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2 STATE OF NEW YORK
3 CITY OF YONKERS
4 -----X

5 Minutes of
6 City Council of the City of Yonkers
7 May 13, 2008 - 7:00 p.m.
8 at
9 Roosevelt High School
10 631 Tuckahoe Road
11 Yonkers, New York 10710
12 -----X

13 B E F O R E:
14
15 CHUCK LESNICK, Council President
16 PATRICIA D. MCDOW, Councilmember
17 LIAM J. MCLAUGHLIN, Councilmember
18 SANDY ANNABI, Councilmember
19 JOAN GRONOWSKI, Councilmember
20 JOHN MURTAGH, Councilmember
21 DEE BARBATO, Councilmember

22 P R E S E N T:
23
24 CHRISTIAN DIPALMERO, Special
25 Counsel
26 JOAN C. DEIERLEIN, City Clerk

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19
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2 MR. LESNICK: We are here for the
3 public hearing. It is 7:06 for a 7
4 o'clock public hearing, not bad. This
5 is actually a continuation of the
6 public hearing that we started last
7 week, so unless anybody is unfamiliar
8 with the project, I do see some of the
9 representatives from the developer
10 here. I know John Feingold, Kevin Ryan
11 from AKRF. In fact they are coming up
12 right here.

13 Unless anybody has any reason to
14 want a background on the project, we
15 will just take up from where we were
16 when we left off when this public
17 hearing started on the 29th of April.

18 The one thing I do want to make
19 clear is that the comment period will
20 remain open until May 30th, so if you
21 don't feel like sticking around today,
22 or if you are watching this at home and
23 you want to submit a comment, you have
24 until May 30th to get some written
25 comments into us, so with that, I'd

2 like the clerk to call-- by the way,
3 how many speakers do we have signed up?

4 MS. DEIERLEIN: Thirty-one so far,
5 Mr. President.

6 MR. LESNICK: Thirty-one speakers
7 at five minutes a piece, so it should
8 take a couple of hours. You don't have
9 to necessarily take your five minutes,
10 and again, what these meetings are are
11 for comments on the DEIS, so if you are
12 just in favor of the project or against
13 the project, you can sit down, you
14 don't have to elaborate, but we want to
15 hear comments about the DEIS, or if you
16 still have questions about it some
17 more.

18 With that, and again we did this
19 last time and it worked pretty well,
20 the clerk announced five speakers in a
21 row and they got ready to speak and
22 just went through it like that, so
23 please call the first five speakers.

24 MS. DEIERLEIN: The first five
25 speakers are Declan Sherry, Charlie

2 Hensley, Geri Esposito, Joyce Torre and
3 Mary Lorenz. Mr. Sherry.

4 MR. SHERRY: Good evening,
5 Honorable members, residents and
6 guests. As a Local Union Number Three
7 Electrician, this project is a must for
8 Yonkers, not only for all construction
9 workers building the project, but for
10 the future full-time employment for
11 residents of Yonkers.

12 This project will attract big time
13 investment for the future and be
14 beneficial to everyone financially. It
15 will also be a vast improvement to the
16 area. It's great that our elected
17 officials have the vision and foresight
18 into looking in the favor.

19 I am in favor and support the
20 project for the downtown revitalization
21 of Yonkers, and hopefully it will get
22 under way as soon as possible.

23 MR. LESNICK: Thank you. Mr.
24 Hensley.

25 MR. HENSLEY: Hi folks. You know

2 in Vaudeville I think it was the dog
3 act that was number two. I will be
4 very quick. I won't take my whole five
5 minutes, and I certainly wouldn't have
6 come so early if I had known you only
7 have 30 speakers, but I know you will
8 all be relieved to know--

9 MS. DEIERLEIN: I am up to 75.

10 THE WITNESS: Oh, you are up to
11 75. You will be happy to know I have
12 just today accepted a full-time
13 position in the city so that I can
14 spend more time with you and not go on
15 the road anymore, so all I am going to

16 bring up tonight, I understand that
17 Counselmember McDow has requested a
18 scale model of the development that is
19 going on, and if that is true, I think
20 that is a terrific thing.

21 I have presented myself as an
22 actor, but I have actually produced and
23 directed far more productions, so I
24 know how to read plans, and I fear that
25 an awful lot of people can't, and I

4.6

5.16

2 think the scale model is going to be an
3 important thing.

4 For instance, the buildings that
5 we have in Yonkers right now, we do in
6 the theater, I have to read the plans,
7 the builders have to read the plans,
8 the actors can't read plans so we build
9 models for them which usually go away
10 and then I spend the rest of my time
11 saying well, that counter is about this
12 high, so imagine that the buildings
13 that are existing in downtown right
14 now, most of those will come up to your
15 ankle, your shin, maybe, if one fourth
16 equals one inch, okay, so we are up to
17 my shins.

18 We don't like to think about
19 shins. I know shins are unimportant.
20 We think at some point we will grow out
21 of hitting our shins and crippling
22 ourselves, but I can assure you at
23 least in 53 years I have not stopped
24 that, so up to shins.

25 Some of the buildings in this

2 proposal are going to come up to my
3 waist, waist in shins, that is quite a
4 distance, and then, of course, we have
5 got these two towers that are going to
6 give it to us up to here, so I just ask
7 you from a scale standpoint to stay on
8 top of that.

9 I love this development. I have
10 said it before and I am not going to go
11 on more about that. I really want to
12 see it happen, but I do think this is a
13 podium. Eleven stories is not a
14 podium. Eleven stories is a building
15 with a 50 story building on top of it
16 which makes it a 61 story building
17 which is a lot higher than your shins.

18 I met a neighbor last week for the
19 first time. We got to talking about
20 the development. She thinks it's all
21 great, and I said what do you think
22 about the waterfront? She said well,
23 it's perfect, no building is going to
24 be taller than 12 stories, and I
25 thought where did she hear that and

2 what year is she living in? So that is
 3 another one of those things that may be
 4 getting the word out will help us get
 5 the scale on this project, especially
 6 given that the pictures that we have
 7 seen so far, which are so terrific,
 8 don't tell us a couple of key things
 9 which are the shadows that are going to
 10 be over downtown. None of these
 11 pictures look exactly the way it's
 12 going to look.

8.13 The daylighting of the river is
 13 great. It's not going to look quite as
 14 sunny as in the pictures we have seen.

15 The pictures that we see of the stadium
 16 in the development, you never see the
 17 tops of those buildings.

18 Now, we know that's how things get
 19 sold and I completely understand it,
 20 but for the time being I want to make
 21 sure that you are imagining the stories
 22 that you can't see.

23 I have two final thoughts. I love
 24 this development. I want to make sure
 25

2 that when we are done it doesn't look
 3 like somebody played pin the tail on
 4 the donkey and lost, and the other
 5 question I put before you is, there are
 6 so many Italians in this government and
 7 so many Italians among the City Council
 8 people, there is so many Italians among
 9 the developers and I dare say among the
 10 people in this room, surely we can
 11 learn something from the gorgeous
 12 waterfront cities that the Italians
 13 built where we step down to the water
 14 and everybody shares it, so that's all
 15 I got to say tonight. I am glad to see
 16 you. Have a good time.

17 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
 18 much.

19 Next speaker.

20 MS. DEIERLEIN: Geri Esposito,
 21 after Jerry, Joyce Torre.

22 MR. ESPOSITO: Good evening City
 23 Council President Lesnick and members
 24 of the City Council. My name is Geri
 25 Esposito. I am a homeowner and a
 taxpayer in this beautiful City of

2 Yonkers. I have lived here all my
3 life. I actually went to the Yonkers
4 public schools and I am grateful for
5 that.

10.7

6 I am here on behalf of the project
7 for tonight. I see this project
8 bringing tax relief from the retail
9 stores as well as jobs. It will create
10 jobs for our unions. It will create
11 jobs for our young and for our city
12 members, you know, residents of our
13 city, and also our senior citizens can
14 benefit from that.

15 I see -- that's good for our
16 seniors. They need their little jobs
17 too. I also see it as beautification
18 act for our downtown city. We are
19 going green. It's environmentally
20 friendly. I have read some articles on
21 that and I am glad for that because we
22 need to protect our planet.

23 This project would be a very
24 inviting place for our City of Yonkers.
25 We can have tourism here.

2 I go to work every day in White
3 Plains. I see what they can do. I see
4 the beautiful project that they put up
5 there. I am hoping that this could
6 come to Yonkers. We have the most
7 beautiful waterfront, 11 miles of
8 beautiful beautiful Hudson River that
9 we want to protect, and of course we
10 want to keep those buildings in line
11 with how they want to be built and I am
12 glad that you are asking for that.

13 Also, I don't know anything about
14 building. I know about being, you
15 know, doing things for the city,
16 creating jobs, opening up the waters
17 that we have there, putting people to
18 work and that's the most important
19 thing.

20 Times are tough. This is crucial
21 for this city. We need to act now. We
22 can't wait, and I want to thank you
23 very much for hearing me and I hope you
24 decide on that. Thank you.

25 MR. TORRE: Good evening. I am a

2 resident of Yonkers now for four years,

3 I love it. I think it's a great idea,

4 jobs for people to bring their families

5 after all this is built. I read a

6 couple of little things on it during

7 the past couple of months about the

8 kyack opening and having access to the

9 Hudson, I think that's great. I think

10 it's a great idea that we are going

11 green, and I think it's even a better

12 idea if we hop on it before the costs

13 rise up so much, because we well know

14 everything has been rising and rising,

15 so if we start on it now, we won't have

16 to pay additional costs that we are

17 lacking right now, just not doing

18 anything. Good evening and have a good

19 night.

20 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very

much.

21 I like his example, you don't have to

22 take the full five minutes. We are up

23 to 75 speakers.

24 MS. DEIERLEIN: Marianne Lorenz

25 and then Donna Nolan, Jim Nolan,

2 Shelley Weintraub and Om Dhiman. I

3 will do it again. Marianne, then Donna

4 Nolan, Jim Nolan, Shelley Weintraub and

5 Om Dhiman.

6 MS. LORENZ: Good evening. My

7 name is Marianne Lorenz. I have lived

8 in Yonkers most of my life. I have

9 seen Yonkers go down and now I am

10 watching it come up, and I am very

11 happy to see all the development that

12 is going on, all the nice things that

13 are happening.

14 The people that are coming in, the

15 potential people that might come in if

16 we continue with these projects, and

17 the only way we'll get to be ahead of

18 everyone else is to continue with these

19 projects. We need these projects to

20 keep our taxes down. It's going to

21 bring a lot of revenue. It's going to

22 give a lot of people jobs and it will

23 make a lot of people happy, and

24 basically that's it. Thank you.

25 MR. LESNICK: Thank you.

2 MS. DEIERLEIN: Donna.

3 MS. NOLAN: Hello everyone. I am
4 not going to take up the whole five
5 minutes. I have in my hand over 30
6 letters from Yonkers residents who are
7 in favor for this project.

8 You guys, I have never hid the
9 facts how I feel about it. I truly
10 truly want you to take this into

11 consideration. We need this, the jobs
12 for the construction industry, the
13 children of our city in Yonkers, the
14 jobs that it will bring for them.

15 Again, you know how I feel. I
16 want you to take into consideration,
17 truly we need to get this done. We
18 need to build Yonkers and be the same
19 as all the cities around us. Thank
20 you.

21 MR. LESNICK: If you would give
22 those, Donna, give them to Mr.
23 Constantine, Mark Constantine, our
24 counsel who will give it to the clerk
25 and they will be entered in.

2 MR. NOLAN: Good afternoon. I am
3 just basically saying I live at 50
4 Stock Ridge Road. You open up my back
5 door, you see the project, Ridge Hill,
6 okay. I am for all this building. I
7 got 30 years in this business and I
8 know these guys, all right. I don't
9 know them but I know Donald Trump with
10 the projects he did.

11 My first project I did was down at
12 Battery Park City. That was fill from
13 the Trade Center, and it's amazing what
14 we built down there over the years and
15 we are still building down there.

16 The waterfront is beautiful. Our
17 waterfront is rotting away. I was
18 involved with Jersey City. I remember
19 that place was rotting away. It's a
20 beautiful waterfront. I mean, it's so
21 many projects I was involved in.

22 We need to get past this and get
23 building here, because if we don't do
24 it, our schools are going to rot away,
25 and we need to start doing something in

14.11

15.22

2 Yonkers. Stop talking about it and we
3 need to start building. Thank you.

4 MS. DEIERLEIN: Shelley Weintraub.

5 MS. WEINTRAUB: Good evening.

My

6 name is Shelley Weintraub. I am a
7 resident of Park Hill, Yonkers, and I
8 am also the Vice President of real
9 estate at Graystone also here in
10 Yonkers.

11 I support the redevelopment of our
12 downtown. In my position at Graystone,
13 I often have the opportunity to market
14 our properties to people who have heard
15 about Yonkers master plans and ball
16 parks and our desirable waterfront.

17 One such property was historic
18 Phillipsburgh Hall on Hudson Street.
19 This building opened in 2001 and has 28
20 studio apartments, 22 of which I
21 marketed to people in the arts.

22 Please listen as I tell you about
23 the 14 wonderfully talented people who
24 moved to Yonkers to live in
25 Phillipsburgh Hall, but who have all

2 left Yonkers since.

3 Jakin was born and raised in New
4 Orleans. He is a saxophone player who
5 recently came to New York to make a
6 name for himself. He supported himself
7 as a sax repair person, learning his
8 skills from an new orleans old time
9 craftsman. Jakin moved from
10 Phillipsburgh Hall to Manhattan.

11 Rene and Curt. Rene is a
12 professional pianist and also teaches
13 piano. Curt is a professional
14 violinist and teaches violin. They
15 moved to Phillipsburgh Hall from
16 Washington Heights.

17 Charlene is a fine artist who also
18 works in interactive media. Beginning
19 as a graphic designer and currently as
20 a consultant. She did television
21 animation for several years. She began
22 a job in Irvington, New York, and chose
23 to live in Phillipsburgh Hall. She
24 moved from Brooklyn.

25 David is a trumpet player. He

2 recorded with Paul Simon, Tito Puente,
3 Celia Cruz. He performed in the
4 following movies: The Mombo Kings, the
5 Thomas Crown Affair and Gloria. He
6 freelances and records for various
7 record labels. David relocated from
8 Riverdale to Phillipsburgh Hall.

9 Ben and Casandra were new to New
10 York. They are both actors with
11 degrees in theater, and relocated to
12 New York City from Massachusetts.

13 Ben is employed at Jularid school
14 doing sound design and lighting,
15 describing himself as an electrician
16 and sound engineer. They were living
17 in the North Fork of Long Island when
18 Ben traveled three hours a day to work
19 each day daily before moving to
20 Phillipsburgh Hall.

21 Linda is a gospel singer who also
22 had her own radio broadcasting show on
23 local New Jersey stations. She
24 relocated to Phillipsburgh Hall.

25 John is a sculptor and painter who

2 has exhibited solo and group shows
3 since 1994. He is returning to Yonkers
4 after being away for the last 11 years
5 and wanted to have an active role in
6 the arts scene here. He relocated from
7 Purdys to Phillipsburgh Hall.

8 Namiko came from Japan a few years
9 ago to get her master's degree in urban
10 design in Cornell. She was working for
11 an architect in Elmsford but lived in
12 Pelham and was unhappy there. She was
13 very excited to be moving into a
14 building that has a community of
15 artists.

16 Isabel is an art instructor at the
17 Dalton School in Manhattan.
18 Phillipsburgh Hall was her first
19 apartment. She set up a painting
20 studio in a section of her main room
21 and was thrilled to be part of the
22 building, and I can go on and on but I
23 won't.

24 All of these wonderful young and
25 talented residents of Phillipsburgh

2 Hall have left Yonkers. Each and every
3 one told me how disappointed they were
4 that the proposed development plan did
5 not materialize. They said there was
6 no place to sit down with their agent
7 and have a cup of coffee. There was
8 limited shopping. The promised
9 ballpark never materialized.

10 They saw the plans, they heard the
11 hype, but years after they moved in
12 there was still nothing to keep these
13 young and vibrant people in our
14 downtown community.

15 We lost a golden opportunity when
16 we lost these artists. I urge the City
17 Council to move expeditiously in
18 creating a downtown that all of Yonkers
19 can be proud of, and one that has
20 tangible benefits for the current
21 residents of the community.

22 We cannot afford to lose the newer
23 residents who have moved into 25 North
24 Broadway, 66 Main Street, 35 Hudson
25 Street and the units down at the pier.

2 Graystone will have another
3 opportunity to bring a new wave of
4 residents into the downtown when we
5 open our work force condominium project
6 on Warburton Avenue.

7 I will again market this property
8 and I will again market the City of
9 Yonkers. I hope your actions will pave
10 the way for Yonkers to become the
11 cosmopolitan and energetic city that it
12 has long been distant to become. Thank
13 you.

14 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
15 much.

16 MS. DEIERLEIN: Our next speaker
17 is Om Dhiman, and after Mr. Dhiman we
18 have Ann Miller, Walter Lipscomb, Ron
19 Salvatore, Fred Buhler and Michelle
20 Jacobs.

21 MR. DHIMAN: Honorable members
22 of
23 City Council and members, residents and
24 members of the City Council: My name
25 is Om Dhiman and I am the manager of
the low income housing in the City of
Yonkers. I manage 700 apartments, and

2 I have been doing that for 20 years
3 here.

4 I have looked at the plans
5 proposed by these developers and
6 believe that the plan is unprecedented
7 and comprehensive. It's an
8 extraordinary opportunity for Yonkers
9 to develop its downtown.

10 There have been many projects that
11 have been proposed over the years, but
12 all of them fell to the wayside for
13 political or economic reasons.

14 After a long period of time, this
15 is a good plan. This is putting the
16 city in the right direction. This is
17 about bringing new life to the city.

18 There has not been anything like this
19 in the city for half century.

22.20

20 Most important is, that west side
21 of the city needs a face lift so that
22 residents of the west side don't have
23 to go to the east side for shopping or
24 entertainment.

25 If built as proposed, benefits to

2 the city will be great. There will be
3 more than three billion in private
4 investment. More than 32 million in
5 new tax revenue to the city and the
6 schools and Westchester County.
7 New residents will spend 65
8 million dollars a year. That will
9 reach poor sections of the city. The
10 developers need to make a profit,
11 otherwise why would they come here?
12 They have to borrow billions of dollars
13 and put here in Yonkers. They can go
14 somewhere else where people are more
15 receptive and have less hassles.

23.2

16 The developers are going to clean
17 up former industrial contaminated sites
18 which costs millions of dollars to do.

23.16

19 To me, the most attractive feature of
20 the plan is that they are going to
21 build 4,600 parking spaces downtown.
22 Ten years ago I rented a small
23 office space in downtown Yonkers.
24 After six months I had to move
25 somewhere else because parking was

23.19

23.19

24

2 always a problem.

3 Secondly, they are going to open
4 up Saw Mill River Road. There will be
5 restaurants around it. In addition,
6 there will be 5,300 permanent jobs,
7 13,000 construction jobs after the
8 project is completed, and prior will
9 pay two hundred million dollars in
10 wages in a year.

11 Thirteen acres of contaminated
12 land will be cleaned up. There will be
13 significant improvements to the
14 downtown local water and sewer systems.

15 Given all these benefits, I would
16 urge the City Council to approve the
17 project as soon as possible. Thank
18 you.

19 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
20 much.

21 Next.

22 MS. DEIERLEIN: Ann Miller, then
23 Walter Lipscomb and Ron Salvatore.

24 MS. MILLER: Good evening, Council
25 members.

MR. LESNICK: Pull it down a

25

2 little bit. That's it.

3 MS. MILLER: I have some specific
4 questions about the mall and the
5 ballpark. The first thing, well, first
6 I wanted to say I support the scale
7 model being requested by Councilwoman
8 McDow.

9 My questions about the ballpark
10 and the mall are, first of all, it is
11 going to be 60 story buildings built on
12 top of an 11 story podium.

13 We have to talk about the safety
14 of those buildings. Is there an
15 evacuation plan? Who's going to pay
16 for additional fire equipment,
17 modernized trucks?

18 The other thing is, how is the
19 city going to be receiving-- how soon
20 will the city be receiving property
21 taxes to pay for additional services?
22 And specifically what additional city
23 services are going to be needed to deal
24 with 60 story high buildings?

25 Finally, the mall owners typically

2 lease space to retailers. Is there any
3 way to guarantee that the money that is
4 going to be paid to these employees is
5 going to be a living wage and is going
6 to benefit Yonkers residents? That's
7 it. Thank you.

8 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
much.

9 The next speaker-- just a note, the
10 speaker asked questions. These are
11 questions that will be answered by the
12 council when we respond. That is the
13 whole purpose of this hearing.

14 Actually that was very good. That is
15 the first person that actually
16 commented on the DEIS asking specific
17 questions, so I encourage more people
18 to do the same.

19 MR. LIPSCOMB: My name is Walter
20 Lipscomb. I am a member of the
21 Community Voices Heard, okay. We are
22 representing 2,000 people in the
23 downtown Yonkers community, okay.

24 We understand the improvements.
25 Everything is all good, okay, but we

2 are concerned with those that are, you
3 know, the handicapped, the elderly,
4 okay, low income people.

5 You got down here for affordable
6 housing, out of all the units, you are
7 going to give us six percent affordable
8 housing, that is people making \$50,000
9 or whatever. That is not someone who
10 is on Social Services, not no one who
11 is on social security. That is not
12 anybody who is handicapped. That is
13 affordable housing for everybody making
14 \$50,000 or better.

