 and the theatre picture is here. What we've
4 done at some expense, but which we really
5 think makes a difference, these little
6 sections of the auditorium, this is the stage,
7 regular chairs, you can turn these so they
8 face also auditorium seats or they close, the
9 floor moves, so that if somebody wants a small
10 place that seats 50 or 60, they could do that
11 during the school day and we could still have
12 an assembly, or whatever was going on here, or
13 music practice back here and we could
14 accommodate community meetings or meetings
15 that Members of City Council or Government
16 want to do. So those are very special spaces.

17 We expect to do a large arts program
18 here. There will be a graphic arts studio,
19 which will also use the technology. There is
20 a full music program. We think that we might
21 be able to combine with the community to do
22 musicals or performances that would be
23 fund-raisers for us and the various community
24 groups.

25 We have really worked hard to listen

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2 to the members of the community, because this
3 is a community school, and we're very, very
4 excited about that.

5 We're going to be offering after
6 school, once the school day ends, there will
7 be sports, there will be technology classes,
8 there will be adult seniors coming in to tutor
9 or mentor our students, but there will also be
10 availability for instruction for seniors, so
11 that if they want to come in and learn how to
12 e-mail their grandchildren, we'll have courses
13 to do that.

14 Many of our seniors have little or
15 no knowledge of the whole technology piece.
16 We're going to bring them in, because all the
17 students are going to have their own device, a
18 personal computer, and they're going to take
19 those home to their families and their
20 parents, and we want the entire community and
21 hopefully take advantage of the wide web that
22 the Mayor has proposed so that there will be
23 access to computers and to the Internet and
24 various other things from people's homes or
25 right outside them, because the entire City

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2 will be wireless.

3 So we're particularly excited about
4 the fact that this is a community school with
5 others coming in, joining the community and
6 where members of the community can tell us
7 what they want to do. So that's very
8 exciting.

9 There are other pieces of the plan
10 that you could look at over here. I won't
11 take up too much of your time. We really
12 tried to make sure that the design took into
13 account largely the beautiful setting that
14 it's in.

15 So this is a vista from the third
16 floor hallway, which will be totally glassed
17 in at the end, and you see the park and a
18 little bit of the Civil War Memorial.

19 We designed a building -- and our
20 architects are here. I want to recognize
21 them, Scott Prisco and Joe Vasta. They
22 designed a building with no front, no back,
23 every angle, because it faces Memorial Hall
24 sort of here and Lansdowne Avenue and Parkside
25 Avenue. So there is actually a main entrance

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2 in the front, but all of the vistas, all of
3 the elevations don't look like the back.
4 Everything looks like a very beautiful piece
5 of a beautiful building, and that way,
6 wherever you are in the park and however the
7 park Centennial project develops, we will be
8 right there with them.

9 So you can see the elevations here,
10 and this sort of gives you a sense of the park
11 and what the building will look like. It's
12 gorgeous and it's set up for the kind of
13 instruction that we want to do and the kind of
14 interaction with the world that we want to
15 achieve.

16 I'm going to stop, but I'd like to
17 call Reba Smallwood to the microphone, because
18 there have been issues about MBEC related to
19 this project and many others, and we've worked
20 on that very carefully, and I wanted Reba to
21 explain it to you before we even get into it,
22 and then, of course, you'll have questions.

23 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

24 Thank you very, Ellen Savitz.

25 Welcome. Good morning.

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2 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: Good

3 morning, Chairman and Members of Council.

4 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

5 Please state your name for the record.

6 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: My name is

7 Reba Smallwood. I'm Director of Small

8 Business Development for the School District.

9 I'll make this quick, because we
10 have been partners with the City since the
11 inception of the new anti-discrimination
12 policy and we have had Council people that are
13 invited to share information -- for us to
14 share information with to keep you on board.

15 So what I want you to know is the
16 same process and the same commitment that we
17 have had with our anti-discrimination policy
18 that's in place will certainly be enforced in
19 this project. And like she said, the world is
20 looking at this project. Everyone wants a
21 piece of it. So the outreach, the information
22 sessions, the training that we do in the
23 normal course of our anti-discrimination
24 policy and monitoring will be done on this
25 project.

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2 We have taken the best of the City's
3 policy and the best of the School District's
4 policy and merged into an anti-discrimination
5 policy for this project only, and by doing
6 that, we were able to include employment goals
7 that were not in the normal School District
8 policy.

9 And those goals for participation on
10 the contracts and the employment will be
11 established on a contract-by-contract basis.
12 So where you see overall goal of 25 percent,
13 that's at the end of the day. When contracts
14 might come in that might lend itself to 45
15 percent participation, that will be it, but
16 there will be some where there won't be that
17 level. But at the end of the day, 25 percent,
18 one quarter of the participation on those
19 contracts, we want to be from minority and
20 women-owned companies.

21 The information will go out in every
22 bid. Every bid that goes out for the capital
23 program will have the ranges established by
24 the City of Philadelphia, which we include in
25 our bids as they go out. So it's no secret

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2 when the time comes to bid on these projects
3 what the responsibility is of the prime
4 contractors and the subcontractors. All of
5 them will also be given out at pre-bid
6 conferences and advertise them. We have
7 opportunity alerts.

8 So we will keep the City informed
9 and Council informed about the opportunities.

10 So I'm just here to ensure you, this
11 is a commitment, and anyone that has worked
12 with us or me for the last 18 years knows that
13 this is something that is a commitment and
14 that is real and meaningful and will be
15 carried out.

16 So I'll be here for questions as you
17 question the others, and thank you.

18 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Thank you,
19 Reba and I'm going to hand the microphone over
20 to another miracle worker on this project,
21 Karen Borski, from the Park Commission, the
22 Executive Director, who really helped us get
23 far in this project.

24 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
25 There are a number of Council colleagues,

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2 including myself, who will have many questions
3 across the board. What I'd like to do,
4 Councilman Nutter, is to roll through the
5 testimony, get that on the record and then
6 open it up to what I'm sure will be a series
7 of questionings.

8 Ellen, forgive me.

9 Karen Borski, Executive Director for
10 the Fairmount Park Commission.

11 MS. KAREN BORSKI: Thank you,
12 Madam Chair.

13 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
14 Please state your name for the record.

15 MS. KAREN BORSKI: Yes. I am
16 Karen Borski, Executive Director, Fairmount
17 Park Commission, and I appreciate the
18 opportunity to be here today to comment on the
19 actual terms of the ground lease between the
20 School District of Philadelphia and the
21 Fairmount Park Commission for this project.

22 The actual terms of the lease I'd be
23 happy to go through as a question and answer
24 segment of it. We addressed this whole issue
25 over the last 18 months or so, looking to make

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2 sure that it moves forward in the interest of
3 the School District and the Microsoft effort
4 in creating a School of the Future in West
5 Fairmount Park, and at the same time, working
6 to establish the mission of Fairmount Park,
7 keep that intact, let it grow in this growing
8 partnership with the School District as we
9 move forward.

10 Fairmount Park's issues were all met
11 in the course of that lease agreement. We're
12 very happy with the final result. There is a
13 grant consideration. There is improvement and
14 maintenance of our athletic fields. There is
15 an acre-for-acre equivalency swap so that the
16 Fairmount Park Commission did not, in effect,
17 lose land in this process.

18 So as our considerations were met,
19 I'd be happy to talk about anything specific
20 that the Council Members would want to
21 address. Thank you.

22 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
23 We appreciate your willingness to allow us to
24 address our questions to areas you discuss
25 during the Q and A. That helps us enormously,

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2 although we're not going to rush through this,
3 but to use that particular method would be
4 fine.

5 Let's then invite up Joan
6 Schlotterbeck, our City's Commissioner for
7 Public Property.

8 Good morning.

9 MS. JOAN SCHLOTTERBECK: Good
10 morning. I'm Joan Schlotterbeck, Public
11 Property Commissioner.

12 Basically I'm here today to lend --

13 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN: I
14 want you to be comfortable. Have a seat.

15 MS. JOAN SCHLOTTERBECK: Have a
16 seat? I didn't even realize she got up.

17 I'm here today to totally support
18 both Bills for the School of the Future, and
19 that's my main purpose for being here today.

20 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
21 Thank you very, very, very much, Commissioner.

22 MS. JOAN SCHLOTTERBECK: You're
23 welcome.

24 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
25 Ellen, in your introductions, you quickly

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2 introduced us to the architects. Please state
3 their names again for the record, as well as
4 the construction managers on this project, for
5 the record, and those who are represented here
6 today.

7 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Sure. The
8 architects are the Prisco Group. Present
9 today is Scott Prisco and Joe Vasta, who is
10 the Project Manager. That's V-A-S-T-A. And
11 we have met with many, many members of the
12 Prisco team, but they are representing them
13 today.

