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2 COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

3 PUBLIC HEARING

4 COMMITTEE ON PARKS, RECREATION

5 AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

6 - - - -

7 Room 696, City Hall
8 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
9 Wednesday, March 10, 2004
10 9:40 a.m.
11 - - - -

12 BILL 040031 - An Ordinance authorizing the
13 Commissioner of Public Property, on behalf
14 of the City of Philadelphia, to purchase fee
15 simple title to a certain parcel of land
16 with the buildings and improvements thereon,
17 situated on the Northwest side of Algon
18 Avenue at Fox Chase Road, all under certain
19 terms and conditions.
20 BILL 040093 - An Ordinance renaming the
21 Recreation Department facility identified as
22 Manayunk Park located on the 4300 block of
Silverwood Street as "Pretzel Park."

PRESENT:

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18 COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN, Chair
19 COUNCILMAN DARRELL CLARKE
20 COUNCILMAN FRANK DICICCO
21 COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE
22 COUNCILMAN JACK KELLY
COUNCILMAN MICHAEL NUTTER
COUNCILWOMAN DONNA REED MILLER
COUNCILMAN BRIAN O'NEILL
COUNCILWOMAN MARIAN TASCO

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I N D E X

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1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040093

2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Good morning.

3 The City Council Committee on Parks,
4 Recreation and Cultural Affairs is now in a
5 public hearing the hear testimony on Bill
6 040093 and 040031.

7 The members joining us this morning
8 are Councilman W. Wilson Goode, Councilman
9 Frank DiCicco and Councilmember Marian Tasco.

10 Clerk, could you please read the
11 title of Bill No. 040093.

12 THE CLERK: Bill 040093, an
13 ordinance renaming the Recreation Department
14 facility identified as Manayunk Park located
15 on the 4300 block of Silverwood Street as
16 "Pretzel Park."

17 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you,
18 David Ford.

19 Joining us also is Councilman Jack
20 Kelly, a member of this Committee.

21 Could Kevin Smith please come up to
22 testify on Bill No. 040093?

23 Good morning.

24 MR. SMITH: Good morning.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Please start by

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040093

2 stating your name for the record.

3 MR. SMITH: My name is Kevin Smith.

4 I'm with the Manayunk Neighborhood Council.

5 Dear Committee Members, the park
6 located 4300 Silverwood Street has been listed
7 in City records as Manayunk Park since its
8 creation in the early 1900s. However, no
9 residents know it by that name. In the minds
10 of residents in as far back as anyone can
11 remember, the park has been known as Pretzel
12 Park.

13 In 1998, a group of community
14 organizations joined to form the Friends of
15 Pretzel Park. We immediately began working
16 with Councilman Nutter, the Department of
17 Recreation, Pennsylvania Horticultural
18 Society. When we began our work, the
19 Department of Recreation installed signs
20 welcoming visitors to Manayunk Park.

21 There are two stories about the
22 origin of the Pretzel Park name. One relates
23 to the pretzel shape of the sidewalks, two
24 large loops in the center with triangular
25 spaces at three of the five entrances. The

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040093

2 original pretzel shape was renewed with recent
3 renovations made possible by Councilman
4 Nutter. The other name may have originated
5 when a vendor began selling pretzels in the
6 park and many residents went there to buy
7 pretzels and thought that's why it was called
8 Pretzel Park. In either case, it's time for
9 the official name of the park to come in line
10 with the real name of the park.

11 This was demonstrated graphically
12 when in the normal course of cleaning up the
13 park, I climbed a ladder to remove a sticker
14 from the "Welcome to Manayunk Park" sign at
15 the Silverwood and cotton Street entrance.
16 While graffiti is not a major problem, it is
17 persistent consists of crude scrawlings and
18 band and radio station stickers. As I climbed
19 a ladder to remove the defacement, I realized
20 it was a picture of a pretzel and not some
21 random symbol. I had to laugh and admire the
22 defiance. It is Pretzel Park and not Manayunk
23 Park.

24 Today, there's still a small Pretzel
25 sticker on the Manayunk sign. I celebrate

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040093

2 that pretzel and this change to bring the
3 official name of our little piece of Manayunk
4 heritage back to the community.

