COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
PUBLIC HEARING - JOINT COMMITTEES ON
LAW & GOVERNMENT
and
STREETS & SERVICES
- - -
Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Wednesday, June 9, 2004, 10:58 p.m.
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BILL 040370 - An Ordinance amending the Ordinance approved January 3, 1992 (Bill No. 1205-AA), which, pursuant to subsection 9-204(8)(a) of The Philadelphia code, designates the locations in Center City at which vending is permitted, by deleting all permitted vendor locations on both sides of Eighth Street between Market and Chestnut Streets.

Bill 040400 - An Ordinance amending Section 9-204 of The Philadelphia Code relating to Sidewalk Vendors in Center City and Section 9-205 of The Philadelphia code relating to Sidewalk Sales to permit farmers' markets on the south side of Walnut Street on the sidewalk abutting Rittenhouse Square, and providing that provisions shall expire after a specified period of time, all under certain terms and conditions.

Bill 040514 - An Ordinance amending Title 12 of The Philadelphia Code, by amending Section 12-2809 relating to Civil Penalties and Costs, to increase the civil penalty for violations of Section 12-1126 relating to Excessive Noise, and Section 12-1127(1), (2), and (3) relating to Excessive Idling of or Noise from Motor Vehicles.

Bill 040552 - An Ordinance authorizing the revision of lines and grades on a portion of City Plan No. 107 bounded by Forty-sixth Street, Forty-seventh Street, Fairmount Avenue and Westminster Avenue, under certain terms and conditions.

Bill 040557 - An Ordinance authorizing the revision of lines and grades on a portion of City Plan No. 222 in the vicinity of Hunting Park Avenue and Kensington Avenue, under certain terms and conditions.

Bill 040560 - An Ordinance regulating the direction of movement of traffic on Twentieth Street, from Belfield Avenue to Olney Avenue, northbound.

Bill 040561 - An Ordinance authorizing the revision of lines and grades of an area of City Plan No. 178 bounded by Olney Avenue, Belfield Avenue, Ogontz Avenue and Wister Street.

Bill 040562 - An Ordinance authorizing the installation of all-way stop signs at the intersection of Front Street and Elfreths Alley.

Bill 040563 - An Ordinance authorizing the revisions of lines and grades on a portion of City Plan Nos. 271 and 146 in the vicinity of Penn Street and Shackamaxon Street, under certain terms and conditions.

Bill 040568 - An Ordinance granting permission to Nirlesh C. Desai and C&N Newsstand, owner and operator of the newsstand located on the northwest corner of Sixteenth Street and John F. Kennedy Boulevard, to construct, use and maintain a conduit for fiberoptic facilities in and under the north footway of John F. Kennedy Boulevard, the west footway of Sixteenth Street and the south footway of Cuthbert Street, for the purpose of supplying telephone service to said newsstand.

Bill 040569 - An Ordinance authorizing the revision of lines and grades on a portion of City Plan No. 205 in the vicinity of Fairhill Street and Annsbury Street, under certain trerms and conditions.

Bill 040605 - An Ordinance authorizing the construction of sewers and appurtenant work in portions of Saint Lukes Street and in a proposed right-of-way for drainage and sewer purposes in an existing ten feet wide alley south of Rowan Street.

Bill 040606 - An Ordinance authorizing the Water Commissioner on behalf of the City to enter into an agreement with the owners of the properties and their successors of a private ten feet wide alley, located south of Rowan Street and north of Saint Paul Street from Sixteenth Street to approximately 252 feet west of Sixteenth for the grant of a right-of-way to the City for drainage and sewer purposes, under certain terms and conditions.

Bill 040612 - An Ordinance amending Section 10-722 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "use of Dumpsters," by prohibiting dumpsters on Strawberry Street between Chestnut Street and Market Street.

RESOLUTION 040646 - Resolution authorizing City Council's Committees on Law and Government and Streets and Services to hold public hearings to investigate the state of intergovernmental cooperation between the Streets Department, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (Penn DOT) and the City Council of Philadelphia, and, toward a remedy, authorizing the issuance of subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents to the full extent authorized under Section 2-401 of the Home Rule Charter.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN FRANK DI CICCO
COUNCILMAN DAVID COHEN
COUNCILMAN FRANK RIZZO
COUNCILWOMAN DONNA REED MILLER
COUNCILMAN JUAN F. RAMOS
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL
COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNA C. VERNA
COUNCILMAN DARRELL L. CLARKE
COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN
COUNCILMAN MICHAEL A. NUTTER

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you. Good evening, and thank you for your patience.

This is a continued hearing of the Committee on Streets and Services. There are some additional bills that will be heard tonight that were not part of the original hearing, but because that hearing has been continuing and the advertisements have been appropriately advertised, there's no need for us to begin a new Committee on Streets and Services.

We'll just continue the prior session that started... I forgot when it's been so long, but at least two weeks or so ago. Okay?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: As long as there's been an advertisement.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: The advertisement's have been properly notified. WE checked with the tech staff.

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And they said that we don't need to close out that Committee and start a new one.

It's a continuation of the previous hearing. So we meet all the technical legal requirements to continue.

Bill Number 040612 is being held at the request of the sponsor.

Bill Number 040400 and Bill Number 040370, we have written testimony that has been left with us by Mr. Haigler of the Department of Licenses and Inspection.

So, for the purpose of time, being given it's such a late hour, we won't take any testimony unless there's someone here who would like to testify on that bill.

And if not, we will just provide the stenographer with that written testimony. Are there any objections from the Committee.

(No response.)

COUNCIMLAN RAMOS: No objection.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: They are non-controversial bills, and we don't need to do those. Mr. Haigler has left us

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written testimony.

The Clerk will read the title of Bill Number 040568.

THE CLERK: Bill Number 040568, an ordinance granting permission to Nirlesh C. Desai and C&N Newsstand, owner and operator of the newsstand located on the northwest corner of Sixteenth Street and John F. Kennedy Boulevard, to construct, use and maintain a conduit for fiberoptic facilities in and under the north footway of John F. Kennedy Boulevard, the west footway of Sixteenth Street and the south footway of Cuthbert Street, for the purpose of supplying telephone service to said newsstand.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Will those testifying on this bill please come to the witness table. Mr. Moss has left, I believe. Is there anyone here who wishes to testify for or against this bill?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Seeing none, The clerk will read the title of the next

bill.

THE CLERK: Bill Number 040605, an Ordinance authorizing the construction of sewers and appurtenant work in portions of Saint Lukes Street and in a proposed right-of-way for drainage and sewer purposes in an existing ten feet wide alley south of Rowan Street.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Is Mr. McCluskey here?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No? He's gone, too. Smart guy.

Anyone else here wishes to testify for or against the bill?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Seeing none, the Clerk will read the title of the next bill.

THE CLERK: Bill Number 040606, an Ordinance authorizing the Water Commissioner on behalf of the City to enter into an agreement with the owners of the properties and their successors of a

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private ten feet wide alley, located south of Rowan Street and north of Saint Paul Street from Sixteenth Street to approximately 252 feet west of Sixteenth for the grant of a right-of-way to the City for drainage and sewer purposes, under certain terms and conditions.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Anyone wishes to testify for or against this bill?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Seeing none, the Clerk will read the title of the next bill.

THE CLERK: Bill Number 040514, an Ordinance amending Title 12 of The Philadelphia Code, by amending Section 12-2809 relating to Civil Penalties and Costs, to increase the civil penalty for violations of Section 12-1126 relating to Excessive Noise, and Section 12-1127(1), (2), and (3) relating to Excessive Idling of or Noise from Motor Vehicles.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Anyone here wishes to testify for or against this bill?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Seeing none, the Clerk will read the title of the next bill.

THE CLERK: Bill Number 040552, an Ordinance authorizing the revision of lines and grades on a portion of City Plan No. 107 bounded by Forty-sixth Street, Forty-seventh Street, Fairmount Avenue and Westminster Avenue, under certain terms and conditions.

MR. LONEY: Good evening, Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee.

My name is Paul Loney, Survey Bureau Manager of the Department of Streets.

The department would like to offer the following testimony on Bill Number 040552.

This is not an administration ordinance, but an ordinance requested by Mr. Cordell Blue, of the Philadelphia Housing Authority, 12 South 23rd Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103.

The purpose of this ordinance is to

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legally remove Many Street and June Street from the City Plan to facilitate a new PHA residential development.

This ordinance is supported by the Department of Streets, and is recommended to your Committee for favorable action.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Any questions for this witness from the Committee?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Anyone else here wishes to testify for or against the bill?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Seeing none, the Clerk will read the title of the reflection Bill.

THE CLERK: Bill Number 040557, an Ordinance authorizing the revision of lines and grades on a portion of City Plan No. 222 in the vicinity of Hunting Park Avenue and Kensington Avenue, under certain terms and conditions.

MR. LONEY: Good evening, Chairman and members of the Committee.

Again, my name is Paul Loney, the Survey Bureau Manager of the Department of Streets.

The department would like to offer the following testimony on Bill Number 040557.

This is not an administration ordinance, but an ordinance requested by Mr. Elias Bolat, Active Auto Sales, 4101 Kensington Avenue, Philadelphia.

The purpose of this ordinance is to strike Worrell Street from The City Plan to prevent short dumping and secure the area.

This ordinance is supported by the Department of Streets, and is recommended to your Committee for favorable action.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Any questions for this witness by the Committee?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Anyone else here who wishes to testify for or against the bill?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Seeing none,

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The clerk will read the title of the next Bill.

THE CLERK: Bill Number 040563, an Ordinance authorizing the revisions of lines and grades on a portion of City Plan Nos. 271 and 146 in the vicinity of Penn Street and Shackamaxon Street, under certain terms and conditions.

MR. LONEY: Good evening, Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee.

My name is Paul Loney, again, the Survey Bureau Manager of the Department of Streets.

And the department would like to offer the following testimony on Bill Number 040563.

This is not an administration ordinance, but an ordinance requested by Mr. Lynn Carry, Vice President of the property of LHTW Corporation, 3001 Street Road, Bensalem, Pennsylvania.

The purpose of this ordinance is to legally close Penn Street to facilitate future development.

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This ordinance is supported By the Department of Streets, and is recommended to your Committee for favorable action.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Any questions from this Committee for this witness?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Is there anyone here who wishes to speak in favor of or against?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Seeing none, the Clerk will read the title of the next bill.

THE CLERK: Bill Number 040569, an Ordinance authorizing the revision of lines and grades on a portion of City Plan No. 205 in the vicinity of Fairhill Street and Annsbury Street, under certain terms and conditions.

MR. LONEY: Good evening, Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee.

My name is Paul Loney, Survey Bureau Manager, Department of Streets.

The department would like to offer

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the following testimony on Bill Number 040569.

This is not an administration ordinance, but an ordinance requested by Linda Miller of 530 West Hansbury Street, Philadelphia.

The purpose of this ordinance is to strike and vacate Fairhill Street from The City Plan to prevent short dumping in the area.

This ordinance is supported by the Department of Streets, and is recommended to your Committee for favorable action.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Any questions for this Committee -- for this witness from the Committee?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Anyone else here wishes to testify either against or for?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Seeing none, the Clerk will read the title of the next bill.

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THE CLERK: Bill Number 040562, an Ordinance authorizing the installation of all-way stop signs at the intersection of Front Street and Elfreths Alley.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: We have all night. Don't worry about it. Take your time.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: We're not in a hurry.

MR. DENNY: Good evening, Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. My name is Charles Denny. I'm the Assistant Chief Traffic Engineer for the Department of Streets.

I am here to offer testimony on Bill 040562, an ordinance authorizing installation of an all-night stop at the intersection of Front and Elfreths Alley.

Pennsylvania Vehicle Code requires PennDOT to develop regulations governing traffic control devices in accordance with

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Federal Highway Administration's manual on uniform traffic control devices.

These regulations apply to all public highways in Pennsylvania, and the City Solicitor has ruled the Streets Department is legally obligated to comply with the Vehicle Code and related PennDOT regulations.

Federal and state criteria require that an all-night stop be warranted by an engineering study of traffic conditions, police crash records, traffic volume, speeds, and sight distance.

The study conducted as a result of this request concluded that present-day conditions at this location do not satisfy federal and state warrants for an all-night stop control.

The intersection isn't unusual compared to most others. Front Street is a narrow roadway with a wall on its east curb line. As such there is no pedestrian cross traffic.

Elfreths Alley is a unique street,

but it has no virtually no motor vehicle traffic on it. These two factors result in no cross traffic at this intersection; and therefore, no way to justify installing an all-way stop.

Our search of police crash records show that there has not been a crash reported here for a ten-year period, from 1994 till 2003. This is a very unusual occurrence for an intersection in the City of Philadelphia.

The most likely traffic crash to occur at this intersection would be a rear end crash after we install the stop sign on Front Street.

Basically, a typical driver who would roll through a stop hits an innocent driver who believes in stopping at stop signs.

We should really not be installing devices that cause more harm than they prevent.

At Front and Elfreths Alley, we are dealing with a situation which prevailing

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traffic conditions indicate that establishing an all-way stop control would lead to a safety problem.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I'd be happy to answer your questions.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you. Any questions for this witness from the Committee?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Anyone here wish to speak in favor of or against?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Before we begin reading the title of the next bill which is obviously the reason why most of the people are still here this evening... Before we begin, I just would like to let everyone understand that I know there are a lot of people here who wish to testify.

And we are going to do everything within our power to accommodate your right to be heard, but for the sake of efficiency, given the late hour, I would

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ask that those here who wish to testify be as brief as possible, and that my colleagues keep their questions as brief as possible also.

We will limit the testimony to five minutes, and ask that if you have not already, please sign in with my legislative aide, assistant, Mr. Brian Abernathy, behind me, to make sure your name is on the witness list.

I would also ask for those of you who are testifying, if you're coming up in groups as a panel, as an example, four or five of you, whatever the number, who live on the same block, and that your testimony is basically the same, would you please appoint someone to be the spokesperson for that block.

We will take your name and address so that the record reflects that you were here in attendance; but rather than be repetitive and continue the same testimony, in the interest of fairness to everyone else, we would appreciate that the panels,

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if you choose to do it that way, let someone speak on behalf of the panels.

We are willing to give everybody five minutes. We will wait to see how these proceedings go forward. We would ask that you do not continually repeat the testimony has already been given by the people before you, and add something new to the testimony, if you can.

Hold on one second.

The Clerk will read the title of the two bills, and then we will have a brief opening statement by both Council members, Donna Reed Miller and Councilman Cohen.

Clerk will read the title of the bills, please.

THE CLERK: Bill Number 040561, an Ordinance authorizing the revision of lines and grades of an area of City Plan No. 178 bounded by Olney Avenue, Belfield Avenue, Ogontz Avenue and Wister Street.

Bill 040560, an Ordinance regulating the direction of movement of traffic on Twentieth Street, from Belfield Avenue to

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Olney Avenue, northbound.

MR. LONEY: Good evening, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. Again, my name is Paul Loney, the Survey Bureau Manager of the Department of Streets.

And the Department would like to offer the following testimony on Bill Number 040561.

This is not an administration ordinance, but an ordinance requested by Mr. Edward Turzanski, Assistant Vice President for Government and Community Relations of LaSalle University, 1900 West Olney Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19141.

The purpose of this ordinance is to narrow 20th Street between Olney Avenue and Belfield Avenue, to enhance the safety of the students and employees.

This ordinance is supported by the Department of Streets, and is recommended to your Committee for favorable action.

MR. DENNY: Mr. Chairman, and

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members of the Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today.

My name is Charles Denny, Assistant Chief Traffic Engineer for the Department of Streets.

I am here to offer testimony on Bill Number 040560, an ordinance regulating the direction of the movement of traffic on 20th Street from Belfield Avenue to Olney Avenue northbound.

Pennsylvania Vehicle Codes under Section 3308 and 6109(a)(4) gives local authorities control for setting directions of streets under their jurisdiction in the City of Philadelphia, City Council determined street direction.

Streets Department has observed no adverse consequences of permanently altering 20th Street as a one-way northbound street.

Therefore, the department has no objections to this bill.

We offer the following analysis.

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Background: Trial period of altering 20th Street as a one-way northbound street began on December 29, 2003, and has been in effect for a little over five months.

Findings: The Streets Department Traffic Engineering Unit evaluated traffic crash data for the months of January, February, March and April of 2002 within the area of... of 2004, within the area of 20th Street, bounded by Nedro Avenue on the north, Belfield Avenue on the south, Wister Street on the west, and Ogontz Avenue on the east.

Traffic Engineering compared these four month time period of January and April 2004 with the same months in 2001, 2002 and 2003.

The following are the crash details. The number of crashes, both total and then injury crashes within that.

For 2001 there were 79 total crashes in the area, with 21 of those being injury crashes.

In 2002 there were 106 crashes

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within the area, with 22 being injury crashes.

In 2003, there were 72 crashes in the area, with 12 being injury crashes.

In 2004 there were 72 crashes, with 12 being injury crashes.

The results clearly -- The results of the data clearly demonstrate that the one-way operation of 20th Street did not result in an increase in traffic crashes in the area.

At 20th and Olney, the avenue, the crashes went from 13 in 2003 to 8 in 2004.

Analysis: The one-way operation of 20th Street resulted in the diversion of southbound traffic, primarily to Ogontz Avenue or Wister Street, but also to a lesser extent Broad Street.

Since 20th Street ends at Belfield, this traffic has not resulted in significant detour.

Traffic that is coming from the west or turning west on Belfield Avenue diverts to Wister Avenue.

Wister, which has traditionally been underutilized in terms of full capacity, has handled additional traffic volume that resulted from this alteration.

However, to minimize disruption to the community, Traffic Engineering will need to make a single adjustment to the controls at the intersection of Belfield and Wister.

On the other hand, traffic whose origin is destination is of the east, southbound traffic on 20th Street primarily turns to the east at Belfield. Use for the most part using either Ogontz Avenue or Broad Street.

Given the capacity of these streets, both streets are more than capable of handling this additional traffic.

The intersection of Olney and Ogontz is under construction. When completed in the near future, the observed congestion at that southbound traffic as experienced will diminish.

The area served by three firehouses,

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Engine 19, Medic Unit 24 at Chelten and Banton Street; Engine 51, Medic Unit 18 at 5931 Old York Road; Engine 72, Medic Unit 24 at 1127 West Loudin Street.

Response to this block at 20th Street from the firehouses at Chelten and Banton and at 1127 West Loudin is not impacted by the changes.

The response to this same block from the firehouse at 5931 Old York Road to 20th Street and Belfield is 2,000 feet longer via Wister Street and Belfield.

Conclusion: 20th Street north of Olney is basically a local street. The one-way operation south of Olney results in a drop of approximately 200 vehicles southbound on 20th Street north of Olney.

This vehicle traffic is considered through traffic and is diverted to through streets.

This is consistent with the Streets Department's policy, and that is to keep through traffic on through streets and off local streets, although through streets

arterials are better capable of handling traffic volume and keeping through traffic off of local streets.