15 I got a job making \$24,000 a year.
16 I can't move there. That is not enough
17 for affordable housing. That is low
18 income housing, all right. So, I mean,
19 six percent, build three hundred units,
20 if you do three hundred units, six
21 percent, you do the math, you are
22 talking about 30 units, that is
23 affordable housing, so everybody else
24 has to be making \$75,000, \$100,000 a
25 year to move in and buy it, okay.

2 You may have heard real quick no
3 real reasons being made for affordable
4 housing. Six percent of affordable
5 housing, no provision is being made for
6 the low income housing. No provision
7 is being made for handicapped and
8 senior citizens, okay. There is
9 nothing in here.

10 Your whole plan, buildings and
11 everything is all beautiful, what about
12 the people who already live there?
13 People who already live there are low
14 income. Nothing in here is for the
15 people that live there, okay.

16 So my question to you is, what
17 about the people that live here? What
18 are we going to give them? Where do we
19 live? We get to move, get to watch
20 everything come up, watch the prices
21 soar. What happens to the people that
22 already live there? Thank you.

23 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
much.

24 MS. DEIERLEIN: Ron Salvatore and
25 then Fred Buhler and Michelle Jacobs.

2 MR. LESNICK: We would encourage
3 the people that are the second and
4 third people to certainly move up to
5 the front so we don't have to have
6 delay while you are coming up to speak.

7 MR. SALVATORE: Good evening,
8 Council members and residents of
9 Yonkers. My name is Ron Salvatore. I
10 was born and raised in New York, in
11 Yonkers, and I was an Allstate agent
12 for a little over 35 years, and I have
13 seen a lot of these proposals made and
14 promises made, and I really believe in
15 Yonkers, and sometimes looking at what
16 has happened in White Plains and New
17 Rochelle, and we have so much more here
18 that should be offered to the City of
19 Yonkers.

20 We will have additional revenue.
21 I don't want to repeat. They all took
22 my speech, but in a nutshell, I think
23 that we should seize on this proposal
24 and get it done as quickly as possible.

25 The revenues that we are going to

29.21

2 get will pay for all of those extras
3 that are required, I am sure. Thank
4 you for your time.

5 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
much.

6 Mr. Buhler.

7 MR. BUHLER: Hello, I am Fred
8 Buhler. I've lived in Yonkers for
9 about 40 years, and you have a huge
10 beautiful big project in front of you,
11 and as you can see, I am on crutches.
12 Why? I have a project in the back of
13 my house. Yes, it was an active
14 project, fix the rail, fix the landing,
15 fix the step, fix everything. I
16 didn't.

30.17

17 Let's not put Yonkers on crutches,
18 and one more thing, please vote in the
19 affirmative now. There is no second
20 chance. It is now. Thank you.

21 MR. LESNICK: Before we call the
22 next speaker, I just want to remind
23 everybody that Patricia McDow, the
24 co-chair of real estate had arranged at
25 our first meeting for a spanish

2 translator, and at the second meeting,
3 Rich Marmalea of my staff is doing
4 translating in the back. If there is
5 anyone who needs spanish translation ,
6 see Rich in the back. He is right
7 here.

8 Anybody need spanish translation?
9 If you do, reach out and find Rich.

10 MS. JACOBS: I would like to thank
11 the City Council for this public
12 hearing and for the opportunity to let
13 the citizens of Yonkers voice their
14 various opinions and concerns.

15 That said, I would like to appeal
16 to the City Council to take a sensible
17 slow look at the SFC and other
18 development plans.

31.19

19 Most of Yonkers is entirely
20 unaware of what is being proposed, and
21 as people find out, they are appalled.
22 Many are frightened at the magnitude of
23 change that would result from these
24 projects and a hasty going forth with
25 them.

2 I would also like to point out
3 that as you know, the developers have
4 millions of dollars with which to
5 advertise and further spread their
6 propaganda. I am merely a citizen, 18
7 years in the city that I love.

8 The developers don't care about
9 Yonkers, they care about making money
10 off of Yonkers. We the citizens, your
11 constituents are left to try and seek
12 out the information and to understand
13 what is being proposed, and I fear many
14 are naive, and I fear that many haven't
15 read four thousand pages of an
16 Environmental Impact Statement. It
17 appears on a web site.

18 How many of our elderly have
19 access to that web site? How many of
20 them even know this is happening? And
21 who paid for that Environmental Impact
22 Statement? The very people who seek to
23 profit from it, the developers.

24 Now, it seems to me that someone
25 being paid for something tries to

2 please the party who's paying, so
3 already we are working from a biased
4 document.

5 Why, then, is Yonkers being led by
6 the developers? Why aren't we coming
7 up with a plan and telling them what to
8 do?

33.9

9 I applaud and endorse Councilwoman
10 McDow's request for a 3D rendering to
11 scale the entire downtown and
12 waterfront, because I feel certain that
13 the people of Yonkers, even some of
14 those who currently think this is a
15 good idea, would be horrified if they
16 could actually see what an 11 story
17 mall with a ball field and two 50 story
18 towers on top of it looks like. Do we
19 really want a structure that is over
20 600 feet sticking up over the seven
21 hills of Yonkers? Do people realize
22 how far it could be seen and how ugly
23 it would look and how out of context it
24 is with the city? To put it in
25 prospective, that is double the height

33.9

2 of Park Hill which it flanks.
 3 My family came to Yonkers to
 4 escape tall buildings, not to live in
 5 their shadows.
 6 Regarding the DEIS which is what
 7 we are here to speak about, there are
 8 many questions that I think the City
 9 Council must address before beginning
 10 any consideration of this project.

34.11

11 Some of those questions are, what is
 12 the sale price of all the public
 13 properties, the Chicken Island Mall,
 14 parcels H and I, the part next to the
 15 police station.

34.16

16 Given the parkland alienation swap
 17 provided by New York State law, why
 18 aren't we negotiating so that SFC
 19 contributes properties to the downtown
 20 open spaces parkland needs of the city
 21 such as dedicating H and I to parkland.

34.22

22 The current building plans for the
 23 Chicken Island mall contemplate using
 24 every square inch of the property
 25 except for the area around the

34.22

2 daylighting Saw Mill River.
 3 Why is there no additional open
 4 space besides a small space for
 5 restaurants near the river, we believe
 6 more of a stream than a river,
 7 according to the proposed plans.

35.8

8 Why is it the plans, or most of
 9 the plans show the bottoms of the
 10 buildings? We've never seen them in
 11 the context of what is actually here.

35.12

12 Why isn't the City Council
 13 negotiating a real park downtown? New
 14 York City only allows Trump to build
 15 his enormous residential towers along
 16 the West Side Highway after he agreed
 17 to a 28 acre public park. Why are we
 18 not requiring similar quid pro quo?
 19 Why do we need this much additional
 20 space, shopping space, when we already
 21 have the Cross County Mall and the
 22 malls on Central Avenue and will soon
 23 have Ridge Hill?

35.24

24 Why are we rushing into this when
 25 Ridge Hill has yet to be completed and

2 prove itself? What will the ball field
3 be used for in addition to baseball,
4 and will people really want to live
5 adjacent to a structure that is a
6 source of that kind of noise?

7 I know there are many people who
8 want to be heard, and I can tell you
9 that I personally represent many who
10 could not be here tonight but they are
11 deeply deeply concerned.

12 I ask you, do not sell out
13 Yonkers. This is a wonderful city
14 because it has retained its historical
15 context and small town quality. Please
16 do not take the gracious out of living
17 in Yonkers. Thank you.

18 MR. LESNICK: Thank you. Our next
19 speaker.

20 MS. DEIERLEIN: Deane Provty,
21 Barrymore Scherer, Reverend Jesse
22 Brown, Carmen Gomez Goldberg and
23 Anthony Leo.

24 MR. PROVTY: Good evening. I
25 moved to Yonkers about six years ago

2 from the city after living there for 16
3 years, really to get out of the city
4 and to get into a neighborhood that was
5 much more like the area that I grew up
6 with on Cape Cod, and I have a lot of
7 problems with the proposal that we have
8 before us about developing downtown,
9 most specifically to have to deal with

10 taxes, and I would like to see a
11 specific breakdown of the cost, the
12 infrastructure costs that would be
13 covered by the TIFP bond, sewer
14 upgrades, roads, parking structures on
15 a parcel by parcel basis, on a street
16 by street basis, and specifically which
17 streets will be affected by the new
18 separated storm sewers and what the
19 costs will be.

20 These costs keep running up and up
21 and we are giving away tax dollars.
22 The revenues that I see are on the
23 riverfront that are being given away,
24 the incentives that are given to the
25 developers, we are not going to get

37.10

37.16

2 that money back.

3 Explain exactly how the proposed
4 number of parking spaces was arrived
5 at, how many for residential units, how
6 many for retail and restaurant
7 basically for this Phase I proposal.

8 How many parking spaces for the
9 ballpark? How many spaces for just the
10 ballpark, and how do we get the access
11 for that? How many parking spaces
12 would be cut from the project if we
13 don't do the ballpark and what the
14 differences are between the two.

15 Who is going to pay for the
16 utility upgrades, electric and water to
17 the project? What is the anticipated
18 cost of the specific upgrades? How are
19 the taxpayers going to be dealt with

20 with these situations? Will the SFC
21 projects receive tax abatements from
22 the Yonkers IDA? And if so, what type
23 of abatements? Mortgage tax, sales
24 tax, tax exemptions, pilots, et cetera.

25 What is the yearly dollar amount

38.3

38.15

38.20

2 of abatements and the exemptions
3 expected to be? Is it anticipated the
4 city make up the lost revenue through
5 the sales tax? Will the SFC project
6 apply for Empire Zone and Federal
7 Empowerment Zone Tax Credits, and if
8 so, what are the yearly dollar amounts?
9 None of this has been put forward in
10 any kind of concrete way.

11 Will the River Park Center and the
12 Hudson River Esplanade Park be public
13 or private property? That is a big
14 concern for a lot of people in Yonkers.

15 Who will dictate the use of the
16 open space? And will there be a charge
17 for using these areas for community
18 events?

19 What are the anticipated costs of
20 administering, maintaining and
21 providing security for these areas,
22 police, fire and rescue?

23 What is the target consumer market
24 and estimated new sales tax revenue
25 from the retail at Chicken Island? Can

38.20

39.11

39.19

39.23

2 you provide us with an analysis of how
3 this retail will or will not affect tax
4 revenues from other commercial areas in
5 Yonkers like Cross County, Central
6 Avenue and Ridge Hill. Thank you.

7 MR. LESNICK: Thank you.

8 MS. DEIERLEIN: Mr. Sherer.

9 MR. SHERER: I would like to say
10 at the outset of these comments that
11 after the deeply positive experience of
12 working with the members of the City
13 Council, all the members on the
14 creation of the Phillips Manor Hall
15 Historic District, I feel a sense of
16 confidence that when the Council asks
17 for reasonable and informed public
18 input on a proposal, they are not just
19 going through the motions.

20 On the contrary, our Council
21 members are genuinely interested in
22 what we have to say, and ready to take
23 our ideas seriously, so thank you for
24 this opportunity to speak.

25 As a Yonkers resident of 18 years,

2 I feel that Yonkers downtown is ripe
3 for development, but smart development.
4 However fine the Mayor's motives, he
5 and the developers are simply rushing
6 headlong into this unbelievably massive
7 set of building projects.
8 Unfortunately this process is putting
9 the cart before the horse.

10 Why has there been at the start an
11 agreement with the developers that
12 gives them and not the city the right
13 to call the shots? We didn't elect the
14 developers.

15 There is no reason why Yonkers
16 should hand over its destiny to one
17 developer or to a consortium of
18 developers. If we are planning
19 modernization, our watchword should be
20 caution, not haste. Put on the brakes.

21 All we hear is talk of 25 stories,
22 30, 40, 50 story towers along the
23 river, not to mention the Chicken
24 Island two 50-story towers to be built
25 on top of an eleven-story shopping

2 mall. That is 61 stories. That's
3 roughly 650 feet high.

42.4

4 The hills that give Yonkers its
5 tremendous character are around 300 or
6 350 feet above sea level. These towers
7 would be twice as high as those hills,
8 which means they would be visible not
9 just from downtown but from Cross
10 County and other distant points.

11 It's one thing to look at the
12 distant Manhattan skyline from the
13 heights of Dunwoodie golf course. It
14 would be another thing for us to have
15 skyscrapers looming right in our faces
16 and casting long shadows across our
17 streets.

42.18

18 Considering that Yonkers is part
19 of a county-long greenbelt, these
20 looming towers threaten to be an
21 ecological disaster. Think of all the
22 flocks of migrating birds that will die
23 when they crash into the sides of these
24 buildings. Think of looking out your
25 window and seeing birds crashing into

42.18

2 them.

43.3

3 Before we take one step further
4 toward bricks and mortar, we should
5 demand, as Councilwoman McDow has
6 demanded, that the city be given a
7 complete three-dimensional model, built
8 to scale, showing the entire proposed
9 downtown, and the waterfront and the
10 surrounding areas.

11 In context, this will enable

12 Yonkers citizens to get a realistic
13 idea of the sheer size and height of
14 these buildings. And when they do, I
15 can assure you, they will not be happy
16 because they have not been shown the

43.17

17 truth yet, and eleven stories of a
18 shopping mall? I realize four stories
19 will be devoted to parking, but that's
20 still seven stories of shopping.

21 This, in addition to Ridge Hill,
22 which has only begun construction? And
23 in addition to the expanded Cross
24 County Mall. Just seven stories? The
25 Westchester mall is only four stories.

43.17

2 Even if we were not in a worldwide
3 economic downturn, just what kind of
4 shopaholics is Yonkers expecting to
5 attract? We already have an example of
6 this kind of planning gone completely
7 wrong. Look at New Rock City. What
8 has it produced? A hangout.

9 Last year the hangers out got
10 bored and rioted there. Is this what
11 we want to plan for the downtown?

12 And speaking of shopping, what is
13 planned for this additional giant mall
14 topped by a ballpark and two looming
15 towers: Sacks Fifth Avenue and
16 Nordstrom or Target and 99 cent
17 stories.

44.18

18 Do you think the people who want
19 to shop at Nordstrom would want to shop
20 under a ballpark with several thousand
21 sports fans and their litter? Who is
22 going collect this litter and let alone
23 pay for its collection?

44.24

24 As far as the residential element
25 of these building projects goes, we are

44.24

2 in recession, yet this plan calls for
3 an enormous volume of housing stock for
4 which there is no guaranteed market.

5 All these future residents, where
6 on earth are they supposed to come
7 from? And what they if don't come?
8 What do we do then? And even if they
9 do come, we are being told that these
10 new residents and their taxes will go
11 to supporting our schools, but who is
12 to pay for all the infrastructure
13 needed to support these new residents,
14 the new roads, sewers, energy, police
15 and fire? The developers won't pay for
16 it. We will have to pay for it.

17 Where will they go to school, all
18 these children of the new residents?
19 Will Yonkers need to pay for building
20 another school or two? And will
21 Yonkers have to coin its own money to
22 do so?

45.23

23 The TIFP dream just is a way of
24 saddling Yonkers with another crippling
25 debt. Would you buy those bonds? That

2 is why you have to put on the brakes.

46.3

3 We already have the accepted
4 Master Plan at 1998, which called for a
5 very different kind offer development,
6 much lower in height, much more
7 sympathetic to Yonkers attractive
8 character.

9 The City Council is being asked to
10 amend that master plan in this DEIS.
11 And the Council does have the power to
12 refuse to do so. Use that power of
13 refusal. Proceed with caution. Think
14 not just development, but smart
15 development, and one final idea.

46.16

16 The Chicken Island development
17 calls for expansion of the footprint to
18 include territory from New Main Street
19 to Palisade Avenue.

20 Instead of turning this into an
21 absurd shopping hangout/ballpark,
22 traffic nightmare, what about turning
23 this central piece of land into Yonkers
24 own State University campus? That way,
25 smart development could contribute to

2 generations of smart graduates. Thank
3 you.

4 MS. DEIERLEIN: Reverend Jessie
5 Brown?

6 MR. BROWN: I have the very
7 distinct honor to present to you
8 Reverend Jessie Brown in the person of
9 Ms. Julie Weiner, who is the Executive
10 Secretary of the SUNY, Council of
11 SUNY

12 Yonkers, thank you very much, and
13 hopefully to let you know also is that
14 we want to be provided within the
15 written period, additional comments.
16 Thank you.

17 MR. LESNICK: You only get five
18 minutes between the two of you, you are
19 down to four.

20 MS. WEINER: Julie Weiner, the
21 interim Executive Director for of the
22 Council for SUNY Yonkers. Thanks,
23 Reverend Brown, thank you, City Council
24 and members and President.

25 The Council for SUNY Yonkers Board
has asked me to make the following

2 statement: At a recent public
 3 presentation, SFC mentioned having
 4 incorporated into its proposal
 5 suggestions from the public, including
 6 the suggestion of reserving space for a
 7 potential four-year SUNY college of
 8 technology.

9 The possibility of siting such a
 10 technology college in the proposed Elm
 11 Street and Palisade Avenue office space
 12 is mentioned in the appendix of the
 13 DEIS, and the conceptual development
 14 plan quote "Suggests the location of a
 15 State University of New York school of
 16 technology in Yonkers to develop the
 17 next generation of skilled labor as
 18 well as to provide continuing
 19 education, opportunities for the
 20 existing work force."

21 This suggestion originally came
 22 from the Council for SUNY Yonkers, a
 23 community group interested in
 24 facilitating the establishment of
 25 Yonkers by SUNY of a college of applied

2 science and technology.

3 Our vision is that the
 4 establishment of such an institution
 5 will have a substantial impact on both
 6 the level of education of the residents
 7 of Yonkers and the lower Hudson Valley
 8 and on the region's economy.

9 The technological education it
 10 will give the work force and
 11 technical-- and underpinnings it will
 12 provide for the economy will allow
 13 Yonkers to retake its place as a
 14 creative force in the discovery and
 15 manufacture of the knew and perhaps yet
 16 unimagined technologies of the future.

17 As Yonkers residents, we are the
 18 creators of the Otis Elevator break
 19 that led to the establishment of the
 20 skyscraper and the modern city, FM
 21 radio that led to the place of the
 22 United States in the center of the
 23 world music, and Baker Lite,(Ph) the
 24 first plastic. All these Yonkers
 25 inventors revolutionized and reshaped

2 our entire world. Yonkers did that.
3 Yonkers will do it again.

4 Of immediate interest to the
5 developers, once the college is
6 established, around it will grow
7 economic institutions to serve the
8 students, faculty and staff. This will
9 have economic benefits for the whole
10 community, but especially for the
11 developers who rent space to such
12 enterprises. It will attract more
13 businesses and a higher level of
14 employment.

15 According to the SUNY web site,
16 investment in education provides a
17 seven hundred to eight hundred percent
18 return in terms of economic growth.

19 In short, a SUNY college of
20 technology and applied sciences will be
21 an anchor institution and the crowning
22 jewel of the SFC project, but there is
23 a missing dimension in the DEIS
24 description.

25 Left out of the document is an
50.25

2 answer to the question of what the
3 developers are willing to contribute to
4 ensure that such a college is
5 established here.

6 The Council for SUNY Yonkers would
7 like to see in the Final Environmental
8 Impact Statement, evidence of
9 willingness to contribute to assure
10 that SUNY cannot refuse Yonkers
11 invitation.

12 The Council for SUNY Yonkers urges
13 the offer by the developers of a ten
14 year rent free allocation of space for
15 such a college. This would enable the
16 federal and state governments to make
17 the kind of substantial investment and
18 appropriate technical and staffing
19 requirements to upgrade the work force
20 of Yonkers in the Hudson Valley that is
21 long over due.

22 We encourage the developers, and
23 their respective foundations such as
24 Cappelli Foundation, to be the creative
25 force in the development-- in the

2 leadership development of the State
3 University of New York in Yonkers.

4 This project will give the City of
5 Yonkers, the Hudson Valley's most
6 populous culturally diverse crossroads
7 city, the opportunity to show what a
8 key role the region's largest city can
9 play in the economic development of the
10 region as a whole.

11 Such a commitment would allow the
12 developers to express their commitment
13 to their highest potential as in their
14 proposed role as Yonkers leading
15 corporate citizen. Thanks.

16 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
much.

17 Before the clerk calls the next
18 speaker, I just want to point out that
19 Vinnie Spano is in the back in the
20 hall. He is expecting written
21 comments. You can write them
22 informally on a piece of paper and hand
23 them to it.

24 We are at speaker 18 out of 80.
25 If we continue at this pace, it will be

2 three and a half hours. If everyone
3 speaks five minutes, it is five hours,
4 so please go ahead.

5 MS. DEIERLEIN: Carmen Gomez
6 Goldberg to be followed by Anthony Leo,
7 Ginger Keys, Barbara Howard and Vernon
8 Brinkley.

9 MS. GOLDBERG: Good evening,
10 everyone. I have been a longstanding
11 resident of Yonkers and I never coming
12 in and speaking to City Council, but
13 the reason that I am here today is
14 because I believe in this project. I
15 believe in this project because I am a
16 mother of five and grandmother of five.

17 My children were all raised and
18 educated in Yonkers. Most of all, I am
19 a latino woman, and this project
20 impacts my community the most. I am
21 also the President of the Yonkers
22 Hispanic Federation of Chamber.

23 This project means jobs, jobs
24 means opportunity, and I am asking City
25 Council that yes, we do elect you into

53.23

2 office to make the correct decision and
3 the right decision for us.

4 Let's keep Yonkers moving forward
5 and please let's allow this project in.

6 Thank you very much.

7 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
much.

