

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON RULES

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, February 26, 2019
10:15 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN WILLIAM K. GREENLEE, CHAIR
COUNCIL PRESIDENT DARRELL L. CLARKE
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL
COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON
COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON
COUNCILMAN AL TAUBENBERGER

BILLS 180515, 180973, 181064, 190001, 190016,
and 190058

- - -

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Good
3 morning, everyone. This is the Committee
4 on Rules. We have attained a quorum with
5 Council President Clarke, Councilman
6 Henon, Councilwoman Blackwell appointed
7 to the Committee, and Councilman
8 Taubenberger.

9 For the record, Bill No.
10 180973, which deals with remapping in
11 Point Breeze, if anybody is here, that
12 bill will not be heard today. At the
13 request of the sponsor, it will be held
14 to the call of the Chair. So 180973 held
15 to the call of the Chair.

16 Ms. Marconi, will you please
17 read the title of the first bill before
18 us.

19 THE CLERK: Bill No. 190016, an
20 ordinance to amend the Philadelphia
21 Zoning Maps by changing the zoning
22 designations of certain areas of land
23 located within an area bounded by Stenton
24 Avenue, Chelton Avenue, Broad Street,
25 Windrim Avenue, Belfield Avenue, and

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 Wister Street.

3 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:

4 Mr. Gregorski, before you start, Council
5 President Clarke.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

7 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman,
8 thank you. I just wanted to just briefly
9 say again hello to our wonderful
10 residents from the Fishtown community and
11 the St. Laurentius community for coming
12 down and fighting the good fight as it
13 relates to being able to save the church.

14 I just want to commend you all
15 for all the work you've done. I'm very
16 proud to have played a very, very small
17 role, but I just wanted to for the record
18 thank you, and look for the support of my
19 colleagues, which I'm sure based on
20 earlier conversations will get.

21 So, guys, thank you for coming
22 down. We'll get to you in short order.

23 Thank you.

24 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: You were
25 very persuasive, sir.

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I

3 try, sir.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And we'll
5 be getting to that bill shortly. We have
6 a few bills that should go relatively
7 quickly.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

9 Thank you, sir.

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: So hang
11 in there.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

13 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
15 you, Council President.

16 Mr. Gregorski, good morning.

17 MR. GREGORSKI: Good morning,
18 Chairman Greenlee, members of the Rules
19 Committee. I'm Marty Gregorski, Division
20 Director with the Development Division of
21 the Philadelphia City Planning
22 Commission, and I'm here to testify on
23 Bill No. 190016, which was introduced
24 into City Council on January 24th of this
25 year by Councilmember Bass.

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 Bill No. 190016 amends the
3 Philadelphia Zoning Maps by changing the
4 zoning designations in the area
5 described. This change remaps blocks of
6 single-family row homes from "RM-1"
7 Residential Multi-Family to "RSA-5"
8 Single-Family Residential Attached. It
9 consolidates commercial zoning to active
10 corridors and nodes; replaces all the
11 industrial zoning with appropriate
12 residential or commercial zoning; and
13 remaps parks and recreation centers to
14 the "SP-PO-A" Parks and Open Space.
15 These changes to the Zoning Maps were
16 recommended in the 2016 Upper North
17 District Plan.

18 The Philadelphia City Planning
19 Commission considered Bill No. 190016 at
20 its meeting of February 19th of this year
21 and recommended it for approval.

22 And I'd be happy to answer any
23 questions at this time.

24 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
25 you, sir.

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 Any questions for Mr. Gregorski
3 on this bill?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing
6 none, is there anyone else here to
7 testify on Bill 190016?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing
10 none, thank you.

11 Ms. Marconi, our next bill,
12 please.

13 THE CLERK: Bill No. 190001, an
14 ordinance to amend the Master Plan for
15 Drexel University and to approve the
16 proposed addition to 101 North 34th
17 Street.

18 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
19 you.