In conclusion, the one-way northbound reconfiguration of 20th Street resulting in the removal of through traffic from a local street and has not had an adverse effect on the safety in this area, as demonstrated by the findings of the Streets Department.

(Boo's from the audience.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Excuse me. Excuse me. I understand that most of you have been here for several hours; and I also understand that a number of you have been appearing in this Council on Thursday for the last couple of months.

I appreciate the fact that you've been here and you're participating in the process. But we're not going to be allowing people to be yelling out and making statements from the gallery.

You will all have an opportunity to be heard in the proper time. So, please

respect all the witnesses, whether you agree or disagree with them. Thank you.

MR. DAMIANI: Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I'd be happy to answer questions you may have at this time.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Before we begin with the questions, I want to go back. I did make somewhat of a mistake. I failed to acknowledge both Council members Donna Reed Miller and Cohen for opening statements.

So at this time, out of respect for the lady on the Committee, I will yield to Councilwoman Donna Reed Miller for her statement, and then Councilman Cohen.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to briefly address some of the concerns and allay many of the fears that I've heard voiced in the community.

This ordinance did not come about by a unilateral action on my part. Contrary to what has been represented, I consulted

with a wide variety of people in the neighborhood.

In addition to LaSalle University, I and my staff have met and consulted with the local block captains and at least three Democratic committee people.

As someone who has worked and been a part of the community organizations in the northwest since my early twenties, I would never ignore the community. Some say I have not listened to my constituents.

Elected officials represent all members of the District. We represent residents, we represent businesses, and we represent institutions. They are all our constituents.

This issue is an issue of public safety and traffic calming. I'm actually condensing, due to the time, some of my opening statement.

I commend all those from the community for your civic involvement, and recognize those involved due to political agendas.

I hope that after this issue is resolved, that you will continue to put your collective energy into the betterment of our City.

As we proceed today with this hearing, let us do so in the spirit of cooperation and a constructive and respectful manner. Thank you.

I also have written testimony that I'll be submitting later for the record at the end. I have Reverend Robert Shine's written testimony.

Most of my witnesses have gone. And we also have a letter of support from Governor Rendell, and one from State Representative Dwight Evans that will be submitted or read at the end. Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

And at the end we will get that into the record. Thank you.

Councilman Cohen for opening statement.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Thank you. I'm officially making known my strong

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objections to the bills introduced by Councilwoman Miller. They have no place in City Council, dedicated to governing Philadelphia.

What Councilwoman Miller has done has been to decide to use City Council as a vehicle for carrying out a political vendetta.

She did not meet with the Committee members. She may have met with one or two, maybe with some block captains who play no role in the political life of the ward.

What happened was this: During the summer past, and naturally the year before that, Councilwoman Miller held meetings in the 17th Ward.

In addition to being the Councilman-at-Large from the 17th Ward, I also happen to be the Democratic Ward Leader of the 17th Ward, having served consistently since the ward was founded in 1965. That adds up to something like 39 years as a ward leader, representing the people of that ward.

During that entire time, there's been an issue between an institution, a university, and the people of Philadelphia.

The university came into the area saying it wanted to operate there and it was going to be a commuter organization because the people that would come to school would be commuters, and they would not be occupying any property.

The property is a part of West Oak Lane. It's a beautiful area, and the people love it. And they have good reason to love it because it's been well cared for.

But what has happened is that ever since the institution came, it grew. We were very proud to have an institution of learning, of higher education, in our community. And the community bore up very well and cooperated in every way with the institution.

You know it best: When young people move somewhere away from home, they tend to act a little differently than they do at

home where they are well known.

The community put up with that. But what we learned happening quickly was that the institution began buying up homes in the area, maybe not in the name of the institution.

People began to complain because students were living at the university. And as I indicated before, it's awful difficult when you have students away from home for the community to survive.

And what happened was, increasingly more and more houses were occupied. And finally there came dormitories that were built in the area.

And all during that time, the community, the university, the institution, and the people worked together; and the people tried very hard to accommodate to the long hours, the way the cars were driven, the horn-honking, the staying up late, and occasionally the drinking of liquor which is what occurs at every university where people live.

And suddenly we find -- Suddenly we learn that the institution says it wants to close down the one block of 20th Street which goes from Olney Avenue south to Belfield Avenue, and which provides easy access to the Expressway downtown.

As we began learning it, we learned that people from Mount Airy, from Chestnut Hill, from Germantown, from the suburbs also use this area.

They came down Stenton Avenue south and east, and they went and they made a right turn. They went down 20th Street, and got to the university. And then one block further they were into the Expressway.

Suddenly... 40 years ago it began. The institution decided it wanted the street closed. It wanted to occupy this one block of 20th Street for the university. That meant they were closing off that street, that easy access to the Expressway, and compelling people, if they had their way, to wend through little

streets and whatever was otherwise available to get to the Expressway. It was very inconvenient. It was very dangerous.

Now, that's an old fight. It's 40 years old. And for 40 years that fight was successfully waged by the community, and 20th Street remained a two-way street at one block going north and south, which led to the Expressway.

Then suddenly this thing happened on Christmas Day Eve. And going through materials sent to us by the Streets Department, we found a one single-page sheet announcing that as of December 29th the street would become a one-way street.

There had been no discussion with the community by the institution or by the Streets Department when they issued that.

And we know why. Because last summer Councilwoman Miller called two meetings in the 17th Ward to... She called -- She picked the meeting place. She picked the areas that she invited people to. Nobody else had anything to do

with it. And she presented her proposal.

She said there were problems. She wanted to effectuate a compromise. And her compromise was to ask for a one-way street.

Do you know what that meeting and one that followed a short time later, also called by Councilwoman Miller, amongst the people she decided she wanted to have a meeting, not a single resident of the area spoke in her support.

Without question, unanimously, the people got up and protested after protest saying that this was terrible, they would be landlocked in their home. They would not have easy access. They'd have to tie up all the little streets in the area.

If they wanted a major arterial to go through, they'd have to go to Ogontz and Olney. And that area was jam packed.

Also, there were other schools in the area that would suffer from any diversion of traffic. There are two high schools, Girls High School and Central High School.

There's a Logan Elementary School. There are other scattered schools. There's Penn on Ogontz Avenue, all kinds of schools, where there are accidents occurring and traffic.

And Councilwoman Miller decided that, I guess, that it was easier to deal with the institution than it was to deal with the traffic problems.

The Eighth Councilmanic District, according to survey by the Daily News, they listed the addresses where accidents took place, showed that the accidents were occurring among the public school kids.

But instead of paying attention to that, Councilwoman Miller apparently chose to go ahead with her plan to compromise the situation, by providing for the elimination of the southbound traffic on 20th Street, turning it into a one-way street.

Now, she did that, despite the fact that not a single resident, not one, ever spoke up at the meeting in her favor.

Oh, I guess there was one. Somebody

in her office may have spoken up who works for her in her office, Steve Younger who at one time worked for me and now works for Councilwoman Miller. Except for him I know of nobody else who spoke at the meeting.

But she waited until she was elected. The Daily News reported that the one surprise that Mark McDonald, a reporter in the Daily News found in the whole election, was the strong vote that the 17th Ward gave Councilwoman Miller, believing that after these two meetings that she had called, she picked the people who came and she got no support, we were confident that she would accept the decision of the community as expressed over the many years, and would do nothing.

But instead, we learned from the Streets Department, that at Donna Miller's request the street was to be turned into a one-way street effective December 29th.

For the last five... I guess more than five months now, the people led by the -- Would the people stand up who are

here tonight who came here today for a 4 o'clock meeting from the 20th Street area?

(People comply with request.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: These are the people that are left from the more than almost 200 people that were here today waiting to testify and to show their support.

Now, we elect officials in the City of Philadelphia -- Thank you for standing. You may be seated. We elect officials to support us.

We don't expect the officials to carry on vendettas against us -- but that's what's happened -- and for City Council to permit the travesty of a hearing in order to permit Councilwoman Miller to try to use the City Council as an instrument to take away the rights of the people.

You know, a couple -- about a month or two ago there was a fire at Ogontz and Olney Avenue. You saw pictures of it in the newspapers everywhere.

People rushed to their cars. It's

right near 20th and Olney Avenue. The people that lived there thought they were going to go down 20th Street, you know, to get to the Expressway, and to escape the fire.

But instead, they had to wend their way through streets because there was no way at all of their getting through without tying up traffic.

What's happening in the area is that streets have become clogged up. And what has happened is that the Streets Department has been used as a tool by a member of City Council to achieve an effect in which the District Councilman is taking over.

I believe she's taking over the political power of the ward leader of the 17th Ward, who happens to be me, and who happens to be a colleague of hers.

Now, in City Council there are no two City Councils. There is no District Council member who has greater rights than the City Councilman-at-Large.

The District Councilman is elected

only by ten percent of the people of the City. The Councilman-at-Large is elected by the entire City.

And if anybody should have more power, obviously it ought to be the Councilman-at-Large. That was the original concept of the Home Rule Charter.

Now, but what I want to address myself particularly to is this use by Councilwoman Miller of using City Council to try to cut down the political power of the ward leader of the 17th Ward.

To reduce City council to a political fighting area is a wrong thing to do. It interferes with good government, and I think that the District Council members out to feel embarrassed at being used by Councilwoman Miller for the purpose of trying to reduce the effectiveness, political effectiveness, of another member of this body.

Incidentally, for the record, I came in second highest following Councilman Kenney in the City and the Council-at-Large

contest. I got almost as many votes as the Mayor did, as did Councilman Kenney, and did most Councilmen-at-Large because we're elected all over the City, not just one-tenth.

But what we try to do is to work together cooperatively, and we try to decide the things in the best way possible.

No district Councilman has the right to try to defend a wrong decision, and this decision by Councilwoman Miller, in defiance of the rights of the people, trying to say that you've elected me as District Council member, you've given up your rights. You don't even have to be consulted by the City, you know.

I don't have to consult with you. Or if I do and find you have a different opinion, I nonetheless have the right to disregard it. I think that's a terrible precedent to set.

And I'll close by saying that whatever the decision of this Council is, first I think this Council ought to

immediately terminate this matter.

And I am moving, Mr. Chairman, to table this motion so it not be heard by the Committee at all because I don't think it belongs here.

Council is permitting itself to be used for wrong purposes. And for Council to be pitting people against another Council member is unforgivable.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you, Councilman Cohen, for that brief opening remark.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Councilman Cohen is brief.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I just want for the record, even though this is a continuing hearing from the hearing we started a couple weeks ago, for the record, to acknowledge that the members of the Streets and Services Committee are present: Councilman Rizzo; Councilman Cohen; myself, Councilman DiCicco; to my right, the Vice

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Chair of the Committee, Councilman Ramos; Donna Reed Miller; Council member Clarke; and I know Councilman Nutter was just here. He's still here. Thank you.

Also in attendance, Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown and Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell, who are not members of the Committee. But let the record reflect that they are in attendance as well.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Mr. Chairman, I move that a vote be taken on my motion to table.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Well, we're in the public hearing. Is it appropriate to do it at the public hearing?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Yes.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: It is?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: A motion to table has to be voted on.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: All right. There's a motion...

COUNCILMAN COHEN: The reason I moved this is because it's improper to use City Council --

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COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm not debating it. I'm not debating it. You know a little bit more about parliamentary procedures, a lot more than I do. I just want to make sure.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Can I ask a question before we vote?

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Question on the motion?

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: No.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: There's a motion on the floor. Do I hear a second?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: There's no requirement of a second on a motion to table.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Then we'll take a vote.

All those in favor of tabling this bill from the Committee signify by saying aye.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Aye.

VOICES IN THE AUDIENCE: Aye.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No. The Committee. Excuse me, ladies and

gentlemen.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: It would be a new concept.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: They want to make sure their rights are heard.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I can understand that.

All those in favor signify by saying aye.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Aye.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Those opposed?

(Chorus of "nays.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: The nays have it; the motion fails.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Okay.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So we will continue with the hearing.

We have two witnesses that have testified. Are there any questions for these witnesses by the Committee?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Yes. Mr. Loney any or Mr. Denny.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Excuse me. Mr.

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Loney, I understand you're retiring on June the 20th.

MR. LONEY: June the 25th, sir.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: 25th?

MR. LONEY: I might still be here.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You might be still there on the 26th, but proceed. Thank you.

MR. LONEY: Mr. Cohen, before you get started, I just want to say to the Chairman, since he did bring that up, that --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: I just want everybody to know, Mr. Loney, that the last time there was a motion to table was when everybody ganged up on Councilman Cohen, as they're going to be doing tonight here, and they moved to table against me, because I was fighting on behalf of the freedom of people to use the posters on poles during the election time.

And I was the sole vote, and the so-called two factions combined against me. We went to court. And you know what? As a

result of that not, only was the Council action thrown out, but now even commercial companies can put ads on.

That's what happens when you make a terrible mistake, as Council did at that time. And I think you're repeating again.

But let's go. It's a great --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Glad to see it. Glad to hear that you're in favor of billboards. Thank you.

Mr. Loney, please.

MR. LONEY: Yeah. I just wanted to... For almost eight years now I've been testifying before this Committee. And I want to say what a pleasure it is, and what a professional organization this Council is.

And just it's a shame that more people don't get a chance to interact with this Council. They would understand what a great body this really is.

So, I just wanted to thank everybody here for all the time I've spent and the wonderful opportunities I've had.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And thank you for your service. I know they'll be a more formal way in which we will be honoring you or thanking you in the future --

(Councilman Cohen began speaking simultaneously with Councilman DiCicco, not reportable.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- because Mr. Loney, for your many years you know that you made decisions that have created all kind of problems for Council members.

So, we asked for street lights. We get instead stop signs.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman, Councilman, Councilman, I appreciate what you're trying to accomplish here.

But I would like that the testimony in question be germane to the bills that are before us.

Mr. Loney was gracious enough to thank this Council for its diplomacy in handling the affairs of this City, and I think that's very admirable of him.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, we were

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always --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So, rather than get into any of the things that you may or may not have disagreed with him over the years -- and I'm sure there are more disagreements than you've had agreements with him -- I would rather proceed with the bills that are before us.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Go ahead, Mr. Loney. Tell us who wrote this report.

MR. LONEY: I don't -- I don't --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Did you write it, did Mr. Denny write it, did the Commissioner write it? Who wrote it?

MR. LONEY: I don't know. I'll give that to Mr. Denny. I don't -- I'm not a traffic engineer. I'm not sure who wrote that.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Mr. Denny, did you write this report?

MR. DENNY: I wrote this report.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: How come it's not signed by you?

MR. DENNY: The standard procedure

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is that the Commissioner signs the reports to Council.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: What's that?

MR. DENNY: The standard procedure is that the Commissioner signs the reports to Council.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Before it comes out in the name of the Commissioner.

MR. DENNY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: what did you use as your standards?

MR. DENNY: I'm not sure what you mean.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: To write the report. Do you have any standards you go by? Because we've never found any. The Streets Department never tells anybody what the standards are, except to say that you work for the state and under PennDOT regulations something's banned. What are the standards you used in deciding this?

MR. DENNY: In this particular case?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Yes, in this particular case. Or is it just that you

have to read the report to find out what you use?

Isn't it a fact that you use the three-day survey, that that's what you claim you use, three days? But you've been there for almost five-and-a-half months.

And you've only examined five streets. How about all the other streets that you didn't examine in the area? What did you compare it with?

Tell us what your standards were. You said that it didn't hurt traffic. Sure not. You chased traffic away, didn't you?

MR. DENNY: Yes, we did. It went other routes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Isn't there one perfect easy way to clean up the street and have no traffic is to just build obstructions so nobody can go through it. Then there will be no traffic. Am I right on that?

What did you do with the other five months and six or seven days, when you weren't using these counters on the few

main streets? And what did you use to check them with? How did you know how they compared with what existed last year or two years ago?

MR. DENNY: We had some previous counts from the past that we compared them to.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, what count did you compare it to?

MR. DENNY: A report for the streets that we conducted our traffic counts on, and we compared it to that.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, there's nothing in your report that indicates you compared it with anything.

In fact, you say there was no difference in what you did after you shut off traffic and what you did before. You said there was no appreciable effect.

MR. DENNY: In terms of traffic crashes, that's correct.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Who made this request for this turn off of one-ways going south? Was that a decision you

recommended?

MR. DENNY: No, that was not.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: When I say you, in this case I mean the Streets Department. Did you recommend that to the Streets Department, saying we've made a study, and therefore we are urging people to agree to a one-way traffic; it will be better?

MR. DENNY: We received a request to make the street one way, and we did so.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And from whom did you receive the request?

MR. DENNY: The Councilwoman Miller.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Anybody else?

(Boo's from the audience.)

MR. DENNY: That's all they're re-...

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And is this decision based solely on preference of Councilwoman Miller?

MR. DENNY: We made an evaluation of what happened, and we made our report.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And in your report, did you say you had no preference;

you could accept this? Isn't that what you said?

MR. DENNY: That's what we said, yes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: You didn't say it was needed. You pointed out the number of pedestrian accidents, pedestrian vehicle accidents were the same now as they were three years ago, that there have been three accidents over a three-year period?

MR. DENNY: No. We looked at the total crashes and injury crashes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Why was that excluded from the final report?

MR. DENNY: Why was what --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Because when you sent us the memorandum of progress, you noted that there was the same average of pedestrian automobile accidents on the 20th and Olney, one a year.

In the Eighth Councilmanic District that Councilwoman Miller is supposed to be responsible for, and I believe she mentioned she acted on public safety, the

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number of kids hurt is far greater than that every year. Ever week, actually, this is the District having the most problems on accidents for children, is the Eighth Councilmanic District, more than any other District. Do you agree with that? That's what the study in the Daily News showed.

MR. DENNY: I have to take a further look at that.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, don't you know? You just wrote the report, you say.

MR. DENNY: This study looked at an area that was bound by Nedro Avenue, Wister, Belfield and Ogontz. It was not the whole District.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, at one time, didn't you consider the applicable area the entire 35th District?

MR. DENNY: No, just the area -- the area immediately surrounding where we made the change.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, how many automobile pedestrian accidents were there?

MR. DENNY: There were 12 --

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COUNCILMAN COHEN: In the last three years, anywhere near 20th and Olney?

MR. DENNY: I have I have broken down for injury crashes. I don't have it broken down for pedestrian crashes, in what we were looking at.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, why don't you break that down? Isn't that what the institution claims is so dangerous?

People have suggested maybe we ought to use crossing guards, take them away from the children, because they're taking police and others in the public schools to take care of college-age students. That's what's happened ever since December 29th.

MR. DENNY: In our review of the four months we looked at, there were 12 injury crashes in 2003 in that period, and 12 injury crashes in 2004 in that same period.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Can you tell me: Are there any department -- PennDOT requirements on what's necessary for closure or change from two-way to one-way

street?

MR. DENNY: PennDOT has some guidelines in their Publication 201.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: What are PennDOT's guidelines for changing a two-way street to a one-way street?

MR. DENNY: They give you a list of items to look at, and then some criteria to follow.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And what were the lists to look at and what were the criteria involved?