14 Also here is Bill Carter from
15 Gilbane, who is the Construction Manager, and
16 they have also been exceptional in pushing
17 this along and figuring out the best way and
18 the most economic way to do this job.

19 We also have two people from our
20 design and construction department who have
21 really worked diligently on this project.
22 They're School District folks, and that's
23 Terry Wilson and Joe Joseph, who are sitting
24 right here.

25 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

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2 As a former teacher, we want to put the names
3 with the faces. So we want to ask those
4 gentlemen to call their names so that we can
5 put the name with the faces and have them
6 rise.

7 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Okay.

8 Great.

9 Would you, Joe?

10 MR. JOE JOSEPH: My name is Joe
11 Joseph. I'm the Project Executive from the
12 School District of Philadelphia.

13 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
14 Thank you. And?

15 MR. TERRY WILSON: I'm Terry
16 Wilson. I'm in the Deputy Design Management
17 for Philadelphia School District.

18 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
19 And the other three gentlemen that did not
20 rise?

21 MR. BILL CARTER: Bill Carter,
22 CM for Gilbane Building Company.

23 MR. SCOTT PRISCO: Scott Prisco
24 with the Prisco Group, architectural process.

25 MR. JOE VASTA: Joe Vasta,

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2 Prisco Group, Project Manager.

3 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
4 We thank you very much and welcome you to
5 these chambers.

6 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: And you
7 should probably also note for the record,
8 Mary, if you would stand up.

9 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
10 Yes, indeed.

11 MS. MARY Cullinane: Mary
12 Cullinane from Microsoft Corporation.

13 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
14 Welcome.

15 I will begin with a couple of
16 questions and then give all of my colleagues
17 an opportunity to offer questioning, and mine
18 appear in no particular order.

19 Please speak to the enrollment plan,
20 both West Philadelphia young people as well as
21 citywide.

22 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Well, the
23 premise for the school was that students who
24 have been very successful in their previous
25 educational experiences and students who have

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2 not can all rise, because they will have a
3 nurturing, challenging environment, because
4 they will have instruction that is geared to
5 adapting to their learning styles and they
6 will have the empowerment of the technology to
7 move them forward, or if they're on level, to
8 move them higher, so that eventually they will
9 all be, by the end of ninth grade, we hope,
10 fully --

11 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
12 Equipped.

13 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: -- equipped
14 to go on and move.

15 It's a college-bound curriculum.
16 And it is a neighborhood school essentially,
17 but it is also a magnet school. The way we're
18 going to work it is, 75 percent of the
19 population -- and the school will top out at
20 around 750 kids.

21 So we will start with the ninth
22 grade class in September '06, and 75 percent
23 of the members of that class will come from
24 the theatre pattern that we have determined,
25 which takes in a very large area of West

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2 Philadelphia, both in Councilman Nutter's
3 district and in Councilwoman Blackwell's
4 district. And they're be selected, by the
5 way, by lottery. They will apply and we will
6 just simply select whatever the 75 percent
7 number is.

8 Then the other 25 percent will be a
9 lottery from anywhere in the City, and those
10 students apply as they would apply to any
11 magnet school and they will be selected by
12 lottery. Those percentages could change as
13 demographics change or as the school really
14 gets up and running and the school
15 administration feels that they want to tinker
16 with that a little, with consultation,
17 obviously, from Council and the School
18 District, and those decisions would be
19 carefully made.

20 But right now, we feel it's really
21 fair to the community, and it's a large
22 community that we've taken in. The map
23 actually is in your folders of what we've
24 defined as the community. And then 25 percent
25 for the City for anybody anywhere.

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2 So that's the enrollment process as
3 we've established it now. And they will apply
4 for the school next November this time or
5 December to go in September '06, because
6 that's when kids pick high schools. So we're
7 very excited.

8 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

9 Awareness and outreach becomes incredibly
10 important. Can you speak to how the world you
11 just described will be informed and alerted of
12 this enormous opportunity.

13 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Many of the
14 elementary schools in the area already are
15 aware of it, but we will do some serious
16 conversations. The students who could apply
17 are currently sixth graders. When they are
18 seventh grade, we will begin to visit each
19 school, have them understand what this is and
20 what it isn't, because for some kids it may
21 not be a fit.

22 So we're going to do a huge through
23 the whole school fair process and all of the
24 things we normally do to get out what high
25 school possibilities are. This will certainly

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2 be one of them, and use all of those
3 processes. But we will also be visiting -- a
4 team would be visiting every elementary
5 school, speaking to the seventh graders and
6 hopefully parents at the same time about what
7 the opportunities will be and what the school
8 really is, not what the hype says and not
9 what --

10 So we will do a big outreach, but we
11 thought at sixth grade it was a little too
12 early.

13 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
14 My second and final question for this round
15 goes to an issue where our City can and should
16 do better, and, that is, MBE and WBE
17 participation. I hear that 25 percent is the
18 established goal and that that may rise or not
19 depending upon the area of activity.

20 What measures, safeguards are in
21 place to hopefully exceed that goal?

22 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: I'm going to
23 let Reba talk to that.

24 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: Yes. We
25 fully intend to exceed the goal. Just as an

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2 example, the current professional services on
3 this contract for these gentlemen, the Prisco
4 Group and the others, even though the overall
5 goal is 25 percent, we achieved 42 percent in
6 that contract.

7 So that it's our outreach, our
8 weekly and monthly training, our opportunity
9 alerts. We have a network of activities that
10 we do to try to get the word out, and monitor
11 who comes in and what the responses are, so
12 that we have in place and we're looking every
13 day to see what additional things that we can
14 do to ensure that we don't have just a 25
15 percent. That's a floor. That is not the
16 ceiling. So I think that you'll be pleased at
17 the end of the day to see that we more than
18 achieved the goals that we've set.

19 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN: I
20 do have a follow-up, but I'm going to hold on
21 that, because it may very well be addressed by
22 one of my colleagues.

23 We'll now move to the Councilman
24 representing the Fourth Councilmanic District,
25 Councilman Michael Nutter. We'll do five

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2 minutes per round and then we'll rotate again.

3 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you,
4 Madam Chair.

5 Ms. Savitz, let me go through a
6 couple items relatively quickly, just for the
7 mechanics of all this.

8 When do you expect to start the
9 project and when do you expect it to be
10 completed?

11 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Well, we're
12 hoping to begin the actual construction in
13 late February, early March, depending on the
14 weather, and then, again, on a very fast
15 track. But I have to say that one of the
16 reasons that we are trying to do this as
17 quickly as possible is because there are kids
18 in the City -- and we're only going to be able
19 to help 750 of them here, but I suspect that
20 there will be calls for this kind of school in
21 other sections of the City, and we are using
22 the learning that we're doing for all of our
23 new schools and for some of our other schools
24 as well.

25 So in order to get this out there

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2 and ready for kids by '06, we have to do some
3 very serious bumping up of the construction
4 schedule, but we fully expect the building to
5 be open and ready for the ninth grade class in
6 September '06. Hopefully it will be finished
7 by August 1st. There may still be a few
8 things that need tinkering, but that's the
9 plan.

10 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, when
11 you started and you said you hoped to start in
12 late February, early March, is there something
13 that might interfere with that?

14 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: I doubt it.
15 We have to go out for bid and we have to wait
16 for the bids to come back, and then they need,
17 whoever is chosen as the contractor, needs
18 apparently a window of time to get certain
19 certifications and to get their trailers in
20 place. You know, I'm talking about stuff that
21 is not my forte, but assuming that the bids go
22 well and everything goes as it should, we're
23 going to start -- maybe I should check.

24 The current plan is to start in mid
25 February. I told you, this is a little

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2 miracle that we're all going to be lucky to
3 participate in.

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you.
5 I think you answered this question already,
6 but I want to make sure that I'm clear. In
7 terms of students, the prospective ninth
8 graders, their parents would fill out, I don't
9 know, EH 36 or 38 for November of 2005?

10 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Right. And
11 my wonderful colleague reminded me that those
12 kids would be seventh graders now and would be
13 going into eighth grade next year. So we will
14 have to begin to really pump up the outreach
15 for this spring.

16 They're going to fill in. There is
17 a regular Philadelphia high school selection
18 form. They will fill that out. They may put
19 Central or Bock or this school, whatever it
20 turns out to be named, and then we will do a
21 lottery and then inform the ones that have
22 been accepted.

23 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Now, from a
24 previous discussion, it is my understanding
25 that since this technically is a neighborhood

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2 school, the boundaries from which students
3 will be considered for the 75 percent
4 component goes as far as, let's say, part of
5 University City to either the south or the
6 east, working itself pretty much west up
7 through the Cobbs Creek area and north of
8 Market out to where City Avenue intersects
9 with the Schuylkill Expressway, and the river
10 is the other boundary. Is that correct?