20 Mr. Gregorski, please.

21 MR. GREGORSKI: Good morning,
22 Chairman Greenlee, members of the Rules
23 Committee. I'm Marty Gregorski with the
24 City Planning Commission. Bill No.
25 190001 was introduced into City Council

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 on January 24th of this year by
3 Councilmember Blackwell.

4 Bill No. 190001 amends the
5 Philadelphia Zoning Code by amending the
6 Master Plan District for Drexel
7 University to approve the proposed
8 addition to 101 North 34th Street. The
9 building addition will expand its
10 district's occupied area by 4,503 square
11 feet and its gross floor area by 10,778
12 square feet, both being very minor
13 adjustments to the campus. The two-story
14 addition will include housing and
15 administrative functions for Drexel
16 University honors students and staff.

17 The Philadelphia City Planning
18 Commission considered Bill No. 190001 at
19 its meeting of February 19th of this year
20 and recommended it for approval.

21 And I'd be happy to answer any
22 questions at this time.

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
24 you, sir. I know Councilwoman Blackwell,
25 who is here, is the sponsor of the bill

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 and is supportive.

3 Any questions or comments?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing
6 none, anyone else here to testify on Bill
7 No. 190001?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing
10 none, thank you.

11 Ms. Marconi, our next bill,
12 please.

13 THE CLERK: Bill No. 181064, an
14 ordinance amending Title 14 of The
15 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Zoning and
16 Planning," to revise certain provisions
17 of Chapter 14-500, entitled "Overlay
18 Zoning Districts," by amending the "/CDO
19 Central Delaware Riverfront Overlay
20 District," to revise provisions relating
21 to river access streets; all under
22 certain terms and conditions.

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
24 you.

25 Mr. Gregorski.

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 MR. GREGORSKI: Good morning,
3 Chairman Greenlee, members of the Rules
4 Committee. I'm Marty Gregorski with the
5 Philadelphia City Planning Commission.
6 I'm here to testify on Bill No. 181064,
7 which was introduced into City Council on
8 December 6th, 2018 by Councilmember
9 Squilla.

10 This bill amends Title 14 of
11 The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Zoning
12 and Planning," to revise certain
13 provisions of Chapter 14-500, entitled
14 "Overlay Zoning Districts," by amending
15 the "/CDO Central Delaware Riverfront
16 Overlay District," to revise provisions
17 relating to river access streets.

18 The bill adds additional river
19 access streets within the Central
20 Delaware Overlay, as recommended by the
21 Master Plan for the Central Delaware.
22 The streets are Lehigh, Cumberland,
23 Berks, Market, Chestnut, Walnut, South,
24 Tasker, and Mifflin.

25 Where a river access street, if

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 extended, would intersect with the
3 Delaware River, no permanent structure
4 may be constructed within the
5 right-of-way of the extension of that
6 street. And the following applies to
7 lots with frontage on river access
8 streets:

9 Non-accessory surface parking
10 lots are prohibited; uses in the vehicle
11 and vehicular equipment sales and
12 services category are prohibited, except
13 personal vehicle sales and rental shall
14 be permitted west of Delaware Avenue; one
15 or more active uses shall occupy 75
16 percent of the length of such ground
17 floor frontage.

18 The Philadelphia City Planning
19 Commission considered Bill No. 181064 at
20 its meeting of January 15th of this year
21 and recommended it for approval.

22 And I'll also be happy to
23 answer any questions at this time.

24 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
25 you, sir. I notice Councilman Squilla is

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 putting in an amendment. It looks like
3 all it does is take out Lehigh Avenue?

4 MR. GREGORSKI: It removes
5 Lehigh Avenue.

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Was there
7 a particular reason for that?

8 MR. GREGORSKI: Because it
9 doesn't extend in a way that would be --

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Got you.
11 Any questions for Mr. Gregorski
12 on this bill?

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing
15 none, anyone else here to testify on Bill
16 No. 181064?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing
19 none, and that amendment will be offered
20 at the meeting.

21 Ms. Marconi, our next bill,
22 please.

23 THE CLERK: Bill No. 190058, an
24 ordinance to amend the Philadelphia
25 Zoning Maps by changing the zoning

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 designations of certain areas of land
3 located within an area bounded by Berks
4 Street, Memphis Street, Wilt Street, and
5 Tulip Street.