MR. DENNY: The traffic volumes, traffic crashes... Traffic volumes, crashes, alternate routes for the traffic.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, isn't it a fact that you had no guidelines in reality, and that PennDOT says all the time it will accept whatever Philadelphia thinks is good PennDOT will accept without question?

That's what they tell us all the time we call them. When we tell them that your offices says that PennDOT regulations have not been met, they say that's totally

untrue. We will meet -- We will accept Philadelphia's standards. Whatever Philadelphia agrees to do is agreeable to us. But we never got the Street Department to agree.

Is that because you want to just base your recommendation on what politicians ask you to do?

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I wish that were the case. I wish that were the case.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm sorry.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: That's all right. Your question is right. Because seems to me that this is political corruption of the worst kind, to permit one single individual to make the decision, and to ignore the community.

And the Streets Development didn't communicate with the community -- the Councilwoman didn't. And she felt that she was elected by them; they gave up their rights.

She doesn't agree that the

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expression of voters --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- is that the expression of people --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- are entitled to --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman, I would appreciate your directing your questions and comments to the witnesses and not engaging in a one-on-one with the members of this committee. Before you do --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, I think you would feel altogether different if somebody went into your area and said, you no longer count, and I'm replacing you, and I don't care how your people feel.

(Laughter and applause.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: It's not so easy to be quiet like that.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman, I'm only going to respond to say that Council members-at-large have interfered in the

workings in my District in the past, including yourself but --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Yeah. Well, you know that.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I know. It's been done to me.

Joe, before you begin, Mr. Denny, when you conducted or your department conducted this study, this survey, how is it compared to other studies that have been requested for similar types of changing of directions of traffic?

Was it consistent with what you normally would do? Was the criteria the same? Was there any difference in how this was conducted?

MR. DENNY: Most of the studies we do for changing streets one way are not as involved because they're usually much smaller streets involved in the changes, and...

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: But I'm talking about the process, the criteria, whatever the guidelines are that the department has

in place. Was there any deviation from that? Was it consistent with what you normally would do, notwithstanding that some streets are busier than others?

MR. DENNY: It was consistent, yes.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So there was no special consideration, no changing of the criteria to make it fit better or worse?

MR. DENNY: No.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Isn't there a whole set of instructions by Pennsylvania Department of Transportation requirements, in setting up a one-way street? Do you have them? Do you have with you?

MR. DENNY: I'm not sure if I have them with me. There is a page in 201 --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Could you check and see if you have them with you? Because I'd like you to read into the record what PennDOT says you're supposed to do before you make a decision on changing a two-way to a one-way street.

And tell me if you find anywhere it

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says check with the District Council member to find out what he or she thinks.

(Laughter.)

MR. DENNY: Well, when I started I initially said that the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code, Sections 3308 and 6109(a)(4) gives local authorities control for setting directions of streets under their jurisdiction.

In the City of Philadelphia, City Council determines streets direction.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman, I would ask you ask maybe you ask one more question. There are other members of this committee. And then we can come back to you.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Okay. Well, no. That's all right. You can go right ahead. Let me finish that one question. Aren't there a whole lit, a whole page full of lists of requirements?

MR. DENNY: There is one page.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: In 205?

MR. DENNY: In 201.

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COUNCILMAN COHEN: In Title 67, Chapter 201. Do you have a copy of that?

MR. DENNY: It's Chapter 201, yes, Title 67, Subchapter D. For traffic control restrictions.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: 20151.

MR. DENNY: 201.51, one-way streets.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: One-way streets.

MR. DENNY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And aren't there a whole list of requirements?

MR. DENNY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And did you meet all of them?

MR. DENNY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: But you don't refer to them in your report.

MR. DENNY: I...

COUNCILMAN COHEN: You have nothing to compare with. You've told us what you thought happened over the three-day period. And you waited -- I believe it was in March, if my memory is right from in the report, that you did those three days.

I don't know what happened during January and February or April, May and June. And you had nothing to compare it with.

And you didn't mention most of the streets in the District. You didn't compare them. You didn't tell us what had been the condition before, what it was later.

You said Ogontz and Olney was under construction. It's not under construction. It's fully operating. But the fact is it's jam packed, isn't it?

And that's the only major area where you can divert traffic to. Anywhere else you divert traffic, you either got to chase it away from the whole area or if you divert it, it's got to go into some small street somewhere, doesn't it?

MR. DENNY: The traffic would either go to Wister, to Chelten Avenue, to Ogontz Avenue or to Broad Street.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, we'll hear from the witnesses.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you. Councilman -- The Chair recognizes -- Let me get Councilman Rizzo and then --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: You mention -- You didn't cover Chelten Street in your report.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

Mr. Denny, I just have a very basic question. You're a professional engineer, traffic engineer. Do you believe that 20th Street is a safer street, both for pedestrian and vehicular traffic, in the configuration that it is today?

MR. DENNY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

The chair recognizes Councilwoman Donna Reed Miller.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you.

I just want to say just a couple things, and then I have a question to ask.

We've been meeting with the community for the last five or six years. We've been meeting with the community so

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often. I don't call the meetings.

These people have meetings and they invite us to them. We've been meeting with them --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: When --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: -- as far back as when Joe Marks --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman, please.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: -- was Managing Director of this City. We've had Joe Marks at the meetings. We've had Estelle Richman at the meetings, as Managing Director. We have not had Phil Goldsmith there, but we've had people from his office there.

We've had state police, L & I, City police, LaSalle police, because we've been meeting and dealing with the issues pretty much around the students and their behavior out in the community, and any other issues that comes up.

And I just wanted to say that because this wasn't a meeting that we just

had last summer or two meetings last summer. I wanted to just make that record clear.

The other thing I want to say is that I'm not here tonight to attack Councilman Cohen, but evidently it's very obvious that that's what he wants to do with Donna. So if he wants to continue to do that, just do it. But I am not here to attack him or anyone else.

The other thing I'd also just like to say, too, that in September of 2003 I had two memos that I took up to Councilman's office, Councilman Cohen's office, to talk to him about 20th Street and about Kimball Park. So, I just want to let the people know that, too.

We are not trying to close 20th Street --

(Councilman Cohen began speaking simultaneously with Councilman Miller, not reportable.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- across the street from Kendall Park.

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COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We are not trying to close --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And we're --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman --

(Councilman DiCicco and Councilman Cohen began speaking simultaneously, not reportable.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- work with me --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- you come up with a plan.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman, you have made a lot of statements tonight concerning Councilwoman Donna Reed Miller. She did not respond. She allowed you the opportunity. I would ask that you --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: What do you mean she allowed me the opportunity?

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: She is not --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well, because I didn't interrupt you.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: We're not going to go one-on-one.

I'm going to Chair this Committee, and I'm going to limit the debate for half a minute if we continue this, so please let her finish. She didn't interrupt you when you were speaking. I would ask you to give her the same courtesy. Thank you.

Please proceed.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We did not make this decision in a vacuum. We talked to people, and I just need you to know that, just for the record. Just for the record.

I can't sit here and hear these things said and know that there's a whole another part of the story that's not being told. This was a compromise.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: There was no compromise. A compromise --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well, to some people there's no compromise.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- is when people get together.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman, please.

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COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: For some people there's no compromise.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman. Councilman.

You've said a lot of things, and she allowed you to say them without interrupting you.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: She didn't allow me to say --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And I did not make --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- a word.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And I'm saying --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: -- 20th Street one way.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I asked for a study. I have a right to talk, just like --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilwoman.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: -- you do.

(Councilman Cohen and Councilwoman

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Miller began speaking simultaneously, not reportable.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- when you pick one color --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I have a right to talk and make comments just like you.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And you have that right; and continue, please. Please do not interrupt her.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And I also did not make 20th Street one way. I asked for a study. I asked for a study.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, they say -- You heard them testify. They said you requested --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well, I think he just --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- it. You're the only who that requested it.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: -- made a mistake with his use of words...

(Moans from the audience.)

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Because later I heard him -- I did hear him mention a

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study.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: You ignore these people who live there many years?

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We have not ignored them.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: When you go in, you say you're not --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We have not ignored them.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman Cohen, I think you are totally --

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And the only question right now --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- disrespecting this Chair. Excuse me, Councilwoman.

It's about the third time in the last minute-and-a-half that I had to ask you to please allow her to finish, and you're saying that she didn't allow you.

No one interrupted you during your probably 10- to 12-minute opening remarks and your subsequent questioning. I'm asking you to give the same courtesy to the

other members of this Committee, please. Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I'd like to ask a question of anybody at the table. Could you explain what traffic calming is? And does the northbound direction for 20th Street act as a natural traffic calming mechanism.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: The Chair recognizes Mr. Sernick for comments, please.

MR. SERNICK: Good evening, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee.

My name is Joseph Sernick. I'm the Chief Engineer and Surveyor of the Streets Department.

Traffic calming is a concept where various measures are initiated to try to slow down and better control traffic. Without traffic calming, traffic can get out of control, can be very fast. So you try to institute some kind of measures that reduce the volume of traffic, reduce the speed of the traffic, reduce the number of

turns.

And clearly, making 20th Street one way and reducing the width of the cartway is clearly traffic calming measures which have calmed traffic on 20th street.

(Alarm sounds.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: That wasn't meant for you. That was still running from the previous person. So thank you, Mr. Sernick.

MR. SERNICK: Mr. Chairman, could I also try to make a very brief statement that I think will at least clarify the Streets Department's position on this.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Please do.

MR. SERNICK: For many years this issue of 20th Street: Closing it fully, closing it partly, keeping it open was on the table. It was a contentious issue.

We have a mechanism in City government here that allows us to do a trial. There's nothing better -- no better way to see how things work than trying it out. We have this mechanism. We decided

to institute this trial which is what started in December.

During that period the Streets Department evaluated traffic, evaluated where traffic was diverted to, evaluated crashes.

It was done by a professional traffic engineering staff. It was done by professional traffic engineering staff that had no vested interest in this. It was an objective study.

I understand that some of the conclusions that were drawn here are not satisfactory to everybody. I'm sure we'll hear some conflicting opinions.

However, our position was that based on our study which was done, traffic engineering is part art and part science. Based on our evaluation, the traffic operation in the area was not adversely affected by the closure of 20th Street.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, of course. That's all traffic --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman,

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please; let the witnesses finish. Thank you.

MR. SERNICK: That's the judgment that the professional traffic engineering staff of the Streets Department has made.

Could somebody else make a different evaluation? Of course they can. And we'll listen to that, and we'll respect any testimony that we hear today.

But that was in our evaluation. And I believe it was a fair and objective evaluation, and it was using the same type of study that we would do in any situation of this type.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Mr. Sernick, how long has the study been going, six months?

MR. SERNICK: It's been going since the 29th of December, so it's --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And what was the time period that you were going to allow for the study?

MR. SERNICK: I believe we're allowed eight months. So I believe that

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this would go till August 28th, I guess.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

Councilwoman Miller.

MR. LONEY: Mr. Chairman, can I say something, too?

As both Councilwoman Miller and Councilman Cohen know, that I've been involved in these meetings kind of from the beginning.

And one of the things that we had heard, we had just finished design of the new 20th Street, if this goes through.

One of the things that we heard was that there was traffic. The barriers were going to move back, and that's going to be a lane of traffic and we'll -- or a lane of parking that's not there now, that the neighbors had said they wanted the students or whoever in LaSalle to be -- park there and not in the neighborhoods.

That's been accommodated to. So some of the things that actually the people have been out there... I was out there and we did accommodate as much as we could

within that area.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Mr. Loney, how many meetings --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: What was the --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Mr. Loney, how many meetings have you attended?

MR. LONEY: I have attended so far three, one with Councilwoman Miller, two major community meetings.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: In what period of time, approximately?

MR. LONEY: I don't know. When were the two meetings, Councilman? Probably within the last six months.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Last six months. Mr. Denny, have you attended any of those meetings as well?

MR. DENNY: No, I have not.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Mr. Sernick?

MR. SERNICK: No, I have not.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Are there any other members that you know of, Mr. Loney, from the Streets Department who have attended meetings along with you?

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MR. LONEY: No. Probably pretty much it was just me.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Okay. Just wanted to know for the record who it was. Okay.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: These departments had no meeting with the people.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman.

MR. LONEY: No. Councilman, you --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: The only time you had meetings was when we brought them to your place.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman, I will recognize you, trust me, if you just give me an opportunity.

I'm really trying to maintain as much order as I can at this late hour.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, you know, when you were under attack it's certainly different --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm under attack mostly every week around here, but I'm learned to... I don't know. I guess roll with the -- Councilman Cohen, you are

being recognized. Thank you.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Hold on. Hold on. Okay. Now go.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Somebody mentioned traffic calming. There's Not a word in your report about traffic calming. There's not a word in your report about most of the requirements of PennDOT.

If you don't have the page, I'll let you see our copy, and you can read it into the record as to what's done -- what's required to be done. Could Ellen bring it over to him?

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Do you have copies for the Committee?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: No. It's just here. Read it into the record. It was just a copy we had. We assumed he had it, too, the PennDOT regulations.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Apparently he has. Thank you.

MR. DENNY: One-way streets, elements of engineering and traffic study.

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The following elements shall be considered as applicable in every engineering and traffic study pertaining to one-way streets.

One, accident analysis; two, capacity analysis; three, geometric review.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Can you speak a little louder so everybody can hear you, sir? Or excuse me, Mr. Chairman. Will you instruct the witness to speak louder.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So moved.

MR. DENNY: One, accident analysis; two, capacity analysis; three, geometric review, intersection alignment or terminal points of one-way --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I will now ask that you read a little bit slower.

MR. DENNY: Okay.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

MR. DENNY: Geometric review, intersection alignment of terminal points of one-way street systems roadway width; four, parallel streets; five, speed data,

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travel time delay; six, travel volumes, ADT, peak hour travel volumes, turning movements.

B, criteria. One-way street may be established in [sic] the following conditions are satisfied.

The traffic demand can accommodate in both -- be accommodate in both directions. Whenever possible, adjacent parallel streets should be used to form a one-way couplet, street has a reasonable number of intersections for an entrance or an exit from the one-way streets or the one-way system.

The roadways at the terminal points of the one-way streets provide satisfactory transitions to and from the one-way -- to and from the two-way operation.

There will be a reduction in vehicle traffic conflicts at intersections. There will be a reduction on intersection delays. Existing mass transit routes can be satisfactorily accommodated. Emergency vehicles can reasonably and expeditially

[sic] reach their destinations.

Then C, reference. See Section 75 PACS, Sections 3308 and 6109 A-4, relating to one-way roadways and rotary traffic islands and specific powers of department and local authorities.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And as a result of all your hard work, did you reduce the number of accidents, traffic accidents?

MR. DENNY: No. Traffic accidents remained the same.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: They remained the same. So that nothing was accomplished, except you chased away a lot of people and made life inconvenient for thousands of Philadelphians, and you decided to turn over management of the Streets Department to the District Council members. That's what you achieved?

Because your report says it made no difference. Your report says you can live with it. But the report doesn't say we recommend continuance.

You said -- Your report says we can

manage with it, and that there had been no increase of problems.

One would expect there to be a sharp decrease in problems when you reduce traffic 80 or 90 percent.

And why didn't you mention all the streets, like Elkins Street? You don't mention a thing about them. That was a question, where are the streets, the other streets.

Isn't Woodstock Street nearby? Isn't Lambert Street nearby?

MR. DENNY: There are a number of streets that are --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Beachwood. You didn't say a word about them.

MR. DENNY: There's a number of streets that are not really affected. Most of the traffic is either on --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, the people there say the streets that before were livable are no longer livable because traffic -- the traffic that was not eliminated has to find some other way and

they go through all these little streets. Nothing -- I'm told the kids used to play in the street in Elkins Avenue. It's also just one block, that whole street.

And now the kids can't play because traffic comes through there. Traffic goes wherever it possibly can go.

But why do you -- You know, what I can't understand, Mr. Denny, is how you -- Streets Department says everything it does has to be in consort with PennDOT regulations.

And yet, the only thing you do is to accept the instructions from a District Council member, apparently, or this District Council member or the Mayor.

But the only one you've said was in touch with you was the District Council member. And you accept that.

Why do we need -- Why do we need a Streets Department making studies? Because you don't seem to have equipment. You didn't know what the study required until you read into the record.

Did you do everything PennDOT said you should?

MR. SERNICK: Councilman, I'd like to answer that, if I could. Again, Joseph Sernick. I take exception to the way you've characterized what we've done.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, take all the exception you want. Just give the people back their street. That's what they're asking for.

MR. SERNICK: The Streets Department --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And stop being so high and mighty that you don't listen to people.

MR. SERNICK: The Streets Department made a professional traffic engineering study.

(Mr. Cohen began speaking simultaneously with Mr. Sernick, not reportable.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- people that lived there 40 and 50 years.

MR. SERNICK: They did not make a

judgment based on the request of anyone.

They made a professional traffic engineering study --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: There was nothing --

MR. SERNICK: -- which resulted --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- professional about it at all, and you know it.

For three days they had some kind of a little counter, and they had nothing to compare it with.

And they were at least honest enough in the report not to mention fake streets or fake studies that were never made.

All they did was three days they had a counter, and they counted cars. I don't know what it showed them.

Certainly did nothing about the stories the Daily News is writing about safety for kids in public schools. You endanger the lives of the kids at Central. You don't care about them.

MR. SERNICK: Again, Councilman, I think that's --

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(Councilman Cohen began speaking simultaneously with Mr. Sernick, not reportable.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- apparently what a District Council member feels.

MR. SERNICK: That's not correct.

There was a lot of study put into this. We understood that this would be a very controversial issue right from the beginning.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, what was controversial? For 40 years it had been the same. You changed it, didn't you?

MR. SERNICK: I understand that. And we understood that the change would be controversial. And therefore, we -- we -- we -- we took --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Weren't you interested in how the people felt. Why didn't you send people out to talk to the neighbors?

MR. SERNICK: We had plenty of input from the neighbors. We were trying to make a professional --

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(Councilman Cohen began speaking simultaneously with Mr. Sernick, not reportable.)

MR. SERNICK: -- objective traffic engineering study.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Has anybody in the audience been interviewed or discussed things with?

(Chorus of no's.)

MR. SERNICK: And Councilman, that would not be the appropriate approach from the Streets Department. It's not a popularity contest. We're not taking advice from anybody. We're doing a professional --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: People have a perception that it's important for them to be able to get out of their house in case of a fire, like Ogontz and Olney had. They ought to be able to get out of that house and shoot down the Expressway.

MR. SERNICK: And Councilman, it is important. And that's why it's important --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And I don't agree with Councilwoman Miller --

MR. SERNICK: -- that you do an objective study.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- that institutions are as important as the people. The people that live there are the important people in Philadelphia. And that ought to be recognized. And not the institution.

Maybe people can't put in campaign contributions like institutions can, but for that particular reason they need even more support.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Did they give you money, Councilman? Did they give you money? Because they certainly didn't give me any. Okay.

(Boo's in the audience.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Did they give me money?