11 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: The map is
12 in your folder. We actually moved it around a
13 little bit at the suggestion of a variety of
14 people and in response to your questions when
15 we met last time, Councilman. So it now goes
16 up further on City Avenue up to Kelly Drive
17 and then, as you said, goes down through the
18 University City area.

19 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So these
20 are the official boundaries for the school?

21 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: These are
22 the official boundaries for the school.

23 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay. And
24 tell me a little bit about the outreach plan
25 in terms of these now seventh graders who may

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2 or may not at the moment have the School of
3 the Future at the forefront of their minds.
4 How are they and their parents going to find
5 out about this?

6 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Well, this
7 spring, probably March, April, May, because
8 they won't be making a decision until the
9 fall, we need to gather the seventh grade
10 students and their parents. We used to go out
11 and describe Creative and Performing Arts. I
12 asked for a meeting and parents were invited,
13 and they came.

14 If parents don't seem to be able to
15 get there, we will go visit a home and school
16 meeting or a community meeting or whatever we
17 can.

18 It is very important that this
19 community understands and, frankly, the
20 community at large -- and we'll have to figure
21 out how we get it out to all of them -- that
22 they have an option to do the school, and by
23 then, it will be in construction, they will
24 realize it's going to happen and we will
25 describe that.

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2 So through March, April and May,
3 through my office and the educators, we'll go
4 out to schools, reach out to parents. If they
5 don't come to the schools when we want to talk
6 to them, we'll go to their community
7 organizations.

8 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: How are you
9 going to deal with parents who have possibly a
10 seventh grader who is not presently a student
11 in the Philadelphia public school system but
12 who live within the boundaries for this,
13 quote/unquote, neighborhood school?

14 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: They are
15 eligible to apply. We clearly picked out --
16 there are schools within this area, but one of
17 the reasons we moved the boundary up is that
18 while there are no schools in the additional
19 piece that we added, there are folks living
20 there whose kids may not be in our system at
21 the moment or may be in our system.

22 So if you live within this catchment
23 area, you may apply. Whether you attend a
24 Philadelphia public school now or not,
25 assuming we need to see -- obviously we'll be

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2 checking for deeds or leases or something that
3 confirms addresses, because we've already
4 gotten at least six or seven application
5 comments or questions, and I suspect there
6 will be great interest. So we will be
7 checking addresses carefully.

8 But, yes, anybody in the area,
9 Councilman, may apply.

10 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Okay.

11 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
12 Last and final question for this round.

13 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: We can go.

14 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
15 What did you say, Councilman?

16 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I have
17 more, but it's the tail end of the year and in
18 the Christmas spirit, I'm adjusting myself.
19 I'm actually giving time back. It's a new me.

20 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
21 Thank you, Councilman Nutter. Thank you very
22 much.

23 We will now proceed then to
24 Councilman Frank Rizzo.

25 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I just have

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2 one short question. It's more a curiosity
3 question than anything.

4 Could you explain why we need to
5 involve ourselves in a lease? Why isn't this
6 just a gift from the Fairmount Park Commission
7 to the School District? Why do we have to do
8 a lease arrangement to get this accomplished?

9 MS. KAREN BORSKI: I think the
10 answer is just the way of doing business. We
11 have had ground gifted to us, but I don't know
12 that anywhere in Commission history have we
13 really as a Commission in any sort of form
14 bequeathed land to others. We have lease
15 arrangements and license agreements all over
16 the City with various athletic organizations
17 and things like that.

18 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But this is
19 not an athletic organization. This is the
20 School District.

21 MS. KAREN BORSKI: Right. It's
22 sort of an interesting question almost after
23 the fact.

24 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: This is the
25 School District of Philadelphia.

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2 MS. KAREN BORSKI: Right. I
3 think that that was probably our greatest
4 interest in making this work, was that we did
5 want to partner with the School District in a
6 very successful way.

7 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: What
8 significance does the lease have? What does
9 it do to complicate in the next century, the
10 next decades? Would it be better to revisit
11 it and look at a clean acquisition rather than
12 a lease?

13 Again, I'm not sure whether there's
14 any significance, lease versus gift, but at
15 least the legalese should be able to tell us
16 if there is potentially any complication.
17 Matter of fact, I'm thinking now, maybe on my
18 feet here, that it's better that it's a lease
19 because you never know if the City would start
20 to sell assets and that would block, I would
21 believe, any potential sale of the school to
22 turn it into a Bally's.

23 MS. KAREN BORSKI: Right. No.
24 I think that we looked carefully at the
25 protection issued.

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2 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Really
3 getting a comfort level here. Can we take a
4 recess?

5 MS. KAREN BORSKI: Councilman,
6 I have a Commission meeting later this
7 afternoon. Don't get me in any trouble here.

8 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But I think
9 it's something that we should really look at.
10 Does it tie the School District up?

11 MS. KAREN BORSKI: Right;
12 and/or the park system. I can come at it more
13 from that angle.

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Councilman,
15 I would think the real issue for us is -- I
16 think the director is correct. We would never
17 just give anyone any park land, but, secondly,
18 were something to happen in the future, we
19 still own the land. And I would now ask more
20 of a lease question. If somehow some way the
21 school went out of business, do we take the
22 property as well, the improved -- I mean, we
23 take the building as well, right?

24 MS. KAREN BORSKI: Yes.

25 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: If we gave

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2 away the land, someone else would own it, who
3 could then do whatever they wanted to do. So
4 I think we have the ultimate control over
5 forever. This is a 40-year lease with four
6 ten-year renewals? Right. So you got 80
7 years of lease time. I don't think we could
8 ever want to give -- I mean, as wonderful as
9 the company may be, we always want to hold
10 onto our land.

11 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Good.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: We love
13 real estate. Thank you.

14 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thanks.

15 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
16 Anything else, Councilman Rizzo?

17 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: That's
18 enough.

19 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
20 For now.

21 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: For now.

22 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
23 Councilman Jim Kenney, please.

24 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you,
25 Madam Chair.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

3 You're welcome.

4 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you,
5 Madam Chair. I appreciate the opportunity to
6 ask some questions.

7 First I'd like to comment on the
8 School District overall. With the exception
9 of some tragic incidents that happened
10 recently, I'd just like to say that since this
11 new governance scheme went into place and
12 since the advent of Mr. Vallas and the staff
13 and the elevation of people like yourself,
14 Ellen, to positions of leadership, I think the
15 School District has turned itself around
16 tremendously. I really do.

17 I think it should be proud of
18 itself, proud of its kids, and as someone who
19 has perhaps been critical in the past, I
20 really do feel like there's a team effort
21 within the District and also within the
22 Government and Council to really make this
23 stuff work. I sense no more whining, no more
24 complaining, do the work, create our
25 relationships in Harrisburg, get the money

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2 that we can get and get more if we can get it
3 and move forward. And I just want to commend
4 you all, and Paul. He's not here, but I just
5 want to say what a wonderful job that I think
6 you guys have been doing.

7 This is the example of how a private
8 company can have faith in a district when the
9 district takes care of its own business and
10 moves forward, and I think that stuff is going
11 to continue to come.

12 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: And I'm
13 sorry that Paul isn't here to hear that. I
14 will relate it, certainly. I was supposed to
15 start by giving you apologies. We have a
16 School Reform Commission meeting today and
17 Mr. Vallas needed to be present there, but he
18 wanted to apologize for his absence and
19 express his gratitude, and I neglected to do
20 that, so I don't know if I'll be here next
21 week. But I will tell him.

22 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Speaking
23 for myself, I actually look forward to you
24 guys coming in here now as opposed to past
25 years appearances. Thank you.

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2 A suggestion: I know a number of
3 private schools have what they call a
4 pre-eighth grade summer program, pre-ninth
5 grade summer program. Sometimes the pre-ninth
6 grade is required because kids are having
7 difficulty in certain areas.

8 Is there any thought to once the
9 school is up and running that when kids are
10 selected through lottery, that they are
11 encouraged or even perhaps required based on
12 their grades to come in for a six-week period
13 daily? And I know these pre-eighth and
14 pre-ninth summer programs are not all school
15 work. You come in, you do a certain number of
16 work in the classroom, you have some
17 recreation activity, you have some social
18 interaction and some other things.

19 I really do think -- and my son went
20 through at St. Joe's Prep both pre-eighth and
21 pre-ninth, and when he started as a freshman
22 in September two years ago, he was acclimated
23 to the school. He knew the people, he knew
24 his classmates, he knew his teachers, he knew
25 where the bathrooms were and where the

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2 classrooms were.

3 Is there any thought to doing that?
4 Not a summer school program, not a mandatory
5 summer school program, but this kind of
6 getting ready for school? Plus it takes them
7 off the street in the summer and puts them in
8 an air conditioned buildings and it's a lot of
9 fun.

10 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: I'm going to
11 give the microphone to Mary Cullinane, because
12 we have given some great thought to this. So
13 I'll let her answer that question.

