COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE ON RULES

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Room 400, City Hall

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Monday, June 21, 2004, 10:09 a.m.

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BILL 040666 - An Ordinance amending Title 14 of The Philadelphia Code relating to "Zoning and Planning" by amending provisions of section 14-205 concerning R-1A residential Districts, all under certain terms and conditions.

PRESENT:

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNA C. VERNA
COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE, JR.
COUNCILMAN JACK KELLY
COUNCILMAN FRANK DI CICCO
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL
COUNCILMAN DAVID COHEN
COUNCILWOMAN DONNA REED-MILLER

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good morning, everyone. This is a public hearing of the Committee on Rules. And at this time the Chair will appoint Councilman Goode and Councilman DiCicco to the Committee for today. And to my left is Councilman Kelly; to my right is Councilman O'Neill.

I would ask Mr. McPherson to please read the title of Bill Number 040666.

Mr. McPHERSON: An ordinance amending Title 14 of The Philadelphia Code, relating to Zoning and Planning by amending provisions of section 14-205 concerning R-1A residential districts, all under certain terms and conditions.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Good morning.

Please identify yourself for the record and proceed with your testimony.

MR. KRAMER: Good morning, Madam

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President and members of the Rules Committee. My name is William Kramer. I am the Supervisor of the Zoning Unit of the Development Planning Division of the City Planning Commission.

I am here today to testify on Bill 040666. This bill was introduced on June the 10th of 2004. It amends Title 14 of The Philadelphia Code entitled zoning and planning, by changing a number of the dimensional requirements of the R-1A residential zoning classification.

The minimum lot width will be increased from 60 to 65 feet. The setback will be increased from 30 to 35 feet. The required side yard will be reduce from 15 feet to 10 feet.

The required rear yard will be increased from 25 to 30 feet. The minimum open area will be reduced from 70 to 65 percent of the lot, and the minimum lot area will be increased from 6,000 to 7800 square foot.

The increase in the minimum lot area

is our main concern with the amendments. Raising the minimum lot area from 6,000 to 7800 square feet results in a reduction of the allowable density of a building site by about 30 percent which is a considerable reduction.

This zoning classification has been used in several recent zoning remapping ordinances, and changing the requirements of the district will create a number of non-conforming lots and properties in the area where this classification has been mapped.

Additionally, a request for proposals has been issued for redevelopment of the former Byberry State Hospital property. Submissions have been received based in part on meeting the current R-1A requirements.

One submission would develop the entire R-1A portion of the site with single-family homes meeting the requirements of the current R-1A classification.

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Changing the requirements of the classification after the RFP has been issued and submissions have been received may place the redevelopment of this site in jeopardy.

After considerable discussion, the Planning Commission at its meeting of June 15th, 2004, recommended that Bill 040666 not be approved.

That concludes my testimony. I will be happy to answer any questions of the committee.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: The Chair would like to note that Councilwoman Miller has also joined the Committee, and so has Councilman Cohen.

The Chair recognizes Councilman O'Neill.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Yes.

Mr. Kramer, I spoke to your office the other day, John Chapman, particularly, and he mentioned these two objections.

Actually, he didn't mention the Byberry, but I've talked to PIDC about

that.

If it were not for the non-conforming issuing, just in terms of placing R-1A sort of halfway in between R1 and R2, would the Planning Commission have any objection to that?

Mr. Chapman indicated you would not in and of itself.

MR. KRAMER: In and of itself he is correct. With that already being applied in the mapping process, without it being sent out as part of an RFP, we have no objection to changing the numbers.

COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Thank you. This is just a further refinement of it, and I appreciate your concern.

I've spoken to PIDC that is dealing with the Byberry issue as a point for the City. And I don't think this will affect the total number of houses and how they look.

It's sort of just a rough way of looking at the density up there. So, I hope we can move this forward and get a

rule suspension. But I'll continue to work with you on this. Appreciate your testimony.

MR. KRAMER: Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Thank you.

Are there any other questions from members of the Committee?

(No response.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Do we have anyone else to testify on this bill?

(No response.)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT VERNA: Seeing none, this will conclude our public hearing. We will now go into our public meeting.

(Public hearing concluded at 10:15 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 21, 2004, and that this is a true and correct transcript of same.

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DAVID A. DEIK, RPR and
Commissioner of Deeds

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