8 Would the next five speakers, come up.

9 MS. DEIERLEIN: Anthony Leo is
10 next, then Ginger Keys and Barbara
11 Howard.

12 MR. LEO: Good evening, City
13 Council. I was born and raised in
14 Yonkers. We played in Chicken Island
15 when we were kids. My father had
16 pizzerias in Yonkers on North Broadway.
17 We have seen Otis Elevator leave, 20
18 South Broadway empty out, Saunders
19 leave, the majority of the businesses
20 leave the downtown area.

54.21

21 If anyone things a ballpark and
22 the stores are eyesores. They should
23 see Chicken Island. Go there a half
24 hour after dark and see people
25 urinating there and all sorts of

54.21

2 activities.

3 This is from the bottom of my
4 heart, we need this done. We have
5 proven developers here that proved
6 themselves in White Plains, New
7 Rochelle and all throughout this state,
8 Boston, Texas. I think it should be
9 done now, lets build it now. Thank
10 you.

11 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
much.

12 Ginger Keys.

13 MS. KEYS: Good evening.

14 MR. LESNICK: Push the mike down
15 a
16 little bit.

17 MS. KEYS: I was always told I had
18 a big mouth, so I didn't think I had to
19 move it.

20 Good evening, Council members. I
21 found the ariel photograph of the
22 project area, I had it on my computer.

23 Now, tonight I am really here
24 about my church. Mount Carmel Church
25 has been here in Yonkers for 116 years,
and when I look at that ariel picture

2 and saw how that little small square is
 3 where our church is going to be on
 4 Yonkers Avenue, I got very upset with
 5 the program, and I am ready for you to
 6 do the development. I don't mind the
 7 development coming in, but I think you
 8 have to take into consideration the
 9 church, an Afro-American church that
 10 has been here for 116 years should not
 11 be played with, because that is the man
 12 upstairs, and he is not going to allow
 13 it, so look at that plan. Bring in
 14 that small scale so we can see where my
 15 church, Mount Carmel is going to be
 16 when all this River Park Center is
 17 being built. Thank you.

56.6

18 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
 much,

19 Barbara Howard with pictures?

20 MS. HOWARD: Thank you, Council
 21 members for this opportunity. Good
 22 evening.

23 Yes, let's improve the Yonkers
 24 downtown and let's not drag our feet,
 25 but let's just check out a few details.

2 I wanted to talk about tonight a couple
 3 of topics, not everything, just a
 4 couple of things on zoning, storm water
 5 management, a couple of other things.

6 You know, zoning should be based
 7 on a deep rooted philosophy and not
 8 mathematical calculation or builders
 9 break-even analysis. Lots of lawsuits
 10 emanate from this and the world has a
 11 lot of wars going on because land
 12 disputes.

57.13

13 To have a land use that is fair
 14 and would minimize a lot of anguish out
 15 there, but the request for zoning
 16 amendments by SFC are major changes
 17 that don't project any kind of holistic
 18 approach or philosophy, and therefore
 19 not balanced.

20 Moreover, a lot of the assumptions
 21 in the plan, there are assertions and
 22 the data are erroneous and misleading.

23 We have heard about the 90 percent
 24 build-out. They want to change the lot
 25 coverage from 90 percent to a hundred

57.24

57.24

2 percent. That means there will be no
3 more setbacks from these buildings that
4 could be right next to each other. How
5 do you service buildings without
6 trampling on the public easement with
7 that?

8 Setbacks have always been an
9 integral part of the zoning plan for
10 safety and many other reasons.

58.11

11 The request to change in River
12 Park Center and the Cacace Center to
13 allow for a height change as previously
14 recommended, to put ten stories on top
15 of-- change from being ten stories to
16 50 stories which is on top of that 11
17 story podium, and whatever roof
18 appurtenances that would accommodate
19 architectural trends, there is no urban
20 planning rational for that, and I dare
21 say there is no real vision.

58.22

22 The DEIS refers to a Map Six and
23 patterns and cites a recommended FAR of
24 6.4, and a gross residential density of
25 205 units per acre respectively.

58.22

2 In this plan there is actually a
3 range, and the range goes from 1.6 FAR
4 to 6.4 FAR, and 51 units to 205 units
5 per acre. SFC only used the highest
6 end of that range, but even at that
7 they misstate the proposed density.

8 If you look at it this way, they
9 have 950 units they are proposing at
10 River Park Center in those two
11 buildings. That is 475 per, like ten
12 units to a floor at 1200 feet each
13 gives you 12,000 square feet per floor,
14 and that's going to be on a hundred
15 percent build-out lot of 12,000 feet,
16 so that means you have a FAR of one per
17 floor. That means you have a FAR of 50
18 and not six as stated in the report,
19 all right.

20 It also -- that is a pretty high
21 FAR, six to begin with but it's not
22 six, it's 50. They spread it out over
23 the ten acres or something.

24 Also you are getting a gross
25 residential density of 1,900 units per

58.22

2 acre, not the 72 that they are
3 suggesting in their report.

60.4

4 By approving this amendment, you
5 are also going to allow as many 50
6 story buildings that can possibly fit
7 on this ten acres without sinking,
8 because it is not per owner and it's
9 not per parcel, it's for the whole ten
10 acres.

60.11

11 Let's not forget about the
12 sweeping zoning change proposed for
13 Palisades Point, and I will quote, "No
14 use or dimensional regulations of the
15 Zoning Ordinance applies to a PUR.
16 Whatever is built shall be considered
17 to be conforming under all provisions.
18 You can see that on page 3A-22. It is
19 kind of hard to find a redeeming
20 philosophy in that kind of proposal.
21 No zoning will apply to what is built
22 on parcels H and I. We don't need
23 zoning if you go for that. I might
24 have to give it.

25 Now I am going to move on to our

2 least favorite topic, storm water
3 management. We learned in a meeting in
4 municipal operations with engineering
5 that most of the flooding problems that
6 we have seen in Yonkers come from our
7 own doing, not global warming.

61.8

8 The DEIS repeatedly suggests the
9 highly plausible conclusion that storm
10 water runoff from all these new
11 buildings is not going to contribute to
12 storm water problems and flooding, and
13 they are not planning any mitigation or
14 detention whatsoever. They are just
15 going to carry the water and put it
16 into the Hudson.

17 I mean, it's negligent to accept a
18 convenient calculations that lead the
19 applicant to conclude the discharge
20 into the Saw Mill don't need any flood
21 bank control, so there are many other
22 things too.

23 The turf field, we brought that up
24 before. It has not been responded to.
25 That is not a pervious surface.

2 Whether it's a natural turf or a
3 synthetic turf, the water has to go
4 somewhere.

5 It's eleven stories up in the air,
6 so they are not mitigating it. We are
7 on the hook for all the infrastructure.
8 We don't know --

9 MR. LESNICK: If you can put the
10 rest in writing, we would appreciate
11 it. You are over the five minutes.

12 MS. HOWARD: I just want to show
13 you one thing, if I may. I brought
14 these pictures.

15 We altered the course. You have
16 to think about the calculations.

17 Parcels H and I --

18 MR. LESNICK: Okay.

19 MS. HOWARD: H and I are in the
20 floodway. They are in the floodway.
21 The only permitted use is a lawn.

22 MR. LESNICK: The City Council
23 will be having a series of working
24 meetings next Tuesday that we will be
25 talking about affordable housing and

2 infrastructure. We will once again
3 have a discussion where some of these
4 issues on floods will be thoroughly
5 vetted in the leisure of going back and
6 forth but not for this meeting, but we
7 do respect your comments, and anything
8 more, submit in writing.

9 MS. DEIERLEIN: If I can call the
10 next group so they can get ready.
11 Gavin Kearney. Marla Hurban. Kelly
12 Chiarella and Pat Puleo and Mike
13 Ramondeli.

14 Mr. Brinkley.

15 MR. BRINKLEY: Thank you. Good
16 evening, City Council. Excuse me. I
17 am sorry. I am just going to take a
18 couple of minutes here to just say that
19 I represent, I am getting over a cold

20 here, I represent the Yonkers Alliance
21 for Community Benefits, and what we
22 are, what we have been saying all along
23 is yes, Yonkers needs development
24 badly. Yonkers needs a lot of things
25 very badly, but what the DEIS is not

2 really specific on, things like the
3 numbers. I mean, specific numbers of
4 jobs, commitments, not, you know,
5 numbers that are kind of made up.

6 We want to see that the
7 development is done right, that the
8 people that live here now, that live in
9 the affected area are the ones that are
10 also able to benefit and not people
11 from outside New York City and all of
12 that, so in closing, we just wanted to
13 be clear, we are not against the
14 project unless these things aren't done
15 properly and these questions aren't
16 being addressed. Thank you.

17 MS. DEIERLEIN: Mr. Carney.

18 THE WITNESS: Good evening,
19 members of the Council and thanks for
20 the opportunity to comment on the DEIS.

21 My name is Gavin Carney. I am an
22 attorney with New York Lawyers for the
23 Public Interest. Together with the law
24 firm of Millbank Tweed we represent the
25 Yonkers Alliance for Community

2 Benefits.

3 We are still in the process of
4 reviewing that fairly voluminous DEIS
5 and we intend to submit written
6 comments, but we wanted to take the
7 opportunity to provide some brief
8 testimony on the draft environmental
9 impact statement.

10 The Yonkers Alliance for Community
11 Benefits is a coalition of residents
12 and community based organizations from
13 Yonkers that believe that this project
14 has great potential for the city, but
15 as Vernon Brinkley just testified, we
16 think it's a matter not just of if the
17 development happens, we think it's a
18 matter of how the development happens.

19 There are a number of areas of
20 concern for our coalition, and in
21 particular there are some areas in
22 which we believe that the DEIS does not
23 perform the requisite hard look at
24 potential impacts of the project, and
25 does not fully consider ways to

2 minimize or avoid significant impacts.

3 I will just touch on a few of
4 those and we'll address them in more
5 detail in our written comments.

66.6

6 As a general matter we are
7 concerned that the DEIS does not
8 account for the cumulative impacts of
9 this and other major redevelopment
10 projects that are currently
11 contemplated by the City of Yonkers,
12 and we think that this omission has
13 affects on a number of the impacts
14 detailed in the DEIS and a number of
15 the impacts that I will discuss
16 tonight.
17 Specific areas of concern include
18 the social and neighborhood impacts of
19 the development. While the DEIS
20 generally acknowledges that
21 gentrification may result from the
22 development, we do not think that it
23 adequately evaluates the potential
24 impact of the development on the
25 affordability of nearby housing, and on

2 the potential displacement of residents
3 in the study area and in Yonkers beyond
4 the study area.

66.6

5 In terms of mitigation of these
6 effects, we also believe that the DEIS
7 improperly relies on incomplete
8 neighborhood housing plans that may or
9 may not come to fruition in the future.

67.5

10 In addition, we believe that the
11 affordable housing proposed as part of
12 the projet is insufficient to offset
13 the displacement that it will cause.

67.10

14 Another area of concern for our
15 coalition is impacts generated by the
16 scale of the development. A number of
17 folks testifying tonight have

18 identified some of these. These are
19 impacts in terms of aesthetics, in
20 terms of shadows, in terms of community
21 character.

67.18

22 We believe that the development
23 creates impacts for which the DEIS does
24 not fully count in this regard and we
25 also believe there are alternative

2 actions that meets beyond those
3 described in the DEIS and should more
4 effectively address these impacts.

5 We are also concerned about the
6 potential impact of this development on
7 local services, particularly in light
8 of the project's significant reliance
9 on tax increment financing.

10 One area of particular concern is
11 the potential impact of this project on
12 the local school system, and we believe
13 that the DEIS underestimates this
14 impact.

15 As a general matter, we also think
16 that many of the mitigation measures
17 and benefits described in the DEIS
18 lacks sufficient detail. Of particular
19 concern to our coalition is the lack of
20 detail with respect to the affordable
21 housing to be provided in the
22 development and/or supported by the
23 development over the short and long
24 term.

25 The number and quality of jobs

2 that will be made available to Yonkers
3 residents during and after
4 construction, and measures that will be
5 taken to ensure that they go to local
6 residents over the short and long term
7 is another area where we think the DEIS
8 is insufficiently detailed.

9 We also think that there is
10 insufficient detail with respect to the
11 support that will be provided to ensure
12 that local businesses benefit from --
13 sorry, I am trying to speed it along,
14 support that will be provided to ensure
15 that local businesses benefit from and
16 are not displaced by the development
17 over the short and long term.

18 As I said we'll address these and
19 other matters more fully in our written
20 comments, and we look forward to
21 working with the city, the City Council
22 and the developer to address these
23 concerns. Thank you.

24 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
25 much.

If you have written comments, you can

2 hand them in. If not, later.

3 MS. DEIERLEIN: Marla Hurban and
4 then Kelly Chiarella.

5 MS. HURBAN: Good evening,
Council

6 members. My name is Marla Hurban. I
7 have a few things I want to say about
8 the project, and I know that studying a
9 four thousand page document is
10 certainly no easy feat, and we are
11 going to leave it to you and the
12 attorneys to do what is in our best
13 interests as far as finding what is
14 missing, because I am certainly no
15 engineer, but as a city resident,
16 somebody who lived here now for almost
17 17 years, we are on the cusp, we are on
18 the cusp of becoming really a wonderful
19 city that can take care of ourselves,
20 and it scares me when I see a project
21 come in of this magnitude and the
22 public gets a little bit put off by the
23 whole process because they don't
24 understand it, not because you are not
25 doing what you are supposed to be

2 doing, but because they don't
3 understand it, and a lot of people come
4 to these public hearings tonight as
5 they do because they think they can put
6 in their opinions how high it should
7 be, how wide it should.

8 It's my understanding until you
9 actually accept the DEIS we can't
10 really comment on many of these items
11 that people would like to be
12 discussing, and whether or not that is
13 true, there is a lot of
14 misunderstanding.

15 I know when we talk about master
16 plans and we talk about, you know,
17 environmental impact study statements,
18 what does it all mean to the average
19 person? And they are getting a little
20 bit lost in all of this, so as you go
21 through the next part of this process,
22 I ask you to please think about how you
23 make it simple for the simple people to
24 understand.

25 I love to see this project go

2 through as quickly as we humanly can.
3 I think the financial state of the
4 country, of the world leaves us at a
5 really bad place if we don't move
6 forward.

7 The City of Yonkers for the first
8 year was able to do a little bit of
9 bargaining to cover all of its
10 expenses, and I understand from the
11 meetings that we had discussing the
12 budget next year is a drop dead year,
13 and if we don't do something to change
14 things, it's going to be over. I hate
15 to see us think like that. I hate to
16 see us go forward like that.

17 I think that this project will
18 bring hope. I think this project will
19 bring jobs. I think this project will
20 bring housing, and I think that this
21 project is something sorely needed down
22 in the city, so I guess what we would
23 like to know is how we help you move
24 the project along, how we don't wait
25 until financially it's impossible for

2 this project to go forward, and we
3 don't want it to drag out so that it
4 becomes a bad scene for everybody as it
5 did with Ridge Hill.

6 I think that if you can make it a
7 little bit more easy for regular people
8 to understand what your questions are,
9 then the whole process will be able to
10 move a little bit faster.

11 I personally would love to city a
12 ball stadium. I know we don't have
13 enough stadiums or fields down here at
14 all. We need shopping in the downtown.
15 I work in the downtown. There is no
16 where to go and nothing to do, and if
17 we want people to move up here and live
18 in all this development that we are
19 doing, we have to provide the basics
20 for them. We have to provide shopping.
21 We have to provide entertainment for
22 them, and for somebody who rather come
23 over on the west side and look at the
24 river once in a while, we need a little
25 more destinations, so I hope you move

2 this along as quickly as possible.

3 MR. LESNICK: Our next speaker.

4 MS. DEIERLEIN: Kelly Chiarella
5 then Pat Puleo and Mike Romandelli.

6 MS. CHIARELLA: Good evening,
7 Council members. Very quickly, as an
8 advocate for our children I would like
9 to speak in favor of the SFC program--
10 project, excuse me. The obvious
11 revenues and monies that Yonkers will
12 benefit will be able to eventually help
13 our annual deficit problems. We will
14 finally be able to stop depending on
15 the state to take care of our children.

16 Our school system has suffered way
17 too long waiting for the funding to be
18 fixed, and as a third generation
19 Yonkers resident, I personally am very
20 excited about all of the new projects
21 that are happening in our city.

22 The waterfront is not a place that
23 I felt comfortable frequenting in a
24 very, very long time. The new
25 development will allow us to showcase

2 Yonkers as the wonderfully culturally
3 diverse economically sound invigorating
4 city that many people want to visit.
5 Thank you.

6 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
much?

7 MR. ROMANDELLI: Good evening.
8 Thank you for your attention. I
9 appreciate the awards that you gave out
10 to the people in our schools who make
11 our schools matter. The teachers I
12 know, and I am sure CSCA all
13 appreciated it very much.

14 I rarely get involved in this type
15 of situation. I am here for budgets.
16 I am here for many crises, rarely does
17 the teachers union extend itself, but I
18 have spent the last couple of days
19 working with our elected officials
20 trying to see if we could do more for
21 education.

22 I know that we have lost federal
23 funds. Our Title One funds are down,
24 not ours alone, but certainly it hurts
25 us when we are in such a tight budget.

2 I spent the day in Albany. I know
3 that higher education is taking a
4 sincere hit. The SUNY schools are
5 facing a three and a half percent cut
6 along with every other state government
7 department, and that means that's going
8 to affect their tuition. That means
9 their tuitions are going to go up and
10 it's going to hurt, so when we talk
11 about wanting to put a SUNY school in
12 downtown Yonkers, that is wonderful,
13 but not if we can't fund it, not if we
14 can't get funding from the Federal
15 Government, not if we can't get
16 additional funding from the state
17 government.

18 At some point, as I stand here and
19 I say to you we need a budget and we
20 need the budget that is before you
21 because our kids need an education, we
22 also have to get ourselves out of the
23 hole. We are in a hole.

24 We are standing in a school that I
25 work in. I can tell you where the

2 water leaks. I can take you to a
3 beautiful room and you will look out
4 over Yonkers and you will have a
5 beautiful view of Yonkers, and you will
6 be able to take your hand and put it
7 outside and touch the outside brick
8 because it's falling down.

9 We are in desperate state. We
10 have not, you have tried but we have
11 not been adding enough funds to our
12 schools to hold them together. The
13 roof leaks. The water comes in. The
14 windows are shaking. The windows are
15 cracked. There is water coming up from
16 the floors.

17 I am sorry, I am sorry that I
18 can't tell you about how the wonderful
19 kids who show up in class every day and
20 who aren't getting an education are
21 also watching as it crumbles around us.

22 This is reality. Reality is the
23 Federal Government and the State
24 Government isn't going to help, isn't
25 going to get us out of the hole that we

2 are in.

3 Now, what do we do? We have to
4 solve the problem. We need to have
5 development so it brings additional
6 funds. You need to make sure that you
7 do your job and make sure that the
8 residents who are here tonight, their
9 concerns are addressed. There seems to
10 me that there can be both. There can
11 be development and there can be the
12 concerns of the people who elected you
13 to make sure that their needs are met
14 as well.

15 Tonight one of the few things that
16 certainly struck me heart was a comment
17 from a local community person about a
18 church, Mount Carmel, and how that
19 church, that over a hundred year old
20 church will be impacted. It reminded
21 me of Trinity Church in lower Manhattan
22 on that terrible day on 9/11 when the
23 buildings were falling.

24 The church remained. I think you
25 can build the buildings tall and make

2 sure that that beacon of that church
3 remains so that the community can still
4 have it.

5 You can assist the schools meet
6 the needs of the community, build the
7 buildings and keep the church there. I
8 know that it's a hell of a job, it's a
9 hell of a God damn job you have in
10 front of you, but if you don't get it
11 done, if the buildings aren't built,
12 then we will not be able to dig
13 ourselves out of the hole, the
14 financial hole that your students need,
15 that your residents need.

16 They need this. They need their
17 garbage picked up. They need their
18 police. They need their fire. They
19 need a place to send their kids to
20 school that meets the needs so that
21 they can go to at least state college
22 and not go to Harvard. God, I don't
23 know why we are not trying for that,
24 but we are not going to do it unless
25 you go forward with the development.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
4 much.

4 You made reference to our State
5 Legislators. Andrea Stewart Cousins
6 and aid Chris Johnson are in the
7 audience and I wanted to acknowledge
8 them.

9 Who is our next speaker?

10 MS. DEIERLEIN: Our next speaker
11 is Mike Romandelli, to be followed by
12 Robert Volino and Justin Tubiolo,
13 Dennis Shepherd and Margaret
14 Sotterholm.

15 Mr. Romandelli. Mike Romandelli?
16 Ronald Volino?

17 MR. VOLINO: City Council
18 President and distinguished members of
19 the Council. The Yonkers renaissance
20 began about ten years ago and we need
21 this project for it to continue.

22 I have been a Yonkers resident all
23 of my life and I saw the city have its
24 ups and its downs. This project will
25 stimulate the local economy, create

2 jobs and lift the west side out of an
3 economic slump that it's in.

4 It will bring residents from all
5 over the city to the banks of the
6 Hudson that is the crown jewel of the
7 city.

8 I have been wanting to see a
9 project like this happen for many, many
10 years, and it makes me sick every time
11 I take the Bronx River Parkway north, I
12 get off at exit 21. At the light, Main
13 Street, I make a right and I look right
14 at the buildings. I look at White
15 Plains and I always say to myself why
16 can't this be my city? Why can't my
17 city look thick this?

18 Back here we have some men in
19 white t-shirts that say in red
20 lettering the future is now. Let's
21 seize the moment and make sure the
22 future does not pass us by. Thank you
23 very much.