14 MS. MARY CULLINANE: Thank you.
15 And on behalf of Microsoft Corporation, I'd
16 like to thank the City of Philadelphia and the
17 Councilmen's support of this initiative.

18 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I think we
19 ought to that thank you. We appreciate your
20 being nice and polite, but we thank you, trust
21 us. Thank you. It's a great company.

22 MS. MARY Cullinane: We're
23 thrilled with the partnership.

24 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: It's a
25 great company and we're happy to be associated

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2 with it.

3 MS. MARY Cullinane: We are
4 truly thrilled with the partnership.

5 In response to your question, we've
6 given considerable thought to what we're
7 referring to as an acclimation program. So
8 having --

9 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
10 What type of program is that?

11 MS. MARY Cullinane: An
12 acclimation program.

13 So how do we acclimate not only the
14 students, but the parents and the families and
15 the community at large and the organizations
16 that will be associated on an ongoing basis to
17 what the experience will be like once the
18 students enter the buildings. And the more
19 acclimated they are prior to the beginning of
20 that school year, the more comfortable they
21 are, the more likely they'll be successful in
22 the beginning.

23 That period of transition from
24 eighth to ninth grade is a critical period of
25 transition, and that transition will be

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2 heightened to a certain degree because of the
3 changing environment that they're entering
4 into in this type of school.

5 So working with the elementary
6 schools in the area as well, so that that
7 orientation can begin to the thinking in the
8 seventh and eighth grade. Then an acclimation
9 period during the summer prior to them coming
10 into the ninth grade hopefully will mitigate
11 some of the challenges that they'll have in
12 September of their first year.

13 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And I
14 believe whether the child is accepted or
15 chosen by lottery or not, the opportunity for
16 a child to be in a pre-eighth, pre-ninth grade
17 program helps them with their studies moving
18 forward, regardless of where they go to
19 school.

20 MS. MARY Cullinane:
21 Absolutely. And since the goal truly of this
22 school is to take these lessons in this
23 environment created and have it permeated
24 throughout the district. Those lessons that
25 those students learn in the eighth grade will

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2 be transferable, regardless of the school that
3 they enter into.

4 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: The last
5 question I have relative to admission is, I've
6 not traditionally been a great fan of lottery
7 admission. Lottery with some type of
8 additional grading or discipline criteria,
9 those kinds of things, I've always been more
10 in favor of.

11 With this particular school, I think
12 the opportunity to do a lottery and do it
13 right makes sense in the beginning, because I
14 think the whole concept is to take kids who
15 are achievers, who are middle achievers and
16 underachievers, mix them together and let them
17 all achieve. So we can only really do that by
18 lottery.

19 Is there any issues or consideration
20 relative to this past discipline in the
21 lottery process? Achievement is one issue,
22 but discipline also is another issue. I'm
23 wondering whether or not there's going to be
24 any type of screening discipline-wise. Again,
25 if a kid is underachieving but not a

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2 discipline problem, certainly if he or she
3 wins the lottery, there's a tremendous
4 opportunity. But there's been a history of
5 discipline issues. How do we get off on the
6 right foot?

7 MS. MARY Cullinane: We've had
8 significant debate on that within the
9 Committee to establish the policy. There is
10 specific research and some thinking that says
11 discipline is an outgrowth or problems with
12 discipline is an outgrowth of a lack of
13 connectivity or a lack of relevance in their
14 instruction. So if you deal with that issue,
15 the discipline would go away.

16 So we do not want to prohibit those
17 individuals from experiencing the school,
18 because one could argue that their discipline
19 issues will go away once they do.

20 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And I think
21 with this school and this concept, I agree
22 with it. When some magnet schools, I don't
23 agree -- for example, we've always had a
24 discussion about Saul School. I mean, we've
25 had kids that have won the lottery to go to

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2 Saul, but don't like animals, but their
3 parents want them to go to Saul, which is a
4 recipe for disaster.

5 In this particular situation, I
6 think it's worth in the early years taking
7 that chance to see if that theory in fact
8 works.

9 MS. MARY Cullinane: Sure.

10 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I was just
11 wondering whether or not there's any review of
12 past discipline just so people are aware of
13 what the profile of the child is coming in.

14 MS. MARY Cullinane: As far as
15 a policy, to your point, we do not want to
16 look at that as a criteria. We really want to
17 be able to demonstrate that given appropriate
18 learning environments, success can be achieved
19 for all students. If at the end that needs to
20 be revisited in a few years, we have the
21 ability to do so.

22 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I think in
23 the beginning it's a sound theory.

24 Just one quick one. On the West
25 Philadelphia map, why is that little tail of

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2 Overbrook?

3 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
4 Repeat that, Councilman.

5 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: On the West
6 Philadelphia map where the school boundary is,
7 there's a little tail here of Overbrook that's
8 not in there, and I'm wondering why and where
9 do those kids go to school.

10 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Lamberton.

11 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Oh, okay.
12 It seems like an odd way to end it. I mean,
13 it could go to the point and it just cuts off,
14 and it just seemed odd; that's all.

15 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Our sense
16 was that Lamberton is a K to 12 school and
17 essentially the kids follow that pattern.

18 We are open to suggestion. It's a
19 very large area, but if there is strong
20 feeling that that area should also be
21 included, that's fine. What we're doing is,
22 we have kids from Overbrook High School, which
23 would normally attend Overbrook High School,
24 or University City High School, who would come
25 to this school and also help with some

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2 overcrowding issues at Overbrook and at U
3 City.

4 Lamberton High School does not have
5 an overcrowding issue. It's a very small
6 school. It has about 500 kids now or 450. So
7 relieving overcrowding in that area was not
8 helpful to the broad plan for the School
9 District. We were working --

10 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I'm sure
11 the District Council people have dealt with
12 this. It was curious to me because it just
13 seemed odd, and I understand the explanation.

14 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Great.
15 Thanks.

16 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thanks.

17 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
18 You have a quick follow-up on that?

19 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Just
20 additionally, as the district has, I guess,
21 the \$1.5 billion worth of school construction
22 or new construction, there is current
23 conversation going on about essentially a new
24 Lamberton.

25 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN: A

1 12/8/04 - Bills 041037 & 041038 - Parks

2 new?

3 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: A new
4 Lamberton School.

5 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: At least a
6 new Lamberton High School.

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Because
8 there has been severe overcrowding in the past
9 at Lamberton, and the condition of the
10 building has become one of the many issues
11 over there. And so I think the Lamberton
12 community may very well see itself having a
13 new school itself.

14 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
15 Very well.

16 Councilman Rizzo have a quick
17 follow-up, and then we will proceed to
18 Councilman Goode.

19 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Just to
20 follow up on Councilman Kenney's question, how
21 do we deal with an issue if it's a lottery
22 where there is a student that's identified,
23 that this is the career path that they want
24 and they really excel, they're geniuses before
25 they even get into that environment, and not

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2 to give them the access to that environment
3 would be not a good situation.

4 What if you identify, or within the
5 Administration, that there's a student that
6 really should go there because they're headed
7 towards the corporate world, college in the
8 area of computer science? How do you deal
9 with that? You have to have some kind of an
10 exception or some administrative way to deal
11 with that.

12 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Well, first
13 of all, this is not necessarily a career track
14 to working in the field of computers or
15 anything like that. This is a career track to
16 get kids ready for the world of work and be
17 totally equipped with both technology skills
18 and all of the academic skills that they need.

19 If the kids end up coming in and
20 they are ahead of many of the other students,
21 the way the program is designed, there will be
22 things for them to get involved in beyond the
23 regular classroom that will let them go as far
24 as they need to go.

25 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: That's not

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2 his question.

3 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: You're
4 suggesting that we have a small sort of
5 appointed kids because of -- that kind of goes
6 against the whole premise of the school.

7 The premise of the school is to
8 prepare these kids for college so they can be
9 doctors, lawyers, teachers, social workers.

10 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Architects.

11 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Architects .

12 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But what if
13 you have one --

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I don't
15 think that's the Councilman's question.

16 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: -- and the
17 principal, the teacher thinks that they're a
18 candidate, they're really going to be on that
19 track that you just described and they don't
20 win the lottery?

21 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: That's the
22 problem with winning the lottery.

23 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: What about a
24 kid that wins the lottery the doesn't want to
25 be there?

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2 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Some of
3 this, I think, will be honed in when a
4 specific advisory board and selection
5 committee is established. We are going to try
6 to be as fair as possible, because the belief
7 is that every kid can learn and achieve, and
8 it may mean that we lose some really
9 overachievers who are really anxious to get
10 in, but the premise of the school is, we're
11 going to bring kids in who can get better and
12 we're going to make them better and help them
13 get better.