(Members of the audience speaking simultaneously, not reportable.)

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Prove it.

Prove it.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: You know the answer to that. Check yourself.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Prove it.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you, Mr. Sernick.

Are there any other questions for these witnesses from the Committee?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Why is it that they didn't mention even about the auto pedestrian traffic problems, that there were three facilities over three years and the same seem to exit?

Why was there no reference to the auto pedestrian problems?

MR. DENNY: IN the statistics we were using, we had total crashes and we had breakdown of injury crashes. We didn't have a breakdown of injury pedestrian.

Injured pedestrians would be part of a general injury crash category. And since we were going from 12 injury crashes to 12 injury crashes, it did not -- there was no change in injury crashes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: In the last three years, how many auto pedestrian accidents were there at 20th and Olney? In the area that you would consider 20th and Olney, because I understand that you go only by intersections.

MR. DENNY: I was only looking at the four-month periods in my evaluation.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Didn't you state in the report you gave to us prior to the final report that there were three pedestrian auto accidents?

MR. DENNY: I did not state that in the report, no.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: In your final report you didn't say it, but you had it in a preliminary report.

MR. DENNY: I did not mention it in the preliminary report.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Did you have a conversation about the number of accidents with Ellen Berkowitz, an attorney on my staff?

MR. DENNY: I was asked some

questions about pedestrian crashes, yes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And did you not say to her, when she asked you how many accidents there had been, you said there had been three in the last three years?

MR. DENNY: Yes. And that was for full years. That was not for four months. I gave her a total breakdown of the three years at that one intersection.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And there were three in the three-year period.

MR. DENNY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: One a year, on average.

MR. DENNY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And that you would feel justifies changing the life of thousands of people in Philadelphia, to meet an institutional request?

Is that how the City of Philadelphia sees the people of Philadelphia? An institution makes the request because there's one accident over a period per year of adults, and there are hundreds -- seem

to be hundreds of accidents of ordinary school-age children, public school children, and deaths occurring regularly? Weren't there two deaths even last week of school kids by accidents?

MR. DENNY: I don't know that there were deaths, but there were...

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, it was reported in the press.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Mr. Denny, let me ask the question in a different way. If your report, your survey, your study were to have in any way indicated any increase in traffic, whether they be among vehicles or pedestrians, would your conclusion have been the same?

MR. DENNY: If there was an increase in crashes? Probably not.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Probably not. So you did take into consideration pedestrian safety as part of this overall issue that we're talking about.

MR. DENNY: As part of the total crashes, yes.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And not because of any sponsor or request by a District Council person or any institution did you in any way, as I said earlier, skew your findings or your study to reflect that. And I certainly don't think so; but I want that --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Mr. Chairman --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- again, to be perfectly clear for the record.

So if there was there was an increase as to the one-way street versus the two-way street, that would have been reflected in your study as well.

MR. DENNY: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman Cohen.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Was there anything in your report that said the Streets Department recommended this change? There's absolutely nothing in your report that says that, and you're dead wrong in creating the impression that it does say

that.

All your report said was that you accepted it, the Streets Department accepted it. You could live with it.

MR. DENNY: That's what we said, yes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, sure. You didn't recommend it. You never said it in your report that you recommended it. And that's after your so-called studies. And your only study in your report lists a three-day study by counters; isn't that accurate?

MR. DENNY: Normally when we have a change in direction of the street, that's the answer we give. Unless we have a reason to oppose it, we say we have no objections. We don't normally say we support a change in street direction.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, you said you'd accept it; you could live with it.

Sure. Chase away all traffic everywhere, and everybody could live with that, except the people that have to get

someplace.

Why did you limit the check to three days? What's significant about three days? There's nothing in PennDOT that says three days, does it?

MR. DENNY: We place traffic counters on a normal pattern which is a three-day pattern.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And that's consistent with other surveys?

MR. DENNY: It's consistent with what we do, yes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, Mr. Chairman, on the other surveys, I have to tell you that I received a letter following presentation of those subpoenas, where the Streets Commissioner's asked for more time to try to get everything together.

And we're going to need time when that bill is called up later in Law and Government and Streets, the joint thing. I will ask that that matter be continued to give her time to get everything into us and get us a chance to study it. Because right

now there are no standards. The only standard he used was the three-day study.

Incidentally, were you out there at any time? Because anybody that's out there has to admit how orderly the people have been in the community, how with these five years they conducted themselves with dignity, and have worked closely with the police, to make sure there was no interference with whatever was left of the traffic. Isn't that right?

Is there anybody here from the Police Department?

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I think you missed a subpoena.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Yeah, I think we missed --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You let one get by, councilman. You're slipping, Councilman. You let one get by.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: This is only the beginning. This battle's gone on for years. Nobody can take away the right of people to protest against unjust actions of

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either a Council member or the whole City.

So this decision by the Streets Committee, which seems inevitable, since apparently District Council members are here for the purpose of uniting to protect each other in case they make mistakes to make sure nobody will catch onto it, and they'll all vote in support of each other, if that's the way they want to do it, that's fine.

That's what they did on the political poster bill. And the Federal Court threw it out, as will happen in this case, too.

All right. Now I'd like to... What do you do the rest of the time? In three days you spent --

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And then you talked about. You made it five months. What do you do the rest of the time?

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Specific to surveys, Councilman; not necessarily what they do with their time. Specifically --

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(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Okay. To the survey.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Okay. All right.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: That's what I mean. What are you doing there? You only spent three days with their counters, and you have no other method of -- You didn't report on anything else you did. So what do you do when you're there?

MR. DENNY: We did observe the area. We checked the traffic crashes which was our primary area of concern for those four months. And then in the four months from the previous years.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: I don't know. It seems to me the Streets Department is a great job. You work three days in five months with counters, and you do nothing else. It seems like a pretty good job to have.

All right.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No further

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questions for these witnesses?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Not now. We have a lot of other witnesses.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: We will now proceed with bringing up Mr. Ed Turzanski, please, the first witness.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: I would ask, Mr. Chairman, that the witnesses remain here --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Yes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- so they could reply.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: It is... Well, they're several hours away now from starting a new day. It's now Thursday morning.

Good morning, everyone.

VOICES IN THE AUDIENCE: Good morning.

MR. TURZANSKI: Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Please identify yourself for the record. You've been with us all day as well.

MR. TURZANSKI: Thank you, Mr.

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Chairman. Good morning.

My name is Edward Turzanski. I'm the assistant Vice President for Government and Community Relations at LaSalle University.

And as per Chair's request, I have 20 copies offer my testimony in writing, which I'd like to submit at this time.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

You can proceed, please.

MR. TURZANSKI: Thank you, sir.

On behalf of Brother Michael McGinnis, President of LaSalle, the Trustees, faculty, and nearly 6,000 students, more than 45,000 alumnae of LaSalle University, I wish to express our sincerest thanks to you and this Committee, for allowing to us testify in behalf of Bills Number 040560 and 040561. We respectfully ask for your support in voting for their passage.

As has been mentioned, for the past 40 years LaSalle had appealed to the City of Philadelphia for help in addressing what

had been a growing safety and security problem experienced by pedestrians and motorists alike on 20th Street between Olney and Belfield Avenues, a one-block segment that the University occupies on both sides of the street, and on which there are no private homes.

It should be further noted that the speed and volume of traffic on this segment of 20th Street posed a serious safety hazard to anyone traveling through the area, including LaSalle students and staff, and neighbors residing in the immediate community.

Previous administrations and their Streets Departments, beginning with Mayor Tate, have recommended and supported the complete closure of this segment of 20th Street as the best way of dealing with these safety and security problems.

Our Councilwoman, Donna Reed Miller, however, insisted that we find another way to deal with the problem, other than completely closing off the street.

Working with her office, with Mayor Street and his administration, including, as has been mentioned, City Managing Directors Marks, Richman and Goldsmith, with the City Streets Department, with the Architectural firm H2L2, and most importantly with block captains and neighbors from the immediate area, we came to the compromise reflected in these bills.

Let me be clear, Mr. Chairman, LaSalle's preference would have been to completely close 20th Street between Olney and Belfield Avenues.

Competent traffic safety and engineering professionals still believe that a complete closure would not have posed any serious problems in the area, and it would have been the best way of dealing with the safety and security concerns on that street.

But we also recognize and respect the leadership of Councilwoman Miller, Mayor Street, and other elected officials, and the views of those neighbors with whom

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we have worked for a period of 27 months prior to the implementation of this test, to build a consensus on the compromise position of making this segment of the street one-way one lane northbound.

And based on the test period, we are reasonably satisfied with the results, and we believe that our students and our neighbors are safer for them.

In fact, when LaSalle worked with the City and Red Cross officials to serve as an evacuation center and command post to contain the effects of the Friday, February 13, 2004 gas fire at Ogontz and Olney Avenues, the reconfigured 20th Street posed no problem for police, fire and rescue equipment and personnel to provide quick and effective response.

Our participation in the task force City Managing Director Goldsmith instructed Fire Commissioner Hairston to convene, for the purpose of studying the incident and identifying best practices to be applied to other situations, confirms that under the

worst and most unlikely of conditions, the reconfigured 20th Street worked as needed.

In part, this is why we believe that a large but silent segment of our immediate community, we think a majority, supports this measure.

But there are those who do not. Their main concern, as expressed to us, and as mentioned by a member of this Committee, has to do with the inconvenience caused by losing the use of this local street as a quick throughway, usually to the Route 1 Expressway.

Mr. Chairman, given that people of good will and reasonable intellect can disagree on things such as a traffic pattern on one block of one street, one would hope, nonetheless, that all would concede that the safety and security of large numbers of individuals, even if they include students along with neighbors, trumps the convenience of having a quick throughway to an expressway or anywhere else, and that the people who visit, live

and work at LaSalle are entitled to a safe and secure 20th Street.

It should also be noted, Mr. Chairman, that some people have tried to exploit this issue for narrow political advantage by organizing individuals and interests far removed geographically from the neighborhood at 20th and Olney, and that these persons have focused on intimidating, insulting and provoking LaSalle students, such as the ones who were here with me earlier this evening.

They are also tried to intimidate supporters of ours who believe that safety and security are more important than convenience.

Thankfully, Mr. Chairman, we enjoy the support of enlightened leaders who believe that safety and security need not be a zero sum game, where one side wins out over the other.

We thank those leaders: Mayor Street, our District Councilwoman Donna Miller, Governor Rendell, Congressman

Brady, State Representative Evans, members of this Committee and Council, and many other government, business and community leaders, including the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, who have recognized the need to help LaSalle and its neighbors come together to achieve this and other worthwhile quality of life goals.

On a final note, Mr. Chairman, we ask that this Committee please consider that LaSalle is important to the quality of life for all who live near 20th and Olney.

It employs nearly 1200 people, more than half of whom are City residents, and 200 of whom live in the surrounding community.

They contribute more than $1.7 million annually in wages taxes to the City, and the University spends more than $12 million each year with businesses located in the surrounding community.

LaSalle enrolls nearly 6,000 tuition-paying students, with approximately 4,000 bringing tuition and tourism dollars

from outside Philadelphia.

More than 300 neighbors study at LaSalle, and another 700 use the University's library and athletic grounds each year and without cost.

Also, LaSalle is using its own funds to build a $26 million resident's facility, to take students out of homes in the neighborhood and bring them on campus.

And it plans to build a $30 million state-of-the-art science and technology center in the next five years, all employing union labor.

LaSalle does everything it can to contribute to the quality of life of all those who want to live, work and study near 20th and Olney.

But it must be understood that the configuration of 20th Street through its campus affects LaSalle's capacity to make that contribution.

The nursing, tutoring and other community services performed by students, faculty, staff, and alumnae, and the

desperately needed development dollars and jobs LaSalle brings to its community, are made possible by the human and financial resources that come with a stable environment.

That enrollment is determined by our ability to provide current and prospective students and visitors with a safe, clean and welcoming campus and neighborhood.

Bills Number 040560 and 040561 support that ability by making 20th Street between Belfield and Olney and the surrounding neighborhood safer for pedestrians and motorists.

On behalf of everyone affiliated with LaSalle, thank you. And thank you to the members of the Committee for hearing this testimony.

We would be most appreciative of your understanding and support.

Additional information has been included in our written testimony, and I will gladly answer any questions asked.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you, Mr.

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Turzanski, for your testimony. And I do appreciate in the back part of your written testimony, a breakout of what LaSalle University means to the City and the student body in the neighborhood, in terms of employment, tax dollars, et cetera because those are questions that we normally would ask of you. Save some of us that time. So thank you for that.

MR. TURZANSKI: Thank you, sir.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I just have one question at the moment. In your testimony on Page 1, Paragraph 3, you site for the past 40 years LaSalle's appeal for helping the City, et cetera, what had been a growing safety and security problem experienced by pedestrians and motorists.

Could you explain to me the issue of security? I think I understand the issue of traffic as best I can, not really knowing the neighborhood. But security is something I'm concerned about. And how does this configuration or this one-way street help with that security issue?

MR. TURZANSKI: Mr. Chairman, because the street had been a throughway, and because of the volume and the speed of traffic, and because of the large number of students' vehicles we have, and two major parking lots adjacent to the street, and just the large number of people moving from our main business building and our main campus on the one side of 20th Street, that being the east side, and our library and dorms on the other side, what we've experienced is a large number of break-ins, automobile thefts, and attacks on individuals, in which 20th Street was used as a quick thoroughfare in and out of the area.

So as the police described it to us -- and this is their parlance -- a target-rich environment on which you had a thoroughfare where cars could move very quickly in and out of the area, making it difficult to try to prevent these crimes from occurring or apprehending those responsible. That, in part, speaks to the

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security question.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: That's an absolute defamation of the whole neighborhood; and you know it.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Excuse me. Councilman. Councilman.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And there's no truth whatever to anything you said about that.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: You're maligning the whole community.

He put out a burglary alert one day.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman, please. I'm trying to Chair this meeting at this early hour of the morning. You'll have your time for questions. Please just let the witnesses finish.

Yeah; I think I'm familiar with that kind of experience. I know we -- we -- when -- there is a facility, shopping malls, as an example, that are close to interstate highways. Those are the places that seem to have the higher --

MR. TURZANSKI: And Mr. Chairman, if I may make it very clear, we are not talking about our immediate neighbors.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Talking about --

MR. TURZANSKI: I want to be -- And I did -- And I did say that clearly, and perhaps it was not heard clearly.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: People from outside the area.

MR. TURZANSKI: But we're talking about -- Exactly, people from outside the area who use the street as a quick thoroughfare in and out.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I understand that. And again, I understand that from surveys and issues that are spoken about often where malls are located next to interstate highways, that they have the highest number of auto thefts.

MR. TURZANSKI: I'm a resident in the Franklin Mills Mall area, and that's what we experience there.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Okay. I can

understand that. Thank you.

Questions for this witness?

Councilman Cohen.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: You know, a, is it the reason that you're charging that 20th Street is used as a getaway street -- I gather that's what you're saying or other, whether the getaways are people in the neighborhood or elsewhere.

But when did that get born, that idea? Because until very recently your institution never mentioned that. You only mentioned the auto accidents.

MR. TURZANSKI: No. No, Mr. --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: But when the information came out --

MR. TURZANSKI: No, sir.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- that indicated you had not been telling us all the facts --

MR. TURZANSKI: No, sir, that's not correct.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- about vehicle accidents.

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MR. TURZANSKI: In our discussions, going back to the Tate administration, we had mentioned a number of problems. Most of them have to do with pedestrian and vehicular safety.

The real security problems that came in --

(Councilman Cohen began speaking simultaneously with Mr. Turzanski, not reportable.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- not true --

MR. TURZANSKI: -- that came in --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- because one accident per year is hardly a threat.

MR. TURZANSKI: No. Mr. Cohen, there are accidents that LaSalle security has had reports on, in which individuals do -- choose not to report the accidents to the City. That does happen. So I would suggest --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Not if it's a serious accident.

MR. TURZANSKI: At times, sir, depending on what the person has in mind.

For instance, there is a litigation under way right now in which both the University and the City have been named by an individual who was struck by an automobile. It's not prudent for me to speak beyond that, but just to say that it has happened.

And then the last three years we have had four students who have been seriously hurt in accidents on 20th Street.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: How many in what period of time?

MR. TURZANSKI: Four in the last three years, sir.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Four in the last three years.

MR. TURZANSKI: Yes.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: That's different by one.

MR. TURZANSKI: Pardon me, sir?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: I thought you said three in three years. Now you say four in three years.

MR. TURZANSKI: No. I said that

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there were four pedestrian accidents in a three-year span, sir.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: It's really hard to believe and take you seriously. In view of the news stories that appear about the dangers to public school kids, you're saying that four accident in three years in your location constitutes a safety threat?

MR. TURZANSKI: Mr. Cohen, we have a very large number of people who are regular students and employees in our campus and who are visitors to our campus who cross 20th Street, the people who live in the area and cross that street, especially pedestrians on a regular basis.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Tell me what people cross the street down below 20th Street south of Olney Avenue because all you have is tennis courts on one side. You have -- At the corner you have the library, and then tennis courts. And then you've got nothing. So --

MR. TURZANSKI: Mr. Cohen, I'm

afraid that you do not -- you do not understand the nature of our enterprise and the large number of people who come to our campus, not just to study but also to conferences, to academic programs. We have a very large number of people from outside the LaSalle community who are visitors to the area who cross that street.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And you can't cross a little street that's no wider than from your desk to the rear window or from your desk to our desks here?

MR. TURZANSKI: Mr. Cohen, the volume and the speed of the traffic that we had experienced over the period of time --

(Mr. Cohen and Mr. Turzanski began speaking simultaneously, not reportable.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: I drive there very often.

MR. TURZANSKI: Well, sir, I will tell you that it is much different when you are walking across the street than when you are driving.

And even for those who are driving,

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it is a dangerous situation or was a dangerous situation --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: The Police Department --

MR. TURZANSKI: -- until the street reconfiguration.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- even had trouble finding out about accidents.

MR. TURZANSKI: I beg your pardon, sir?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And the studies show there's no difference, even though you've chased away 80 percent of the traffic, made life miserable every day for thousands and thousands of people because you're fearful that adults can't cross a small street safely, but that the students from Central and from Girls High and from the public schools --

MR. TURZANSKI: Mr. Cohen, we had discussed this --

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(Mr. Turzanski and Councilman Cohen began speaking simultaneously, not reportable.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: They run all of the major risks.

MR. TURZANSKI: We have discussed this step, prior to its being undertaken, with the Principal of Central, with principals of the other schools in the area. They expressed no concerns to us.

And I must say that, again, we come before this Council hoping that the interests of our students, our immediate neighbors of LaSalle as an institution could be balanced which is why, as I said in my testimony, we had accepted the compromise offered to us --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: You have no compromise --

MR. TURZANSKI: -- even though it was not our first choice.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- from the community. You have compromised with yourself. You and Councilwoman Miller --

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MR. TURZANSKI: I'm sorry, sir.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- agreed.