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
7 you.

8 Mr. Gregorski.

9 MR. GREGORSKI: Good morning,
10 Chairman Greenlee, members of the Rules
11 Committee. I'm Marty Gregorski with the
12 Philadelphia City Planning Commission.
13 I'm here to testify on Bill No. 190058,
14 which was introduced into City Council on
15 January 31st of this year by
16 Councilmember Greenlee on behalf of
17 Council President Clarke.

18 Bill No. 190058 amends the
19 Philadelphia Zoning Maps by changing the
20 zoning in an area bounded by Berks
21 Street, Memphis Street, Wilt Street, and
22 Tulip Street. This bill changes the
23 zoning of 1600 East Berks Street, the
24 former St. Laurentius Roman Catholic
25 Church, from "RSA-5" Single-Family

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 Attached to "RM-4" Multi-Family. The
3 Council President's office requested this
4 bill after receiving petitions from the
5 residents of Fishtown. The proposal is
6 for multi-family dwelling units within
7 the former church structure.

8 The Philadelphia City Planning
9 Commission considered Bill No. 190058 at
10 its meeting of February 19th of this year
11 and recommended it for approval.

12 And I'd be happy to answer any
13 questions at this time.

14 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
15 you, sir. And I know there's been
16 multiple meetings with the residents, and
17 it appears that most, if not all, issues
18 have been satisfied. Is that a fair
19 statement?

20 MR. GREGORSKI: I would hope
21 so.

22 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: We hope
23 so too, yes.

24 First, any questions for
25 Mr. Gregorski on this bill?

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 (No response.)

3 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing
4 none, I know there is a large amount of
5 people who said they wanted to say
6 something. Let me first ask, is there
7 anyone here to testify against this bill,
8 against?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: All
11 right. I see no hands go up. I think as
12 the Council President said, you folks all
13 worked hard on this. It looks like
14 everybody is sort of on the same page.
15 We have another bill to come up after
16 this. I would ask that maybe instead of
17 everybody testifying, we have a few
18 people come up rather than everybody
19 saying the same thing. Okay? I see some
20 heads nodding. I hope that satisfies
21 people.

22 So with that all said -- and,
23 again, it looks like the Committee does
24 not have a problem with this bill -- who
25 still feels the need to testify? Who

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 still wants to say something?

3 (Hands raised.)

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Please,
5 why don't you come up.

6 The other people that raised
7 their hands, please, people that raised
8 their hands.

9 (Witnesses approached witness
10 table.)

11 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: The
12 record will reflect Councilman Johnson, a
13 member of the Committee, is present.

14 The folks that came up so far,
15 that's it as far as testifying?

16 Very good. Thank you very much
17 for your cooperation.

18 Please identify yourself and
19 proceed.

20 FATHER BRADLEY: Good morning,
21 Councilman Greenlee and ladies and
22 gentlemen. My name is Father Alfred
23 Bradley. I am the priest responsible for
24 the parish of Holy Name and the school
25 and St. Laurentius, a combined reality

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 that involves this building. I believe
3 that the hard work of the community and
4 the unanimity that will bring peace to a
5 controversial situation is the bill. It
6 will allow us to save the church and move
7 forward with the building that continues
8 to deteriorate in its present state. So
9 I want to testify in favor of the bill.

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
11 you. Thank you very much, Father. Thank
12 you for all the work everybody has done.

13 Mr. Mattioni, sir.

14 MR. MATTIONI: Michael
15 Mattioni. I'm counsel for the parish,
16 and I just want to again say we support
17 this bill and appreciate the hard work of
18 everybody in getting it to this point.

19 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
20 you, sir. Thank you.

21 MR. MATTIONI: Thank you.

22 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Young
23 man, please identify yourself and
24 proceed.

25 MR. VANSTONE: My name is --

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2 should I give my full name? My name is
3 Trucker Vinnen Vanstone, student of St.
4 Laurentius School.

5 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay. Go
6 ahead.