24 MS. DEIERLEIN: Justin Tubiolo,
25 then Dennis Shepherd.

2 MR. TUBIOLO: Mr. President,
3 distinguished members of the Council,
4 thank you very much for giving us this
5 opportunity to speak tonight.

6 My name is Justin Tubiolo. I am a
7 long time resident of the City of
8 Yonkers and member and past president
9 of the Hyatt Association, one of the
10 largest associations in the City of
11 Yonkers.

12 I want to thank our Councilman
13 McLoughlin for taking many many calls
14 over the years. When we heard about
15 this project we got involved in the
16 very beginning. We didn't sit on our
17 duffs and our hands. We made sure we
18 had questions to answers, or answers to
19 questions.

20 I want to thank the people at
21 Struever Fidelco Cappelli for answering
22 our questions and making presentations
23 for us, to make sure our people knew
24 what was going on. Again, this started
25 a number of years ago and now it's time

2 to act.

3 Currently our national regional
4 economies are in a downturn which will
5 negatively affect the wages and
6 property values of our city. Ladies
7 and gentlemen, we are in a recession.

8 In a recent article from the Home
9 News and Times dated April 25th, our
10 Mayor Amicone is quoted as saying, and
11 I will quote, "There is a way to you
12 achieve fiscal stability and ensure
13 that Yonkers continues to become the
14 great city we all know it can be."

15 This project has all the key
16 ingredients of this economic times and
17 things that we desperately need. First
18 and foremost, the long needed jobs it
19 will bring to our residents.

20 We are a City of proud hard
21 working people. The more jobs we have
22 right here, the better it will boost
23 our own economy. This project will
24 help our small businesses, will bring
25 vitality to Yonkers.

2 Second, it will bring additional
3 taxes to Yonkers. We are in serious
4 need of additional revenues for our
5 school children, our seniors and our
6 property owners.

7 Third, bringing credible park land
8 to our city. This also is a right for
9 our children, our seniors and all of
10 our residents in business. Everyone
11 can enjoy the outdoors while
12 experiencing the beautiful Hudson in a
13 clean and safe downtown.

14 Fourth, it will clean up acres of
15 contaminated land which no one
16 mentioned tonight. This would be cost
17 effective to the city and will do such
18 for our environment.

19 Fifth, it will give Yonkers it's
20 own ballpark. This will be a great
21 source of entertainment and again
22 revenue.

23 Six, it will give our downtown a
24 brand new state of the art fire
25 station, our city, our firefighters,

2 and most importantly, our residents
3 need this. Our citizens deserve it to
4 feel perfectly safe at all times.

5 Jobs. Union apprentice programs,
6 the delineation of tax burdens, nature,
7 environment and entertainment. Keeping
8 our unions strong. We're a city that
9 is moving in the right direction. We
10 are a city with a vision. We are a
11 city on the verge of a renaissance. We
12 are a city that has a perfect blend for
13 the development for our waterfront. We
14 are a city that needs our Council do
15 the right thing. The time is now.

16 Please move forward. Build a
17 great future, and that future starts
18 right now, ladies and gentlemen, and we
19 represent 1,500 households in the
20 southeast part of Yonkers, and like I
21 said, we have not been involved in the
22 last month or two, we have been
23 involved in the last several years.

24 Thank you very much.

25 MR. LESNICK: Thank you, Justin.

2 Dennis.

3 MR. SHEPHERD: Good evening, City
4 Council. We are in a school tonight so
5 I guess you are the student Council
6 tonight.

7 Dennis Shepherd. I am President
8 of the Hyatt Association which Justin
9 spoke about. This is nothing new. I
10 have been up here before and we have
11 talked about this developer, and that
12 Chicken Little fear that people have I
13 can understand it, but they have done
14 this before. They have done this.

15 If you go on their web sites you
16 see how successful they are, and they
17 are able to conquer all the problems
18 that everybody brought up.

19 If you go down to the other parts
20 of the United States. I have been to
21 Lancaster Pennsylvania. They have a
22 minor league ballpark there. I have
23 been there, it's great. You get
24 families out, they see. I have been to
25 Bedford New Hampshire, minor league

2 ballpark up there. Been to that
3 ballpark. It's been successful up
4 there. People come out and see it.

5 If you don't do this project, this
6 is something that nobody has brought
7 up, Council, you segregate the city if
8 you don't do this. How do you
9 secretary gate the city if you don't do
10 this project?

11 Well, other people that don't live
12 on the west side don't come to the west
13 side now, they have a fear, and there
14 is no reason to come, but we have
15 started to develop the west side, and
16 you know what, people from other parts
17 of the city are starting to come to the
18 west side.

19 I lived in the southeast section
20 since 1984 and I have only visited the
21 west side the last couple of years
22 because it's economically viable, it's
23 safe to do and we are moving forward.

24 You got to continue this project
25 so you bring the city together. You

2 bring the revenue and you bring the
3 psyche of the city together.

4 You have all parts of the city
5 saying hey, the west side is
6 successful, we want to go there, we
7 want to be a part of all Yonkers. You
8 all represent the total Yonkers. Let's
9 make it a total piece that works
10 together. Thank you.

11 MR. LESNICK: After Margaret who
12 are the next group of speakers?

13 MS. DEIERLEIN: Gus Nathan, Nan
14 Beer, Terry Joshi and Steve Sansone and
15 Kevin Gorman.

16 MR. NATHAN: Okay, a couple of
17 things I want to say. I won't take up
18 my five minutes, but I want to say how
19 proud I am of all of you because this
20 has been very difficult from the
21 beginning.

22 I have been at the very first
23 meeting over two years ago and you have
24 really stuck with it and you are going
25 to make the whole city very proud, and

2 Yonkers will become such a fabulous
3 place and you will have made it happen.
4 It's something, a real -- it's
5 something remarkable for your careers
6 as public servants.

7 Now, when I look at the draft DEIS
8 there was nothing about anything green,
9 anything efficient for energy and now
10 the difference is huge. There is quite
11 a bit of attention to these issues in
12 the draft right now, and there is also
13 reference to SUNY and also the Prospect
14 Bridge. There is so many things
15 because why? Because they were
16 listening. They were out there with
17 all these forums and they were
18 listening. They were working very hard
19 and listening mand yes, they did invest
20 money for publicity for this.

21 Someone called it propaganda.
22 Yonkers gets the worst kind of press,
23 everyone knows about it and thank God
24 there is a private group spending money
25 to promote all the benefits that can

2 come here and the potential here.

3 This is a fantastic balance. This
4 is a great investment. I don't think
5 anyone should be slamming that.

6 Also, the things that they have
7 done have been voluntary. No one has
8 demanded you must do this, you must do
9 that. It's been voluntary. Why?

10 Because these people have honor and
11 they love this city.

12 I heard someone tonight say they
13 don't care about Yonkers. I found that
14 to be an outrageous statement. Two of
15 the three developers were born and
16 raised here. They are very proud of
17 this city. They love this city. They
18 know this city well and they want to
19 work with you, and I think they have
20 definitely proven themselves, so I
21 think some comments tonight from
22 professional critics I think should be
23 set aside.

24 Now, I also heard that some people
25 want to escape, you know, the city and

2 come to Yonkers. There is a lot of
3 people who want to escape Yonkers
4 because of some downward trends that we
5 have had, but we are turning it around.
6 We are absolutely turning it around.

7 The youth does want to escape,
8 right now they escape into gangs, but
9 if we do this development and give them
10 opportunity and give them hope and give
11 them dreams, they would want to stay,
12 they would have something to do, so in
13 terms of gang prevention, development
14 is all about that. It's giving our
15 youth a future and a reason to stay.

16 And now I heard one thing that has
17 hurt my heart. There is only one thing
18 in all of this that has hurt my heart
19 and it happened at the last meeting. I
20 felt very burdened and I felt, you
21 know, to come back with a solution, and
22 this is one reason why I have a strong
23 relationship with Pat McDow, is that
24 she prefers to have someone
25 representing her who comes up with

2 solutions and who is not always coming
3 up with attacks and criticisms.

4 I felt very hurt when I heard one
5 person after another get up at the last
6 hearing saying that they felt they were
7 getting pushed out of Yonkers, and one
8 lady even sat here keys down.

9 I felt so sad about this, and I
10 feel that it would be correct to have a
11 task force to address this issue, and
12 perhaps those real estate officials and
13 so on can be part of the task force, so
14 when people have to be relocated, that
15 they are given great honor in this
16 process and respect and care and
17 support.

18 I have been part of this process
19 when people have been displaced for big
20 disasters in Yonkers where hundreds
21 needed help to relocate, and I saw a
22 task force put together for this and we
23 came through for every last person who
24 was struggling. This is because of a
25 disaster.

2 Now here we have a great
3 opportunity, and we have this stress
4 where people feel they are going to be
5 displaced. We have to step up and take
6 care of these people. No one should
7 have a broken heart because great
8 opportunity is coming around. Everyone
9 should feel part of it and we should
10 help everyone involved.

11 I would like to volunteer to be on
12 that task force and I hope it's going
13 to be creative, something like that, to
14 be ready and to act and to serve.

15 So one last thing about tall
16 buildings. People come and they rally
17 against tall buildings. Something has
18 to be said in support of tall buildings
19 because every minute, every minute this
20 country loses one acre of land due to
21 sprawl, due to urban sprawl. That is
22 for schools, roads and whatnot, one
23 acre every minute.

24 The solution for that is to
25 redevelop, take land that has already

2 been developed as we are doing now. We
 3 are redeveloping now and yes, increase
 4 density in clusters that we are doing
 5 now, tall buildings, because then you
 6 reduce sprawl, you reverse it. It's in
 7 the minus, so this is a very mature
 8 plan. It's environmentally sound and I
 9 think we are going forward. Thank you.

10 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
 much,

11 and I still have the keys from the
 12 woman who left them here last week if
 13 she wants them back.

14 MS. DEIERLEIN: Mr. Nathan still
 15 here? Nan Beer and then Terry Joshi,
 16 Steve Sansone and Kevin Gorman.

17 MS. BEER: Good evening. My name
 18 is Nan Beer. I am a resident of
 19 Southwest Yonkers in Councilmember
 20 Annabi's District.

21 I would like to start talking
 22 about the scenic environment. The DEIS
 23 states that the riverfront and the
 24 Palisades are the premier environmental
 25 asset of the downtown area.

2 Obviously we are proposing a huge
 3 change there. The developer proposes
 4 to mitigate whatever scenic damage
 5 there might be with the concept of view
 6 corridors. I don't think we really
 7 know what that looks like. Even some
 8 of the developer's renderings are
 9 truncated. We don't really see what
 10 the whole picture looks like.

11 I hope the Council will get behind
 12 Councilmember McDow's request for a
 3D
 13 model so we know what we are talking
 14 about. Certainly if you want to get a
 15 flavor of this you can go to the
 16 riverfront library and take a good look
 17 out at what used to be a really
 18 panoramic view of the river and the
 19 Palisades which is now in two pieces
 20 because there is a residential building
 21 in the center.

22 To my mind this is a case where
 23 two halves really do not make it a
 24 whole, but I urge you to see it
 25 yourself, but that is a done deal.

2 In terms of what is coming, let's
3 have a model. Let's see what this is
4 really going to look like in Yonkers.

5 On to traffic. The developer is
6 rightly proud of the green features
7 that will be incorporated in the
8 buildings, but when it comes to
9 traffic, we have something that is
10 hardly green. We are talking about
11 something like seven thousand
12 additional parking spaces in downtown
13 Yonkers.

14 I don't see any effort at putting
15 forth a mass transit plan that would
16 mitigate the kind of effects that we
17 get from traffic, whether it's smog,
18 whether it's noise, whether it's danger
19 to pedestrians or just people's blood
20 pressure rising as they get stuck in
21 traffic.

22 Measures have been proposed to
23 widen streets, to reroute the traffic
24 and that's fine as far as it goes, but
25 I suggest that this is no substitute

2 for a mass transit plan, and any
3 environmental impact statement should
4 incorporate a mass transit plan that
5 has been worked out in consultation
6 with the MTA or whoever else would have
7 a barring on mass transit in this area.

8 We are talking about five thousand
9 plus seats in the stadium. Any of
10 them, when it's over, everyone will be
11 leaving at the same time. They will
12 have come in their cars unless you have
13 presented them with a better
14 alternative. I don't just mean a
15 nobler alternative because that doesn't
16 get people out of their cars. I mean a
17 convenient mass transit option so
18 people don't feel that the car is
19 really the best way to get home at a
20 reasonable hour.

21 Affordable housing. The DEIS
22 suggests that there is going to be no
23 impact on low income housing that
24 currently exists in the area because
25 the number of high income residents

2 coming into the area will be small.

3 If you have looked at any
4 gentrified area you know that this is
5 simply not true, that a small number of
6 high income people demonstrates to
7 landlords that they could get a higher
8 return on their property if they could
9 upgrade the property, if they could
10 move lower income people out, whether
11 by higher rents or other means, and
12 then rent it at a higher amount, so
13 there needs to be-- this is a natural
14 development. It's happened in many
15 areas, so there needs to be proposed
16 mitigation.

17 You can't just say it's not going
18 to happen. It will happen, so let's
19 have a remedy incorporated into the
20 plan.

21 Finally, there is the economic
22 benefit, and obviously all the
23 residents of the city are hoping that
24 there will be an economic benefit from
25 this plan.

2 I am not certain that we have
3 enough information before us in the
4 DEIS to know if this is in fact the
5 reality. If we go ahead with the
6 proposed TIFP plan, 75 percent of the
7 incremented real estate taxes is
8 going-- let me just say one thing.

9 Everyone has talked about White
10 Plains. White Plains is increasing its
11 sale tax by a quarter of a percent
12 effective June 1st. Its property taxes
13 are going up by 4.9 percent, so if all
14 the development was such a great deal,
15 what happened there? And I urge the
16 Council to get an independent
17 consultant. Look at the numbers. Look
18 at the experience of other cities such
19 as White Plains. Thank you.

20 MS. DEIERLEIN: Terry Joshi.

21 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
22 much.

22 For those of you who don't know, Lamont
23 Blackstone is our independent
24 consultant who does our TIFP analysis,
25 and financial analysis. Raise your

2 hand Lamont. If anybody wants to talk
3 to him about the numbers, feel free
4 after tonight.

5 MS. DEIERLEIN: After Terry will
6 be Steve Sansone.

7 MS. JOSHI: Thank you. It's
8 already a long night and we all
9 appreciate the opportunity to speak
10 before you today.

11 I just want to clarify, I think
12 that people here really ought
13 understand that this is the moment when
14 we are supposed to comment
15 substantively on the DEIS. It's not
16 something that is coming on later, this
17 is the moment. It's up until May 30th,
18 so anybody here who misunderstands
19 that, please consider the fact that
20 this is the time you are supposed to
21 read if you want to read the four
22 thousand pages and make your comments.

23 Also I got all these remarks, but
24 I think what we really all feel, at
25 least I feel, is that we are fighting

2 between two extremes here. We seem to
3 all think that either we have to leave
4 Chicken Island and everything else with
5 people urinating in the streets at
6 midnight, or we have to build an eleven
7 story mall with a ballpark at the top
8 and 50 story condos, and I think what
9 will eventually resolve itself after
10 all this conversation is somewhere in
11 the middle in fact is a project that
12 will bring economic benefit to the
13 city, enhance its cultural life,
14 enhance the downtown, but doesn't have
15 to be just quite so big, and one of the
16 objects of studying the DEIS at this
17 point is to make a determination on
18 whether or not the project can be
19 somewhat scaled back, somewhat more in
20 proportion to what we have here in the
21 city architecturally, and in terms of
22 its topography, this isn't White Plains
23 where we have ample space for big wide
24 one-way four-lane streets.

25 We have-- we are constrained by

2 some very odd topography between the
3 river, the Metro North and the bluff,
4 and we really have to think about this
5 when we are building this, and now I am
6 going to go back to what I wrote which
7 is pointless because everybody else
8 said it, but I want to say SFC said
9 they have taken everything into
10 consideration over the last two years.

11 I want to hold up their crib sheet
12 and what it says here. The plan has
13 not been changed in the time period of
14 two years, and that is isn't completely
15 true because certain things have
16 changed. We have gone from two 30
17 story-- oh, one 30 story on H and I to
18 two 25 story buildings on H and I, the
19 mention of some amorphous green
20 building somewhere in the utility
21 section of the DEIS, and the promise of
22 some basically some rooms set aside in
23 the new office building for a school
24 for the college. That is not a very
25 big change in two years of listening to

2 the public, all of whom have been
3 giving many substantive comments
4 already while they have been attending
5 the SFC presentations which I attended
6 a lot, and I just want to say that
7 there are some things that are
8 unsatisfactory in this DEIS which
9 referred back to the scoping document
10 which is what it is based on, what it
11 is supposed to address.

12 I haven't read the whole thing
13 yet, but I can tell you that some of
14 the unsatisfactory responses include
15 that there is a very limited
16 description of planned environmentally
17 sound building practices that was
18 requested on page 20 of the scope.

19 There is an insufficient
20 exploration of the storm water
21 management solutions, as Barbara
Howard

22 pointed out. There is a serious lack
23 of open space for the public, and by
24 that I mean green space, not paved
25 space.

2 In terms of the new downtown
3 population numbers that are going to be
4 coming in, much less the fact that the
5 southwest quarter of the City is
6 already underserved in terms of park
7 land.

8 Six percent of high-end
9 residential units, somehow the number
10 was translated to 63, I am not sure
11 how, for affordable or low income
12 housing is not very much.

13 We have a ballpark that everyone
14 from the Mayor on down acknowledges is
15 a lost leader, and my question to you
16 is okay, that is great, usually when a
17 store has a lost leader tries to make
18 up the money somewhere else and I'd
19 like to know how that is going to
20 happen.

21 None of these issues are addressed
22 in the parts of the DEIS that I have
23 read, maybe in the appendices
24 somewhere, but I do think I will go
25 back to what I started at the

2 beginning.

3 This is a philosophic discussion
4 at this point and a practical one. Are
5 we going to just veer between the noble
6 alternative and the full build-out
7 alternative? I mean, there are a lot
8 of very coherent minds sitting in this
9 room, seven of them up there and a
10 couple of attorneys in the back and the
11 consultants in the corner, and I do
12 think we can come to a better
13 compromise, and when you say on a crib
14 sheet, and I do like their crib sheet
15 that they have -- oh, God, I hate
16 getting cut off.

17 MR. LESNICK: But you have until
18 the 30th to give us more written.
19 Thank you.

20 MS. JOSHI: Don't worry, there
21 will be many more written comments to
22 come.

23 MR. LESNICK: Steve Sansone.

24 MR. SANSONE: Good evening,
25 Council President Lesnick, members of

2 the City Council. I will be brief. I
3 know you have a lot of speakers.

4 I am Steve Sansone here as
5 Executive Director of the Yonkers
6 Downtown Waterfront Bid. My family
7 came to Yonkers in 1904, and we are
8 still here. I am a life-long resident
9 with a tremendous love for this great
10 city and very excited about what
11 already exists in the downtown, what is
12 currently happening in the downtown,
13 and how the downtown will move
forward
14 due to good vision and with input from
15 our citizens.

16 Specific to the DEIS just two
17 items. Number one, I would ask that
18 there be a more detailed analysis on
19 the impacts to the Downtown Bid, not
20 financially, but as to how enhanced
21 services will need to be increased or
22 decreased. And two, in Section 3-J
23 pages 15 and 16, which is the Yonkers
24 Downtown Waterfront Bid, this entire
25 section needs updating and a few

2 corrections made. I'd recommend
3 redoing this entire section.

4 I would be remiss if I did not
5 point out that the efforts of these
6 developers to reach out and connect
7 with the community has been like none
8 other that I have seen in my
9 involvement with this City, and I hope
10 that this can be a template for any
11 future developers that may come to
12 Yonkers.

13 Let's talk about the pulse of the
14 downtown as I see it. There is much
15 anticipation and excitement in the Bid
16 District, but there is just two much
17 uncertainty, and this uncertainty does
18 not help business, nor does it provide
19 a clear message to our property owners
20 and businesses as to what direction
21 they should be heading, especially
22 those who may be seeking financing or
23 even to potential investors in the
24 downtown.

25 We have the original pioneers in

2 our downtown, many of which have been
3 there for decades full of history and
4 traditions. Many anticipate with
5 excitement more foot traffic, the
6 possibility of expanding their
7 businesses or altering some of their
8 services to accommodate new shoppers
9 and dinners, and most importantly
10 looking forward to repairs to our aging
11 infrastructure.

12 The collapse on Buena Vista Avenue
13 and the one recently on North Broadway
14 sent a clear message. Our downtown
15 infrastructure needs to be dealt with
16 very soon. Many of these existing
17 businesses are looking for new
18 opportunities within the downtown.
19 Others want assurances that they will
20 be included in the downtown's future.

21 Then we have the new pioneers,
22 many of which you heard at the last
23 hearing that came here within the past
24 three or four years with nervous energy
25 and excitement, but many are struggling

2 and cannot hold out any longer.

3 Many have invested their life
4 savings hoping to reap the benefits of
5 a promised revitalized downtown. All
6 of these pioneers want a clear message
7 as to where we are going with our
8 downtown, one which will assist
9 everyone.

10 It is up to all of you on the City
11 Council to send this message, and while
12 it is understood you have to do your
13 due diligence to address legitimate
14 concerns, your message needs to be sent
15 very soon.

16 The businesses and the property
17 owners are waiting. We don't want to
18 lose the excitement, and I caution that
19 while it is important that we improve
20 and revitalize our downtown, realize
21 there are businesses, residents,
22 artists and customers that are already
23 there, and there are existing and new
24 shops and restaurants and great
25 entertainment. The reputations of

2 these businesses should not be
3 diminished at the expense of what is
4 coming. They make their livelihood of
5 the existing downtown, and they wait in
6 anticipation to be the welcome wagon
7 for the new.