14 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Because I
15 recollect people -- I've gotten letters from
16 parents that wanted to go to Saul for the
17 reason that their children were interested in
18 agriculture and could never get into Saul, and
19 what a lost opportunity in their education if
20 we have a school that helps prepare people for
21 their future and they can't get in it.

22 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
23 That goes to the editorial comment I will
24 make.

25 That happens all the time now for

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2 young people who want to get in magnet schools
3 and the lottery process is the method by which
4 that happens and the end result is not one
5 that makes the student or the parent happy.

6 So Microsoft School becomes another
7 school like the other magnet schools in the
8 City where young people apply, and the lottery
9 process allows some in and the lottery process
10 says no to others. It simply gets the same
11 criteria, if you will, that other schools are
12 currently enduring, and that's the way it is.

13 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: I do want to
14 say that we are looking at building new
15 schools and replicating this model throughout
16 the City, so that the hope is, very soon if a
17 kid doesn't get into this terrific school,
18 there will be another terrific school, a new
19 Lamberton or whatever, and some major changes
20 going on at Overbrook High School.

21 So I agree. Some win, some lose,
22 but it's an open opportunity and that's the
23 only way we can keep it fair.

24 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
25 Thank you, Ellen Savitz.

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2 Councilman W. Wilson Goode, round of
3 questioning.

4 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

5 I actually had a question e-mailed
6 to me while I was here and the person who
7 e-mailed the question wanted me to ask another
8 question first following up on what Councilman
9 Kenney pointed out about the Lamberton
10 community there.

11 This person actually lives within
12 that community, does not send their child to
13 that school because they don't believe that
14 school is at the level that it should be in
15 terms of education. So while the school may
16 not be overcrowded and while there may be a
17 new school built, I'm sure that rather than
18 sending their child to a private school which
19 they have to pay for, they would like the
20 opportunity to be able to send that child in a
21 couple of years to a Microsoft school.

22 So can you explain in that context
23 why the Lamberton community would not be
24 included in the catchment area?

25 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Well, we

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2 were looking at the broader picture citywide
3 of the overall \$1.5 billion plan and
4 Mr. Vallas's overall educational plan, and in
5 terms of that, we are targeting new schools.
6 We wanted to put this school in this area from
7 the beginning, because there is huge
8 overcrowding at Overbrook and huge
9 overcrowding at University City. There's also
10 overcrowding at West Philly and we're in the
11 process of planning a new West Philadelphia
12 High School as well.

13 And so we looked at schools at
14 placing -- now, we never really expected it to
15 end up in this gorgeous park setting, and
16 we're really grateful. But we looked at a
17 variety of properties in this area because
18 this has two big high schools that are very
19 overcrowded.

20 I understand your point, Councilman,
21 about the fact that people may not like
22 Lamberton at all and they send their kids
23 somewhere else. If they stay in City schools
24 on a parent-requested transfer, then the
25 assumption would be that they'd be in one of

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2 these and be able to apply.

3 But we can look at that. There's a
4 committee that -- the other thing is, there's
5 only 150 or 200 kids that can go into the
6 freshman class, and 75 percent of those is
7 really a small number. The demographics of
8 this area, there would be thousands of kids
9 who -- I don't know. Maybe not thousands, but
10 there's really a lot of kids from this area
11 that would apply and a lot of what I would
12 assume would be some very disappointed folks.

13 Adding another area just brings more
14 people and more disappointment in terms of who
15 gets selected. But we will look at it and see
16 what effect it would have demographically and
17 so on.

18 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Councilman
19 Nutter can correct me if I'm wrong. This is
20 an area that the City is marketing, where
21 there's a lot of people moving into for a
22 number of reasons, and I'm not sure why with
23 new purchases there in terms of homes and
24 marketing home purchases there that we would
25 be shutting people out of the process.

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2 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Okay. Point
3 well taken, and we will certainly go back and
4 look at that, sir.

5 COUNCILMAN GOODE: The question
6 was actually e-mailed to me, it was actually
7 from Ms. Smallwood, if she would approach the
8 witness table.

9 You've discussed the procurement
10 process related to construction. After the
11 school was built and it's up and running, how
12 would procurement be handled? Is there any
13 procurement that would be handled at an
14 individual school level because of the special
15 nature of the school, or will it follow the
16 normal procurement process?

17 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: In terms
18 of supplies, services and equipment, all of
19 those purchases of supplies, services,
20 equipment would go through the same
21 procurement process as we go through with the
22 construction.

23 We have ranges of participation that
24 we enforce on all of the contracts. So we
25 would have that same kind of commitment for

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2 those services.

3 COUNCILMAN GOODE: I guess the
4 question is whether it would be handled at the
5 individual school level or through the normal
6 process. And I'm not even sure how the
7 normal --

8 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: Probably
9 through the normal process, unless it was some
10 kind of procurement that was out outside of
11 the scope of services --

12 COUNCILMAN GOODE: That's
13 not --

14 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: -- that we
15 usually handle.

16 COUNCILMAN GOODE: That's not
17 done at the individual school level?

18 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: No, it's
19 not a school level. It's district-wide.

20 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

21 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
22 Councilman Nutter, please.

23 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you,
24 Madam Chair. I'll be quick.

25 Let me pick up where I was. I asked

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2 about the students and their application
3 process. I've also had inquiries from adults
4 with regard to teachers and, of course, then
5 the principal.

6 Given the most recent contract, tell
7 me a little bit about how a person becomes
8 potentially a teacher at the new school.

9 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: I'm actually
10 glad that you brought that up, Councilman.

11 The principal will be selected for
12 the school by a team of School District folks,
13 education people at the upper levels,
14 curriculum people, certainly Mary Cullinane on
15 the Committee and myself, and we will really
16 look for a principal. In fact, we're ready to
17 do that now. We are going to begin to
18 advertise for a principal as soon as we really
19 nail down the qualifications that we feel
20 we're looking for for this kind of school.

21 We're actually working on a
22 competency wheel similar to the competency
23 wheel that they use at Microsoft to hire, and
24 we're going to talk about that and establish
25 that so that we get a principal that is really

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2 a leader and can understand this kind of
3 school.

4 And then because the teachers'
5 contract changed, we are a new school and,
6 therefore, have the opportunity to select the
7 teachers for the first time. Now, then they
8 go under the PFT contract and we follow the
9 rules, but we will be able to get teachers
10 nationwide and bring them in and have them be
11 the best in their field and innovative.

12 We need people who are not only
13 sharp and know what to do, we need people who
14 are willing to take a risk and are willing to
15 work in a different environment. And we will
16 be bringing teachers on board -- the
17 principal, hopefully, will be on board before
18 the end of this school year, I guess a full
19 year and a summer before the school opens.

20 We're anxious to get the principal
21 because there are many issues that are now
22 being decided that we feel strongly the
23 principal should weigh in on.

24 Then we will look for staff probably
25 in the winter of '06, January, February or so

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2 of '06, and those staff members will be
3 brought on by about March.

4 Now, if they're working in our
5 system, they may keep their jobs and we'll do
6 a lot of after-school or weekend professional
7 development. Certainly in the summer prior to
8 the opening, teachers will meet together, work
9 together, help really polish off the
10 curriculum and build a sense of connectivity
11 and collective decision-making. So that we
12 have a real opportunity with this school to
13 select teachers who want to be in a school
14 like this and want to be innovative. So it's
15 really adding a nice level of being able to do
16 new things.

17 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So your
18 recruiting process for new teachers you expect
19 to start in the fall?

20 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Well, the
21 principal has to be in place by the end of
22 this year, and then next fall, late fall,
23 probably December, January, we'll begin to
24 identify teachers.

25 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And you're

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2 anticipating not only a district-wide, but
3 possibly a national notification that there's
4 an opportunity to teach at --

5 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: I think
6 we'll advertise nationally for the principal
7 as well as the teachers. Once they come in,
8 they become Philadelphia School District
9 employees and go through the process, but I
10 think there's people out there, and we've
11 actually met some of them, who would be
12 perfect for what the vision of the school is.
13 So we get to do that. Very, very helpful.

14 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Let me ask
15 Ms. Smallwood a question quickly and then I
16 want to --

17 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
18 Councilman Nutter, right before you bring up
19 Mrs. Smallwood, which I suspect may be on a
20 different issue, I would like Debra Kahn to
21 respond to your question as well.

22 MS. DEBRA KAHN: I think we got
23 to it. I just wanted to clarify that thanks
24 to the new contract, there is the ability to
25 do this hiring, but it would extend to current

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2 teachers, local teachers, as well as anybody
3 else who would answer.

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Right. I
5 just want to make sure that we're recognizing
6 the folks who are already in the system.

7 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
8 Yes. Thank you.

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Just
10 quickly, I know you have overall
11 responsibility. What individual will be
12 directly responsible to oversee the adherence
13 to the goals as established? And I understand
14 that the numbers that have been mentioned, the
15 25 percent, is more of a floor certainly than
16 as a ceiling. What individual is directly
17 responsible for monitoring and managing the
18 MBE, WBE, DBE process?