7 MR. VANSTONE: Should I read
8 this?

9 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: If you'd
10 like, yes.

11 MR. VANSTONE: Good morning,
12 City Council members. I am Trucker
13 Vanstone, a fifth grade student at St.
14 Laurentius School. I am here, in my
15 opinion, to not only speak about but
16 truly represent St. Laurentius School,
17 which is located next to St. Laurentius
18 Church in Fishtown. I am here to tell
19 you how St. Laurentius School has been
20 impacted by the zoning issues you are
21 discussing today.

22 Inside my school, it is a
23 caring environment full of loving
24 teachers and staff and more than 175
25 children just like me in pre-K through

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 eighth grade. Every day my classmates
3 and I enter the school in front of the
4 church, and we often play in front of it
5 during recess.

6 When the pieces of our beloved
7 St. Laurentius Church fell last month, I
8 was playing inside at our after-school
9 program, and our teachers moved us safely
10 into another area of the school. Moments
11 later, my mom picked me up and the damage
12 was revealed. I was struck in awe, and I
13 was sad that the church still could not
14 get the help that it needed to be
15 repaired.

16 The next few days we had off
17 from school and did not really know
18 whether we would be able to return to
19 school again. Although many of my
20 friends and I love a good snow day, this
21 is different. It was a sad and confusing
22 time. Like me, many of my classmates
23 have still not been inside the church for
24 many years. I had my kindergarten
25 Christmas pageant in St. Laurentius, and

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 that was the last time I remember being
3 in the church.

4 But the church is still a big
5 part of our lives, a part of school, and
6 we want to see it saved, if it can be.
7 Remember, the Rules Committee, I ask you
8 to approve Bill No. 190058 and help our
9 church and our school. This bill will
10 allow St. Laurentius Church to be rezoned
11 so that we can do what's best and safest
12 for me and my classmates, the parish, and
13 our neighbors.

14 We know that this means we may
15 not be able to continue using the church
16 the way we used to, but it will be
17 satisfying to know that we could still
18 have St. Laurentius Church in a new way
19 in our lives, and either way, we know
20 that it's going to be alive in our
21 hearts.

22 Thank you for your
23 consideration.

24 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
25 you. Thank you very much. What grade

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 are you in?

3 MR. VANSTONE: Fifth.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Fifth?

5 All right. I don't think I could have
6 done that when I was in fifth grade. I'm
7 not sure I could have done it in ninth
8 grade.

9 But anyway, Councilman
10 Taubenberger.

11 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Young
12 man? Trucker?

13 MR. VANSTONE: Yes.

14 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I
15 have a comment for you.

16 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: It's
17 going to be good. Don't worry about it.

18 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I
19 thought your testimony was really well
20 done and well delivered. I thank you for
21 coming here this morning to give us your
22 viewpoint, because your viewpoint is a
23 very important one. We're here because
24 of the young people in many aspects. And
25 I just want to finish up by saying I hope

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 it's not the last time you come here
3 before us to give us your thoughts on any
4 subject you ever want to think.

5 That was well done. Thank you
6 for coming.

7 MR. VANSTONE: Thank you.

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:

9 Absolutely. Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Now, I
12 don't think anybody could give better
13 testimony than he just gave, so I guess
14 everybody else could be real short.

15 Sir, please.

16 Why don't two other people take
17 the chairs there so we can keep moving.
18 Okay?

19 Please.

20 MR. STEINKE: I have to admit,
21 I'm loath to follow that excellent
22 testimony. I can hardly do better. But
23 I'm Paul Steinke, the Executive Director
24 of the Preservation Alliance for Greater
25 Philadelphia. Good morning to the Rules

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 Committee and Chairman Greenlee,
3 Councilmembers Taubenberger, Blackwell,
4 and Johnson. Thank you for having this
5 hearing today.

6 The Preservation Alliance
7 supports the preservation of St.
8 Laurentius Church in Fishtown and the
9 passage of Bill No. 190058.