5 The Friends of Pretzel Park received
6 many improvements from our coalition with the
7 City and PHS. The park received an attractive
8 garden house with electricity and outdoor
9 water hookup. Sidewalks were replaced and we
10 were granted a part-time seasonal maintenance
11 attendant.

12 Over the years, dedicated volunteers
13 have installed and painted new and old
14 benches, picked up loads of litter, leaves
15 debris, spread tons of mulch, repeatedly
16 removed graffiti, and established, watered,
17 and weeded gardens. We now a very successful
18 dog run and an exciting and innovative
19 playground. Pretzel Park has been renovated
20 into a lovely urban park where children can
21 play, dogs can run, people can sit and enjoy
22 the action or take a peaceful stroll.

23 We would like to thank Councilman
24 Nutter, the City of Philadelphia, our State
25 Representative Kathy Manderino, the

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040093

2 Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and the
3 many volunteers and other organizations that
4 made this possible.

5 Thank you for your time and
6 consideration.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you,
8 Kevin Smith.

9 Are there any questions for this
10 witness?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I'd like to ask
13 the District Councilperson representing this
14 district, Michael Nutter, to share with us a
15 few words.

16 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Thank you, Madam
17 Chair and Members of the Committee. This is
18 an exciting and historic moment. The enormous
19 weight of the matter before the Committee
20 today, I would tremendously appreciate your
21 support.

22 Seriously, Kevin and Jane and the
23 entire Manayunk Neighborhood Council, they
24 have -- certainly working in partnership on a
25 number of occasions with the Manayunk

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040093
2 Development Corporation -- have really
3 reclaimed Manayunk Park, which I only new as
4 Pretzel Park in all my time, and turned it
5 into a great place. So the community is
6 really to be commended for it. We've had this
7 unofficial name for a long period of time and
8 now I think it's appropriate that we make it
9 official.

10 But I really want to commend them
11 for their great works. And if you're over in
12 that part of the town, you'd really enjoy the
13 great things that they've done over there. So
14 I appreciate Committee taking this matter and
15 I appreciate your support. Thank you.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you for
17 your testimony.

18 Anyone else to testify on this bill?

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mr. Kevin Smith
21 and Councilman Nutter, when you are ready for
22 the official unveiling, be sure to invite the
23 Members of this Committee.

24 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: And supply
25 pretzels.

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040031

2 COUNCILMAN NUTTER: Absolutely.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: That would be
4 appropriate.

5 That concludes testimony on Bill No.
6 040093.

7 We will now move on to Bill No.
8 040031. And we would ask the Clerk to please
9 read the title of the bill.

10 THE CLERK: Bill 040031 an ordinance
11 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
12 Property, on behalf of the City of
13 Philadelphia, to purchase fee simple title to
14 a certain parcel of land with the buildings
15 and improvements thereon, situated on the
16 Northwest side of Algon Avenue at Fox Chase
17 Road, all under certain terms and conditions..

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you.

19 We would like ask the testifiers Ken
20 Sipos from the Department of Public Property
21 and the representative from the Fairmount Park
22 Commission Karen Borski to please join us at
23 the table.

24 We'll start with the Department of
25 Public Property. I ask you to please state

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040031

2 your name for the record.

3 MR. SIPOS: Good morning, Chairwoman
4 Reynolds-Brown and Members of the Committee on
5 Public Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs.
6 My name is Ken Sipos. I'm a Real Estate
7 Specialist with the Department of Public
8 Property. I'm here today to testify in
9 support of Bill No. 040031, an ordinance
10 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
11 Property to purchase fee simple title to a
12 certain parcel of land with buildings and
13 improvements thereon situated on the northwest
14 side of Algon Avenue at Fox Chase Road.

15 This bill will enable the adjacent
16 vacant land at 8432 Algon Avenue to be
17 incorporated to Pennypack Park. This bill
18 provides the legal description for previous
19 Council Bill 030788 signed by the Mayor on
20 December 31, 2003.

21 The Department of Public Property
22 supports this measure and accordingly I
23 respectfully ask that City Council approve
24 Bill No. 040031. I also ask that the Rules be
25 suspended so that the ordinance may be passed

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040031

2 upon second reading at Council.