MR. TURZANSKI: That is not correct.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Don't talk about compromise. The community wasn't consulted --

MR. TURZANSKI: Mr. Cohen, that's not correct.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- and when given a chance has always said no.

MR. TURZANSKI: Sir, that is simply not correct.

(Councilman Cohen and Mr. Turzanski began speaking simultaneously, not reportable.)

MR. TURZANSKI: We met prior to the reconfiguration --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, we'll let -- We'll hear --

MR. TURZANSKI: -- for a 27-month period --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- from witnesses from the community shortly --

MR. TURZANSKI: -- on a monthly

basis --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: -- and find out if it's correct.

MR. TURZANSKI: -- with our neighbors, with the Councilwoman, and with other elected officials. And we had a very extensive, long-lasting collaboration.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

Any other questions for this witness from the Committee?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you, Mr. Turzanski, for your testimony and your patience. Thank you.

MR. TURZANSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, members of the Committee.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Next witness is Lanie Johnson.

Miss Johnson, are you the lady with the video?

Please step forward, please.

How long is the video?

MS. JOHNSON: I'm trying to cue it.

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I have various points on it. I'm not going to play the entire video. Each cue is maybe three minutes at the most, and there's four of them.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So, 12 minutes or so. All right.

MS. JOHNSON: Yes.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Please identify yourself for the record. Do you have a statement to make prior to or would you just like to show the video and then comment as you...

MS. JOHNSON: I would prefer to show the video, make brief comments about that and then I --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: As it's being shown. Okay. So, please identify yourself first for the record.

MS. JOHNSON: All right. Well, it is good morning, Mr. Chairman and Streets.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Speak a little built closer --

MS. JOHNSON: Service Committee. Is that better? I'm sorry. I'm not used to

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microphones that much.

My voice is starting to give out. I didn't expect to be here quite this long today.

My name is Lanie Johnson. I am a resident of 21st and Chew which is a block over from 20th and Olney which is situated right directly behind the dormitories of LaSalle campus.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm not familiar with the neighborhood. When you a say a block over, east, west, north, south?

MS. JOHNSON: A block west of 20th and Olney.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And the traffic on 20 --

MS. JOHNSON: I'm at 21st and Chew.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: 20th Street is now going which way? South?

MS. JOHNSON: 20th Street is now going northbound only. Originally it was south and northbound.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Now it goes north.

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MS. JOHNSON: Correct.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

MS. JOHNSON: All right. I do have the video.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Let me ask you while they're setting that up, traffic as it presently is directed, for those cars who would be turning off up 20th, would they be going in the direction of Chew Street which would be going west or is it going east?

MS. JOHNSON: The cars on 20th Street?

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: If they were to turn off of 20th would they be going...

MS. JOHNSON: Well, they would go -- They can go east or west on Olney Avenue. 20th Street is a north and southbound street.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And Chew is?

MS. JOHNSON: Chest is an east and west street.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Okay. Thank you.

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MS. JOHNSON: I actually have a map, but I'm not sure if you necessarily need that. We do have a map that indicates the area.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I actually meant to take a ride up there this week, but because of the time we spent here, I didn't get a chance to get up there. I wanted to familiarize myself with it.

MS. JOHNSON: Okay. What I did, Mr. Chairman is --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman Cohen just wanted to remind me that, according to him, I will have plenty of time over the next few years to visit it. So, I don't know what that means.

MS. JOHNSON: Okay. What I have, actually, with the video is to try to take the Committee to the site. There are particular areas on this video that indicate --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Can you turn that a little bit more that way (Indicating), I think, so the audience can

see that as well? That's good. That's fine.

MS. JOHNSON: This is going to show the area in question, and as well as the community and the surrounding areas that are affected, that we experience personally.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

MS. JOHNSON: We, you know, you know, not really into statistics per se, or I am not particularly. But I am talking about the human aspect of this.

The first part of it is basically just an aspect to show that there are motorists on a daily basis, of course who aren't here right now, but are in opposition to this.

Basically, these are cars that are going towards Broad Street. And that is the intersection of 20th and Olney. They are turning because of the detour there. That would be the southbound lane that they normally would be able to go down to and onto --

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COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And I'm Looking down 20th Street now; is that where I'm looking?

MS. JOHNSON: Mm-hmm. Yes, you are.

So this is a part of the group of motorists that do drive by each morning. If the sound were on, you would, of course, hear the honking horns in opposition, the fact that the street is closed and they can not.

What they're basically doing is going down further to Ogontz Avenue which intersects at Central High School. And if they go an additional length, they would get to Broad Street, and then make a right onto Broad Street and go south into Center City.

I would like to try to have that cued up. I don't know if anyone has the remote for that. I need to set it to the next section would be 014 to 015 which is going to take you from this point down to Central High School at Ogontz Avenue.

Once we get to the 014, 015 section

of this tape, videotape, it's going to, of course, take you where those cars are turning down to Ogontz at Central High School.

And this particular tape was done to show how the students, our young people under the age of 18, have to cross the street each morning on a busy four-lane street.

Actually, I correct that. It's now a one-lane street each way. Ogontz was recently reconfigurated, which was one of the issues, because residents or motorists no longer have that option of a two-lane Ogontz Avenue. It was drastically reconfigurated. And it's only one way each way, with the turn lanes for left turn. All right.

Actually, this went a little quicker when I was home. If you have fast forward, if it would help expedite this, I could give you a list of where I need those to go each time, as I talk. Okay. Just trying to get this one and then this one

(Indicating). Okay.

Mr. Chairman, while this is fast forwarding, we videotaped on several mornings, at least once or twice a week, just to really get a feel for the different types of traffic patterns that were apparent, I videotaped this as well as two major other intersections. And if we ever get to the one at Central High School, it will be pretty significant. I'm going to move on. It's not going to work.

I'll go ahead with my testimony. I got to do it quite faster at home. I'm not sure how the equipment works here in City Hall.

Okay. Again I say good morning to the Chairman and members of the Streets and Services Committee.

I'd just like to report that how this all started with the experience that we've gone through the last several months. Basically, on December the 29th, a vital part of the roadway needed and the neighborhood was closed off. And on

January the 5th, 2004, that Monday morning, neighbors appeared in numbers in the dead cold of winter to oppose the barricading of the southbound lane of 20th Street at Olney Avenue.

The only knowledge most received was by notice distributed within a day or two of the closing. A great deal never received a notice, such as myself at all.

The account on the Philadelphia -- The account of the closing on the Philadelphia.gov web site stated that the trial closing was anticipation of a permanent change, as though the decision had already been predetermined and it would happen.

This is not exactly the political process that we would expect.

We were also told, on the other hand, by the pamphlets that were put in the doors, that it would be on a trial basis.

So we had two different accounts, one online saying that it was anticipation meaning that it was more or less

predetermined and it was really going to be happening.

Since that time, the neighbors bore have demonstrated. And we have had numerous meetings. We've made calls to our City, our Mayor, our Council person and we've tried to communicate with our own Council person.

Petitions now exceed 2,000 signatures and additional letters in excess of 400 have been given to Council persons and the Mayor. And to date we have collected an additional hundred letters.

I have the original 400 letters. Most of them were delivered to our City Council people at large, our Mayor, and so that they would all have a record of that information.

Safe streets are important to the community for everyone, including for those on our campus area at LaSalle University.

However, access for mobility through the area must not be eliminated. The area has lost many streets over a period of

time. For those not, you know, are not aware, there has been a history of streets that have been eliminated in that community.

My own street, example, 21st Street at one time was open to Belfield Avenue, the same as 20th Street.

There was a Cottage Lane which no longer exists. There's a Clarkson and Penn Street which has no access any longer.

20th Street was opened in 1928 by City ordinance signed by Mayor Mackey. Obviously, if there was a need in 1928, then there's a much greater need in 2004, with the increase of vehicles.

The Olney area and the Avenue is a diverse community of races, and there are many institutions along this corridor which warrants all available means of travel.

We have a Germantown Medical and Emergency Center. There's a LaSalle campus, Central High School, Widener Memorial, Girls High School, Pennel Elementary, Logan Elementary, a nearby

Belfield Recreation Center, and a route for two SEPTA routes, Number 18 and 26.

If we add that mix with delivery trucks and the eight-wheelers that travel through our neighborhood, the motorist in the emergency vehicles, we have a massive influx, with limited means of mobility.

Firefighters have mentioned to me personally that this full access to 20th Street is important for firetruck ladders, and that it is not wise to eliminate the southbound use.

Ogontz Avenue lost one lane of traffic due to the reconfiguration. The two southbound lanes that pass Central have been eliminated, and now there's only one.

The neighborhood has four lanes to use. And with the changing of 20th Street, it would be down to two accessible southbound lanes, one on Wister which is a narrower street, and one on Ogontz Avenue.

We cannot -- Those two streets cannot carry the load, contrary to the information submitted by the Traffic

Department, and we know this and see that on a daily basis. That information is also a part of the segment which I had wished to shown you on the videotape.

I have also not found any information and analysis that takes into consideration the results around the public schools.

A report just this year printed by the Daily News reported that the number of dangers of children under 18 and going to school and how they deal with the traffic on a daily basis.

In no case should we be diverting more traffic in the directions of schools.

And I do not agree with their analysis that the change has not had an adverse effect on the area.

Suggestions to improve the roadway is what is needed to ensure safe passage. Speeding is an issue and a matter that is an ill that exists throughout this entire City. And every street in the City cannot be minimized because of it.

The laws that already exist and are on the books need to be enforced. And I would strongly suggest speed control methods be implemented.

I ask, therefore, that the Committee not accept this bill which is Number 040560, but rather, that the Streets Department and the Engineering Department cease to be negligent in their duties, and indeed become accountable and investigate and create a safe street that will be able to assure the safety of everyone using 20th Street, and it remain two way for the entire community.

Mr. Chairman, for the record I would also like to mention that when we started out earlier today, we were in anticipation of having an earlier meeting.

And unfortunately, we started out with 200 people here this afternoon, prepared -- many of them preparing to testify. And at 7 o'clock we were left with 60. And I'd just like that to go on file.

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COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you for your testimony. And I think it's quite noted by the members of this Committee that there were a larger number of people here earlier today.

Unfortunately, when we had hearings, it's very difficult to predict how long they will take.

But in the interest of all the folks who are involved in this, and have been for a number of years, we wanted to get this hearing under way once and for all.

And unfortunately, it's taken a lot longer, in terms of time, today and yesterday because it's now Thursday, than we all anticipated.

The video. Do you happen -- Do you have a video of what the traffic looked like when -- before the two way was turned into one way?

MS. JOHNSON: I wouldn't necessarily have that because we didn't anticipate this occurring, unfortunately.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I was just

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curious if there was anything to compare it to.

All right. Any questions for this witness from the Committee?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: I have one question.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Councilman Cohen.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: I have here -- and I'd like to ask you to read it to identify it. You've got a note from a public school student?

MS. JOHNSON: Yes. She is here.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Teacher.

MS. JOHSON: We do want her to testify. This young lady has an exam in the morning, and she has unfortunately been here all afternoon and evening with us.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm sorry. I was distracted. The teacher, I understand, has left.

MS. JOHNSON: The teacher had to leave. However, the student has been very dedicated to us, is still here, and has an

early morning exam or in a few hours an exam. She's scheduled to speak next.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: In the interest of fairness, I'd also like to note that earlier this evening, there were some -- a number of students from LaSalle University who were here as well, certainly not the great numbers that the community is. But there were students from LaSalle present as well, but they had to leave also.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And many of them are in favor of the community feeling.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I wouldn't know that because I didn't have a chance to talk to them. But I said, in the interests of fairness, that there were students here as well. And I'm not sure whether they were pro or con on this.

Any other questions for this witness?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, I'd like her to read that into the record.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Okay. Please, ma'am, would you.

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MS. JOHNSON: Okay. Statements from Mr. Fogelman, Burton Fogelman. He's a teacher from Central High School.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Please proceed.

MS. JOHNSON: Teachers at Central High School: Now I use Elkins Avenue, since 20th Street is now one way. I was in an accident last month, in spite of the fact... I'm sorry. I apologize for trying to read his writing.

Oh. I was in an accident last month, in spite of the fact I sit high in a van. I was unable to clearly see traffic on Wister traveling towards Belfield Avenue.

The accident could have been more serious if the driver on Wister to my left had warned me on beeping. I stopped and I was hit.

I believe more accidents will take place because 20th Street is one way.

The street that this gentleman was referring to is a smaller street just past 20th and Olney, if you were going west on

the map -- on the tape that I was showing.

And it's a street that we have neighbors here from that have now found that additional traffic is using it as a shortcut. And that shortcut takes them to Wister. And coming out of Wister is almost a blind spot. And this is what he's referring to.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Is that problem being kind of reported throughout the area, complaints from people living in small streets?

MS. JOHNSON: Complaints that, yes, people on side streets or streets that have normally never been used in that -- for that purpose, they're finding that people are using them for shortcuts, in particular area during the peak hours when we have additional traffic, horrendous traffic and school buses. People are really cutting through the smaller streets, and it's very unusual.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Do you happen

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to know, ma'am, if there -- have any knowledge if any of the residents on those streets that claim to be negatively impacted as a result of this, have they requested any studies as to whether or not maybe the direction of their streets might be improved if they were changed? Do you happen to know if any request has been made?

MS. JOHNSON: As far as I know, they haven't made those types of inquires. They were suggested that signs be posted, in terms of no trucks, things of that nature.

And because of those streets, most of them are within the proximity of the University, the parking is an issue on those streets with the students, and the commuter student.

And they're always been suggested that they buy -- purchase parking permits.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Parking permits.

MS. JOHNSON: Which is unfair if you live in a community, and all of a sudden

you have to have a parking permit in order to live in front of your home -- or park in front of your home

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I understand that, but that's one of those situations that sometimes can't be controlled, especially when you have a commercial corridor that begins to see an increase in activity.

The pressure gets on the residential community adjacent to it. Subsequently, people will have to -- would then have to opt for a permit parking.

The only thing I would suggest in that regard, if discussions have not already been undertaken, that you might want to talk to the University about partnering and some of the possible costs of that permit parking to the residents.

I'm not suggesting that they would agree, but I think that those are conversations that should -- should be taking place.

I've had similar things in my

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District where businesses have either fully paid or partially paid for the cost of permit parking, as a result of what their entity has caused, in terms of additional parking problems.

MS. JOHNSON: Well, that's certainly a consideration. Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

Any other questions for this witness?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: She's going to want to show the rest of the tape.

MS. JOHNSON: I was hoping to at least get down to Central High School which is very important part of this.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Is it working?

MS. BERKOWITZ: We hope so.

MS. JOHNSON: I have fast forward on mine at home.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Another school. Right next door to Girls High is Widener.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Are we there?

MS. JOHNSON: Yes. We'll have to go with this one so that we won't prolong it.

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We are actually at Ogontz and Olney at this particular time.

These are the cars lined up that are sitting on Ogontz in the mornings. There's an extension of this traffic that goes back to approximately more than a block and around another corridor of Ogontz Avenue which intersects.

We are down at the corner of Ogontz and Olney. And shortly this will focus over more to Central High School.

I do apologize for my wonderful footage.

These were buses sitting in front of Central, actually. These are the 17 and bus routes that we have, which are the 18 and the 26.

That is one of the side driveways. And of course, this is a part of the campus of Central High School.

This particular footage was taken during the winter. I had one that was recently done earlier.

This is Ogontz Avenue here where the

students will start to cross over, but they never walk to the corner. They're constantly walking across the lanes to get to the other side.

Unfortunately, this particular footage is not the one that I had planned to show you because of the problems with the counter.

Jason, would you be able to run this completely to the end while Cara is talking? That last number I gave you. Thank you. Near the end.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Are we almost --

MS. JOHNSON: Well, if Cara can speak, I will have him set up the last part of that, since it's taking time.

This is Cara Thompson.

MS. THOMPSON: My name is Cara Thompson from Central High School. And I am a local commuter from the Germantown area.

Each morning as I travel to Central High School, which is located down the

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street from 20th and Chew Avenue, I and many others are affected negatively by the change of 20th Street.

There are two important reasons why I and many others believe that 20th Street should not be changed.

The first reason is because of the increase in traffic. Traffic has increased greatly on Chew Avenue. Starting from Broad and Olney, there are cars backed up from there to Chew and Chelten.

As a result of this traffic, commuters are forced to wait long periods of time waiting to get to their destinations.

Another result is that commuters are forced to use streets in residential areas. These streets are not meant to carry cars.

Children are in danger of being in car accidents with the extra traffic while walking to school, as well as other pedestrians.

Another reason for not making 20th Street a one-way is because the reason is

not good enough. It's claimed that you are protecting the students of LaSalle University, neighbors and visitors.

I agree with that, but it has to be understood that you are putting others in danger by changing 20th Street.

As I said before, you are forcing local commuters to drive through residential areas on a regular basis.

If it is wanted to protect so many people, you should look now at Chew and Ogontz Avenue where Central High School sits. Many bad events have already occurred there: A gas explosion and two dead bodies found across the street from Central High School.

There are no crossing guards there, no police, and no one to protect residents who live there.

Each morning and afternoon, when Central students cross the street to go and leave school, they do not cross at the corner. Instead, they cross in the middle of the road.

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There haven't been any accidents yet with Central students, but students and commuters are constantly in danger if this continues.

If high school students can handle crossing Ogontz and Olney Avenue without a problem, which is a much larger intersection than 20th Street, then I believe that adult students from LaSalle University can handle crossing 20th Street, where there is a crossing guard and university police.

I can say your reasons are not convincing. You say you're protecting residents, but most of the people here protesting are the residents. Before making decisions for someone, I suggest that you consult with them first. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

I'm going to proceed with the witness list here. There are about 18 witnesses who have signed up to testify. I

want to repeat what I said earlier. If there is anyone who is going to add something that has not yet already been discussed or testified to, we would certainly appreciate your comments and your testimony.

But in the interests of time and the lateness of the hour or the earliness of the day, I would ask that if you are prepared to testify and you're only going to repeat what has been said, that you forego your testimony.

And I will ask the witnesses that we will now limit the witness's testimony to one minute per person.

(Moans from the audience.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: The Chair recognizes --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Mr. Chairman, I would object very much to that.

(Moans from the audience.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: They came to a 4 o'clock meeting. They've been very cooperative far beyond what anybody has

reason to expect. And I think we ought to proceed with this hearing, and people ought to be able to express their feelings.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And Councilman, if they are going to say something different --

VOICES FROM THE AUDIENCE: That's right.

VOICE FROM THE AUDIENCE: We've been here all night.

VOICE FROM THE AUDIENCE: We've been here all day.

VOICE FROM THE AUDIENCE: How can you do this?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, I think it's important that each person says it in their own way.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Chair recognizes Mr. Thompson.

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Chair recognizes Weldon Curtis, Mary McKenzie and Carolyn Ross. You can all come up together, please.

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MR. CURTIS: Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Good morning. Please identify yourself for the record, and would you please identify where you live as well. Thank you.

MR. CURTIS: My name is Weldon Curtis, ex-captain of the 57th block of 20th Street, and the chairperson of our committee.