10 St. Laurentius has been an
11 architectural landmark in its Fishtown
12 neighborhood since its construction in
13 1890. Even though its use as a worship
14 space ended several years ago, the
15 preservation of this structure as a
16 neighborhood icon is important to
17 maintaining the identity and pride of the
18 Fishtown community.

19 Fortunately a developer has
20 come forward to make the investment
21 necessary of time, money, and effort to
22 convert this building into market-rate
23 housing. This is a strategy that has
24 been proven and used successfully to
25 preserve dozens of similar religious

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2 properties all across the City.

3 The resulting project will not
4 only preserve this important structure,
5 but add almost two dozen households to
6 the community, who will patronize local
7 stores and restaurants and contribute to
8 the vitality of the neighborhood and the
9 City as a whole.

10 Saving St. Laurentius Church
11 will preserve it as a monument to the
12 Polish American Roman Catholic community
13 that built it, and it will allow future
14 generations to admire and appreciate a
15 landmark that, let's face it, they just
16 don't build anymore.

17 We urge City Council to take
18 the necessary action and move this bill
19 forward so this project can also go
20 forward.

21 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
22 you.

23 MR. STEINKE: Thank you for
24 your time and attention.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And

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2 you're right, they don't build them like
3 this anymore.

4 MR. STEINKE: They don't build
5 them like this anymore, sir.

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Please
7 identify yourself and --

8 MS. NELSON: My name is
9 Patricia Nelson. I am a grandparent and
10 guardian of two --

11 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Little
12 closer to the microphone.

13 MS. NELSON: I am a grandparent
14 and guardian of two students at St.
15 Laurentius. One of them is in Trucker's
16 classroom and one is getting ready to
17 graduate. They started there in first
18 grade. I chose St. Laurentius due to the
19 fact that it was a good school, it had
20 good teachers and good programs.

21 Every day when our children get
22 up in the morning, they don't know if
23 they're going to be able to go to school
24 because of this lawsuit and protest. We
25 need this bill to be passed so that our

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2 children are comfortable going to school
3 every day and that they know they have a
4 school to go to.

5 We as parents feel that the
6 people who are protesting what the
7 builder wants to do are not realizing
8 what they are holding our children back
9 from, and that's one of the biggest
10 problems that we have. They don't have
11 children in the school. Some of them
12 don't even live in the area. So we
13 cannot figure out why they are still
14 doing this if the church itself is still
15 going to be there. You're still going to
16 be able to see those towering spires from
17 I-95 as long as this builder is allowed
18 to build.

19 We need this to be passed
20 quickly and we need it to be done now so
21 that our children know they have a school
22 to go to. We're the last school in
23 Fishtown. We need that school.

24 Thank you.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 you. Thank you.

3 We have two more people.

4 Whoever would like to go first. You can
5 pull that microphone. It moves. Just
6 identify yourself and proceed, please.

7 MS. ROMANIW: Sure. Thank you
8 for the opportunity to speak today. My
9 name is Jennifer Romaniw. I'm a
10 community member and a constituent that's
11 supporting the rezoning of St. Laurentius
12 Church for repurposing. The reason I
13 support this is because the intention of
14 those involved, the developers, is to
15 maintain as much of the structure as
16 possible, as we've already established.
17 I trust that since a number of those
18 involved are also residents of the
19 community, they value the integrity of
20 the neighborhood, which a lot of
21 neighborhood development is lacking now.
22 I think we've seen that.

23 Residents of areas such as the
24 River Wards area, which spans multiple
25 Councilmanic districts, have endured

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 years of predatory development that has
3 become increasingly irresponsible. Take,
4 for example, a recent house collapse in
5 Fishtown that was a direct result of
6 Grady Development. This was my
7 grandparents' house of over 60 years.

8 There are numerous accounts of
9 homeowners having to bear the burden of
10 costly repairs to their homes as a result
11 of irresponsible investors and
12 development and the contractors they
13 hire. This is a result of agencies and
14 departments having codes, rules,
15 regulations, but no enforcement power for
16 any other recourse to hold those
17 responsible for these actions
18 accountable.

19 I'm here to support what I hope
20 will be responsible development and
21 investment in our neighborhood. It's
22 time we as a city work to support
23 responsible development and investment in
24 our neighborhood.