8 The Bid looks forward to
9 supporting everyone during this
10 transition. Let the excitement
11 continue in Yonkers, and thank you for
12 the time and effort you have and will
13 be spending on this proposal.

14 MS. DEIERLEIN: Kevin Gorman.
15 After Kevin we have John Larkin, then
16 Richard Fitzgerald.

17 MR. GORMAN: Thank you, Council
18 President Lesnick and the City Council
19 members.

20 Again, like many others tonight, I
21 appreciate all that you are putting
22 into this. It is certainly a lot of
23 work, and I would not want to be in
24 your seat, believe me.

25 With that said, I also have to

2 agree with Council President Lesnick
3 regarding the purpose of the DEIS
4 hearing. Contrary to the Mayor's
5 official web site announcement, this
6 meeting was not called by the City
7 Council as a call for advocacy. This
8 certainly is a call for questions,
9 sharing, discussing fact finding,
10 basically democracy in action.

11 I am a little surprised and maybe
12 even dismayed that the Council as a
13 whole has not at least made a formal
14 objection to the way the Mayor altered
15 the business of tonight in his
16 announcement on the city web site.

17 He called for advocacy. That is
18 their violation of the Constitution of
19 the United States and a violation of
20 the executive branch of government
21 interfering with the legislative
22 branch, especially with interfering
23 with your stated business for tonight.

24 With that said, I would like to
25 move on with the issues tonight. As I

2 said the last time, you know, the prime
3 purpose of any government is the
4 health, safety and welfare, that is
5 always a topic of mine. Of course that
6 is what EIS is all about.

7 One of the issues which I saw in
8 the -- much of the EIS that I looked at
9 is the question of air quality. I
10 question, you know, has this EIS taken
11 into account the fact that the USEPA
12 has found that our region is in the top
13 15 percent of areas in the United
14 States for the worst quality air.

15 Your plans, the way the EIS-- I
16 read it, will increase that problem, so
17 I hope that you will take a good look
18 at that and really determine whether
19 that would be a greater adverse impact,
20 especially, you know, the question I
21 would ask, and I am not being kidding
22 about this, we will we be facing
23 congestion pricing in downtown Yonkers
24 in the future.

25 With that said, I would like to

2 move on to something more important and
3 more immediate, at least, to everybody
4 in this city, money.

5 The -- again, welfare is one of
6 the points to look for. Economic
7 welfare, of course, is the most
8 important thing when you are talking
9 about all the residents of your city,
10 whether wealthy, middle class, lower
11 class. Today's economy, we are all
12 feeling the sane pinch, some more than
13 others.

14 The question here is whether we
15 can afford the increased cost. The
16 increased cost and need for revenues
17 could be resulting in greater taxes.

18 The discussion at last week's
19 budget committee hearing regarding real
20 estate tax assessments and reassessing
21 property of course has one part having
22 to do with the formula they talk about,
23 but the other part, let's face it, you
24 have to find other sources of revenue.

25 You will need more money to meet your

2 general, expenses especially in the
3 immediate few years. I am not talking
4 long term down the road when this
5 project will produce income, yes, what
6 will happen now?

7 Will you be forcing homeowners,
8 parent, families to tighten up on their
9 budget by far more than they are now,
10 because next year you are going to have
11 to increase the taxes again.

12 Current proposed budget, you
13 reflect almost 21 percent of your
14 revenues is 21 percent of this is
15 special revenues. That is like the
16 income tax surcharge that was supposed
17 to be temporary. That is like that
18 special tax on mortgages that was
19 supposed to be temporary. This year
20 we've increased both those taxes. We
21 will be increasing them again.

22 Will real estate assessments
23 increase the cost to the average person
24 today who can hardly pay for that cost?
25 They are feeling the bite, they really

2 are. I don't have to tell you that.

3 So the question I put to you is in
4 the short term, will this cost the
5 public more money than they have right
6 now? Will they be able to afford it,
7 or will you have to be more realistic
8 about your plans?

9 I am not saying development is not
10 a good idea, it certainly is, but the
11 question is, what will be the impact on
12 the general welfare in terms of
13 dollars?

14 Some civic groups have said that,
15 you know, they advocate. They say they
16 represent large groups and numbers.
17 Well, the point is, I haven't seen a
18 civic group yet have a meeting of its
19 general membership where its general
20 membership issued an affirmation.

21 People take positions but don't
22 necessarily reflect their membership.
23 The membership may or may not agree.
24 The membership may have a different
25 story if you are told the facts as I

2 just said about taxes, about what the
3 need for revenue will be. These are
4 questions which really I hope you will
5 answer before you approve any further
6 action.

7 I am going to skip right over to
8 my questions about SFC. I noticed in
9 their new advertisements they make
10 claims of fact without substantiation.

11 One question I asked, and I hope
12 will be answered eventually in the EIS,
13 the City has needs for infrastructure
14 on the west side, of course, and the
15 TIFP will certainly go to that, but
16 what cost will there be in areas?

17 Southeast Yonkers is an area such
18 as that. Also, how many units of
19 affordable housing will be built and
20 where? And will the developer be asked
21 to foot more of the cost rather than
22 the City having to tax its citizens.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
much.

25 Again any comments that you haven't

2 said you can hand it to the gentleman.
3 Mr. Larkin.

4 MS. DEIERLEIN: Mr. Larkin and
5 then Richard Fitzgerald and Janice
6 Lubin Kirshner and Christopher Milano.

7 MR. LARKIN: Good evening Council
8 Members. My name is John Larkin. I am
9 here tonight representing the Nepera
10 Park - Grey Oaks Neighborhood
11 Association, an association in
12 northwest Yonkers, and with due respect
13 to Kevin, I would like to just explain
14 that neighborhood association, ours in
15 particular, has a Board of Directors.
16 Our Board of Directors are the ones
17 that vote. We represent the
18 neighborhood association as a whole, so
19 when we take a position on something,
20 we don't take it lightly, and we make
21 sure that the Board of Directors is
22 approving of what we are doing.

23 Very rear similar to the way we
24 elect seven people to our City Council
25 and you represent the City as a whole,

2 so I would like to offer my comments on
3 the proposed Struever, Fidelco Cappelli
4 Phase I development.

5 I was born and raised in Yonkers
6 and I have seen so many different
7 proposals for development of our
8 downtown that raised our hopes that our
9 downtown would begin to be rebuilt only
10 to fall by the wayside.

11 I know its been mentioned, but we
12 have seen White Plains reinvent
13 themselves and they have a prospering
14 downtown. New Rochelle is also on its
15 way, and here which sit in Yonkers, the
16 fourth largest City in New York State,
17 probably soon to be the third largest,
18 and we have not moved forward on our
19 development of the downtown.

20 This plan before you is one that
21 many of us have hoped for but dared to
22 dream. This proposal is unlike any
23 proposal we have ever seen before.

24 This project, if approved, will
25 forever change the image of Yonkers and

2 place us where we belong as a major
3 city in New York State.

4 Since this project is in three
5 components I would like to offer some
6 comments on the particulars of each.

7 The Palisades Point. This is a
8 site where two 25 story residential
9 towers have been proposed on the
10 waterfront. While some concerned
11 citizens would like the number of
12 stories reduced, I feel having a few
13 high-rise towers makes good business
14 sense not only for the developer, but
15 more importantly for the businesses
16 that have patiently been waiting for a
17 customer base for their businesses.

18 The key word is a few apartment
19 towers on the waterfront. I am just
20 going to mention I am not in favor of
21 that proposed 18 apartment towers
22 suggested by the Alexander Street
23 Master Plan. Hopefully that plan will
24 be rejected or redesigned as it's
25 unimaginative and can only be described

2 as a mini Co-Op City.

3 River Park Center. The concept of
4 combining residential, retail and the
5 ballpark in one development area has
6 changed my mind and our Board's mind
on
7 the original opposition to the ballpark
8 concept.

9 The original proposal, as I don't
10 think I will need to remind all of you,
11 is for building just a ballpark, and
12 building one that did not plan
13 adequately for parking.

14 You remember in that study they
15 were suggesting to you St. Joseph's
16 medical center and the Cacace Justice
17 Center for parking for this ball game,
18 not a way to bring people to the
19 downtown to spend their money.

20 With the proposal now
21 incorporating retail, residential,
22 restaurants, movie theaters, the foot
23 traffic will be created. The downtown
24 will come alive.

25 I do have concerns, though, about

2 the viability of that baseball league.
3 A New York Times article dated April
4 29, 2007 cited poor attendance at the
5 Bridgeport Bluefish games.

6 In ten years they have yet to make
7 a profit and, in fact the article
8 quoted Mr. McGregor as saying in 2006
9 they have lost \$500,000.

10 Since the rooftop ballpark is only
11 a small part of the proposed River Park
12 Center, it may be a gamble that we can
13 afford to take, but what I would like
14 to ask the City Council is, that you
15 take a good hard look at that part of
16 the proposal and ensure that the
17 taxpayers are not liable.

18 The Cacace Center. Our City needs
19 a hotel in the downtown area. Creating
20 new office space and with all this new
21 construction, a much needed fire
22 headquarters.

23 Daylighting of the Saw Mill. The
24 opening of the Saw Mill River to create
25 a riverwalk much like San Antonio or

2 Waterplace Park and Riverwalk in
3 Providence can only be a focal point of
4 the revitalization of the downtown.

5 This is an exciting concept that
6 will create more foot traffic to the
7 downtown, and would be an economic
8 boost to the retail businesses and
9 restaurants.

10 Please ensure, though, that the
11 money already earmarked for this effort
12 is used solely for the daylighting and
13 not for any other purpose.

14 Tax incremental financing.
15 According to the applicant, the present
16 areas surrounding River Park Center
17 generates property taxes of \$505,000.
18 The other properties generate no
19 property taxes.

20 Creating development will increase
21 the assessed value of the property,
22 which in turn should increase property
23 taxes. That is how it should work. I
24 will leave it up to you, our City
25 Council, to ensure that that is the

2 case.

3 Our downtown is our oldest area of
4 the city and the infrastructure is in
5 need of repair. To create this new
6 expanded development, we need to build
7 our infrastructure such as new roads,
8 sewers and water lines.

9 TIFP's has been successfully used
10 in other states. These infrastructure
11 costs will be financed with public
12 bonds and a percentage of the new
13 property taxes will be used to pay for
14 it. It seems to be an acceptable way
15 of enabling the City to update its old
16 infrastructure to handle the new
17 development.

18 Very short. Affordable housing.
19 The applicant is proposing six percent
20 of the residential units be designated
21 as affordable housing. Generally, when
22 a developer receives tax breaks and
23 incentives, the percentage of
24 affordable housing is earmarked at 20
25 percent.

2 The City Council should seek to
3 increase the percentage of affordable
4 housing to meet the needs of the
5 citizens, but do it within the project
6 area.

7 In closing, I applaud all of those
8 who have been an active part of this
9 developmental process. Even though we
10 may not agree on all facets of this
11 development, every voice should be
12 allowed to be heard.

13 I ask that the City Council not
14 let this opportunity pass for I fear
15 this is our last hurrah. But I want
16 you to be satisfied that all questions
17 have been answered, and that the best
18 possible deal is made for the taxpayers
19 of Yonkers.

20 I will end with the same statement
21 I opened with. This plan before you is
22 one that many of us have hoped for but
23 dared to dream. Let's make that dream
24 a reality. Thank you.

25 MR. LESNICK: Mr. Larkin, you want

2 to give your comments to the
3 stenographer, it will make it easier.

4 MR. FITZGERALD: Good evening,
5 Council President, Council members. My
6 name is Richard Fitzgerald and I am a
7 40 year west side resident of this
8 great city. I am a CEO of Sound
9 Associates located here in Yonkers. I
10 ALSO served as the Chairman of the
11 Board of the newly formed Yonkers
12 Partners in Education, an organization
13 created to bring private investment to
14 the Yonkers public schools.

15 I support the proposed SFC
16 development because I believe it will
17 be the most significant catalyst for
18 the revitalization of our downtown.

19 In addition to bringing economic
20 renewal to the City, I strongly believe
21 that this development will bring
22 significant benefits to the 25,000
23 children, including my grandchildren
24 who attend Yonkers public schools, the
25 eldest attending Yonkers High School.

2 I want to preface my comments by
3 my belief that any successful
4 development needs to happen in
5 partnership with the community.

6 SFC needs to work with community
7 organizations on an agreement
8 addressing the community needs that
9 will arise as a result of the
10 development, so this is truly a win win
11 project for everyone.

12 Such an agreement should include
13 generous endowments for the schools,
14 substantial affording housing and
15 grants to the arts, an agreement that
16 leaves the people of the community
17 feeling whole, will set an important
18 precedent for future developments, and
19 will resume in a community with a
20 unfilled vision.

21 First, the economic boon resulting
22 from the proposed development will
23 bring needed tax dollars to the City
24 that will be funneled into our school
25 district.

2 The current funding formula that
3 provides dollars from New York State to
4 our public schools have seriously
5 shortchanged our children, and leaves
6 the Yonkers public schools with serious
7 budget shortfalls every year. Tax
8 dollars generated from the SFC
9 development will help address these
10 gaps.

11 Second, the development will
12 provide after-school weekend and
summer

13 jobs for many of our high school
14 students, jobs that are currently in
15 short supply in our City.

16 Third. A downtown with a bustling
17 center of activity will bring a sense
18 of hope and optimism to children and
19 family in Yonkers who have lived in the
20 depressed inner city. The experience
21 of an economic boon will open eyes and
22 create a sense of what can be. This,
23 coupled with the job opportunities and
24 increased dollars for the schools, can
25 only be a tremendous lift for our city.

2 Yes, I believe we need to do due
3 diligence on infrastructure issues,
4 incorporate effective plans for traffic
5 control, consider appropriate
6 alternatives for displaced incumbents,
7 and limit the height of proposed
8 towers, especially on the waterfront.

9 At the same time we must remember
10 that a successful development needs to
11 be profitable. Profit is not a curse
12 word. Many of us seniors and future
13 pensioners, annuity and stockholders
14 with retirement expectations have our
15 future linked through financial
16 institutions to some of these projects
17 being proposed.

18 If the projects don't make money,
19 lending institutions don't make money,
20 the annuities don't make money, and our
21 financial future may be adversely
22 impaired.

23 I sincerely hope that we can keep
24 the rhetoric to a minimum. We must
25 bring to the debate serious questions

2 and intelligent observation, not
3 unsubstantiated allegations and
4 conjecture.

5 The future of our great city is in
6 our hands. Let the renaissance begin
7 now.

8 MS. DEIERLEIN: Our next speaker
9 is Janice Lubin Kirshner, then
10 Christopher Milano.

11 MS. KIRSCHNER: Hi. I am Janice
12 Lubin-Kirshner, Executive Director of
13 the Jewish Council of Yonkers, and we
14 bring a lot of services to the
15 residents of Yonkers enriching the
16 lives of hundreds of seniors, bringing
17 the generations together in our
18 mentoring programs, awarding over
19 \$15,000 in scholarships, and promoting
20 cultural diversity programs, and we are
21 in the downtown area all the time.

22 We are very excited about the
23 development and the use of the
24 waterfront, but I am also someone who
25 grew up in Yonkers. My father had a

2 store with my uncle on Main Street for
3 many years, and I spent a lot of time
4 in downtown Yonkers.

5 I can't tell you how important it
6 is to see this redevelopment in this
7 area. It is essential for the future
8 of Yonkers, the jobs, the activity and
9 the taxes. I recommend that you accept
10 the DEIS and move on to the next step
11 in the process.

12 I respect that you have a very big
13 job. I have not read the four thousand
14 pages of the plan, and that you have to
15 do due diligence. However, time is of
16 the essence, and my real concern is
17 that we don't let these opportunities
18 slip away, and we need this program.
19 Thank you.

20 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
much.

21 MS. DEIERLEIN: Christopher
22 Milano.

23 MR. MILANO: Thank you, Council
24 members, for allowing me to speak here
25 tonight. I have listened to people

2 come up here and tell you they have
3 lived here for 18 years and 20 years
4 and 30 years. Well, I feel kind of old
5 because I have lived here for 74 years.

6 I am going to speak very plain. I
7 don't have statistics, I don't have
8 numbers. What I am going to tell you
9 is, that as a small boy, I remember
10 going down to the city pier with my
11 dad, looking up on that pier and seeing
12 the City of Yonkers, population
13 250,000, and I was very proud of it.

14 I was very proud of the fact that
15 I was a member of this city. Getty
16 Square was the hub of Yonkers. There
17 was not a thing that a family needed
18 that you couldn't purchase in Getty
19 Square.

20 It was beautiful on the holidays.
21 If you go down there and look at it
22 now, it is deteriorating. It is
23 falling apart. It is unsafe.

24 Forty years ago a man had a
25 vision. He started refurbishing the

2 riverfront. It is beautiful down there
3 now. He has a new downtown Yonkers
4 project. This project will bring
5 13,000 new jobs, will bring in tax
6 revenue, a fire firehouse, will bring
7 in environmental. It will bring in
8 support for the small businesses.

9 I implore you to accept this and
10 to approve it. Thank you.

11 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
12 much.

13 MS. DEIERLEIN: Pat Gambardella.
14 After Pat, Thomas Carey.

15 MR. GAMBARDELLA: Council
16 members,

17 it's a pleasure speaking to you guys
18 tonight, and my thing is falling down
19 on me here.

20 I have been a lifelong resident of
21 Yonkers as several of the other people
22 here are, and our business is located
23 two and a half blocks south of the
24 proposed baseball stadium, Cappelli
25 project, and I can only say that I am
for this project.

I have been a critic of this

2 project from the very beginning seven
3 years ago when it was just a baseball
4 stadium and stores. I did a lot of
5 research, and in fact, one of the
6 gentleman brought it up, and I brought
7 it up at one of the earlier meetings
8 how the Bridgeport minor league stadium
9 was losing money.

10 I saw why it's losing money. It's
11 a stand-alone stadium with a few
12 stories right along 95. There is no
13 buildings, there is no nothing, there
14 is just a blob right there right on the
15 waterfront there in Bridgeport and
16 that's why.

17 I have gone to Newark to see
18 theirs and theirs does make money.
19 Practically every other minor league
20 baseball stadium does generate profit.

21 As far as the downtown goes, I
22 frequent it and I meet a lot of people
23 that go there. I go to the
24 restaurants. I go to the loft there
25 for fitness and I have a fantastic time

2 down there.

3 The majority of the people that I
4 meet down there that moved to Yonkers
5 and live on the waterfront are from
6 Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens and New
7 Jersey. They love living in Yonkers.
8 They love the area and they feel it has
9 so much more to offer, but it's not
10 there yet.

11 Transportation. We have the
12 transportation hub down there. We have
13 the Metro North Railroad, and we have
14 the buses that run-- that's the main
15 bus hub that runs all through
16 Westchester County, they will meet in
17 Yonkers by the train station, so as far
18 as transportation goes, I think we have
19 that covered.

20 Taxes. The influx of taxes
21 created by this project, granted in the
22 beginning we'll were not get any
23 property taxes, but the sales and
24 income taxes we do get will be badly
25 needed.

2 The last thing we need is the
3 State Financial Control Board to come
4 back into Yonkers and tell us how we
5 have to run our city, and if anybody
6 remembers how it was when they were
7 here last time, it was no picnic.

8 Limit the height of the buildings.
9 I do quite a bit of traveling on my
10 job. I go to Hobokin which is
11 phenomenal. The rebuilt downtown
12 Hobokin area with the buildings are
13 fantastic. They are limited to 20 to
14 25 stories. Granted it's a giant wall
15 along the waterfront with a riverwalk,
16 but the surrounding neighborhoods have
17 totally changed.

18 I have seen them 15, 20 years ago
19 as a run down ghetto, and they have
20 turned into a beautiful, I don't know,
21 urban suburban downtown area where
22 people want to live. In fact, they
23 closed down all of downtown Hobokin for
24 the St. Patrick's Day parade, which
25 goes to show you how much people want

2 to be there.

3 Between the new buildings and the
4 renovated old buildings, they renovated
5 a lot of old factories into loft
6 apartments which is just fantastic.

7 Tarrytown. Nobody wants the
8 downtown Yonkers to become another
9 Tarrytown where the developer got so
10 fed up with all the public opposition
11 and fighting among the council members
12 and the Mayor of Tarrytown, he just
13 pulled out, and now Tarrytown is left
14 with taxes and a giant concrete slab
15 where the GM factory once was with no
16 development planned anymore.

17 I did the baseball stadium. I
18 pretty much touched on everything I
19 wanted to talk about, other than the
20 fact that I enjoy going down to
21 downtown Yonkers, and I think this is a
22 fantastic opportunity for us, and there
23 is a lot of issues, and I am sure you
24 guys will work it out and a lot of
25 valid things, but one of the things, I

2 would like the community organizations
3 such as these coalition groups that
4 feel they are being left out, they are
5 being outpriced, they should work with
6 Mr. Cappelli and other developers that
7 are looking to come to the City, and
8 with the Nepperhan Community Center

and

9 Cluster, to develop a low income
10 housing project along the waterfront.

11 There is a lot of property there,
12 even between Warburton Avenue and
13 Ravine there is a lot of buildings that
14 could use renovation, that need to be
15 raised and redeveloped. These are
16 areas that these people who are looking
17 for low income housing could go, but
18 create their own development with the
19 developers that are looking to make
20 money here in Yonkers. Thank you.