And this is...

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And you reside, sir?

MR. CURTIS: I reside at 5713 North 20th Street.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And just so I get a sense -- And I'm not interrogating you. Just a sense of where that is in proximity to --

MR. CURTIS: 20th Street. The 5700 block is one block from where the barricade is at.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Gotcha. Thank you.

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MR. CURTIS: I can look out my door and see it.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Understand. Thank you.

MR. CURTIS: Okay.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Whoever decides to go first, please proceed with your testimony.

MR. CURTIS: Well, I want to address this to our Council lady, Miss Miller.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You need to... The way it works here, so you need to address your questions to the Chair, and any one of us can then respond. Thank you.

MR. CURTIS: Okay. Well, to the Chair, I have a problem with the way we didn't know anything about this closing of the street, which we had met some time ago.

A couple years ago I met with Miss Miller and Steve, and we discussed that when I was the block captain.

And my answer was no, we wasn't going to try it. One way had to be no way. That's the way we had it.

And I must admit that I had sickness, and so forth. I had to be away from my duty and all, out of town a lot.

And also that I got a letter for a meeting, and which I didn't get it. I didn't receive the meeting [sic] for this... whatever it is that had came out. And when I got the thing --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Where was the letter generated from?

MR. CURTIS: Well, we was -- I was supposed to get a letter for a meeting.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: From whom?

MR. CURTIS: From the Council lady.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

MR. CURTIS: And Steve.

And I didn't receive a letter, which he told me later on that he did write a -- send me a letter. I didn't get the -- didn't receive the letter.

And when I knowed anything, I looked on the wall that say the 29th of December the street would be closed.

And really, I was upset about it.

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And we haven't had a chance to meet with our Council lady, and we been trying to meet with her.

And I want to ask her a few questions about why she wouldn't come and meet with us to explain this, you know, because we -- we needed her.

And we had discussed this before. And we want -- I wanted to know how did it get around and we don't know anything about it, just a few people.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm confused. You said you met with her but then you didn't meet with her?

MR. CURTIS: This was two years ago.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Oh, so you did have a meeting a couple years ago.

MR. CURTIS: We had a meeting two years ago.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: All right. Thank you.

Anyone else wish -- I'll get the other testimony. Then we'll proceed.

Good morning, ma'am.

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MS. McKENZIE: Good morning.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Please identify yourself for the record.

MS. McKENZIE: My name is Mary McKenzie, and I reside at 5746 North 20th Street. That's in the second block above LaSalle College or University.

Now, some of these things have been said, but these are my feelings and my concerns, so I have to say them again.

After reading the 20th Street report, I come to the conclusion that the recommendation and finding are false, misleading and incorrect.

Councilwoman Miller has a total disregard for our community and surrounding areas.

The traffic change involves elementary schools and two high schools, all located at Ogontz Avenue. This is the direction 20th Street traffic is forced to go because of the change.

People are beginning to go through the driveways just to get through the

traffic.

Wister Street is backed up on a small -- on small side streets. Drivers are trying to... Drivers are trying with little success to get out of the -- of these areas onto the Expressway and to the -- in the City of Philadelphia.

There are only two streets of traffic leading out of the area. Cars are blocking the intersection. Changes have been made in the interests of the university.

There is no interest shown to the community. The community does not have the opportunity of sharing on decision-making process, and that affects their neighborhood.

Things just seem to happen. The community finds out about changes after the changes have already been made.

These changes jeopardize the well-being and safety of the children who live and attend schools in the area.

The neighborhood residents have done

nothing. We have only allowed the university to come into our community and live in harmony with the people in the community. There has been no harmony, only unrest and conflict. We need 20th street Open to two-way traffic.

And to add to that, the Streets Department taking down the light at Kimball and Nedro. And that's a main crossing for the elementary school, Pennel Elementary School. And the light was up there. They taking it down and made stop sign. It's less than a hundred yards, that it's about -- It's more than a dozen stop signs.

I tried counting them, and I couldn't even count them because it was -- It's two streets, Kimball and 20th Street. They make a X, cross each other.

There's no -- It's no way that a kid can get across those street. The cars is standing there like they're confused, trying to get across the street.

And I called the department, the Street Department, and they said that the

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stop signs are safer than the light.

And you know that's -- Everybody knows that stop signs is not as safe. One of them knocked down already.

And it's -- it's... The school kids is having -- They're little kids. There's five and six years old. They need the light back up there.

So, I would ask that you look into that, and get our traffic light put back up at Kimball and Nedro Streets. It's a main crossing for a grade school. And it's very important.

MS. ROSS: Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Good morning.

MS. ROSS: My name is Carolyn Ross. This is on a more personal note. My mother is a senior citizen who has lived in the Belfield community for over 40 years.

She is on the corner every morning protesting the takeover of her community by LaSalle University.

The community has formed a coalition

to prevent the university from making changes in their community without notifying and involving the residents in the decision-making process.

The community is against most changes that have been made, such as the conversion of 20th Street from two-way to one-way.

I am saddened by what I know and see happening in the community where I lived as a child. It displeases me to know that my mother cannot grow old in peace in a neighborhood where I remember being happy as a child.

For the record, as a former LaSalle student, I have never had any problems crossing 20th Street.

(Laughter and applause.)

MS. ROSS: On another note, this is from the City of Philadelphia Personnel Department, job of the traffic engineer, and typical examples of work.

Develops and selects the location and design of traffic signs and signals.

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Investigates traffic complaints of the general public and takes necessary follow-up actions.

Develops traffic control features.

Confers with police and public officials on traffic operational problems.

Speaks before community and other types of citizen groups on traffic problems.

Based on the changes made in the community and the decision to make 20th Street one way, is the City of Philadelphia hiring unskilled workers?

Maybe someone should look into the backgrounds of these workers and/or the City hiring practices.

The study seems to me to be subjective. Doesn't seem to be anything objective about the studies.

On a final note, 2003 20th Street was changed to one way.

2004, the City introduces and puts into place a new regulation entitled "Stop When Traffic Is Obstructed," meaning all

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intersections designated by ordinance as "Don't Block the Box Intersections." If you block an intersection, there is a penalty for violations. Chapter 12, Page 407.

The City created the problem in the area around 20th Street, and now they are going to penalize motorists who violate this ordinance?

Seems to me that this is a form of harassment against the residents who live and travel in the area.

On behalf of the community residents... It's a long day. I ask that 20th Street be reopened to two-way traffic.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you for your testimony.

What I'd like to do is go through the witness list. And if there are any questions, we can bring folks back up.

Clarence Queen, Deanna Cardwell and Kim Brown.

MR. QUEEN: Good morning.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Good morning,

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sir. Please identify yourself for the record and proceed with your testimony.

MR. QUEEN: I'm Clarence Queen. I'm the block captain of the 500 block of East Ashmead Street, directly behind Germantown Hospital, about a quarter of a block away from Wister Street. I'm in the 44 what-you-call-it -- zone -- Zip Code, which LaSalle is part of that 44 Zip Code.

Since the striking of a major artery that leads to the Expressway, I've been getting -- our street has been getting traffic, trucks, school buses.

And this is a street that you have problem -- say, probably a problem negotiating a car down, with people speeding, ignoring stop signs, and the likes.

At Wister and Belfield I have witnessed four- and five-car collisions, where people are rushing, trying to find an alternate route to get to the Expressway.

I've noticed up on Chelten Avenue, which is blocks and blocks away, it's

bumper to bumper traffic, due to the striking or partial striking of 20th Street. Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

MS. CARDWELL: I'm Deanna Cardwell. Address is 1913 West Olney Avenue. I'm directly across the street.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I do have -- One thing. I do have a testimony. And I also have a statement, as far as protesting.

Mr. Turzanski said that we're harassing LaSalle students. And LaSalle students are harassing us.

And I see one of the security officers. If you get a testimony from her, she can testify that we have been very peaceful.

I have a private criminal complaint that I had to file against a student from LaSalle University who harassed me verbally and also indecent exposure.

Here's my statement. I hold in my hand copies of the United States

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Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights, and Philadelphia Home Rule Charter. These documents govern us as Americans and Philadelphians.

These are the documents that guarantee us life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. These documents tell us that we exist as a Federal Republic. We abide by the themes of Democracy.

This means that we are governed by the people, either directly or through elected representatives that represent those who elect them.

What does this have to do with 20th Street? For over 40 years LaSalle University has been trying to take over our neighborhood and completely close 20th Street to any traffic. For 40 years the community has been fighting back and have held LaSalle in check.

The late Councilman Joseph Coleman and Herb DeBerry knew their jobs as representatives, and acted in the interests

of the majority of the community.

Presently Councilman-at-Large David Cohen also knows that a democratic process must prevail, and the voice of the people must always be heard.

We are here today because we have not been heard. The representative of our District and a large private corporation, LaSalle University, have concocted to override the community and change the traffic pattern of 20th Street.

Why has our community been betrayed? Why has due process been ignored?

A Charter does not give one City Council person the authority to change the direction of a street on their own.

We had meetings with Miss Miller and overwhelmingly we told her that we wanted no changes made to 20th Street, no closure, no one-way, no nothing. Excuse me. Anything, to use the Queen's English properly.

The last mass meeting held on this subject was in August of 2000. Mrs. Miller

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reported to us that LaSalle continued to reject our suggestions to build the overpass or dig an underground tunnel.

She then suggested that a new proposal was on the table to make 20th Street one way.

We said no; tell LaSalle no.

The community had made their decision, no changes. And we believed the subject was dead.

Unfortunately, around December 22, 2003, in the midst of the holiest holiday celebrated by Christians around the world, Philadelphia Streets Department personnel, like thieves in the night, put up signs stating that as of December 29th, 20th Street will be closed to southbound traffic.

We were surprised, upset and angry. How did this happen? Just what was going on?

The community immediately mobilized and has been protesting and demonstrating this deliberate attempt to close our

street.

We contacted Donna Miller to find out why she pulled a Benedict Arnold on us. What was her motivation to ignore the community?

She finally told us that the Streets Department was conducting a test, at LaSalle's request, because there was a safety issue.

There is no safety issue at 20th and Olney. Numbers from the Statistical Unit of the Police Department witness to the fact that there is no safety issue at 20th Street.

LaSalle must realize that this is a residential area. 20th and Olney does not exist for LaSalle students only. We use the intersection going to and from. Our children cross the intersection there.

If there was a safety issue at 20th and Olney, the community would already have acted to solve any traffic problems.

The community has been left in the dark. Our attempt to get answers are

ignored. We come to City Council to expose this injustice. Our representative's lack of respect for her constituents is real.

We notice the friendly camaraderie between Mr. Ed Turzanski, LaSalle's representative, and Miss Miller, and her staff.

When we ask to have an audience with her, we are confronted with looks of utter disdain. There is something wrong with this picture.

Finally, after five months, Mr. Stephen Vaughan and Mr. Johnson present us with the 20th Street report.

It's presented to us on white plain paper, no statistics, no criteria as to how the study was implemented, et cetera.

It's stated that the City has a policy to keep traffic off local streets, and to put them on larger ones.

Is it okay to take the traffic off of 20th Street, away from adult students attending LaSalle, and redirect the traffic to smaller streets where our babies are

trying to cross the streets to go to school?

We have strange cars in our driveways, trying to avoid the traffic tieups caused by the closing of 20th Street.

We have 18-wheelers traveling on back streets to avoid traffic jams and bottlenecked streets caused by the closing of 20th Street.

Our neighborhood children are just as important as the students that go to LaSalle.

LaSalle University can show no cause to close 20th Street to two-way traffic, other than the fact that they're trying to establish a college-like atmosphere for their students.

They are trying to take over our community one street at a time.

We ask that you take a look at the report that we received. If you can make a decision based on that bogus safety issue, then the future of the City of Philadelphia

is indeed in jeopardy.

We understand the usual voting protocol of you: If you vote for my bill, I'll vote for yours. But we ask that you remember the mandates and the documents that I spoke of earlier. They make this country different from countries like Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, where the people have no voice.

Please don't let the people down. Please preserve Democracy and freedom by voting no on Bill 040560 and 040561.

Our battle cry continues to be: No justice, no peace.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Miss Brown.

MS. BROWN: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and Committee members.

My name is Kimberly Brown. And I am here to give testimony on Bill Number 040560 and 61, to permanently close 20th Street to two-way traffic.

I'm a resident of the Penn area

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neighborhood and the President of the Penn Area Neighborhood Association, also known as PANA.

The closure of 20th Street has adversely affected the quality of life in our neighborhood. We border LaSalle on Wister Street.

And there has been a substantial increase in traffic on Wister Street, Locust Avenue, Magnolia Street, Church Lane, Clarkson Street and Ashmead.

Cars are cutting across Clarkson onto Armstrong and on Magnolia Street at astronomical speeds and numbers.

Prior to the one-way closure, we documented cars going the wrong way on Church Lane at one out of every ten.

After the closing of 20th Street, it has been documented that five out of ten cars are going the wrong way down Church Lane to avoid gridlock. So the report by the Streets Commission is false and inaccurate.

Drivers... This is putting our

residents and our especially our children and seniors at great risk. We do not have traffic lights or painted pedestrian crosswalk, as does 20th and Olney, the middle of Olney, or the middle of 20th Street, where LaSalle has a traffic light.

We were informed by Paul Loney of the Streets Department that we could recommend streets to be studied during this trial.

These recommendations were not addressed. I e-mailed the Streets Department several times. And the final analysis, which I received from Mr. Vaughan through Miss Miller's office, which is a bogus report. It is not at all statistically accurate, with what the gentlemen here tonight presented.

None of the streets that we recommended were involved in that analysis.

Also, I want to indicate earlier Mr. Cohen asked that they read the protocol for the standards.

And I think that one of the things

was that they need to also address the four parallel streets.

Well, we are a parallel street, and we have four parallel streets directly in our neighborhood, to Wister Street. And it wasn't addressed at all, which I would think at that point would make this report obsolete. It did not follow the protocol. And I think that needs to be addressed by the Committee.

The document that we were given indicated that crashes at Penn and Chew -- and I'm referring to the bogus document that was distributed by Mr. Vaughan -- that the crashes at Penn and Chew dropped from five in 2002 to zero in 2004. And the crashes at 20th and Olney dropped from 13 in 2003 to 8 in 2004.

Well, at 20th and Olney, the reason why the crashes were reduced was because there were protesters out there every morning from 7:00 a.m. till 9:00 a.m., and the cars were all stopping and honking and giving our support and signing petitions.

Penn is not a through street, going back to the reduction in crashes at Penn and Chew. Penn isn't a through street. It goes to the hospital and it stops.

I believe the hospital took that from our neighborhood several years ago, in the hopes of making a better community for us, which it didn't.

I must also testify that on numerous occasions I have personally witnessed pedestrians -- I have personally witnessed college students from LaSalle stepping into pedestrian crosswalk ways against traffic lights, at which point drivers slam on their brakes and cause fender benders.

LaSalle, with it's high tuition, may want to require a mandatory safe-street crossing course to their students.

Mr. Turzanski of LaSalle met with PANA members, with PANA membership, on May 13, 2003, to discuss LaSalle's plans to surround Wister Woods with an eight-foot high stone wall fence to create a walking path, tennis courts, playing and practice

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fields from LaSalle students.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Miss Brown...

MS. BROWN: I understand. I'll be done in a minute.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: If you can summarize, I'd appreciate it. Thank you.

MS. BROWN: This project included the secure fencing of Clarkson Street. The fencing was done prior to our May 13th meeting, and the community was not informed of this issue.

I, as an immediate neighbor of LaSalle, see a pattern of exclusion by LaSalle.

Mr. Turzanski did not make mention of the 20th Street project at this time. We had offered him the floor, and he neglected and negated this issue.

His agenda was obviously to smokescreen us. And it worked, because while we were dealing with the issue of Wister Woods, we weren't even looking at the notices that went up the day before for 20th Street.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: These are wonderful people.

MS. BROWN: Mr. Turzanski did address PANA through an e-mail which at the time he stated that Councilwoman Miller asked that LaSalle look into compromises.

I am not aware of any compromises presented to the community. The only option was to close 20th Street to two-way traffic.

The dirty deed was done on December 29th, with no prior notice to the community members.

And again, this is another exclusive move on LaSalle's part and Miss Miller's.

As for Miss Miller's decision to approve the closure, the Penn area neighborhood feels excluded from this decision that directly affects our community.

It was my understanding while I was secretary of PANA that we had a good working relationship with Miss Miller and her office. This recent action leads me to

believe otherwise.

I hope, Miss Miller, that you realize and remember that PANA consists of a large number of your constituents.

And as for Mr. Vaughan who indicated at the meeting that block captains were invited to these prior meetings with Miss Miller, we have block captains in our community. And none of our block captains were invited. And they directly are affected.

And I do believe that we share Wister Street with LaSalle and the Coalition to Save 20th Street. Therefore, I would think that we would be a direct group to contact.

The Penn area neighborhood --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Miss Brown, I don't mean to be rude --

MS. BROWN: I'm getting to the end.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- but you've got about nine minutes in already which is four minutes over.

MS. BROWN: Well, Mr. Turzanski got

(Laughter and applause.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I understand.

(Applause and cheers.)

MS. BROWN: Okay. And everybody else did, too.

(Applause.)

MS. BROWN: And I am a paying member of this City, even though I don't get all the rights that you do.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: All -- I understand. Ma'am -- Ma'am...

MS. BROWN: The Penn Area Neighborhood Association --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: For the record, I understand Mr. Turzanski had 20 or so minutes, whatever.

The point is, there are 18 witnesses that are speaking against it. And if I allowed everyone 22 minutes, we'd never get through this process. I'm not trying to cut you short.

MS. BROWN: Okay. The Penn Area Neighborhood Association is opposed to the

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closing of 20th Street to two-way traffic, and we ask that the Committee do not accept this bill.

We also ask that the Committee review the tape that was presented to you by Miss Lanie Johnson prior to making your decision.

Thank you for your time.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

John O'Connell and Gracey Holmes. Are any of those individuals here?

Is John O'Connell here? No? Yes? Gladys Lackey? No?

So, we have John O'Connell, Gracey Holmes. And I would ask... Is Fred Mauer... Would you please come up to this panel. Thank you.

Miss Holmes, would you begin, and then the gentleman will follow. Thank you.

MS. HOLMES: Yes. My name is Gracey Holmes. I live in the 5700 block of north 20th Street.

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Chairman, my question and comment is that I don't understand the safety reason that LaSalle wants 20th Street one way.

We had spoken to Council Miller about 20th Street, and our understanding was that we told her we didn't want a test, a trial or anything because we didn't believe in closing of 20th Street.

There's no safety issue. If... If LaSalle students can cross Olney Avenue, they can cross 20th street.

If elementary school can cross Olney Avenue or Ogontz Avenue, then the students should be able to cross 20th Street.

Turzanski has recommended to the City that they put up all these stop signs. So my question is to you, Mr. Chairman, do Turzanski work for the Street Department, that he can recommend stop signs in our neighborhood?