25 I'm asking Council not only to

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 support this rezoning, but also consider
3 to take further action to support our
4 residents, especially those who have
5 experienced the frustration of dealing
6 with hardships caused by this
7 irresponsible development who are just
8 seeking short-term investments in the
9 neighborhood for financial gains.

10 We need to make changes, such
11 as repealing the tax abatement, this is
12 causing strife in our neighborhood;
13 enacting harsh penalties on predatory
14 developments; providing residents
15 mechanism for recourse when they
16 experience this; and providing
17 enforcement power to the appropriate
18 agencies.

19 I thank you for the opportunity
20 to address the group, and I urge you to
21 work to enact some changes to really
22 support our community.

23 Thank you.

24 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
25 you. And I'm sure the Council President

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 will keep, and all of us, will keep
3 working on those issues.

4 I'm sorry. Real quick, did you
5 say that was your grandparents' house
6 that collapsed?

7 MS. ROMANIW: Yes.

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Oh, my.
9 Sorry. I'm glad at least nobody was
10 hurt.

11 MS. ROMANIW: Nobody was hurt,
12 but that doesn't mean it's not going to
13 happen again.

14 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Oh, no.
15 I know. That had to be horrific.

16 Sir.

17 MR. WUNSCH: Pretty much what
18 she said. Good morning, Councilmembers,
19 and thank you for bringing this bill to
20 the table. My name is Aaron Wunsch. I
21 teach historic preservation at the
22 University of Pennsylvania and I'm also
23 the President of Repoint, a
24 pro-preservation group in Philadelphia.

25 We fully appreciate the desire

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2 to keep the church interior intact.
3 That's the part of the building that
4 parishioners, many of them, feel most
5 connected to, and it's beautiful. It's
6 also hard to love spot zoning. It's a
7 workaround at best, but the situation at
8 hand calls for pragmatism. In this
9 tax-abated wild west in which we're
10 living, spot zoning is our best chance to
11 keep this building standing. Unless and
12 until Council acts on the recommendations
13 of the Mayor's Task Force on Historic
14 Preservation, we need to use the tools we
15 have at hand. If we fail to do so, we
16 should know that we are facilitating the
17 demolition not only of this church but
18 others all across the City.

19 There is no heroism in purism.
20 It's time to get serious about church
21 preservation in Philadelphia. Thank you
22 for bringing us a step closer.

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
24 you.

25 No other questions or comments?

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 No one else here to testify?

3 (No response.)

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I think
5 everybody is on the same page here. Very
6 good. Thank you. Thank you all for
7 coming. I appreciate all the work you've
8 done in your community. I know it's
9 important. As a Catholic school
10 graduate, I know how important your
11 neighborhood school is. So, again, thank
12 you for all your efforts.

13 Ms. Marconi, our final bill,
14 please.

15 THE CLERK: Bill No. 180515, an
16 ordinance amending Section 14-303 of The
17 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Common
18 Procedures and Requirements," to amend
19 requirements regarding Neighborhood
20 Notice and Meetings, all under certain
21 terms and conditions.

22 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:
23 Mr. Gregorski.

24 MR. GREGORSKI: Good morning,
25 Chairman Greenlee, members of the Rules

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 Committee. I'm Marty Gregorski with the
3 Philadelphia City Planning Commission
4 here to testify on Bill No. 180515, which
5 was introduced into City Council on May
6 17th, 2018 by Councilmember Johnson.

7 Bill No. 180515 amends Section
8 14-303 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled
9 "Common Procedures and Requirements," to
10 amend requirements regarding Neighborhood
11 Notice and Meetings. The bill expands
12 the radius for the definition of
13 "affected properties" regarding the
14 neighborhood notification that is
15 required for all zoning appeals, special
16 exceptions, and Civic Design Review
17 cases.