19 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: My office,
20 Small Business Development, is the seat of
21 where the responsibility lies in the Office of
22 Procurement Service under direction of
23 Kimberly Sangster, who is the Chief
24 Procurement Officer.

25 As a small unit, we have consultants

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2 who assist us in monitoring and reporting on
3 the compliance with the goals.

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And do I
5 understand that you've brought on a consultant
6 to do that?

7 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: GPUAC is a
8 consultant that works with us on the
9 construction process and will be monitoring
10 the contract goals and the employment goals
11 under the project.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So you're
13 going to be monitoring both the procurement of
14 whether it's a services, supplies and
15 equipment --

16 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: No.
17 They're on the construction side.

18 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: They're on
19 the construction side. Who is taking care of
20 the SSE?

21 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: And the
22 other in the procurement process will be the
23 staff in my office, along with -- we have
24 recently purchased a compliance software and
25 monitoring software, which will make it much

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2 easier for us to track, monitor and report on
3 the compliance.

4 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And have
5 you established goals, and who will be
6 monitoring the issue of employment at the
7 site, specifically whether it's neighborhood
8 people in general, minorities, females or any
9 others?

10 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: The ranges
11 of participation are established under our
12 contract with the Minority Business Enterprise
13 Council of the City. The City and the School
14 District work together. It's a partnership to
15 establish those goals.

16 Once the goals are established,
17 based on the information from the City,
18 they're included in every proposal and bid.
19 It's up to my office to do the monitoring of
20 the compliance with that.

21 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, we've
22 had such a good hearing.

23 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: I know.

24 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I mean,
25 with every respect to fellow public employees,

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2 I mean, this has not necessarily been a strong
3 area for us. So, I mean, I have to be,
4 unfortunately, somewhat brutally honest with
5 you to say that I don't necessarily get the
6 greatest comfort level if you tell me, us,
7 that there is a significant reliance on either
8 data or information or goal-setting as
9 established by the MBEC, which we all
10 acknowledge is going through a restructuring
11 process. But, I mean, they just have not, as
12 far as I'm concerned, in recent years been up
13 to the task. I mean, we need to call it for
14 what it is. So --

15 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: This is a
16 work in progress, and we understand that
17 issue. The School District of Philadelphia
18 does not certify, so that we rely on a
19 certification agency, but because we accept
20 certifications from around the country, we can
21 look at what Minority Business Enterprise
22 sends us, and it is a recommendation, which we
23 can accept or reject, but it gives us a basis
24 of what is available in the Philadelphia area.

25 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I

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2 understand. Well, I had to respond --

3 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: And I

4 understand your --

5 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: -- in that

6 way. I know that they're trying to do what

7 they need to do, but as either you or Ellen

8 indicated, there are a lot of people watching

9 what goes on here.

10 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: Exactly.

11 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: We cannot

12 afford a mess. I mean, I don't know how much

13 more basic I can kind of be about it. I mean,

14 there's probably another level, but --

15 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: And what

16 we're --

17 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: -- this is

18 a public hearing.

19 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: Certainly.

20 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So I have

21 some very serious concerns about that. I'll

22 leave it at that for the moment.

23 What I would ask just literally on

24 behalf of the Body, if we could get regular

25 reporting in all of these areas, contracting;

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2 services, supplies and equipment; the
3 procurement issues you talked about; the
4 construction issues and the employment issues.
5 And I don't know what your arrangement is with
6 GPUAC. They've monitored other projects on
7 behalf of the City. Often we've received
8 monthly reports.

9 I think if you would send that to
10 the Body and more than likely either directly
11 to the Chair or to the Council President or
12 both, this is -- how you start really does
13 dictate how you end.

14 MS. REBA SMALLWOOD: Right.

15 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So I'm
16 going to try to take the hearing back to the
17 positive area and rely on your good work.

18 Madam Chair, I just have a few last
19 questions.

20 We have a second Bill, which is kind
21 of being carried along through this process as
22 a bit of an add-on. I just want to at least
23 get something on the record about the other
24 parcel of land that is a part of this
25 transaction, which technically has nothing to

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2 do with the school, but why are we doing this
3 and what is this part about?

4 MS. KAREN BORSKI: Councilman,
5 I think you know that as Fairmount Park
6 Commission looks at these issues where there
7 will be an adaptive reuse for any piece of
8 parkland, that we look to make sure that
9 there's availability of a similar piece of
10 parkland elsewhere in the system, and the
11 School District has come forward with a parcel
12 of land about six and a half acres and
13 bordered somewhere along lines by Old Line and
14 Manatawna Roads.

15 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: What's the
16 present use of that property?

17 MS. KAREN BORSKI: It is a
18 recreational piece of land.

19 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And it's
20 actively being used for recreational purposes?

21 MS. KAREN BORSKI: It is.

22 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Will there
23 be any change in its use as a result of this
24 transaction?

25 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Not

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2 anticipated, no.

3 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And for
4 whatever reason, the people who are presently
5 using it, are they aware that there may be a
6 transfer in at least jurisdiction?

7 MS. KAREN BORSKI: Informally,
8 yes. Not in any formal manner.

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And is
10 there anything that the present users need to
11 do in order to maintain their current use?

12 MS. KAREN BORSKI: They will
13 probably be approached about a permitting
14 arrangement with Fairmount Park Commission,
15 yes.

16 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
17 Could you restate that? I didn't hear you
18 clearly.

19 MS. KAREN BORSKI: We will
20 probably be engaging in conversations -- there
21 is an athletic use to that field right now --
22 about becoming part of the permitting process,
23 as we at Fairmount Park Commission permit out
24 use of fields.

25 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Can I follow

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2 up, please?

3 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
4 On this issue, yes.

5 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Could you
6 state for the record that the arrangement that
7 they presently have, financial arrangement,
8 whatever that may be, maintenance, will be
9 grandfathered to that group?

10 MS. KAREN BORSKI: I could say
11 probably, Councilman. Because it is not in
12 our -- it's just coming by virtue of this
13 ordinance into our catalogue of assets, we
14 will look at it as part of Fairmount Park
15 Commission property going forward upon signing
16 of this lease, which will mean that we have
17 responsibilities for maintaining it.

18 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Those
19 tenants, again, I don't know what their
20 responsibility is financially presently under
21 the School District's arrangement, it would be
22 unfair to them to transfer this property, then
23 all of a sudden they have to deal with
24 Fairmount Park Commission on a criteria that
25 you presently use that may be a lot different

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2 than the arrangement that they have now.

3 Whatever maintenance the School
4 District does, if any, I would think that it
5 would have to be a seamless transaction, as
6 far as I'm concerned.

7 MS. KAREN BORSKI: That's
8 certainly our goal. We're not looking to
9 upset the apple cart.

10 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: And I'll
11 work with the Park Commission to make sure
12 that they're at the same situation that they
13 had before.

14 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Or better.

15 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: We'll see.

16 Madam Chair, I just want to make one
17 note for the record. I'm now switching back
18 to the earlier Bill, 041037. There is a
19 reference made in Section 2 of the Bill to an
20 Exhibit A. Those materials were handed over
21 to the Chief Clerk's office, I believe, as a
22 part of the transmittal, but I would simply
23 say that I believe that that material should
24 be incorporated, as it is referenced as an
25 Exhibit A to this particular Bill, and at the

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2 appropriate time -- and I have the documents.
3 I'd like to put forward an amendment to
4 incorporate these documents as an official
5 part of this Bill so that we have a complete
6 package.

7 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
8 Very well.

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I have no
10 more questions.

11 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
12 Okay, then.

13 Councilman Jim Kenney?

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you,
15 Madam Chair.

16 Just one relative to security. I
17 guess it's safe to assume that the internal
18 security of the building, teachers, students,
19 will play itself out as we find out who our
20 students are and what their needs are, and I
21 guess the long-range plan or hope is that the
22 learning environment in the school will
23 diminish the need for security down to a
24 minimum.

25 The question I have is relative to

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2 security of the building. Is there any design
3 features or plan that exists relative to
4 security of the building because of its
5 location, which is not your traditional
6 street-front location, and because of the high
7 profile nature of the building and I assume
8 because of the very expensive equipment that
9 will be in there? Is there any either design
10 issues that help with security for the
11 building being broken into and things stolen
12 or is there any plan?

13 MR. TERRY WILSON: Once again,
14 Terry Wilson.

15 The approach to security, as far as
16 this building is concerned, is to try to be
17 very non-evasive as far as how it's taken care
18 of. We will still have the security checks,
19 but instead of having the exposed
20 walk-throughs that you would see in the
21 airports, they're going to be built into the
22 door frames.

23 Instead of having the open conveyor
24 belts that are in there, there will be holes
25 in the wall when they walk into the foyer with

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2 a conveyor belt behind that to where it passes
3 through and comes out.