They have had police officer out there to cross the students. And I have the pictures here, where they have police officer out there in the morning crossing

the streets [sic].

Since it's not a traffic problem out there, why the Police Department out there crossing the students or helping the traffic get along?

And if they need -- Since he recommend four-way stops to our community, I believe they need four-way stop at LaSalle University.

If they can put four-way stops to confuse our children crossing the street to go to elementary school, then they can put four-way stops at 20th and Olney.

I probably have some more to say, but I'm getting a headache right about now.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you. Thank you.

Gentlemen, decide who goes next.

MR. O'CONNELL: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee. My name is John O'Connell.

I am a Democratic Ward Leader of the 9th Ward which is located in Mount Airy and Chestnut Hill.

However, today I'm here as a local businessperson in Germantown, Mount Airy and Northwest section of the City. My company is Weichert Realtors, McCarthy Associates.

I use 20th Street. I use many of the streets in that particular area, West Oak Lane on a weekly basis.

And I wanted to testify that I find the closing of 20th Street -- Actually, the 20th Street being made one way hugely inconvenient for my business.

And so, I wanted to make my testimony brief, but I wanted to add the views of a local businessperson who finds that particular issue inconvenient.

And so I -- You know, I'm here to just oppose -- you know, urge everyone on the Committee to vote no.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

MR. O'CONNELL: Thank you, sir.

MR. MAUER: My name is Fred Mauer. I live at 5165 D Street, and I may not be a resident of this particular area, but I am

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a very concerned citizen, because when I saw what's happening in this area, I got a little upset.

This session you went through with the PennDOT discussions and the Streets Department are the exact things that I'm finding in my own neighborhood, that I can't get the Streets Department to do an honest thing with me.

So I think we represent a common problem with the PennDOT and with the Streets Department. They can't give the right story.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Could you speak to any personal experience about the bills that are in front of us, and any problems that you've had with this intersection?

MR. MAUER: No.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Or you're just here to beat up on the Streets Department? Because we'd rather not do that, if we can help it.

MR. MAUER: Mr. Chairman --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: There are a

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number of other people from the community who --

MR. MAUER: I am here with the community. Actually, there was another -- You introduced this session by saying the other Committee was meeting with you simultaneous.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No, no, I did not.

MR. MAUER: There was --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: That hearing --

MR. MAUER: There's another ordinance --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: That hearing will take place after this Committee adjourns.

MR. MAUER: Well, I am talking on the subject matter. I'm talking about it.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Then you can come back at the next Committee and speak to that because I think --

MR. MAUER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to finish my testimony.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Is it germane

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to 20th and --

MR. MAUER: I have a limited time and you have a lot.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Is it germane to 20th and Olney?

MR. MAUER: Yes, sir. What do you think I'm sitting here for?

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Because you said you don't live in the community.

MR. MAUER: I said I'm here representing the community, as my experience.

This man represented as a businessman. I'm representing as a user, as a knowledgeable person, as a man who has dealt with the Streets Department.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Continue with your testimony.

MR. MAUER: I don't see anything wrong --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Continue with your testimony.

MR. MAUER: Okay. Thank you.

Let me correct some things that were

said earlier.

This man from LaSalle says that they had a problem with the speed and the traffic on 20th Street. And I think if he can quote Mr. Tate, as this problem started when the Mayor Tate... I think I'm around that period when Tate was Mayor. And I don't recall that we had a severe problem on 20th Street.

In any case, LaSalle opened up by starting from 20th Street. They didn't start from Olney Avenue. They started from 20th Street.

If we didn't have 20th Street, there would not be any LaSalle. So LaSalle starts on 20th Street.

Now, the problem we have with this, this gentleman says that the speed, the volume problem... Now, I read the report from the Streets Department. And it says that the volume is 200 cars.

Now, I think it's 200 cars maximum an hour. I'll tell you, on my block where I live, we have 800 cars an hour. So the

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volume on 20th Street is really very minimal.

If there's any volume, it happens to be when the kids go to school or when people go to work. So the volume is very small. It is not a volume problem.

And they've already talked about the traffic. They told you that there's no accident problems there.

But I think there's another significant part. And I'll read the rest of my testimony.

I am very familiar with the 20th Street two-way because I take it on my trips to Germantown, and when I go to LaSalle for meetings.

It was a direct route for me from my house. It was a most safe and convenient way for me to go to LaSalle or to go to Germantown.

I live only 700 feet away from East Olney Avenue. I find it's safer for me to go the indirect route and come from the south.

Instead of coming over Olney which is a lot of stop signs, I prefer to come from the south and use 20th Street. It's very valuable to me.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm listening.

MR. MAUER: Oh, I'm sorry.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm just helping Councilman Cohen out of his chair.

MR. MAUER: I figured you were preoccupied, and that...

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Yeah. Well...

MR. MAUER: I was very mystified when the Streets Department decided to close down 20th Street so preemptively.

I had not heard of any 20th Street problems until the closing action went into effect.

I noticed that the closing action did not go through a City ordinance process, so there was no chance for my public testimony. Today I'm having a chance.

I think closing a two-way street in a significant neighborhood around the

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Belfield Recreation Center is a serious community harm, and that needs resolution.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You don't have to stop.

MR. MAUER: Well, I'm trying to be polite with you.

(Councilman DiCicco said something; microphone not on, not reportable.)

MR. MAUER: Yes, and I know --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- summarize?

MR. MAUER: I question if the Streets Commissioner overstepped her emergency powers to close down 20th Street. I did not find any evidence to justify her emergency powers for public need or ordinance in advance to close this public highway for any trial period or for any -- and to state no true reasons for closing it down.

I understand that road closing was a pretense because of student accidents, but the actual trial report was a vehicle study only, using PennDOT crash history, with no other relevant facts.

I think that trial evidence cited in the final ordinance is not honestly affirmed. Since those reasons were not part of the study, then the relevance of the crash history is not proof of affirmation.

Since there was no ordinance with a public hearing, and no independent findings, then the single evidence of this uncommissioned staff report is faulty evidence.

It may not be done by professionals. It was internal professionals and was not an independent professional.

It was only done to placate a private reason, and we found out what that reason was tonight.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Please summarize.

MR. MAUER: It seems that the real truth in Bill 61 is to give away one half of 20th Street as a gift to the unnamed party, from public assets, with no compensation for the public.

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It is proposed to give away our public highway for someone else's use. We plan to give away a price of access, transportation, public benefits, and impose new hardships on the users who had a residence for 81 years of development along 20th Street.

This is a multi-million dollar swindle land grab, disguised as a traffic study.

I asked for a City -- Where is our City Planning Commission? In it's 20-year forecast, that would have to show that we need a one-lane 20th Street.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Sir, I'm going to cut you off now. Please. You've had ten minutes.

MR. MAUER: I think we need to widen 20th Street in the 5500 block, to add two more full lanes from the center and westwards, with a traffic island safety zone, and to have biplanes [sic], and to prohibit free parking on the entire length and to include SEPTA bus service.

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COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you. Thank you.

MR. MAUER: 20th Street is the only west --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Sir, thank you for your testimony.

MR. MAUER: Since west --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you for your testimony.

MR. MAUER: Since west 20th Street is the only north and south street crossing --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you for your testimony.

MR. MAUER: Thank you, Mr. DiCicco.

COUNCILMAN DCICCO: Now we have a four-lane highway coming up next. Elizabeth Johnson, Ben Tray and Rosalie Washington.

MS. TRAIL: Trail.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Trail. Excuse me. Trail.

Elizabeth Johnson. Let me readjust this, since no one gets cheated out of any

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time here. Thank you.

Please... Miss Johnson.

MS. JOHNSON: My name is Elizabeth Johnson. I live 5645 North Uber Street. I'm on the corner of Uber Street and Chew.

I am here to urge the stopping of Bill 040650.

More than 40 years ago, LaSalle College, which it was at that time; since it has become a university -- attempted to change the traffic patterns in the 5500 block of Trayer Street.

After... When Joseph Coleman was our Council person in the Eighth Councilmanic District, he sent us a letter -- and I still have a copy of the letter -- that states that he would not get involved in this situation of 20th Street closing down or any changes unless LaSalle and the community set down and reached some kind of agreement.

When Herbert DeBerry came Council person, he took basically the same status and said that he thought that the community

and LaSalle should sit down and work out an agreement, because he doesn't live there and he doesn't have to travel that area.

But... And when our Council person became Donna Reed Miller, we first tried to close the street down, she had told them yes and us no.

But actually, she came to some meetings, and we expressed very strongly that we did not want 20th Street closed; she backed down, too.

And the next thing we knew, she had gone to LaSalle and offered them a compromise, one-way 20th Street.

We do not and -- we told her at that time, we do not want a compromise. We want 20th Street left alone.

Since 20th Street has been changed and traffic is getting jammed up, Uber Street, which is one way north, sometimes gets traffic running through there going south because the people get hung up in traffic. They're on their way to work or to other places in the rush hour, and they

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go any way they can, through any street they can, to get to work or to get where they are going.

Councilwoman Miller -- It was interesting. There were -- Eighth Councilmanic District was in the Tribune of this week. And it stated that in the Eighth Councilmanic District, that 80 percent -- let's see -- 80 percent 80.2 percent black, African Americans, and 15.6 percent white.

And I say to you, to Councilwoman Miller, and to the Council at large, and to all who will listen, that it's not -- It's a LaSalle and community issue, but it's also a black and white issue. And no one wants to say that, but that's what it is.

Because if my son lived in the Northeast or a white area and exposed himself to a white woman, as a LaSalle student did since they've been demonstrating, he would be in jail if not dead. You don't kid me about you don't know that this is a black and white issue?

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If you went through what we go through on a daily basis -- on a nightly basis, I should say, of students and their behavior, and we have already met with the Police Commissioner will be three times next week. And we inviting you to our meeting on June the 22nd again, with the Police Commissioner, about the behavior of LaSalle students.

Well, we went to our Council person and asked her for a copy of -- asked her to put into -- into practice what Michael -- Councilman Nutter had, about the educational legislation.

She said she was working on her own.

That was two years ago. She hasn't worked on it yet, at least we haven't heard about it yet.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Miss Johnson, if you can summarize, I would appreciate it.

MS. JOHNSON: Listen, I been here since 3 o'clock.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I know.

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MS. JOHNSON: And I'm in a wheelchair, and I've had three strokes. Give me my day.

(Applause and cheers.)

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm -- I'm -- I'm --

MS. JOHNSON: It's a black and -- It's -- It's --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm trying my -- I'm trying my best.

MS. JOHNSON: I know what you're trying to do, but you didn't rush anybody this morning.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm not rushing you either. I'm just --

MS. JOHNSON: Well, I've stayed here all this time. I want my say.

The security neighborhood issue alert that came out from LaSalle University -- And incidentally, while I mention LaSalle University, I look at Iraq and what's going on over there, and how those people are terrorized and how they are treated. We're terrorized by LaSalle

the same way, with Ed Turzanski as the leader.

(Applause.)

MS. JOHNSON: We have gone to the police because while the people out there picketing for LaSalle, and trying to keep the City open, Turzanski went to the picketers.

And first you offered some of them a job. And I don't think they look like they want to work because they look like me. They retired, most of them.

But he offered them a job, in other words, shut up. That's what he was telling them. And he may have offered somebody else in here something else, because I think LaSalle got their way.

(Laughter.)

MS. JOHNSON: In the security alert, neighborhood issues alert, LaSalle University put out this flyer. And to me it sounds racial.

The university has been informed that four burglaries of students occupied

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neighborhoods -- in occupied neighborhood houses and one burglary on an off-campus apartment have taken place in the last two weeks [sic].

The Philadelphia Police and LaSalle University have these -- university have these burglaries under active investigation.

If you are the victims of a burglary or if you observe suspicious activity, contact LaSalle security. And it gives a phone number. If you have -- live off campus and observe suspicious activity, call 911, and then contact LaSalle University.

Now, this has gone out to students while the protesters are out there. And it goes on to give them an update on the protestant and what they should do.

These people out there are not life-threatening to these students because they're too old. These students have sort of been promoted to tell if anything happened, so they can blame it on the

people out there demonstrating.

See, people breaking houses in the block, and they are not LaSalle students. But we do have LaSalle students. And on my block there are 35 houses. Six -- Seven of them are occupied by LaSalle students.

They party any time of night they want to. They drink. They fight. They sell whiskey. They use my yard. I live on a corner house. They use my yard for a bathroom.

My son couldn't live in a neighborhood and do that. He'd be killed, as I said before. My daughter couldn't do it in a white neighborhood. She would be killed, too.

Why do we have to tolerate this nonsense? Why do we have to tolerate it? And then we come out here, they going to close 20th Street or make it one way, and we are supposed to accept it.

There are a lot of things that we don't accept about LaSalle University. We are being terrorized on a nightly basis by

the students.

We have asked for some police help because when they come -- And one night we asked the police to clean out the house. A couple times we asked them. About 80 students came out. We counted 80. There may have been more, but we counted 80.

And so, when they want to use the bathroom, they go to anybody's yard in the neighborhood they want to. I've had girls to squat right in front of my house and do their business from LaSalle University.

And you're telling me that you going to rush me through this and tell me I should tolerate that?

Oh, no. You wouldn't tolerate it, and we are not going to tolerate it.

If you want to come to some of our meetings, we meet every Saturday morning, and we're going to meet June the 22nd. And if you want to come, I'll let you know where the meeting place is. And you are welcome to come, because people are sick and tired of what we have to go through in

the neighborhood.

(Applause.)

MR. SHRED: Hi. My name is Ben Shred (phonetic). I'm a Committee person, and also a block captain, and on the board of Emen, and also am local contractor.

I live 353 East Sharpnack. I'm a local contractor. I have interest there.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: What is that relationship to 20th and Olney?

MR. SHRED: Because I has property in the neighborhood. I have interest right there.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm asking -- Sir, you're not a... Mr. --

MR. SHRED: And also I'm a contractor, so I use that.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I am not suggesting it's limited. I just want for purposes of the record --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Okay.

(Councilman Cohen began speaking simultaneously with Councilman DiCicco, not reportable.)

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COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: -- so I can understand who these people are and where they're coming from. You're not under attack. And excuse me for getting a little bit loud.

MR. SHRED: That's okay.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I've been more than patient, too, I think.

MR. SHRED: That's okay.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm trying to give everybody a chance. I want to know where you live. And I want to know where that is in proximity to LaSalle; that's all.

MR. SHRED: Sir, I don't know approximately how far from LaSalle. I don't have that estimate. What I said...

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You live in the general vicinity?

MR. SHRED: I have a home right in the general area.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Give your address.

MR. SHRED: I own property there, so

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I have interest there. I'm also a local contractor, use that street --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Where do you--

MR. SHRED: -- three, four times a day.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Where do you live?

MR. SHRED: Oh, Lord. I'll give it to you again. 353 East Sharpnack Street.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And where is that --

MR. SHRED: 22nd Ward.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And where is that -- Where is it? What neighborhood is it?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Mount Airy.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Just tell me.

VOICE IN THE AUDIENCE: Mount Airy.

MR. SHRED: Mount Airy.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Mount Airy.

MR. SHRED: Lower Mount Airy. Lower Mount Airy.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Mount Airy. Okay. Thank you.

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MR. SHRED: Okay. Now we got it.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You're from Mount Airy. Continue.

MR. SHRED: Okay. I use that area. I'm a local contractor. I use that area three, four times a day before they close it.

The morning when I notice I was closed, I was making that -- that turn, and I find I couldn't make it. I have to straighten back out in the street.

Now, I'm opposed to 20th Street to be closed because it's a main artery from Cheltenham Avenue to... What's the name of that street again? Belfield. There is a street -- out to Belfield Avenue.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I see you're very familiar with the neighborhood.

(Laughter.)

MR. SHRED: You can go to -- You can go to -- You can go to Broad Street, Expressway, Wayne Avenue, Germantown, Wister. It's a main artery, and that street should never close at all. It

should open both ways. Okay.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

MR. SHRED: Once a year I -- Council get together and said they have the memorial outfit Martin Luther King, the great civil right leader.

I get ready to see rust about that [sic]. I don't think so. Everything that Martin Luther King give his life for is taken away bit by bit, bit by bit by our own kind.

It's time for us to stop. We have to do something. As the late President Reagan -- You have the wall. He said the great wall have to come down.

We have the wall in front of us, 19th Street.

It's not only from 19th Street. It's a City street. Why the City street should be blockaded? Why we have to be blockaded from able to use the main street from Cheltenham Avenue, lead to all the other street? Why we have -- Why we have -- Why we have to live that standard

big street have to be blocked off?

We know that LaSalle... We know that LaSalle has...

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm listening. I'm listening.

MR. SHRED: Okay. We know that -- We know that --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: If I wouldn't have been listening, I wouldn't have known that you stopped talking.

MR. SHRED: Okay. I know that LaSalle has...

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I'm still listening; trust me. I can --

MR. SHRED: I know. Okay. I know LaSalle have --

(Councilman DiCicco and Mr. Shrad began speaking simultaneously, not reportable.)

MR. SHRED: That's why -- They have the entrance with the -- in the Street Department. We know they have entrance at the zoning because we went to the zoning. And they were just like the lawyer

representing us.

We have to take we hat off to Mr. Cohen. He stand with the people, and he with the people. If -- If it wasn't for him, we wouldn't be here today able to testify and give a -- let everyone know how we feel about it. They tried to cut him off but he stand up, and he stand with us, and today he's still with us.

But regardless of what happened here today, what decision you made, and I know people's watching. We have send around here 2,000 petition signature.

And the way we treated today, you know, someone in your neighborhood and know that we are represented sign those petition because it's a City problem.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Miss Washington.

MS. WASHINGTON: My name is Rosalie Washington, and I live at 2136 Elkins Avenue. And I think most of the traffic from 20th Street comes down my little

street. It's very little.

And tractor-trailers and trucks and everything goes down that street because it's only one block long. And it goes to Wister Street. And it's very hard to get on Wister Street from Elkins Avenue.

And we have a lot of kids in the block that ride their bicycles and crossing, and the traffic is very bad there.

Sometime the traffic is... The cars are a whole block long coming through my street. And it's very bad. And I wish 20th Street would be two ways again.

I thank you very much.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you, ma'am, for your testimony.

The next witnesses are Phil Johnson, Greg Palmere, Ann... Is it Boyson or Boyer?

MS. BOYSON: Boyson. And Ola Smith. Ola Smith does not want to testify.

VOICE IN THE AUDIENCE: No; she does.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Does she? Does she not? Well, she's on the list. And that's the end of the list, as they say.

Good morning, ma'am. Please identify yourself for the record and proceed with your testimony, lady in the middle, I guess.

MS. SMITH: Good morning. I'm Ola Smith. I live 5700 North Woodstock Street.

I am here because I oppose to 20th Street being closed either way.

I attended LaSalle, and I didn't need the street closed for me to go to LaSalle. I had family members attending LaSalle, and they didn't need the street closed to go to LaSalle.

So, I see no need for the street to be closed for the students to cross 20th Street as we crossed.