18 Originally this bill would
19 double the radius from 250 feet from the
20 edge of the property line to 500 feet
21 from the edge of the property line. On
22 average, this would triple the number of
23 addresses to which applicants would be
24 required to mail or hand-deliver a letter
25 prior to being heard by a registered

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 community organization, the Zoning Board
3 of Adjustment or the Civic Design Review
4 committee, sometimes adding more than 400
5 additional addresses to this list.

6 The City Planning Commission
7 considered Bill No. 180515 at its meeting
8 of September 18th, 2018 and unanimously
9 recommended against its approval.
10 However, after this meeting, staff worked
11 with the Council office to significantly
12 mitigate the impact of the notification
13 area expansion to add only properties
14 which are located on the same block as
15 the subject property. This creates
16 regulations that are logically consistent
17 with the goals of the near neighborhood
18 notification and addresses the concerns
19 of the Commission. With these changes
20 made to the legislation, the staff
21 recommends approval of the bill as
22 amended.

23 And I'd be happy to answer any
24 questions at this time.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 you. And it's good to see everybody
3 worked together to work this out, and
4 that's the way it's supposed to get done.

5 The record will reflect
6 Councilwoman Bass, a member of the
7 Committee, is present.

8 Any questions for
9 Mr. Gregorski? I know there's someone
10 else that wants to testify.

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: None for
13 Mr. Gregorski. Thank you.

14 Ms. Marconi, who is our --

15 THE CLERK: Charles Bode.

16 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Please
17 come forward.

18 (Witness approached witness
19 table.)

20 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Anyone
21 else here to testify on this bill,
22 180515?

23 (Witness approached witness
24 table.)

25 MR. BODE: Thank you,

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 Councilmembers. My name is Chuck Bode.
3 I'm with the West Powelton/Saunders Park
4 Registered Community Organization, and we
5 have turned in on the table up front the
6 letter we wrote to Councilwoman Blackwell
7 last summer concerning this. I'm not
8 going to read the letter. I'm just going
9 to -- I have a few thoughts.

10 First, the notification should
11 vary with the scope of the project, with
12 the impact of the project. Our RCO has
13 had projects that vary from a backyard
14 shed, which was a few inches too big, to
15 a 15-story office building. They
16 require -- they have different impacts on
17 the neighborhood and should have
18 different notification requirements. So
19 we say one size shouldn't be made to fit
20 all.

21 We also would like to see just
22 a more wide-ranging thought about this to
23 consider the cost and the effectiveness.
24 One applicant spent a thousand dollars to
25 mail notices for a small project.

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 Someone else bought us the returns.
3 Twenty percent of the letters were
4 returned, some of which are to occupied
5 properties.

6 We need to think about how we
7 notify large property owners, such as
8 SEPTA. Where do we mail to SEPTA? Not
9 to the local address. And the notice
10 says posted in a multi-family building.
11 How many actually got posted?

12 We would like to suggest the
13 notice needs to be effective. And there
14 is one option or one suggestion, with the
15 sign regulations be amended that RCO
16 notices, RCO meetings, could be posted on
17 the streetlight poles within so many feet
18 of the building, so people walking by
19 might see the notice.

20 And we thank you for the
21 opportunity to testify.

22 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
23 you.

24 Ms. Green, you'd like to say
25 something?

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 MS. GREEN: Yes.

3 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Please
4 identify yourself and proceed.

5 MS. GREEN: Tiffany Green.

6 I agree we my fellow RCO
7 colleague. We talk a lot, quite a bit,
8 and he's absolutely right in terms of the
9 notification. And the main reason why is
10 because when you go into Civic Design
11 Review, most likely that is a very large
12 property. And so to only limit it to
13 like 250 feet is a real issue, and we
14 think that it should be widened at least
15 up to a three- to four-block radius. It
16 gives -- it comes in terms of standing
17 and providing people with opportunity.
18 If they should decide to appeal, they
19 should be able to be included in terms of
20 notification and coming out for the CDR
21 review or the Planning Commission review.

22 And that's another thing, which
23 is Planning Commission. Planning
24 Commission review should also be included
25 in notification, because that plays a

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 very big role in terms of support when
3 you come down here in City Council. So
4 residents should be notified of that. It
5 takes a lot of us to notify people to
6 come down for Planning Commission
7 meetings regarding different properties.