4 There will be cameras, where we
5 spoke a great deal with Dexter Green and his
6 group with the School District on security.
7 The cameras are going to be covering such
8 places as entrances, exits, stairwells,
9 high-expense-type areas where there's major
10 computer equipment, things of this nature.

11 We're not going to be putting on
12 what you've seen throughout the City, the jail
13 bar type of grates. We're looking to -- and
14 also for most of the schools that we will be
15 proceeding on now, with a screening system,
16 which is a security screen that looks very
17 much like a window screen as opposed to the
18 items that you've seen in other buildings.

19 There will also be burglar-type
20 devices at areas such as doors, such as
21 windows, which can gain access and so forth.
22 So it is being handled.

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And it's
24 interesting, though, that a lot of the design
25 features keep the security equipment from

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2 being too intrusive or too apparent,
3 especially the metal detectors in the doors
4 make a lot more sense. The conveyor belt
5 behind the wall, behind the blind I guess
6 creates more of an atmosphere of learning as
7 opposed to security.

8 MR. TERRY WILSON: Right. And
9 the other thing that we're taking a look at
10 is, we've asked the architects to take a look
11 at site lines. You know, no matter what you
12 do as far as cameras are concerned, someone
13 has to monitor a camera. If you have too many
14 cameras, they're not going to be able to
15 monitor. Then their benefit is only for
16 recording the problem, not to stop the
17 problem.

18 By developing good site lines
19 throughout the building to where staff that's
20 in there can observe what's going on, we feel
21 it is a much more proactive way to handle
22 these situations.

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

24 Thank you, Madam Chair.

25 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

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2 You're welcome.

3 Ellen Savitz?

4 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: I just
5 wanted to add that we will be working with
6 Microsoft's Department of Homeland Security on
7 the issues of security both in and out of this
8 building, another something that Microsoft has
9 thrown in to make this project work.

10 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN: I
11 certainly appreciate that questioning as well.

12 I have a couple more questions
13 during this public hearing. I want to go back
14 to Councilman Michael Nutter's line of
15 questioning regarding our continuing interest
16 and concern with MBE/WBE participation, and
17 let me put it in context for you of what we
18 don't want.

19 We don't want to be back here in
20 four years, as we are going to be today in the
21 second half of this hearing to discuss what's
22 not happening with the stadiums, and be in a
23 position where we have to advocate for
24 subcontractors who are not being treated
25 fairly. And so that puts in context the

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2 concerns raised by Councilman Nutter.

3 To have to reexamine all of this
4 four years from now simply blemishes what is
5 expected to be a very exciting initiative on a
6 number of different levels, from the business
7 of running a school system to the academics of
8 running a school system. And so I'd be remiss
9 not to put that on the record.

10 My final question, I think, because
11 I took a bunch of notes, parking. Could you
12 please address for a moment the issue of
13 parking and accommodating staff at all times
14 of day? What sparks that question for me is
15 today's Daily News story with what we're
16 seeing over at University City High School.

17 MS. KAREN BORSKI: Yes.
18 Parking does become an issue just because of
19 the area, and we have given a lot of thought
20 to it so far and probably more to come. But
21 as it stands right now, there are 30 spaces
22 leased physically on the premises, which is
23 the number -- I'm sure the School District
24 would have liked more, but that we could
25 accommodate within this new architecture.

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2 In addition to that, we are working
3 on agreements with the Zoo, who has a parking
4 lot adjacent to this facility that they also
5 have an arrangement with Fairmount Park for,
6 to have 30 spaces available in that lot.
7 Because of the different time usages for each
8 of these institutions, we believe we'll be
9 able to accommodate 30 spaces in the Zoo lot.

10 Additionally, as you may know, there
11 is a plan being looked at for the entire
12 Centennial District, and we have asked them to
13 also take another look at what parking needs
14 might generate in the years to come just from
15 even -- the real fact of the matter is that in
16 a high school, you may get some students,
17 particularly in perhaps their senior year, who
18 will find themselves driving to school. And
19 because of the nature of the roads and the
20 park setting, parking is consistently an
21 issue, something that we know we're going to
22 have to continue to address.

23 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

24 Okay. Any other comments on that?

25 MR. TERRY WILSON: The one

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2 element which has been brought up in a number
3 of community meetings and so forth, and just
4 to expand upon what Karen was talking about,
5 is, we do have the auditorium, we do have the
6 gymnasium. This is a place where there was a
7 concern. And generally in the meetings
8 between the Fairmount Park Commission, Zoo and
9 the School District, it was determined that
10 the hours of use of the gymnasium, of the
11 auditorium when we would expect heavier
12 amounts of traffic would be at a point in time
13 to where additional spaces in the Zoo lot will
14 be made available.

15 So as a result, there is no
16 anticipation of causing any problems as far as
17 more on-street parking or anything else of
18 this nature within the area. The whole thing
19 has gone through the Streets Department. They
20 feel very comfortable with what we're doing.
21 Through Planning Commission. They feel
22 comfortable with what we're doing. And I
23 think it's a real good solution and good
24 cooperation.

25 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

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2 That all the partners are okay with?

3 MR. TERRY WILSON: Yes.

4 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

5 Very well.

6 Finally for me, back to the issue of
7 enrollment and the integrity of that process,
8 and it really segues from Councilman Nutter's
9 mention of teachers already in the system
10 having a fair opportunity. I want to speak to
11 students already in the system having a fair
12 opportunity.

13 Many children attend Philadelphia
14 public schools either, A, because the ideology
15 of their parents who believe in the public
16 school system or, B, because their parents
17 simply don't have the resources to go
18 elsewhere. And as much as we want the system
19 to be open to all students, in the enrollment
20 process has there been consideration to
21 parents who have been in the public school
22 system along the way and want the opportunity
23 to go here, stacking that against students who
24 are coming from non-public schools and now
25 want to be in this jewel of an institution?

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2 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: I have to be
3 honest. We have not addressed that, because
4 we normally determine an area and take kids
5 who live in that area. Whether or not we
6 would be able to deny --

7 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
8 I'm not asking denial at all. I'm not
9 suggesting that.

10 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: No, but in
11 other words, deny the same equity to parents
12 who pay taxes as much as their neighbors, no
13 matter where they send their kids to school.

14 I think we'd run into more issues if
15 people have put their kids into a private
16 school K to 8 and now want to come back into
17 the system for high school not being in that
18 general first lottery with equity with the
19 kids who have attended.

20 If I'm hearing you, you're
21 suggesting that perhaps only kids who attended
22 our schools --

23 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
24 No. I'm not suggesting that at all.

25 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Okay.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

3 All students should have opportunity.

4 Students who have been in the system from K
5 through 8, in the public school system from K
6 through 8, I'm suggesting for consideration
7 some additional consideration versus parents
8 whose students were elsewhere, for whatever
9 the reason, and now want to transfer in to a
10 public school setting.

11 So I don't know if during your
12 discussions that was ever mentioned, but I,
13 for one, have considered sending my daughter
14 to a private school at a certain juncture, to
15 then re-enroll her in public schools. And let
16 the record show she's currently in public
17 schools.

18 So I know that parents think that
19 way, because I think that way. And so for
20 parents who have either because of ideology or
21 lack of resources have not been able to send
22 their students to non-public schools, consider
23 as part of the enrollment process, lottery
24 process -- and I don't know what that form
25 looks like yet, because I think I've only had

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2 to do it one time for kindergarten, the EH 36.

3 As you look to the integrity of that
4 process, giving consideration to students who
5 have been in the system from K through 8
6 versus students -- and I know Councilman
7 Kenney and I have a running friendly debate
8 about that.

9 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Let me give
10 you the flipside of the argument. I
11 understand exactly where the Councilwoman is
12 coming from as far as loyalty to the District
13 and that kind of thing.

14 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
15 That's essentially what I'm saying.

16 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But I think
17 the opposite under the argument that I want to
18 offer --

19 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
20 Please.

21 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: -- is, is
22 that I think what we want to see our School
23 District become is a more diversified
24 district, where parents instead of moving out
25 of the City will say, You know what, that

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2 Microsoft School is something, I think I'm
3 going to keep my family here, and send that
4 student there.

5 So I think what my hope is and goal
6 for the District is to be a district as the
7 District of choice, so that you wouldn't even
8 think about sending your kid to a private
9 school, unless you had some -- in my
10 particular situation, maybe Councilman Nutter,
11 if he had a son high school age, would be
12 considering our alma mater, because that's
13 where we went, but a parent who has really no
14 connection to a school, I would like them to
15 be able to say, You know what, the School
16 District of Philadelphia is wonderful, I
17 wouldn't think of sending my kid anywhere
18 else.

19 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
20 Yes.

21 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And I think
22 the way we start getting those families back
23 in is through projects like this.