3 Thank you. I'll be happy to answer
4 any questions you may have.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you for
6 your testimony.

7 Any questions for this witness from
8 Members of the Committee?

9 Councilman Jack Kelly.

10 COUNCILMAN KELLY: What is this land
11 being used for presently?

12 MR. SIPOS: Presently, it's vacant
13 grassland.

14 COUNCILMAN KELLY: It's just vacant
15 land?

16 MR. SIPOS: Yes.

17 COUNCILMAN KELLY: There's nothing
18 on it?

19 MR. SIPOS: No.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Any other
21 questions for this witness?

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We would like
24 to acknowledge the presence of Councilman
25 Darrell Clarke, a member of this Committee.

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040031

2 We'll now move to Karen Borski of
3 Fairmount Park Commission to offer your
4 testimony.

5 MS. BORSKI: Good morning Chairwoman
6 Reynolds-Brown, Members of the Committee.
7 Thank you for having us today.

8 My name is Karen Lloyd Borski,
9 Executive Director of the Fairmount Park
10 Commission, and I am today to testify in
11 support of Bill 040031, an ordinance
12 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
13 Property on behalf of the City of Philadelphia
14 to purchase fee simple title to a certain
15 parcel of land at 8432 Algon Avenue, all under
16 certain terms and conditions.

17 This bill will enable the currently
18 vacant land to be incorporated into Pennypack
19 Park. Acquisition of this approximately
20 11-acre parcel will allow the Commission to
21 protect the site and preserve it at open space
22 in perpetuity. Acquisition of the parcel was
23 approved by the Fairmount Park Commission in
24 September of 2003.

25 This bill provides the property's

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040031

2 legal description for a previous Council Bill
3 No. 030788 which was signed on December 31st
4 of 2003. That bill did not contain the legal
5 description when originally introduced. The
6 description was to be added TO Bill 030788 by
7 amendment before final passage by Council, but
8 that amendment mistakenly did not occur.
9 Therefore, Bill No. 040031 is introduced to
10 provide a legal description of the property
11 that City Council already expressed its
12 approval of the City acquiring.

13 The Fairmount Park Commission,
14 therefore, supports this measure and
15 accordingly I respectfully ask that City
16 Council approve Bill No. 040031. I also ask
17 that the Rules be suspended so that the
18 ordinance may be passed upon the second
19 reading of Council.

20 Thank you. I'm happy to answer any
21 questions you may have.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you for
23 your testimony.

24 Any questions for this witness?

25 (No response.)

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040031

2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I would like to
3 ask our District Councilman Brian O'Neill to
4 offer a few words on this measure.

5 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Thank you,
6 Madam Chairman. I just would like to thank
7 the neighbors who stuck with me for I guess at
8 least the last 10 years on this project,
9 putting aside many second-rate developments
10 that were proposed by a second-rate developer,
11 and hung in there until there was funds
12 available to purchase this. Because this is
13 real parkland. This isn't a nimbi project.
14 This is true parkland, and I just think there
15 were probably a lot of prayers out there that
16 were answered. But I'd like to really thank
17 the staff and the leadership at the Fairmount
18 Park Commission as well, because they're real
19 advocates. They didn't have to be brought in,
20 they came in on this. Thank you.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You're welcome.

22 We do have a letter to be read into
23 the record.

24 Clerk, would you please read.

25 THE CLERK: This is a letter

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040031

2 addressed to Councilman Brian O'Neill from
3 Wanda Exline, President of the Dungan Civic
4 Association.

5 "Dear Councilman O'Neill, Dungan
6 Civic Association strongly urges Fairmount
7 Park to acquire this pristine land adjacent to
8 Pennypack Park. This beautiful tract of
9 ground, with rolling hills, trees, and
10 wetlands should be designated part of
11 Pennypack Park. Leaving this pristine ground
12 as open green space is environmentally
13 important to Pennypack Park and the
14 surrounding area. Due to the high water
15 table, this tract absorbs the runoff of water
16 from the south's higher elevations as it runs
17 down to the Pennypack Creek. There are other
18 issues of traffic, etc., but mainly the
19 beautiful picturesque view entering Pennypack
20 Park via Krewstown Road should never be
21 disturbed by any kind of construction.