8 The other thing I wanted to --
9 I lost my train of thought.

10 The other thing I want to talk
11 about is, yes, regarding the notification
12 from developers. We're seeing a definite
13 decrease in the amount of African
14 Americans coming out to this particular
15 zoning meetings. They're not coming out
16 at all. We believe the letter is just
17 not -- we don't think that the residents
18 are understanding the letter. The letter
19 is quite complicated. Yes, it does cover
20 the bases, but when they read the
21 letters, it seems like they don't really
22 understand all that is going on regarding
23 the public zoning meeting that's coming
24 up in the community, and a lot of the
25 residents, we've seen a definite decrease

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 in the amount of participation among
3 residents coming out to zoning meetings.
4 Many of them do not come out, and I don't
5 know what it is, but I think that there
6 needs to be more -- I think that the RCOs
7 should be able to help out a little bit
8 more in terms of notifying the community
9 to come out. It needs to be revamped,
10 the notification, as far as residents is
11 concerned, because we ask -- we catch
12 developers all the time who say they mail
13 out and the people said they did not get
14 it or the developer said they gave it out
15 or they send it out through the mail and
16 the people say they still didn't get it.
17 And some of the developers admit that
18 they did not send it out, and then we
19 have to have them come back again. Or if
20 we do a continuation, who resends out to
21 the public? If we have to have them come
22 back two or three times, they're not
23 sending out to the residents again and
24 again and again.

25 So, I mean, it needs to be

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.
2 looked at. I'm sure this bill does not
3 cover that, but we're asking City Council
4 to really take a look at this
5 notification. It's important that people
6 are notified and be able to come out and
7 have a voice and a vote regarding this
8 zoning.

9 Thank you.

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
11 you.

12 Councilwoman Blackwell.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
14 you.

15 For Powelton Village and that
16 whole area, we'll be in touch. We're
17 happy to have a discussion on certain
18 aspects of this issue. So we'll be in
19 touch with you. I'll probably have Marty
20 be in touch with you in that regard.

21 And certainly Drexel, who was
22 here, as City Planning said, the area is
23 a real small change to their Master Plan,
24 and so we're happy to support.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 you, Councilwoman.

3 MR. BODE: Thank you.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Anyone

5 else here to testify on Bill No. 180515?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: No one

8 else here?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.

11 Very good. That will conclude our public

12 hearing of the Rules Committee, and we

13 will momentarily go into a public

14 meeting.

15 Okay. We are now in our public

16 meeting of the Rules Committee. We have

17 a quorum, and the Chair recognizes

18 Councilman Johnson for motions on the

19 amendments to the bills.

20 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I move

21 that Bills No. 181064, 190058, and 180515

22 be moved as amended -- be amended.

23 (Duly seconded.)

24 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: It's been

25 moved and seconded.

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 All in favor?

3 (Aye.)

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Opposed?

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Hearing
7 none, the amendments to those three bills
8 are approved.

9 Councilman Johnson.

10 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I move
11 that the Committee refer Bills No.
12 190016, 181064, and 190058 be referred
13 out of Committee --

14 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:
15 Councilman Johnson.

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I move
17 that Bills No. 190016, 190001, Bill No.
18 181064 as amended, and 190058 as amended
19 and Bill No. 180515 as amended be
20 reported out of Committee and the rules
21 of Council be suspended to be heard at
22 our next Council session.

23 (Duly seconded.)

24 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: It's been
25 moved and seconded.

1 2/26/19 - RULES - BILL 180515, ETC.

2 All in favor?

3 (Aye.)

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Opposed?

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Hearing

7 none, the bills read by Councilman

8 Johnson with the appropriate amendments

9 will be reported out of this Committee

10 favorably with a rules suspension for

11 consideration on first reading at our

12 next session of Council.

13 That completes our Rules

14 Committee today. Thank you all for your

15 participation. Thank you for coming.

16 (Committee on Rules concluded

17 at 10:50 a.m.)

18 - - -

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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, and that this is a true and
correct transcript of same.

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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