21 MR. LESNICK: Thank you. Our next
22 speaker.

23 MS. DEIERLEIN: The next group of
24 speakers, Mr. President, Thomas Carey,
25 Peter Kregan, William Iannacelli. The

2 halfway point, Mr. President. John
3 Catagna

4 MR. CAREY: I am Thomas Carey.
5 Thank you very much. Mr. President and
6 members of the Council, I would like to
7 thank you first for this forum. I have
8 come to you people before. I represent
9 Local 21, plumbers and steam fitters.

10 We have nearly 1,600 members and we
11 cover Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess and
12 Ulster Counties, and I have said this
13 before, SFC is good development. I
14 believe the City of Yonkers needs it.

15 We have a lot of space in the
16 south western part of Yonkers that
17 could really use this development.

18 I am a boat owner. I go up and
19 down the Hudson. The only thing I
20 don't see in this project that I would
21 like to see is possibly some slips
22 where the boats can come in and pull up
23 to these stores and spend some money.

24 There is a lot of money out there
25 on the water. I see it all the time,

2 but for my members, you know, we are in
3 the grips of a recession right now, and
4 I believe this project could really
5 help out, not only the City of Yonkers,
6 but a lot of people that have good
7 jobs, and along with good development
8 comes good jobs, not just while the
9 project is going on, but afterwards.

10 You know, I believe the best thing
11 for an economy that we are in right now
12 is development because it produces so
13 many jobs, and once again SFC is good
14 development, and I thank you again for
15 your time.

16 MS. DEIERLEIN: Peter Kregan. Mr.
17 Kregan is not here. William
18 Iannacelli.

19 MR. IANNACELLI: Good evening,
20 everyone. My name is William
21 Iannacelli. I am the President of the
22 Sprain Lake Knolls Civic Association.

23 Yonkers is very fortunate to have
24 a waterfront property. Let's use it
25 wisely. The developers who want to

2 build on this property know the value
3 of this land, otherwise they would not
4 be proposing to build on it.

5 Let's not allow the developers to
6 do what Harbor City Ratner did to us on
7 the Ridge Hill project by not including
8 the taxpayers of Yonkers in the
9 planning of this project which still
10 has unresolved traffic issues, and has
11 to resolve some of the issues in the
12 court.

13 Let's not make this project too
14 dense which would make the downtown
15 area overcrowded and unhealthy.

16 Let's hold our developers feet to
17 the fire in order to get the most tax
18 dollars for our precious land without
19 the financial gimmicks that always
20 enter into the financing of these
21 projects.

22 We must get a decrease in our
23 taxes and not just a promise. This
24 City must be developed, and I
25 congratulate the Mayor on his

2 persistence to get it done, but where
3 is the beef? We need solid commitments
4 that these developments will lessen the
5 tax burden on the Yonkers residents.

6 I hope all the issues are resolved
7 before this project is approved and
8 completed. Thank you.

9 MS. DEIERLEIN: John Catania. Mr.
10 Catania is not here. Marco Trama Jr.?
11 Moving right along. Doctor Mary Lane,
12 then Jose Velez, Vincent Wilson and
13 Jorge Funes.

14 MS. LANE: Good evening, Mr.
15 Lesnick and the other members of the
16 Yonkers Council, I consider it a
17 distinct honor to speak to you tonight.

18 I am representing YTI, Youth
19 Theater Interactions. I happen to be
20 Chair of the Board, and for more than
21 30 years, YTI has instructed thousands
22 of children of Yonkers and other areas
23 of Westchester in the performing arts,
24 including drama, dance, voice, steel
25 band and other instruments free of

2 charge. We started all those many
3 years ago as an instrument to get kids
4 off the street after school.

5 I want to use YTI as an example
6 which illustrates a need. We are
7 asking that as part of the Yonkers
8 revitalization plan, that serious
9 thought be given to a modern state of
10 the art performance center.

11 We currently manage relatively
12 well in the instructional space that we
13 occupy, but what is missing and is
14 sorely needed is a performance venue,
15 whether for all school recitals,
16 concerts and dramatic presentations
17 through which our students talents are
18 shared within the community, or be it
19 special events in which we collaborate
20 with other artists and other
21 organizations.

22 What is needed is performance
23 space that is intended for the purpose
24 with appropriate lighting, with sound
25 and temperature control and with space

2 in the wings for costume and scene
3 changes, and something as basic as rest
4 rooms.

5 As it now stands, we either go out
6 of town for our annual recital, or we
7 use a local venue which barely serves
8 the purpose, and while we are grateful
9 for the generosity of the public
10 library system, neither of the two
11 facilities has usable wing space.

12 We were again painfully reminded
13 of this on April 28th when YTI produced
14 a scintillating "Broadway Comes to
15 Yonkers," at the riverfront library,
16 when Broadway artists very generously
17 come and donate their time and light up
18 Yonkers on their nights off.

19 We are not thinking of only YTI,
20 we are thinking of the potential for
21 the cultural enhancement of this
22 community, and for feeding the artistic
23 soul of our young and of our older
24 people, and for keeping more of our
25 young people here.

2 A modern state of the art
3 performance center, not only for YTI,
4 of course, but for other artists and
5 producers, and by virtue of their
6 availability would come, would enhance
7 the neighborhood, heighten the
8 community's cultural awareness and
9 impact.

10 It's been shown in countless
11 communities that theater in the inner
12 city revitalizes the inner city. I
13 thank you very much for listening.

14 MS. DEIERLEIN: Jose Velez. After
15 Mr. Velez, Vincent Wilson.

16 MR. VELEZ: Thank you. Good
17 evening, City Council members and
18 Majority Leader Sandy Annabi and
19 Minority leader Liam McLaughlin.

20 My name Jose Velez. I represent
21 the South Broadway Business
Improvement

22 District which for those of you who
23 don't know, stretches from the city
24 line over to Vark Street or by St.
25 Joseph's Hospital.

2 We represent approximately 250
3 retailers, and about a hundred or so
4 property owners. We have been, for
5 some of those who know, we have been
6 for the last couple of years been
7 trying to reduce traffic congestion on
8 South Broadway, primarily due to the
9 trailer trucks that come in through
10 that corridor.

11 With the proposed development
12 which, by the way, we support
13 wholeheartedly, and look forward to
14 seeing more development downtown take
15 place, but we also want to be a little
16 bit cautious about how the impact on
17 South Broadway is with respect to
18 traffic, and I am not just talking
19 about regular passenger traffic, more
20 importantly commercial traffic.

21 I was pleased to see the lighting,
22 the traffic signals on Nepperhan and
23 Yonkers Avenue will be synchronized
24 which is wonderful. We would like to
25 see the same occur on South Broadway so

2 that it handles the traffic flow going
3 to and from downtown after the
4 development.

5 I didn't see anything like that
6 nor did I hear anything like that in
7 the current DEIS. So we would like to
8 see that addressed somehow.

9 And another item that we are very
10 much in favor of and like to see done
11 which has little to do with the DEIS
12 but we'll make our point anyway, which
13 is that we'd like to see some kind of a
14 semi-formal agreement, perhaps, between
15 City Council and the developers whereby
16 the procurement policies of the
17 development project during construction
18 and after construction be designed to
19 that not only South Broadway retailers,
20 many of whom can provide supplies and
21 other goods and services to the
22 project, would be given consideration.

23 We are not asking for favorable,
24 you know, favorable status or anything
25 like that. We simply like to know that

2 the hardware stores on South Broadway,
3 that the locksmiths on South Broadway,
4 et cetera, have an opportunity to sit
5 at the table, if you will, during the
6 construction phase and
7 post-construction.

8 It's not just the buildings, the
9 hundreds of millions that are being
10 spent now, the tens and hundreds of
11 millions that are coming in 20 to 30
12 years.

13 We have a lot of businesses on
14 South Broadway that have been there, as
15 many of you know, for generations, and
16 they have a very, some cases a very
17 sophisticated network of venders and
18 other suppliers, so I am sure the
19 developers, who are very appreciative
20 of the bottom line, can perhaps be
21 pleasantly surprised to find that our
22 merchants, some of them can be very
23 competitive with their pricing, so we
24 would like to ask that before you start
25 putting Sheetrock up and screws and

2 things like that and purchasing them,
3 give not only South Broadway but other
4 small businesses in Yonkers for that
5 matter-- I only represent South
6 Broadway, an opportunity to bid.

7 You will be surprised how
8 competitive small business can be.
9 With that I say good night and thank
10 you very much.

11 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
12 much.

13 By the way, if somebody has a license
14 plate of a car DMG 1760, your lights
15 are on. You obviously didn't come at
16 the beginning of the meeting, otherwise
17 your battery would be dead, but your
18 lights are on.

19 MS. DEIERLEIN: Vincent Wilson
20 and
21 Jorge Funes, Angelo Martinelli, then
22 Jim McMahan.

23 MR. WILSON: Good evening, City
24 Council, City Council President. My
25 name is Vincent Wilson. I represent
the Scrimshaw House which is now called
Pier Point on the Hudson.

2 I am here to read a document that
3 we prepared for you and then have some
4 comments.

5 First we would like to say that
6 the majority of the residents and
7 owners of the Pier Point on the Hudson
8 are extremely positive about the
9 development. We feel the time is now.
10 We do not want to wait to see any
11 delays in this project moving along.

12 That being said, Pier Point does
13 have some concerns that we would just
14 like to document. Pier Point on the
15 Hudson's parking lot would be replaced
16 by the development and a bridge which
17 is proposed to be constructed very
18 close to the building.

19 As it concerns of parking,
20 ownership of the parking is one of our
21 main concerns. Who will own the
22 parking lot after the development is
23 done? Will our lease with the City
24 still be valid? How much money will we
25 have to pay? Will the lease change?

2 Okay, that is our first concern.

3 The second is direct access to the
4 parking lot. Right now, the proposal
5 has it a little distance and it will be
6 shared parking with the condominiums or
7 buildings that are going up.

8 Drop-off points. I have this all
9 documented so I will leave it with you.

10 Residents with disabilities. We do
11 have some elderly residents with
12 disabilities, and we want to make sure
13 that they can get easily accessible to
14 the parking lot.

15 Parking spots. We want to make
16 sure that all our parking spots are
17 indeed replaced.

18 Views. We do have some view
19 concerns on the north and eastern part
20 of the building, how will they be
21 affected, excuse me the southern part,
22 how will they be affected by the new
23 development? And the interim plans
24 during the construction.

25 Concerning the Prospect Bridge,

2 building safety is one of our main
3 concerns. The proposed bridge can
4 create a safety concern for the
5 residents of the building, crime,
6 traffic and exhaust emissions.

7 Privacy. How high will the bridge
8 be and how close to the building will
9 it be? Will pedestrians and passengers
10 and cars be able to look into our
11 windows?

12 Noise. If the bridge is open 24
13 hours, how will our residents sleep?

14 Car lights. Will the bridge be
15 close enough to the buildings so that
16 when the cars are coming down the
17 bridge, will they be reflecting onto
18 the building?

19 We want to reiterate that we do
20 not want the project delayed. The
21 majority of the residents and owners
22 want to see the project begin as soon
23 as possible. We urge the City Council
24 to do its due diligence but in a timely
25 manner.

2 If Yonkers loses its chance, it
3 will be years before another
4 development opportunity will come. The
5 purpose of this communication is to
6 document our concerns, not to slow the
7 process.

8 We have met with representatives
9 of SFC to outline our concerns. They
10 have been very open and accommodating,
11 meeting with us on multiple occasions.
12 We look forward to working SFC and the
13 City Council to find solutions to our
14 concerns.

15 On behalf of the Board of Managers
16 at the Pier Point on the Hudson, the
17 residents and owners, we thank the City
18 Council for your attention to our
19 questions and concerns regarding the
20 first phase of the SFC downtown
21 development.

22 I have contact information from
23 the building if you guys want to, and I
24 also have a bunch of copies of the
25 letter.

2 MR. LESNICK: You can give them to
3 Mr. Constantine and he will make sure
4 we all get them now.

5 MR. WILSON: Thank you very much.

6 MS. DEIERLEIN: Mr. Funes.

7 MR. FUNES: Good evening. My
name

8 is Jorge Funes. I was at the last
9 meeting like two weeks ago, I think.

10 I represent the business on
11 Palisades Avenue. Like I said before,
12 everybody is getting -- the owners from
13 the buildings, they all are getting
14 buyouts and being given millions and
15 millions of dollars. I have been there
16 for ten years, okay.

17 There is no answer. There is no
18 like where are we going? Do I move
19 forward? They have the owners in
20 contract. You cannot sell-- I can't
21 sell my business because they have a
22 contract for almost three years
23 already.

24 There is nothing wrong with the
25 stadium. Everything looks beautiful,

2 but, I mean, where are we going to be
3 standing for the past year, or what
4 will happen with us?

5 I mean, I have seen the Ridge Hill
6 project. I have seen Cross County.
7 There is a few things that I just want
8 to say, like if you think that Cross
9 County is going to survive with the
10 Ridge Hill project, Cross County is
11 going down the drain, you know why?
12 The Cross County mall, they have a lot
13 of problems going on.

14 Everybody is talking about the
15 City of Baltimore. Everywhere they
16 make these stadiums, I have been in
17 Miami. I have been in a building on 36
18 and 11th Street. I have seen a big
19 project, beautiful building empty.

20 Now, you are talking about every
21 year you run out of money for the
22 Police Department, Fire Department.
23 Where is the money that you are getting
24 from the Empire City, the casino?
25 Where is the revenue that you are

2 getting from the building where
3 Citibank is? That building I have seen
4 empty for almost two years.

5 So far we are still getting no
6 answer. So far we are not getting no
7 answer. The business owners, we are up
8 in the air.

9 If somebody pays me, okay, I take
10 my business somewhere else, okay.
11 Yonkers needs something to attract
12 people, okay.

13 A stadium-- I travel a lot, okay.
14 You need here to bring tourists,
15 tourists is the ones. They make the
16 money. Everybody over here is saying
17 like yeah, we need the stadium, we need
18 the stadium. Right now with the prices
19 that you put on the new buildings,
20 \$1,600, \$1,800 rent, nobody can afford
21 that. How can the people be able to
22 afford that? And up to now, you still
23 have no answer.

24 Where are we going? What is going
25 to happen with my business? I know

2 this guy, he has his own business,
3 Manuel Grocery Store. It took him a
4 year before he opened his business.
5 Now after he created his business
6 there, now they are telling him you
7 have to go. Where are you going to go?

8 Only the owners are the ones that
9 are getting the millions. Come on. I
10 mean, I am getting tired. You know,
11 somebody has to give some kind of
12 answer with this to the business
13 owners.

14 If you guys really want to make
15 this stadium, make this stadium. I am
16 not saying not to make a stadium, but
17 like I said before, you are talking
18 about 7,000 rent in Getty Square. I go
19 to Tremont for \$2,800, bigger store,
20 and you see people walk in every day,
21 every day.

22 In Getty Square we see the same
23 people every day. Like the older man
24 who said I don't know how many
25 millionaires are going to move to

2 Yonkers.

3 The park, everything is beautiful,
4 but let's talk about, you know, what
5 are we going to do with our business.
6 You pay me, I will leave Yonkers and
7 you finish with your dream stadium.
8 You can take it all the way to heaven,
9 but I am going to go back to the subway
10 and do my business because this is
11 ridiculous.

12 The construction companies, they
13 want the jobs. Sure, they want to make
14 a profit, no problem with that, so what
15 about my business? Where do I stand?
16 Am I going to move forward to another
17 store? I am going to pay \$7,000?
18 Still I have no answer.

19 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
20 much.

21 MR. FUNES: You are welcome.

22 MS. DEIERLEIN: Angelo Martinelli.

23 MR. MARTINELLI: Mr. President
24 and
25 members of the Council, it is very
interesting sitting out there and
listening. I was always on your side,

2 and you have to make a Solomon decision
3 about how you are able to work this
4 plan out and do some exciting things
5 but, you know, I have been in Yonkers
6 for a long long time, and I think this
7 exciting time is happening right now.

8 I have never seen what is
9 happening that is happening. I have
10 never seen the building that have gone
11 on, the restaurants on our waterfront
12 and around, the corridor of Ashburton
13 Avenue, affordable housing, things are
14 happening, and I think they are
15 happening because of the plan that Mr.
16 Cappelli and his organization brought
17 forth.

18 That was a dream that they saw
19 what could happen here in Yonkers. We
20 see it every day. I mean, they tell
21 you about going up to White Plains and
22 said why not Yonkers?

23 You know, some ladies here said
24 maybe we can get a smaller development,
25 but you know, we don't get developers

2 every day who come with their money and
3 are able to spend their money, put
4 their money where their mouth is and be
5 able to develop a tremendous plan that
6 will put Yonkers on the map.

7 I think your efforts, and you have
8 been very very good here, but your
9 efforts have to be in tune to moving
10 this project.

11 You know, the last time we had a
12 project here was over 20 years ago that
13 had developers that were every
14 interested in our waterfront and that
15 was just in the waterfront area. Now
16 we have not only the waterfront, but
17 the whole downtown area, and so my
18 message as part of the Chamber of
19 Commerce and as part of an individual,
20 is please, don't let this get away.

21 Move this project rapidly. We
22 have a great opportunity. Too often we
23 have had opportunities and something
24 comes along.

25 In the 1980s we had an opportunity

2 to develop the waterfront, and all of a
3 sudden we had a desegregation suit that
4 killed our city. Things happen. Today
5 the economy is not good, yet this
6 developer is willing to go ahead with
7 this project.

8 Please, don't let grass grow under
9 our feet. Let's move this project.
10 Let's get it going and let's develop
11 Yonkers and let's see the dream that
12 all of us have had one time, that
13 Yonkers will be in its rightful place,
14 a tremendous city along the waterfront.
15 Thank you very much.

16 MR. LESNICK: Thank you Mayor
17 Martinelli.

18 MS. DEIERLEIN: Jim McMahan.

19 MR. MCMAHON: Good evening.

Hi,
20 guys, Jim McMahan, Houlihan Lawrence
21 Real Estate. I am also a resident of
22 Getty Square.

23 Two and a half years ago I was
24 part of a little redevelopment of this
25 area in anticipation of this

2 development. There is a lot being said
3 about this development, but nothing has
4 been said about what will happen in the
5 periphery, what is going to happen as a
6 result of this development all around
7 this area.

8 As I said, there were 18 condos
9 two and a half years ago. People
10 bought into those. They bought in in
11 the expectation that you guys would
12 act.

13 It's not happening. With the
14 financial market the way it is right
15 now it may not happen. If you guys
16 don't get of your duff and move it now,
17 it's not going to happen.

18 The financial markets right now
19 are teetering. If it doesn't happen
20 soon, it's not going to happen. The
21 few nay sayers, the very minority of
22 nay sayers in this city are slowing it
23 down just one week at a time. All it
24 takes-- they know it takes one week at
25 a time for this to go beyond where the

2 financial markets will say sorry, it
3 will be another global crossing. It
4 will be another, you know, it was great
5 a year ago, would have happened a year
6 ago, it's not happening, it's not going
7 to happen.

8 If you guys don't do it now, it's
9 not going to happen. There is a lot of
10 small companies, individuals who have
11 bought buildings, not these immediate
12 blocks, but buildings in the area. I
13 am in real estate. I have watched it.
14 They put their life savings into this.
15 A lot of them have put a lot of money,
16 all their money into this in the
17 expectation that you guys would move.
18 Two and a half years.

19 Somebody said what is the rush?
20 What is the rush? Steve Sansone
21 earlier said his family came here in
22 1904. 1904 there were administrations
23 saying let's develop the downtown
24 waterfront. Virtually every
25 administration since then said let's

2 develop the downtown waterfront, and
3 who has done it?

4 This man just before me said 20
5 years ago somebody tried and something
6 happened. Well, something just
7 happened in the financial markets six
8 months ago. Again, I am in real
9 estate, I have watched it. Something
10 is happening right now in the financial
11 markets.

12 If you guys don't act right now,
13 this will be a repeat of 20 years ago.
14 You have to act right now. Don't keep
15 letting these people who are saying
16 let's wait, what is the rush, what is
17 the rush, it is not going to happen.
18 It will not happen if you guys don't
19 act now. Thank you.

20 MS. DEIERLEIN: Barbara Segal.

21 MR. LESNICK: Thank you.

22 MS. DEIERLEIN: Then David
23 Hackett.

24 MS. SEGAL: Hi. I am Barbara
25 Segal. I thank all of you very much

2 for spending all of your time involving
3 this process.

4 I am speaking to voice my opinion
5 on the current redevelopment plans for
6 the City of Yonkers. I fear that
7 Yonkers will miss a golden opportunity
8 to create a signature waterfront that
9 will distinguish Yonkers from all other
10 cities undergoing similar downtown
11 redevelopments including White Plains
12 and New Rochelle.

13 How do we stand out as a place
14 that embodies the energy and excitement
15 of a progressive modern city, a place
16 where everybody would want to live?

17 Our shore lines could be
18 breathtaking instead of average and
19 generic. Cities all over the world
20 define themselves through great
21 architecture and a rich active cultural
22 life.

23 We should look at our waterfront
24 as a pallet created by different
25 artists and architects. I propose

2 where possible that the developers hold
3 international competitions among the
4 young architects, the up and coming
5 Calatropa's, Gehry's and Richard Meyers
6 of this world by tapping into the
7 abundant talents of young architects
8 with fresh ideas, Yonkers increases the
9 chances of generating a unique skyline
10 with more tried and true architecture
11 and reflected in Westchester, and any
12 typical development.

13 Personally I loved Alsop's
14 interpretation of the Glenwood Power
15 Plant. Our city could be a museum of
16 many examples of great and innovative
17 art works and architecture. We do not
18 all like every piece of art in a
19 museum.