24 So while I understand maybe the
25 concept of weighting admission or weighting

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2 lottery towards people who are matriculating
3 through the public system, I really want to be
4 equally active in trying to attract people who
5 are outside the system.

6 One of the things that Ellen
7 Savitz --

8 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
9 Okay. Outside the system, not outside the
10 City.

11 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Outside the
12 system. Well, I'll even go one step further.
13 When Ms. Savitz was the principal of CAPA, it
14 was one of the schools where we had numbers of
15 applications for students who live in the
16 suburbs. And to me, I felt that was a
17 wonderful compliment to that school, that
18 someone who lives in the suburbs would want to
19 send their kids to an inner city school in
20 South Philadelphia.

21 So I would really, long term, would
22 love to be in a situation where even our
23 suburban neighbors say, You know what, the
24 School District of Philadelphia is that good,
25 I'd rather send my kid there.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

3 And that is the ideal to which we move to
4 become. I thank you for that, because that is
5 a perspective I did not consider.

6 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Madam

8 Chair? I'm sorry.

9 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

10 Please.

11 COUNCILMAN NUTTER:

12 Unfortunately, I was, as was the case when I
13 was in school, I was slightly distracted
14 during the last exchange. I was talking when
15 I shouldn't have been.

16 So I just want to make sure that I'm
17 clear. What is the policy with regard to --
18 you have boundaries. Some parents send their
19 kids to the local Philadelphia public school
20 today, some parents send their kids to charter
21 school, parochial school, private school, but
22 they live within the boundaries, they're in
23 Philly, they're within the boundaries of this
24 school. Is there any line of demarcation when
25 the various applications come in from these

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2 now seventh grade, for the moment, kids'
3 parents and the apps come in and clearly you
4 have a kid that goes to --

5 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
6 Powel.

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: I wasn't
8 going to make it so personal.

9 -- Beeber, who lives in, let's say,
10 the Winfield section right now and another
11 parent whose kid goes to Our Lady of Lourdes,
12 who lives in Winfield? They just go in,
13 right? I mean, is there any distinction in
14 those applications because both live in the
15 area attached to that school?

16 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: There has
17 not been any consideration of having a
18 weighted kind of thing for kids who are in the
19 district currently. The idea is that if a
20 child attends Mann or Beeber or Powel or
21 wherever in that district, they'll get an
22 equal chance to apply.

23 The only difference would be that if
24 we pull out an application to be part of the
25 student body and it is not a student currently

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2 attending our schools, we will ask for address
3 verification. But, frankly, for those
4 folks -- just to make sure they really do live
5 where they say they live. The assumption is
6 that --

7 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Well, I
8 think you're going to want address
9 verification for everybody.

10 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: For
11 everybody, okay. Right.

12 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: John Candy
13 said, Trust everybody, but cut the cards.

14 You send in an application, we
15 really want to know that that's where you
16 live.

17 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Okay. Point
18 taken.

19 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: So you do
20 that, but the apps all go in and they're all
21 the same. Because, I mean, I think a part of
22 this discussion is, no matter where you
23 presently send your child to school today, if
24 you are a resident of Philadelphia, you are
25 paying for this system, whether you choose to

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2 use it or not. You don't get a discount on
3 your real estate tax if you don't send your
4 kid to public school. You pay the same old
5 bill.

6 So I think that we want to make sure
7 that there is that sense of equal opportunity.
8 And I think that we will draw some parents,
9 not just because of the financial issue, but
10 because of the educational excellence issue,
11 you will have some parents taking their kids
12 out of other school systems to try to go to
13 this school. I think that's good for us.

14 And to the extent that we replicate
15 this model, whether it's with Microsoft or
16 others, that's how we're going to compete for
17 people.

18 We have a great City. We're
19 improving our school system, and when we
20 become more and more of the system of choice,
21 we're going to have something to offer that
22 even places like two blocks away from us --
23 there's no Microsoft School in Lower Merion.
24 If you want to go to Microsoft School, it's in
25 Philadelphia at Fairmount Park.

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2 MS. ELLEN SAVITZ: Exactly.

3 Thank you.

4 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

5 Thank you, Councilman Nutter.

6 And thank you again, Councilman
7 Kenney, for that important perspective.

8 Is there anyone else here to testify
9 on these bills?

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

12 Very well. While my colleagues move to
13 return, let me just underscore Councilman Jim
14 Kenney's remarks, in that the District and the
15 Fairmount Park Commission and the City of
16 Philadelphia really are to be commended, A for
17 being so very, very proactive in discussing
18 and walking through the little bumps and
19 hurdles that sort of blindside you further
20 down the road.

21 I am excited about the partnership,
22 and as I learn more and more about it, I trust
23 that I'll be one of those cheerleaders for you
24 as I go around the City and talk about this,
25 the first of which will be Monday evening at

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2 Zion Baptist Church speaking to members of
3 that clergy's trustee leadership about this
4 wonderful new opportunity for the Philadelphia
5 public school system.

6 This will conclude testimony on Bill
7 No. 041037 and Bill No. 041038. This
8 concludes our public hearing, and we will now
9 move into a public meeting in about three
10 minutes. Please stay tuned.

11 MS. DEBRA KAHN: It may not be
12 on the record, but let me just thank you and
13 all the members here for, again, your support.
14 We really appreciate your quick action, and we
15 look forward to that ribbon cutting. So thank
16 you.

17 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
18 Very well.

19 We're waiting for the return of a
20 couple of colleagues and we'll proceed with
21 the public meeting.

22 (Brief pause.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
24 We have an amendment on Bill No. 040137.

25 Councilman Nutter?

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2 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you,
3 Madam Chair.

4 Pursuant to the reference in the
5 Bill, I think at Section 2, there's a
6 reference made to Exhibit A. That exhibit is
7 embodied in a half-inch-thick series of
8 documents that I'd like to move forward as the
9 Exhibit A.

10 It's my understanding that they are
11 complete and represent all of the exhibits
12 that should be attached to this particular
13 Bill, and I'd like to hand them forward and
14 then move the adoption of these exhibits as
15 amendments to the Bill.

16 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
17 Can I have a motion to approve the amendments
18 on Bill No. 041037?

19 COUNCILMAN GOODE: I move that
20 the amendment as offered by Councilman Nutter
21 to Bill 041037 be approved.

22 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
23 Second?

24 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Second.

25 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

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2 Let the record reflect that we have in
3 attendance a quorum to move on these Bills,
4 Councilman Darrell Clark, Councilman W. Wilson
5 Goode, Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown
6 and Councilman Frank Rizzo.

7 Can I have a motion on Bill No.

8 04 --

9 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: You need to
10 vote. There was no vote.

11 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
12 Councilman Darrell Clark seconded the
13 amendment on Bill No. 041037.

14 All in favor?

15 MEMBERS: Aye.

16 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
17 Any no's?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
20 Can I have a motion on Bill No. 041037 with
21 the Bill as amended?

22 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you,
23 Madam Chair.

24 I move that Bill 041037 as amended
25 be reported out of the Committee with a

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2 favorable recommendation and the rules of
3 Council be suspended so as to permit first
4 reading at our next Council session.

5 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
6 Second?

7 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Second.

8 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
9 Councilman Darrell Clark seconds.

10 All in favor?

11 MEMBERS: Aye.

12 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
13 Any no's?

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
16 Therefore, Bill No. 041037 will be reported
17 out of this Committee with a favorable
18 recommendation and a further recommendation
19 that the rules of Council be suspended to
20 allow first reading at our next scheduled
21 Council meeting.

22 I will ask Councilman W. Wilson
23 Goode to please give us a motion on Bill No.
24 041038.

25 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you,

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2 Madam Chair.

3 I move that Bill 041038 be reported
4 out of the Committee with a favorable
5 recommendation and the rules of Council be
6 suspended so as to permit first reading at our
7 next Council session.

8 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Second.

9 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
10 Councilman Darrell Clark has seconded.

11 Bill No. 041038 has been moved and
12 properly seconded.

13 All in favor say aye.

14 MEMBERS: Aye.

15 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:

16 Any nays?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN REYNOLDS BROWN:
19 Bill No. 041038 will be reported out of this
20 Committee with a favorable recommendation and
21 a further recommendation that the rules of
22 City Council be suspended to allow first
23 reading at our next scheduled Council meeting.

24 Again, Bill No. 040912 has been held
25 in this Committee at the request of the

1 12/8/04 - Bills 041037 & 041038 - Parks
2 sponsor.

3 This concludes the meeting of the
4 Committee on Parks, Recreation and Cultural
5 Affairs.

6 Thank you for your attendance and
7 your interests.

8 (Meeting adjourned at 12:05
9 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the
proceedings, evidence and objections are
contained fully and accurately in the
stenographic notes taken by me upon the
foregoing matter on December 8, 2004, and that
this is a true and correct transcript of same.

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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