22 "Sincerely, Wanda Exline, President,
23 Dungan Civic Association."

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you for
25 that additional testimony.

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - BILL 040031

2 I would like to ask Councilman Kelly
3 to please give a motion on Bill No. 040093.

4 This concludes our public hearing.

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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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PUBLIC MEETING

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COMMITTEE ON PARKS, RECREATION

5

AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

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Wednesday, March 10, 2004

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Public meeting conducted by the
Committee on Parks, Recreation and Cultural
Affairs, held in Room 400, City Hall,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on the above date,
to consider action on the following:

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BILLS 040031 and 040093.

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PRESENT:

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COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN, Chair

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COUNCILMAN DARRELL CLARKE

COUNCILMAN FRANK DICICCO

18

COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE

COUNCILMAN JACK KELLY

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COUNCILWOMAN DONNA REED MILLER

COUNCILMAN MICHAEL NUTTER

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COUNCILMAN BRIAN O'NEILL

COUNCILWOMAN MARIAN TASCO

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1 03/10/04 - PARKS - PUBLIC MEETING

2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We will now
3 move into public meeting.

4 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Madam Chair, I
5 would like to move that Bill 040031 (sic) be
6 moved out of this Committee with a favorable
7 recommendation. I'd also ask for a suspension
8 of the Rules to permit the first reading of
9 this bill at the next reading Session of
10 Council.

11 (Duly seconded.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Bill No. 040093
13 has been moved and properly seconded.

14 All in favor say aye.

15 (Aye.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: All opposed?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Bill No. 040093
19 will be reported out of this Committee with a
20 favorable recommendation and a further
21 recommendation that the Rules of Council be
22 suspended to allow first reading at our next
23 scheduled council meeting.

24 I will then ask Councilman Clarke if
25 he would to give us a motion Bill No. 040031.

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - PUBLIC MEETING

2 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Madam
3 Chair. I move that Bill No. 040031 be
4 reported out of Committee with favorable
5 recommendation and a request for a suspension
6 of the Rules so as to allow reading at the
7 next Session.

8 (Duly seconded.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Properly moved
10 and seconded that Bill No. 040093 be reported
11 out this Committee with a favorable
12 recommendation and a further recommendation
13 that the Rules of Council be suspended to
14 allow first reading at our next scheduled
15 Council meeting.

16 All those in favor?

17 (Aye.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: All opposed?

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: The bill is
21 approved.

22 That concludes this meeting of the
23 Committee on Recreation, Parks and Cultural
24 Affairs.

25 MS. BORSKI: Madam Chair, I believe

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - PUBLIC MEETING

2 that you really did just read 93 twice and
3 never read 31, and since we got caught on a
4 technicality last time, I just wanted to
5 confirm that the record reflects 31.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We'll make
7 another motion on Bill No. 040031 just to make
8 the record clear.

9 We have to go back into a public
10 meeting so that we can consider Bill No.
11 040031.

12 COUNCILMAN KELLY: Madam Chair, I
13 move that Bill No. 040031 be moved out of this
14 Committee with a favorable recommendation. I
15 also ask for the suspension of the Rules to
16 permit the first reading of this bill at the
17 next Session of Council.

18 (Duly seconded.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Bill 040031 has
20 been moved and properly seconded.

21 All in favor say aye.

22 (Aye.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: There are none
24 opposed. Bill No. 040031 will be reported out
25 of this Committee with a favorable

1 03/10/04 - PARKS - PUBLIC MEETING

2 recommendation and a further recommendation
3 that the Rules of Council be suspended to
4 allow first reading at our next scheduled
5 Session of City Council.

6 MS. BORSKI: Very much appreciated.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You're very
8 welcome. Thank you for the clarity.

9 Thank you, Council colleagues.

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11 (Council adjourned at 9:55 a.m.)

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

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing
proceedings of the Council of the City of
Philadelphia of March 10, 2004, were reported
fully and accurately by me, and that this is a
correct transcript of the same.

RE: COMMITTEE ON PARKS, RECREATION AND
CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Lisa C. Bradley, RPR