20 Our skyline could consist of tall
21 glass clad buildings which would
22 reflect the image of the Palisades and
23 the Hudson River. Colored fruit glass
24 buildings would not take away from our
25 views, but enhance them.

2 Collaborating with the developers,
3 building high when necessary, using
4 great architecture, would not block our
5 views, but would serve to enhance our
6 views, or be interesting enough to
7 become part of the view's attractions.

8 By getting the developers-- by
9 letting the developers go high, we can
10 also ask them to have fewer tall
11 buildings to allow for the much wanted
12 green space.

13 In order to truly live up to the
14 model of being a City of the future,
15 Yonkers needs to expand their vision
16 and take their cues from other cities
17 around the world, taking both the old
18 historic and new forward, investing in
19 great architecture.

20 We should go the next city that
21 everyone is talking about. Let's not
22 lose this historic opportunity to
23 become the next Barcelona on the Hudson
24 and green wherever possible.

25 I support this project very much.

2 I would just like to see some fabulous
3 architecture included. If we are going
4 50 stories, let's make it unbelievable.
5 Let's make it a great destination.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. LESNICK: Thank you, Barbara.

8 MS. DEIERLEIN: Mr. Hackett.
9 After Mr. Hackett, Susan Weisfeld, John
10 Zappia, Jim Mitchell and Paul Ranieri.

11 MR. HACKETT: Good evening,
12 Council members and Yonkers residents.
13 I hope you all agree with me when I say
14 build it now.

15 I have been in business in
16 downtown Yonkers for almost 20 years
17 now, and I am tired of describing my
18 place of business near Chicken Island.

19 It would be nice to show future
20 generations where my business was,
21 right in the heart of Riverside Park
22 Center.

23 There is a lot of negative talk
24 from folks I have yet to see in the
25 area of the development area. It is

2 quite obvious they have not spent any
3 time in my area of business and have no
4 idea what is going on in this area.

5 I would like to bring my family
6 downtown and see joy of what this great
7 city has become.

8 Thank you. Have a good evening.

9 MS. DEIERLEIN: Susan Weisfeld.

10 MS. WEISFELD: Good evening. I
11 have not prepared a statement. I
12 wanted to say something that not
13 everybody has said but I couldn't
14 really think of anything. I wanted to
15 thank you all for having this hearing
16 and for caring about Yonkers.

17 I grew up on the Hudson. I grew
18 up in Inwood. I used to come to
19 Yonkers to go shopping and it was a
20 fabulous place. My husband has a store
21 above Shoprite and God knows what is
22 going on over there. He has been there
23 over 20 years.

24 We have often gone down to the
25 river and we have had picnics and we

2 have had coffee and there has been
3 guano all over the place, and we have
4 looked at falling apart warehouses, and
5 we always said they should develop it,
6 it's so beautiful and you are
7 developing it, and what I am here to
8 ask you for is some green space.

9 I was in Riverside Park this week
10 and it was so packed, people were just
11 enjoying the green space. Wherever
12 Trump has built a development, the one
13 by the UN, the one on Riverside Drive,
14 he's taken away the light, the
15 pollution is amazing. The whole area
16 is gray and beige.

17 If we build these high-rises on
18 our waterfront, the way that I see the
19 plan, we won't have any light. You
20 will be taking away our air. If you
21 have little corridors to see the water,
22 that is not why you were elected. You
23 were elected for us, for our quality of
24 life. You were not just elected to see
25 how many buildings you could build.

2 It hurts me to know that this
3 beautiful waterfront might be blocked
4 by these monstrosities, and why? Just
5 because the developers want to do it.

6 We can find a happy median. I am
7 part of John's district. I am part of
8 the Armorville Association. We had a
9 meeting last night. It hurts all of
10 us. It's not just the Yonkers
11 waterfront that we enjoy, we enjoy the
12 whole waterfront. It's part of it.

13 The man was talking about the boat
14 ride. You go on the ferry and you see
15 Yonkers. You don't want to see huge
16 buildings blocking everything.

17 You can develop the waterfront and
18 you should develop the waterfront, but
19 it's for us and this is our future and
20 our children's future, and my future is
21 here because I can never move, I have
22 too much stuff so I can never move, but
23 I have lived here 32 years in the same
24 house and I am very proud of the
25 progress the City has made.

2 I have lived through many plans,
3 and I have lived through the school
4 debacle, and please let us have some
5 green space. Let us have access to the
6 green space. Let us be able to
7 breathe, that's all I am asking you.
8 Thank you.

9 MS. DEIERLEIN: John Zappia. Mr.
10 Zappia isn't here. Jim Mitchell.
11 After Mr. Mitchell, Paul Ranieri and
12 then Gale Baxter?

13 MR. MITCHELL: Good evening. My
14 name is Jim Mitchell and I am a senior
15 development associate from Westhab with
16 offices at 20 South Broadway.

17 Westhab is the largest non-profit
18 developer of affordable and workforce
19 housing and provider of Social Services
20 in Westchester.

21 Now, just briefly, we believe that
22 the concerns with the DEIS are being
23 addressed and will continue to be
24 addressed in further hearings.

25 The point we would like to

2 emphasize here is that we believe it is
3 very, crucially important for the City
4 and our residents for the SFC
5 revitalization plan to moved forward.

6 Westhab has developed housing many
7 years now. We think that what is
8 needed now is a real economic engine,
9 which this project represents.

10 We worked on Nodine Hill, for
11 example, during the recent years of
12 rising land prices and readily
13 available credit. In that time we have
14 only seen one new house constructed in
15 the area.

16 Large amounts of vacant land, and
17 land with taxes unpaid still remain in
18 that and other parts of the City.

19 To be able to have significant and
20 lasting impact on the economy, the
21 housing and infrastructure of the City
22 requires an enormous amount of capital
23 investment, if it is to have any real
24 effect.

25 Especially under the present real

2 estate and credit market conditions,
3 which are clearly not what they were
4 two years ago, we would not want to
5 miss an opportunity such as this to
6 promote such a substantial investment
7 for our future.

8 While we develop and continue to
9 promote workforce housing in Yonkers,
10 this has to be supplemented by real
11 jobs in order to support the workforce
12 housing.

13 We believe that Yonkers needs this
14 real and substantial investment. We
15 support the vision, the depth and the
16 breadth of the revitalization plan.
17 And we urge the City to allow the
18 Developers to take the next step.

19 In our experience in developing
20 multifamily housing in Yonkers and
21 other parts of the Country, even on a
22 smaller scale of say 30 to 60 units at
23 a time, it is an arduous, complicated
24 and difficult thing to do.

25 Here there is a much larger

2 opportunity to advance a hugh endeavor
3 which can have a tremendous long term
4 impact. We should not lose or miss out
5 on this opportunity.

6 Of course Westhab is in the
7 business of producing affordable
8 housing, and we would not overlook that
9 here, but we are confident that the
10 developers and you will come to terms
11 with the City on that portion of the
12 project and can see it through.

13 The main point we would like to
14 emphasize in closing is, we believe
15 that the benefits of this
16 revitalization effort will
17 substantially increase the value of the
18 market here, and this adds value for
19 everyone who is working for a better
20 urban environment and is concerned for
21 the future of the City.

22 MS. DEIERLEIN: Paul Ranieri, Gale
23 Baxter and Greg Arcaro. Greg is here
24 and then Russ Bolton and Rona Shapiro.

25 MR. ARCARO: Good evening. My

2 name is Greg Arcaro. I am a resident,
3 taxpayer of the City of Yonkers,
4 Executive Director of the Committee
5 Planning Council of Yonkers, and a
6 proud member of the Yonkers Alliance
7 for Community Benefits.

8 You heard earlier this evening
9 from our attorney, Gavin Kierney, from
10 the New York Lawyers for the Public
11 Interest.

12 We are very excited about the
13 opportunity to participate in the
14 project for downtown, and as Gavin
15 said, we are not against the project,
16 we cannot support it at this time based
17 upon the information that has been
18 provided in the DEIS, and I wanted to
19 point out three or four of those items
20 that gave us some concern about being
21 able to support the project, meaning,
22 saying I have differently, the level of
23 detail about the project trails off
24 significantly when the project talks
25 about its impact on the community.

2 That's what we are concerned about, the
3 DEIS, the impact on the community.

4 It's a document filed in the scope
5 that you set forth, and through the
6 reading of the document at these public
7 hearings, deciding through the hard
8 look, has that scope been met? And
9 there is a couple of places here, again
10 Gavin will provide some more details,
11 but these I think are illustrative of
12 how the detail drops off on the impact
13 of a potentially good project on the
14 community.

15 The first one I would like to cite
16 is on page I-28. It says the applicant
17 has committed to either the
18 construction of new affordable housing,
19 or an equivalent financial contribution
20 to a city affordable housing fund
21 thereby mitigating any impact due to
22 the direct residential displacement of
23 families in the project area.

24 No quantification of how much. No
25 quantification of when. Is it done in

2 the beginning? These are the kinds of
3 things that understandably come with a
4 project that was developed from the
5 private sector viewpoint.

6 The waterfront development plan
7 that was produced, I guess in 1998, was
8 a community based plan. We developed a
9 plan with lots of community input to
10 say this is what we like to see in our
11 city with the assumption that
12 developers would come along and
13 implement it.

14 This is a little bit different.
15 This is what the developer sees for the
16 City, and I think another good way to
17 say it is, we go back to January 17th,
18 2007. It says, "Come to a meeting,
19 join the Struever Fidelco Cappelli team
20 for a presentation about its conceptual
21 development plan for the revitalization
22 of southwest Yonkers."

23 So it's understandable there is a
24 dynamic tension here. The point of
25 view of the Alliance is, that we have,

2 I think, a way to ameliorate that
3 through the Community Benefits
4 Agreement.

5 I may point out the second area in
6 which details drop off in describing
7 the impact of a potentially very good
8 project on the community.

9 The applicant will also consider
10 funding-- I am sorry. This program, to
11 be known as the Yonkers Development
12 Employment Initiative, will be designed
13 to prioritize residential participation
14 in various aspects of the construction
15 project.

16 Prospective workers will receive
17 training and become union workers as a
18 result of this program, so this is a
19 description of how to get the Yonkers
20 residents as construction workers,
21 doesn't say how many, just says best
22 effort.

23 We see that a lot in this DEIS.
24 We are talking tonight about the DEIS.
25 We see a lot of best effort. No

2 clarity on what is the number that we
3 will achieve? When we will achieve it?
4 What is the consequence of not
5 achieving it?

6 This is a huge and potentially
7 wonderful project, and it should be
8 specific in the DEIS about it. So we
9 find again the DEIS not specific in the
10 areas of its impact on the community.

11 A third one. Although some of the
12 new residents in the proposed housing
13 would utilize city recreational
14 facilities, most of their recreational
15 needs would be addressed by on-site
16 health facility and fitness clubs to be
17 provided as part of each residential
18 development. Many new residents would
19 utilize the new publicly accessible
20 open space along the Hudson River at
21 the Riverwalk at River Park Center.

22 They would likely opt to utilize
23 sidewalk cafes, book stores and
24 restaurants, yet another example in
25 which it sidesteps the issues of

2 recreation for the residents.
3 Just as the issue of affordable
4 housing is not so much also for the
5 residents, but for the people who work
6 in the stores who also need day care,
7 who also need summer programs, so a
8 potentially wonderful project in our
9 opinion in the DEIS is lacking
10 specifics on its impact in the
11 community, but it can be remedied, and
12 we suggest that the Community Benefits
13 Agreement with the community is one
14 what to do that. Thank you.

15 MR. LESNICK: Thank you, Greg.

16 MS. DEIERLEIN: Rona Shapiro, and
17 the next speakers will be Gail Averill,
18 Michael Carriere, Steve Plotksy and
19 Diedra Hoare.

20 MS. SHAPIRO: Hello, I have to
21 congratulate you for all of you being
22 awake. I don't see any closing yes
23 here. Anyway, I am one of the all time
24 shoppers. I love shopping and I try to
25 do my best for the economy of Yonkers

2 by shopping all over, but even for me,
3 I think that there is an end game here,
4 and I think that with the economic
5 times that we all read about in all the
6 newspapers, with all the stores sales
7 slowing down, I am worried that the
8 DEIS, what it talks about, its mainstay
9 in the River Park Center of an eleven
10 story shopping center.

11 I spend a lot of time down at the
12 river. You know, I have to compliment
13 Steve Sansone because I think he has
14 done something very special. He hasn't
15 built any buildings, but he has brought
16 a lot of culture, and that is what has
17 attracted me to downtown Yonkers.

18 I think that the people that I
19 speak to in the restaurants downtown,
20 some of these young people who moved
21 in
22 by the water, they tell me they have
23 tried Yonkers, they are leaving
24 Yonkers. They didn't tell me they are
25 leaving Yonkers because there is not
enough shopping malls in Yonkers. The

2 reason why they are leaving Yonkers is,
3 and this goes to the DEIS because I
4 find that it's missing this, they are
5 leaving Yonkers because there is no
6 theaters downtown. There is not enough
7 restaurants.

8 It's not that the restaurants --
9 the restaurants in Yonkers are doing
10 well, there is not enough of them. You
11 know, you can't get reservations at
12 Zuppa's or Bell Havana.

13 I think that the speaker from YTI
14 hits on a very important point. None
15 of us are against development, it's a
16 question of not having -- what is going
17 to attract people in Yonkers? What is
18 going to keep people in Yonkers?

19 I am concerned, and I don't hear
20 in the DEIS that we are going to end up
21 with a lot of empty buildings which we
22 already have on the waterfront, and we
23 are building Ridge Hill. I don't know
24 who is going to move there. I don't
25 think Manhattan is all leaving to come

2 up to Yonkers, but we need to figure
3 out cultural enhancements. We need to
4 figure out how, you know, how are we
5 going to build a performance center?

6 I keep telling Dee about how we
7 just went to London and that they
8 turned in one of their power stations
9 into the most famous museum, art
10 museum. You know, none of this is
11 addressed, and I am also concerned in
12 terms of the transportation. You know,
13 when you create seven thousand parking
14 spots and all those parking spots
15 decide to be filled on the same day,
16 how are we going to get out of Yonkers?
17 How are we going to move? And I can
18 remember July 4th with the
19 firecrackers, there was a problem with
20 one light, and this is no development,
21 and a couple of hundred people sitting
22 there, it took me an hour to get home
23 because of the traffic, so this is a
24 real concern and people here love
25 Yonkers.

2 It's no-- everybody wants to see
3 development. Everyone wants to see
4 Yonkers, it's just a different vision,
5 and we asked the developers and we
6 asked the City Council who takes all
7 this time to listen to us, to really
8 listen to us, and because we are not--
9 I don't know, another speaker said
10 these people. We are not these people,
11 we are the people that support Yonkers,
12 that love Yonkers and we want to see
13 the downtown area an area for all the
14 people of Yonkers, the senior citizens,
15 the not so rich. The people who live
16 and work in City Hall can live
17 downtown. They don't have to go all
18 the way to the Bronx, so I think
19 that -- what else can I say?

20 I think that's about it. Oh, yes,
21 yes, of course, I have to end with
22 saying there is nothing, nothing,
23 nothing about bike trails, and all the
24 green people sitting up here and Liam
25 will become a biker, there is nothing

2 about bike trails anywhere. There is a
3 lot of pavement. We need green.

4 I ask everybody to go down
5 Riverside Drive, take a bike ride, take
6 a car ride and see how beautiful the
7 whole Riverside Park is, and Yonkers
8 can be that too. Thank you. Bye bye.

9 MR. LESNICK: Thank you.

10 MS. DEIERLEIN: Next is Gail
11 Averill and then Michael Carriere.

12 THE WITNESS: Hi. I am not going
13 to say that because somebody else
14 already said it. That's good.

15 I don't think despite the people
16 who say I am for development, there is
17 nobody here who isn't for development.
18 We all want development. We want it
19 well done and we want it done right.

20 Some points to begin with. The
21 DEIS loves everything together too many
22 times. When we come to financials,
23 when we come to environmental impact,
24 when we come to several things, it's
25 all put in one big thing.

2 There are three major components
3 of this project, the Palisades Park,
4 the River Park, the ballpark and the
5 Cacace Government Center. They need to
6 be separated out so we can look at them
7 clearly and understand each part of
8 them financially, environmentally.

9 I don't want big buildings, big
10 tall buildings on the waterfront. I
11 absolutely do not want 25 story
12 buildings. We may have them, but when
13 the DEIS compares the alternatives,
14 they do not give enough credit between
15 their proposal and the amount of green
16 space that it needs and the number of
17 residents. Therefore, the amount of
18 green space per resident, and the 1998
19 master plan which called basically for
20 Parcel J to be the green space at
21 196,000 square feet but only 256 units
22 of apartment.

23 The real justification for higher
24 buildings and higher density is to
25 increase profits. We need an analysis

2 that covers the respective profit
3 margins of lower buildings, lower
4 density versus higher buildings, higher
5 density, and find out what is
6 equitable, what is truly necessary.

7 Another financial thing is the
8 cost of the Prospect Street Bridge
9 which will be necessary if there are
10 high-rise buildings on the waterfront,
11 and 456 units and retail and commercial
12 and office space, and this cost is
13 evidently lumped into the TIFP
14 borrowing figure.

15 The TIFP itself is listed rather
16 vaguely as more than 160 million. I
17 would like to know how much more, but
18 we don't know what the cost of this
19 bridge will be. It needs to be pulled
20 out. It is an expensive item. It
21 should not be just lumped in as
22 infrastructure.

23 We are also told that the towers
24 will be perpendicular to the river, and
25 this will not impact the views on the

2 Palisades, but this is pretty faulty.
3 Basic, I think it's geometry, says that
4 the only time it isn't going to impact
5 the view is when you are standing
6 directly in front of the tower.

7 The views from north, south,
8 particularly upland and inland are
9 going to be distinctly impacted.
10 Incidentally, one photo on page 17 of
11 Part Six in visual character shows the
12 view from Southerland Park to the
13 southwest away from the proposed
14 towers. I think they made a mistake.

15 These towers also create a
16 precedent for an ultimate wall of
17 towers along our waterfront which will,
18 among other things, create permanent
19 shadows over both the river and the
20 adjoining neighborhoods.

21 The documents states that the
22 shadow impact will be mitigated. I am
23 not sure what mitigate means, mitigate.
24 We either have shadows or you don't
25 have shadows. Are you going to make

2 the sun pull blinds over itself? A
3 little bit pregnant? I don't know.

4 There needs to be more study of
5 the environmental effects on the river
6 of these shadows, particularly if they
7 continue all the way up, and a little
8 more explanation about what they mean
9 by mitigate.

10 It's an extremely complex-- it's a
11 vitally important matter for the future
12 of Yonkers.

13 I fully support much of this
14 proposal and I understand the urge to
15 get moving on it, but I also think
16 there should not be a rush to this
17 decision. We need to take time to get
18 it right. There needs to be a true
19 understanding of the long term
20 consequences.

21 I understand that there is a
22 proposal for a scale model of the
23 development, and I would like to
24 support that as a requirement for this
25 and all other future projects.

2 It's also probably appropriate to
 3 include the potential environmental
 4 impact of the daylighting of the river
 5 and Larkin Plaza as part of this whole
 6 downtown development, but I think it
 7 should be emphasized that this is not
 8 part of the applicant's project.

9 If it happens, then it's possibly
 10 unlikely that it will at this point.
 11 It's not something that SFC is
 12 building. Thank you.

13 MR. LESNICK: Thank you Gail.

14 MS. DEIERLEIN: Michael Carriere.
 15 After Michael, I believe Steven Plotsky
 16 has left, then Diedra Hoare and John
 17 Zanzano and Jeff Anzevino.

18 MR. LESNICK: The mic is a little
 19 high.

20 MR. CARRIERE: Are you telling me
 21 I am short?

22 Good evening, City Council
 23 President and City Council members, my
 24 name is Michael Carriere and I stand
 25 before you representing all members of

2 District Council Nine, painters an
 3 allied trades, as well as other unions
 4 throughout the Building and
 5 Construction Trades Council and Central
 6 Labor Council where I hold the position
 7 as Vice President for Westchester and
 8 Putnam Counties, in full support to
 9 move this project and build it and move
 10 it forward.

11 Thank you for the opportunity to
 12 speak to you on this very important
 13 topic for the second time. In the past
 14 I spoke to you about jobs. Thirteen
 15 thousand construction jobs will be
 16 created. Fifty-four hundred jobs will
 17 be created and will be permanent.

18 The City of Yonkers has passed a
 19 legislation for apprenticeship. This
 20 again will allow young men and women
 21 the opportunity to learn a specific
 22 trade and skill.

23 The development of the project
 24 will generate large revenue which the
 25 City can use and don't have to look

191.23

2 anywhere else to find funding. 9.9
3 million in property taxes versus 500
4 and five currently. 4.25 million in
5 sales tax versus 355 currently. Over
6 two million in other taxes which total
7 16 million each year. This is a no
8 brainer.

192.9

9 Environmental clean up. The
10 project will be proposed-- the project
11 proposed here tonight is more than 13
12 acres of contaminated land and needs to
13 be cleaned up and will be cleaned up at
14 no cost to the City of Yonkers. The
15 City of Yonkers is relieved of the
16 responsibility for the clean-up of
17 these properties if it sold to SFC.

18 The baseball park. As stated
19 previously, it would bring attractive
20 affordable and quality entertainment
21 back to downtown Yonkers.

192.22

22 Parking. Not only the City of
23 Yonkers, but anyone can use more
24 parking spaces the way families are
25 growing today and young men and
women

192.22

2 are getting their driver's licenses.
3 The project will generate five
4 thousand parking spots. What will this
5 project do for Yonkers? Growth in the
6 community, people who want to come and
7 visit and possibly -- may even possibly
8 live in the City of Yonkers.