I thank you.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you, ma'am. Miss Boyson. Thank you.

MS. BOYSON: Ann Boyson, and I live on Locust Avenue, one of only two

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southbound, one-way streets, Wister being one and Locust is the next one going west.

And it would seem to me in the study -- Well, this is the second time I've protested LaSalle's changing this street in 25 years.

I did protest in the winter. And Mr. Turzanski approached me or confronted me saying, did you drive here?

And I said, yes.

And he said, well, what are you doing here anyway?

And I said, well, I'm a member of PANA, Penn Area Neighborhood, which street is contiguous with LaSalle; and that I was on this one-way street; and that the traffic was coming down my street much more than it ever had.

And I asked him what -- where did he think -- where does anybody think all of this traffic is going to go?

I don't think there was any planning that I can hear or learn of. Mr. Turzanski seemed to be in the dark when I asked him

that.

He could only talk about the traffic on his street, and the problems with the light, and how much he had to pay for the light.

But the planning was not there. There were no detour signs, nothing. It was just changed. Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

Mr. Palmere.

MR. PALMERE: Good morning, Chairman. Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Let me shut the clock so that no one thinks that I'm cutting you short.

MR. PALMERE: No.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You only have two minutes left, so I want to give you your full five minutes.

MR. PALMERE: I'll do it real quick.

MR. PALMERE: Greg Palmere, Democratic Ward Leader of the 12th Ward in Germantown. I live 221 Winona Street.

The closing of 20th Street

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southbound has greatly affected my ward, of which Ann is one of the residents, and many of the residents I think are still here.

It has thrown traffic back into a neighborhood of senior citizens, of children. Where children once played on the street, they no longer can do so.

We have a great deal of traffic now going down not just Wister Street which is a 200-year-old street. It's about 17 and-a-half feet wide, as compared to 20th Street. It's a good bit larger and newer street.

We have traffic going down Locust Avenue which is a very densely residential community, and we have traffic going all the way over to Chelten Avenue, disrupting our business district. And so, I need you to know why I'm involved here, and that is why.

I heard about this situation. By way of my own experience, I happen to own a house on Ogontz and Olney. In my travels there, and in my conversations with my

constituency in my ward, I was made aware of this upcoming dilemma.

And as soon as we saw the signs go up, I began to ask questions; began to seek and try to seek answers to these problems.

And you know, many wards the first casualty of any ward is often the truth. Well, this was no exception because the truth came out very quickly in this war.

In conversations that I had with both my Council people and their staff, my Council member, Donna Miller and her staff, and with Edward Turzanski at LaSalle University and with neighbors in the area, I learned quickly that it wasn't an issue of safety. It wasn't an issue of safety at all.

Mr. Turzanski admitted to me when I spoke to him, and when we spoke to Steve Johnson, Councilwoman Miller's office, safety was not the issue here. So let's be clear on that first, Chairman, and Committee members, that safety is admittedly not the issue, by Edward

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Turzanski and by Councilwoman Miller's staff, Steve Johnson.

And the reason why that was made clear was upon questioning by myself, I asked Edward Turzanski if safety was a problem, students not being able to get across 20th Street, why wasn't safety the problem students being able to get across Olney Avenue?

Because as you might know or may not know, most of LaSalle College's dormitories are located on the north side of Olney Avenue. Okay?

And their campus, their library and the classrooms are located on the south side of Olney Avenue.

And if you know Olney Avenue, you'll know a couple things: One, it has the 18 Bus; two, it has the 26 Bus; and three, it's a six-lane road.

20th Street is a two-lane road. And when that argument was made clear to Turzanski and to Steve Johnson, they admitted very quickly that, you know, Greg,

you know, Coalition to Save 20th Street, the issue really isn't safety.

The issue is LaSalle's interest in building a building. So all of a sudden, here we have this war. All of a sudden the first casualty is the truth. All of a sudden we learn as a community that there's more to this picture, that safety happened to be the convenient thing to say, the convenient argument to make.

But in truth -- And they admit the truth finally. And this is after weeks and months of talking to them -- that nothing about safety.

So I will say nothing more about safety, other than the fact that we have learned that it has nothing to do with safety.

Having said that, I want to say a few other things about this issue because it's been -- it's been mired in mud from the beginning.

Couple other things you need to know, and that is the history of street

closing in my ward, in my community.

10th Street was closed 25 years ago. Penn Street was closed from Germantown Hospital.

We were sold on the idea in the 12th Ward because we were told that we would get a wonderful hospital if we closed Penn Street.

Well, we closed Penn Street. We no longer have a hospital. We have a cul-de-sac.

Now because of the closing of southbound 20th Street, we can't even get out of that cul-de-sac because one of the main exits out of that area beyond Germantown Medical Center, as it's now called -- it's become a convalescent home -- is Clarkson Avenue.

Clarkson Avenue dead-ends into Wister Street. Wister Street is a 200-year-old colonial street which has an enormous amount of congestion now on it, so people cannot get out from behind Germantown Hospital and Penn Street.

That's a real problem.

This affects property values, something that nobody else has spoken about. Property values are immediately affected when it becomes more difficult and more dangerous for people to live in their community.

So, the property values in this area are going to go down, and have already begun to do so as a result of the congestion, as a result of the lack of safety, as a result of the lack of the ability for the neighborhood to exist in a healthy manner.

So property values are important for the record to reflect. They're important for all of us as City representatives to think about, because after all, we love this City.

Many of us have lived in our homes for many, many years. And we don't expect to lose our property values because institutions decide and one Council person decides that, hey, we're going to change

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the direction of the street. Let's just do it. And that's pretty much what's happened.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Can you summarize, Mr. Palmere.

MR. PALMERE: One of the other things I want to talk about --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Mr. Palmere, if you can summarize --

MR. PALMERE: Yeah, I will.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: You're beyond the --

(Mr. Palmere and Councilman DiCicco began speaking simultaneously, not reportable.)

MR. PALMERE: There's been many articles in the Daily News about child safety. There are five public schools in the immediate area. There are two hospitals in the immediate area.

These are institutions that all need people to be able to come and go safely. They're unable to do so presently.

In summary, you know, I will say a

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couple of things. One is is that honesty, integrity has to play a part in our decision making as officials in this City of Philadelphia.

And we've learned quickly, and I think you've learned tonight, that safety admitted by both Council people, staff and by Edward Turzanski, LaSalle, that their integrity has not been fully forthcoming.

And that's important to measure that, especially when you have a community as committed to this area as this community is, as living as longly [sic] under the circumstances of any college or any university as this one has. So I think it's important to measure integrity here. And I think you've seen that their integrity is lacking.

Some other things: The traffic engineering study. What is traffic engineering? What is traffic engineering for?

We are taxpayers. We pay traffic engineering to exist. Are they somebody

that you just try things, trial and error? Is that the way traffic engineering works?

I don't think so. I don't think so. I think it's a little bit more of a science. We do studies. We see no real reflection of studies.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Mr. Palmere, excuse me.

MR. PALMERE: There were no studies done before --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Mr. Palmere, excuse me. We have heard probably 10 to 12 people question the study, and the viability of the study, and the folks who work for the Streets Department, Traffic Division. Please let's not repeat that over again. Do you have anything else to add?

MR. PALMERE: Well, there's been no previous study is the point. And so there has been no study.

I'm talking about the truth. We're talking about integrity, aren't we? We're talking about City residents being

represented by a government with integrity.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: One thing I can say about the Streets Department, just about every department I've had to deal with, can not question their integrity. I find these people to be very upstanding folks. And I disagree with them on a lot of occasions, but I certainly don't question their integrity.

MR. PALMERE: Well, wouldn't you agree that if you're going to conduct a study, that there needs to be data collected before you implement the test --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Look, I'm not --

MR. PALMERE: -- so that you have data to compare something --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Let's not you and I get into a debate.

MR. PALMERE: -- after the test?

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Could you wrap up your testimony and then we can proceed.

UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN: No, no. He means like a pre and a post test.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: I understand what he means. I understand what he means. I just need him to finish his testimony.

MR. PALMERE: You don't want to hear about it and --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No. I just want you to wrap up your testimony.

MR. PALMERE: I hear that you don't want to hear from the public.

And you've got to understand something, Chairman, this is what the community has been hearing from our public officials in the area, with the exception of Councilman Cohen.

State Representative John Myers supports us fully. The Wister Neighborhood Council supports us fully. The Penn Area Neighbors support us fully. The 12th Ward Democrats support us fully. The 17th Ward Democrats support us fully.

And we hope that in a Democracy, in this great seat of Democracy that we live in that's called the City of Philadelphia, the Council people, good Democrats, and the

good Democracy that we have here in this City Council will do the same.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

MR. PALMERE: Represent the interests of this great community, of this great City. You have a great opportunity to do it. Do it.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

MR. PALMERE: Vote no on this bill.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: I would like to ask permission of the Chair to have Ellen Berkowitz of my staff read two letters into the record. Three ward leaders have testified.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Okay. Fine.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Okay. You have letters to be read into testimony. That will be admitted, as well as Councilwoman Miller, I think, has something to be read into the record.

Please proceed.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: They're very

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brief.

MS. BERKOWITZ: This is a letter from -- My name is Ellen Berkowitz. I work for Councilman David Cohen.

This is a letter in support of the community to Councilman Frank DiCicco from Al Stewart, the leader of the 11th Democratic Ward.

Dear Councilman DiCicco, as leader of the 11th Ward, I am writing to express my support of the community in their opposition to the closure of 20th Street to southbound traffic, as proposed in Bill Number 040560.

Neighborhood residents and leaders are legitimately concerned about the diversion of traffic to residential streets and pass five schools in the area, including the Widener School for Children with Disabilities.

Thousands of area residents have signed petitions and sent letters expressing their concern.

As you are aware, the number of

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Philadelphia school children who have been hit by cars while walking to school is at an unacceptable high.

The Streets Department study of the closure of 20th and Olney to southbound traffic did not address this important issue, and has not revealed any compelling reason why this street should be closed to traffic.

Local firefighters have also expressed concern about the ability of emergency vehicles to reach their destination because of the closure.

Under these circumstances, the wishes of the community should be respected.

I urge you to vote no to Bill Number 040560 and its companion Bill Number 040561.

Sincerely, Al Stewart, Ward Leader.

This is a letter from State Representative John Myers.

As a legislator of the 201st District, I fully support the interests of

the residents, as it pertains to 20th Street between Belfield and Olney Avenues.

I will encourage support of the position which Councilman Cohen and the majority of the residents take on the above-mentioned matter.

I have not been involved in any discussions with LaSalle University on this matter, and they have not found it necessary to engage me in such discussions.

I want to reaffirm my belief that those who are most directly affected by a public action should have the greatest voice in determining the appropriate course of action.

There should be no closing of or directional change on 20th Street. 20th Street should remain a two-way street.

State Representative John Myers.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: I'm offering them in evidence.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: So noted. The letters that have been just been read will be handed to the stenographer to be made a

part of the record.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: I would like to make one short comment. I have more to add to that.

There are seven ward leaders in the Eighth Councilmanic District. Tonight you've heard from four of them.

The fifth one, Rosita Youngblood has stated orally that she supports the community. That's number five.

The sixth ward leader -- There are only two left. One is Donna Miller. The other is a person who works for Donna Miller; and therefore, I have not requested any comment from him since I understand he can't give a comment without jeopardizing his position.

(Laughter.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: And that's the seven ward leaders.

So the five who can speak who are not connected with Councilwoman Miller are all in opposition to it.

Now, I don't know -- You heard Greg

Palmere speak of all the groups that are opposed to it.

I don't know what there is by nature of Democracy left in Philadelphia. If this City Council decides not to go with the community, all I can say is, it's got to be a changed City Council after that because if this City Council doesn't support the community, it doesn't deserve to be supported.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: No member who votes against the community deserves to be supported.

You don't give up your rights by electing a paid person to represent you. What you did is, you think you're getting somebody who's going to be supportive of your goals, not in opposition.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you. Thank you, Councilman Cohen.

Councilwoman Miller, I understand you have letters to be read into the record.

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Yes, Mr. Chair. Brian has the letters. He's going to read them.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Please read the letters into the record.

THE CLERK: Dear Councilwoman Miller, I am writing to offer my strong, unqualified support for the permanent reconfiguration of 20th Street between Olney and Belfield Avenues to a one-lane, one-way uphill traffic pattern, and for the striking of the western portion of the street, Bills Number 040560 and 040561.

As you know, since James Tate was Mayor of our City, LaSalle University and its neighbors have had specific legitimate safety and security concerns tied to the two-way configuration of 20th Street between Olney and Belfield Avenues which is occupied solely by the University on both sides of the street.

I am pleased that you and LaSalle and City Streets Department officials and neighbors found a compromise to outright

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closure of 20th Street which preserves northbound traffic access on the street, while at the same time addressing the very serious safety concerns which affected the University and its surrounding community.

LaSalle University is and has been a major employer and resource for educational, cultural, social and economic health and stability for your District, the City, and our Commonwealth, with more than 1100 employees.

LaSalle pays more than $40 million in taxable wages that generate nearly $1.7 million in City wage taxes.

Through its own resources and fund raising from its more than 45,000 alumnae, LaSalle is building a $26 million new residents' facility, and it plans to add a $30 million state-of-the-art science and technology facility in the next five years.

The school also does $12 million of business each year with local businesses. These facilities and this commerce are a source of jobs and opportunity for your

District, the City, and our Commonwealth.

Lastly, the 6,000 full-time students at LaSalle included a very large number of out-of-state residents who bring tuition dollars and jobs to Pennsylvania.

For these and many other reasons, LaSalle is worthy of your support, and that of your colleagues in the matter of 20th Street.

The reconfiguration of 20th Street is a necessary and positive action by City government to support this important community employer and source of economic and educational opportunity. And I support your actions in this matter.

Sincerely yours, Governor Edward G. Rendell.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: That was the same fellow who used to be a Democratic Mayor of Philadelphia, who submitted a budget to the State House of Representatives and then the State Senate, eliminating all drug money, eliminating money for libraries, eliminating money for many services that go

to Philadelphia.

Of course, he's always been really a Republican who masquerades as a Democratic.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: He tells me the same thing.

Councilman, thank you.

Mr. Abernathy, one more letter, I understand?

THE CLERK: Dear Councilwoman Miller, I am writing to offer my unqualified strong support for the permanent reconfiguration of 20th Street between Olney and Belfield Avenues to a one-lane, one-way uphill traffic pattern and for the striking of the western portion of the street.

For too long this thoroughfare has been a disaster waiting to happen and a dangerous safety hazard for commuters and pedestrians alike.

As you know, LaSalle University and its neighbors have had specific legitimate safety and security concerns tied to the two-way configuration of 20th Street

between Olney and Belfield Avenues, which is occupied solely by the University on both sides of the street.

I congratulate and support you for the compromise which you, LaSalle, Philadelphia Streets Department officials, and neighbors achieved to preserve northbound traffic access from the street, while at the same time addressing the very serious safety concerns which affected the University and the surrounding community.

Your compromise position improves the safety and security of the surrounding community by dramatically reducing the volume and speed of through traffic.

As you well know, LaSalle University is a major employer and resource for educational, cultural, social and economic health and stability for the northwest section of the City.

After we collectively move forward with the process of reinvigorating our region, LaSalle stands as an anchor, joining together the many diverse and

diverging communities that make up this section of the City.

LaSalle's tradition of community involvement and partnership is unparalleled. Its commitment to educating and well-being of the community is unquestionable.

Of the nearly 46,000 alumnae, more than 16,000 live in Philadelphia, and nearly 700 of those alumnae, of which I am one, reside in and around the immediate community.

Its innate and enduring economic, educational and cultural contribution of this northwest community has been and continues to be a most valuable asset.

Therefore, the reconfiguration of 20th Street is necessary, and positive action by City government to support this important community resource, and I strongly support your actions in this matter as well.

Sincerely yours, Representative Dwight Evans.

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(Boo's from the audience.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Dwight Evans ceased being a representative of the 17th Ward two years ago.

John Myers is the State Representative covering the area of LaSalle.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

Councilman, what is it with this video?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: What is it with this?

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: No. The video. The video. What's the situation here?

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, where is --

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: What do we have, Miss Johnson?

(Ms. Johnson began speaking away from the microphone, not reportable.)

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Would you come up and speak to the mike so we can hear you?

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Just let me know for the record what the problem is, so... We're not going to...

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MS. JOHNSON: Chairman DiCicco, this particular part of it, this aspect of the video is the very end, and it's very... I think it's very crucial to our points of the community, people in the community.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And how long is it?

MS. JOHNSON: I'm showing only a slight segment.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: And how long is "slight"?

MS. JOHNSON: I would say no more than 30 seconds.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Oh. Slight enough.

MS. JOHNSON: Unfortunately, I had better equipment at home to cue my video

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Most people have better equipment at home than we have here. I can tell you that.

MS. JOHNSON: Jason, you can play it there. This is some --

COUNCILMAN COHEN: What you were referring to when you said --

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MR. JOHNSON: This is primarily Central High School. I do want to show the importance of how students have to cross the street at Central.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: While we're waiting for the... Just let me, while we're waiting for the video to get into position, I just want to thank everyone for attending this hearing.

A special thanks to my colleagues for staying the entire length, and a special thanks also to the City employees for participating.

And I know there was some verbal abuse, certainly not shared by the majority of the members of this Committee.

And I know that there's some people who may walk away from this hearing feeling as though regardless of how the vote turns out -- may feel as though that they have not been listened to or paid attention to.

I would hope that, going forward, that the residents and the LaSalle University can continue a dialogue to work

on these issues.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: There is no dialogue. LaSalle refused to enter into it.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: If you were listening to me, I said I would hope that they can continue with a dialogue.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, I'm saying they haven't had one.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank all of you for attending.

COUNCILMAN COHEN: I want to thank everybody for being here.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: We've got about a minute left.

MS. JOHNSON: It's not working.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you, Miss Johnson.

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: This concludes the public hearing on the... Is that it, Miss Johnson?

MS. JOHNSON: Yes, sir.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Okay.

MS. JOHNSON: These are students... This is dismissal, actually, from Central University -- I mean, Central High School.

And they basically -- how they basically have to duck and dodge traffic. And this is because of the fact that... I'm -- I'm pointing out the fact that if there is an issue with the safe street, it would be Olney Avenue -- Central at Ogontz Avenue and not necessarily 21st Street.

These are young people that go to school and they come back and forth in this manner on a daily basis, actually literally stopping traffic across these two busy lanes on Ogontz Avenue.

In my opinion, these are young people under the age of 18; whereas, they would have young adults on 21st -- on 20th Street.

MS. JOHNSON: All right. Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DiCICCO: Thank you.

This concludes the public hearing on the Committee of Streets and Services.

(Hearing concluded at 2:15 a.m.)

CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the stenographic notes taken by me upon the public hearing of The Philadelphia City Council, taken on June 9, 2004, and that this is a true and correct transcript of same.

_____

DAVID A. DEIK, RPR and
Commissioner of Deeds

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