193.9

9 Growth for small business owners.
10 Makes it better for them and coming
11 downtown, Yonkers then turning away to
12 another location.

13 Provide open space for our young
14 children with open green space, not
15 contaminated grounds.

16 Struever Fidelco and Cappelli,
17 these companies are proposing a
18 wonderful project to Yonkers residents.
19 This will bring opportunity for
20 recreation and permanent employment.
21 Also residents in the outlying towns,
22 cities and villages of Westchester
23 County, allowing them the opportunity
24 for entertainment and green space to
25 come to your community and city.

2 Yes, as previously I heard, this
3 is not White Plains. White Plains
4 don't have a waterfront. This a home
5 run.

6 You need to put the green light on
7 and move this forward for construction.
8 Yonkers City Council, Mr. President,
9 you can pass this project.

10 These three companies have been
11 respected. They are loyal. They a
12 professionals and trusting to build one
13 of the best projects here in Yonkers
14 and move it to the future, but if you
15 wait, there will be no project to
16 build.

17 These companies will not stand and
18 wait, they will look for another
19 location and improve a better community
20 elsewhere. Don't miss the boat. You
21 have the opportunity to sit in that
22 boat and watch from the boat to see
23 construction be built here tonight, but
24 most of all, I want to end on, I am
25 really looking forward hopefully to

2 take my new born son to that stadium.
3 Thank you.

4 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
5 much.

6 On that note before Diedra Hoare comes
7 up we will take a brief seventh inning
8 stretch. We have 65 speakers and the
9 tape needs to be reloaded, and if
10 anybody would like to sing take me out
11 to the ball game.

12 (Recess.)

13 MR. LESNICK: I would like to
14 invite everybody back to speak.

15 Diedra Hoare.

16 MS. DEIERLEIN: Diedra Hoar, John
17 Zanzano and Jeff Anzevino and then
18 Robert Walters.

19 MS. HOARE: Hello, thank you. I
20 was criticized last time for not going
21 into detail, so I am going to go into a
22 lot of detail right now and I'm going
23 to get right to the point.

24 I have some questions about the
25 TIFP, how much property tax revenue
dollar amount is estimated for the TIFP

2 district for each year over the next 20
3 years from the start of construction?

4 How much of the anticipated
5 property tax revenue in dollar amounts
6 is from the SFC development, and how
7 much from the other property in the
8 TIFP District, broken down on a yearly
9 basis for the next 20 years.

10 Give a breakdown for each Phase I
11 component; River Park Center, Parcel H
12 and I, Cacace Center, Larkin Plaza.

13 How much of the anticipated property
14 tax revenue in dollar amounts on a
15 yearly basis will go to pay the TIFP
16 bonds and how much will revert to the
17 City? How much are the increased
18 municipal services, fire, police
19 sanitation, et cetera, necessary for
20 the projects expected to cost dollar
21 amounts for each year for the next
22 twenty years? Give a breakdown for
23 each project component of Phase I.

24 As per the Blackstone report, will
25 the City be responsible for paying any

2 shortfall between the property tax
3 revenues and the TIFP bond payments.

4 What happens if the property tax
5 revenue is not enough to cover the TIFP
6 bond payments? Will the City be forced
7 to raise property taxes to cover the
8 difference? More questions.

9 Affordable housing. The section
10 on alternatives quite frankly was a
11 disgrace. Increasing the set-aside to
12 13.5 or 20 percent without extensive
13 public subsidies is infeasible
14 according to that very tiny paragraph
15 in the alternative section.

16 Since there are already extensive
17 public subsidies for this project, it's
18 not acceptable to refuse to examine
19 these options.

20 There is already legislation, I
21 think Councilwoman McDow, pending to
22 require a 20 percent affordable
23 component for all new development. So
24 this analysis must be provided.

25 Parcels H and I. Where do they

2 get the numbers for the number of
3 people who would be living in the
4 units? 436 units are supposed to
5 create only 62 school-aged children.
6 What assumptions were used at arriving
7 at this figure? 262 units are supposed
8 to generate 38 school-aged children.
9 The difference, the 174 fewer units, if
10 the original Downtown Waterfront Master
11 Plan was followed, is only supposed to
12 result in 250 less people and only 20
13 fewer students.

14 So where do they get those numbers
15 from? 174 units is only going to be
16 250 people living in them? What size
17 are the units? How many people are
18 supposedly living in these units?

19 If it's anything like Manhattan
20 where the young people and the yuppies
21 live in the apartments two and three of
22 them in a one bedroom, is that the kind
23 of, you know, is that the kind of
24 demographics that these developers are
25 going for? It's not realistic.

2 Another big problem I had is that
3 many of the alternatives do not examine
4 all the financial and socioeconomic
5 implications. There are just some
6 vague references to increased or
7 decreased sales tax revenue, and
8 occasionally some job estimates.

9 So, for example, in terms of the
10 ballpark, I have several questions
11 about that. What role will the Yonkers
12 baseball Inc. play in this development?
13 Is it going to be used as a financial
14 conduit? Will its activity as an LLC
15 be subject to the freedom of
16 information and open meetings laws?
17 Who will own the ballpark? How many
18 property taxes would the ballpark alone
19 pay, just the ballpark?

20 Who would be responsible for
21 maintaining the ballpark and what are
22 the estimated costs?

23 Historic preservation alternative.
24 There is no examination of an
25 alternative that only saved the 87

2 Nepperhan building, while permitting
3 the demolition of the Salvation Army
4 building and the current parking
5 garage.

6 I believe that was the intention
7 of that request for an adaptive reuse
8 examination, but we got all or nothing.
9 The building that is eligible for the
10 National Register is 87 Nepperhan. Has
11 the possible adaptive reuse of 87
12 Nepperhan as headquarters for the
13 proposed technical campus at Suny been
14 explored? If not, why not? How much
15 will the demolition of 87 Nepperhan
16 cost? Who will pay for the demolition?
17 How much is it going to cost to move
18 all the city services from 87 Nepperhan
19 to the new office building? How much
20 will the new office building cost? Who
21 will pay for it? Who will own it?

22 Will the City lease the space or
23 we will actually own it? If we are
24 going to be leasing the space, what are
25 the estimated rent costs?

2 Furthermore, what mitigation is
3 proposed for the demolition of the
4 School Street Bridge, which to my
5 surprise apparently is National
6 Register eligible also. No, there is
7 no discussion of mitigation for that.

8 All of the other alternatives
9 ruled out the daylighting of the river
10 in the River Park Center, and I didn't
11 understand that. I want to be provided
12 a justification for why the daylighting
13 will not be possible under the other
14 proposed alternatives. Thank you.

15 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
16 much,

16 Diedra.

17 MS. DEIERLEIN: John Zanzano.

18 MR. ZENZANO: City Council
19 President and City Council members,
20 good evening. My name is John Zanzano
21 and I have been a lifelong resident of
22 Yonkers for the past 17 years and still
23 to this day.

24 Now, you all may be wondering why
25 a 17 year old is here to comment on the

2 Struever Fidelco Cappelli project for
3 downtown Yonkers. I am here to
4 emphasize the plan must be accelerated
5 because many economic opportunities lie
6 ahead in this fine city.

7 As the nation's economy begins to
8 cool down, many changes can be seen.
9 Americans are paying more for gasoline
10 at the pumps, the value milk is every
11 increasing, and job opportunities are
12 becoming more scarce as the job markets
13 are slowing down. This has had a
14 significant impact on this working
15 generation, but will have a
16 significantly greater impact on the
17 next working generation as the country
18 attempts to continue its fight against
19 a looming recession.

20 As the next generation is in the
21 college process, whether in high school
22 or in college, the job markets are not
23 looking too promising. The New York
24 Times of just May 8th last week
25 commented that the next generation is

2 almost guaranteed to have a tougher
3 time in finding employment in the job
4 market than in this current generation.

5 This poses a serious risk to the
6 younger generation. However, the SFC
7 projects proposals would allow numerous
8 job opportunities for the upcoming
9 generation of Yonkers workers ensuring
10 a prosperous future for the next
11 generation, and also the City of
12 Yonkers.

13 The long-term benefits would be
14 critical to the success of the SFC
15 project. Though short-term issues will
16 erupt, such as financing for the
17 project, and also the relocation of
18 residences and/or businesses.

19 However, they have potential to be
20 resolved in time following the
21 initiation of the project. Once the
22 project completes, the City is nearly
23 assured the finances to pay off all
24 final expenses.

25 At minimum, according to the

2 plans, 13,000 jobs are being created in
3 construction alone. Five thousand four
4 hundred permanent jobs will be brought
5 to downtown Yonkers and in total, over
6 16 million dollars will be gained
7 yearly.

8 Though it will be a number of
9 years before the market of 1.5 billion
10 dollars is reached to fill in the gap
11 with revenues alone, the planned
12 initiatives at the River Park Center,
13 Cacace Center, Palisades Point and
14 Larkin Plaza will offer further
15 opportunities to curb the expenses,
16 such as new housing projects, and
17 earnings from the Chick Island Baseball
18 field.

19 I feel one of the toughest parts
20 of the plan will be housing for those
21 who will be impacted by the
22 construction which the City Council
23 must consider in initiating this
24 project.

25 Nonetheless, I am convinced that

2 the long-term results are hopeful for
3 the City as the plans signal to be
4 working to build a better City of
5 Yonkers.

6 Thousands of jobs will grow inside
7 of Yonkers, and an era of economic
8 prosperity will usher into our city.
9 Jobs introduced into Yonkers from the
10 SFC project will have numerous effects.

11 First, Yonkers can provide more
12 jobs for more citizens of the City than
13 it currently does. Now, most Yonkers
14 citizens commute between here and New
15 York City or even to White Plains
16 daily. The SFC project will bring jobs
17 to Yonkers, and could boost our city to
18 become a major district of business in
19 New York State.

20 In addition, city revenue can be
21 increased directly resulting from
22 business investments. The renovated
23 waterfront, the ferry from Yonkers to
24 Manhattan, and even proposals, most
25 notably the Chicken Island ballpark

2 will allow investors to become actively
3 involved in the city from other
4 locations in Southern New York.

5 Whether basing their companies in
6 the city or coming to advertise and
7 potentially sponsor events in the new
8 ballpark, the economic horizon in
9 Yonkers will be extended a great deal
10 if the proposal is hurried. I am
11 convinced the plan such as SFC's, has
12 been long overdue.

13 In concluding, I hope I can
14 represent all the youth of Yonkers when
15 I say the SFC project must hasten its
16 progress. The key to the future of
17 this city is within the project, not
18 only for the current generation of
19 Yonkers workers, but also for the youth
20 of the City.

21 City Council members, I hope you
22 take my ideas into consideration
23 because Yonkers is capable of further
24 growth, and by approving the SFC
25 project, the City of Yonkers can open

2 its horizons to anything and
3 everything.

4 MS. DEIERLEIN: Jeff Anzevino.
5 After Mr. Anzevino, Robert Walters,
6 Kathryn Buckley, Nortrid Spero and
7 Hestia De Vries.

8 MR. ANZEVINO: Good evening. My
9 name is Jeff Anzevino, senior regional
10 planner, Scenic Hudson, an
11 environmental organization that's been
12 advocating for smart growth on the
13 Yonkers waterfront since the 1980s.

14 We support the redevelopment of
15 the Yonkers waterfront as a means of
16 revitalizing the City's economy.
17 However, for new development to benefit
18 the entire community without
19 compromising the environment and scenic
20 views, the location of this project on
21 the Hudson River must be considered
22 carefully, and the planning process
23 must involve the public in a meaningful
24 way.

25 First, Scenic Hudson is greatly

2 concerned that the City appears to be
3 rushing to judgment on this massive
4 project. The City has scheduled just
5 two public hearings during the brief
6 comment period.

7 While we appreciate the recent
8 two-week extension of the comment
9 period to May 30th, this still does not
10 allow sufficient time for the public to
11 review the nine thousand page DEIS and
12 its appendices, and prepare
13 comprehensive comments so that the
14 project can address residents concerns
15 and benefit the City over the long
16 term.

17 The current slowdown of the
18 economy and the tight lending market
19 provide an opportunity for a more
20 systematic review of this project that
21 would allow for further analysis of the
22 DEIS, more input from Yonkers residents
23 who will be the ultimate beneficiaries
24 or losers from this development.

25 As previously stated, Scenic

2 Hudson supports the economic
3 revitalization of the City waterfront
4 and central business district.

5 However, we believe that new buildings
6 should not dwarf the height and scale
7 of existing development. Unfortunately
8 that is what is proposed in the DEIS.

9 We have strong concerns about how
10 the development will impact views to
11 and from the City, cast shadows over
12 adjacent streets, and generate traffic
13 through environmental justice
14 neighborhoods.

15 Further, the development requires
16 drastic amendments to the downtown
17 waterfront master plan, amendments that
18 residents have unequivocally opposed,
19 and I might add have attracted the
20 existing development down to the City
21 waterfront.

22 First visual character and
23 impacts. Everyone understands the
24 Palisades importance as a backdrop to
25 the City of Yonkers. The Palisades has

2 been designated a natural landmark and
3 are listed on the National Register of
4 Historic Places.

5 Views to and from this magnificent
6 rock formation are important,
7 experienced by hundreds of thousands of
8 people annually. These views would be
9 severely impacted by the 25 and 50
10 story buildings.

11 The DEIS proposes no mitigation
12 for the 50 story towers at Chicken
13 Island, and the mitigation proposed at
14 parcels H and I siting buildings
15 perpendicular to the Hudson River is
16 insufficient to avoid minimize or
17 reduce impacts as required by New York
18 State's SEQRA law. Further, views from
19 upland Yonkers neighborhoods will also
20 be blocked by these tall buildings.

21 In addition to the building's
22 visual impacts, the shadows they cast
23 would impact several public open spaces
24 and important natural features.

25 Perhaps most notably, most of the river

2 front park and the entire existing
3 sculpture garden will be in full shadow
4 during significant portions of the day
5 during much of the year.

6 Traffic concerns. To mitigate the
7 development's traffic impacts, the DEIS
8 proposes several things, but one very
9 important thing is the elimination of
10 parking along the Yonkers Avenue
11 Nepperhan Avenue corridor from the Saw
12 Mill Parkway to the downtown. In
13 effect, this would create an urban
14 expressway that threatens to divide
15 neighborhoods, stifle pedestrian
16 activity and hurt businesses.

17 The proposed replacement of
18 on-street parking with garage space
19 would be less convenient for customers
20 and would not provide a buffer between
21 traffic on the proposed multi-lane
22 arterial and the pedestrians on the
23 sidewalk.

24 The additional traffic lanes would
25 also make pedestrians crossings much

2 more difficult, in effect a highway
3 would be created as a conduit to
4 accommodate project related traffic,
5 again at the expense of low income
6 residents whose primary mode of
7 transport is the bus or walking.

8 This is not only a safety concern
9 but an environmental justice issue as
10 the motorist benefiting from this wider
11 road passing through low income areas
12 will be residents of expensive homes.

13 Simply put, it is unfair to create
14 a hostile pedestrian environment and
15 widen barriers in residential areas and
16 business districts populated by low
17 income people to facilitate access by
18 new high income residents.

19 The FEIS should propose traffic
20 mitigation by reducing the number of
21 units so that fewer trips can be
22 generated so that these roads don't
23 have to be so wide.

24 The downtown waterfront master
25 plan. Scenic Hudson supports the

2 existing provisions of the 1998
3 downtown waterfront master plan which
4 was instrumental in the redevelopment
5 of the area around the Yonkers
6 recreation pier. The plan promotes
7 small scale, yet urban residential
8 atmosphere, low-rise high coverage
9 development, on-street parking,
10 enhanced development with a variety of
11 water related uses, a variety of
12 interconnected public spaces, visual
13 connections from downtown through to
14 the Palisades, and retention of
15 existing water edges and bulkheads
16 wherever possible.

17 I will just say quickly to wrap
18 up, we support the daylighting of the
19 Saw Mill River. We think that's a good
20 part of the project, and we will submit
21 additional comments by the end of the
22 comment period.

23 We appreciate this opportunity to
24 provide these comments tonight. Thank
25 you very much, and I have copies for

2 all.

3 MS. DEIERLEIN: Robert Walters and
4 then Kathryn Buckley.

5 MR. WALTERS: Good evening,
6 everybody, and Council President,
7 Council members, thank you for giving
8 me the opportunity to talk tonight.

9 You know, it's been interesting
10 listening to everybody speak and, you
11 know, I applaud everybody in the City
12 of Yonkers, the people that come here
13 tonight really care about their city as
14 I know the City Council does.

15 Just a couple of footnotes. There
16 was a comment about Tarrytown or
Sleepy

17 Hollow and the General Motors site
18 having a developer walk away from that
19 site.

20 It's interesting that it was noted
21 in the paper that other developers have
22 tried submitting proposals for that
23 site, so it's interesting that it
24 doesn't seem to be a lack of developers
25 around.

2 Another comment was about not
3 building on the waterfront for so many
4 years. You know, in the early days on
5 the river, you know, being that it was
6 so polluted, it wasn't desirable, it
7 really was the Hudson River community
8 that cleaned up the river, made the
9 Hudson River clean and made it a
10 desirable place to be.

11 And just a footnote, you know,
12 Fred Danback, that worked for the City
13 of Yonkers, he was a Hudson River hero.
14 He was a member of the original Yonkers
15 Chapter of the Hudson River Fisherman
16 that used to be down at the Hudson
17 River Youth Center, and Fred is written
18 up in the book the Hudson River, he was
19 on Bill Moyer's, but Fred really was
20 responsible for cleaning up the
21 Anaconda site, the floom, and actually
22 it was Fred's original idea about
23 daylighting.

24 When I remember Fred down at the
25 old Besak Center where he used to be

2 the maintenance man, he always talked
3 about daylighting the Saw Mill and the
4 San Antonio River Walk, so somehow

Fred

5 has gotten lost in the history, but
6 Fred was talking about this 25 years
7 ago.

8 I have a few questions for the
9 DEIS. I have always been against
10 high-rise buildings on the waterfront.
11 I think they should be in scale to the
12 river, you know, the conservation
13 easement that Scenic Hudson negotiated
14 years ago talked about eight story
15 buildings. We have gone to 12 and 14,
16 but my question is, why do we have to
17 go to 25 story buildings?

18 In H and I, the 1998 master plan,
19 you know, talked about low-rise
20 buildings on the waterfront. It was
21 community inputted. Why has that
22 changed?

23 You know, the cost of developing
24 parcel A, it can be broken out
25 separately. I think that's important

2 to have.

3 The Prospect Avenue Bridge has
4 come up, you know, as a question
5 because that's an expensive part of the
6 project, and does that take away from
7 whatever tax would be generated from
8 the 25 story buildings on H and I?

9 Daylighting is something that was
10 mentioned and I have been interested in
11 for years, and I have never seen a
12 total cost of the daylighting project.
13 How is that broken out?

14 We received 34 million dollars
15 from the State of New York to do the
16 daylighting. I have never seen that
17 incorporated in the total cost of the
18 project, and the accounting for that 34
19 million, is it going to be used for
20 daylighting, or will it be used to
21 employ property just for landscaping
22 along the river? We need an accounting
23 of that 34 million dollars.

24 In the EIS, you know, all the
25 years that I did work on the Saw Mill

2 River, we were always working with the
3 Army Corps. of Engineers on flood
4 control projects, you know, up river,
5 down river, and they were always
6 interested in the floom, but they
7 always said that they would never go in
8 there because it was too dangerous,
9 so-- and it is a creepy place down
10 there, but I haven't seen mention of
11 the Army Corps or the permits.

12 The daylighting, I think that
13 should be incorporated into the EIS. I
14 agree with Pat that we need, you know,
15 a vision of what this project is, as
16 far as the heights, you know, so Pat,
17 if we can get that, that would be
18 great. And I would like to see either
19 energy star building codes be
20 incorporated into the project, and I
21 think that would be a great way to go
22 on the project.

23 On a personal note, you know, I
24 live on Warburton Avenue. I have never
25 seen Odell and Broadway included in the

2 traffic study, and I think it will be a
3 traffic block up there. Some mornings
4 you have to wait three light changes to
5 get through that traffic light.

6 I thank you very much, everybody,
7 for hanging in there, and I am sure
8 we'll be talking again. Thank you.

9 MS. DEIERLEIN: Kathryn Buckley,
10 then Nordrid Spero.

11 MS. BUCKLEY: Good evening. I
12 really commend all of your stamina for
13 putting up with this.

14 MR. LESNICK: You can pull the mic
15 down a little bit.

16 MS. BUCKLEY: I can.

17 MR. LESNICK: That's it.

18 MS. BUCKLEY: So it seems like the
19 study doesn't look at what could happen
20 to everything around, specifically what
21 one of the young men was talking about
22 with his business, and I think there
23 are a lot of businesses that service
24 low-end, the low-end clothing stores
25 and fruit markets that won't be able to

2 afford seven thousand dollars a month
3 in the new malls and the new
4 surrounding retail, so you have to
5 think about how many people and
6 businesses are going to be displaced.

7 And they talk about the jobs, the
8 5,400 jobs that are going to be
9 generated, but as I see it, all I hear
10 about is retail and malls, the only
11 kinds of jobs that are going to be
12 generated are minimum waged sales
13 clerks and cleaning people and the very
14 lowest jobs. They are not going to be
15 jobs that anybody is going to be able
16 to pay the kind of rents and mortgages
17 that are going to be necessary in the
18 next 15 to 20 years, and I do implore
19 you to get that 3D scale model because
20 then everyone can talk about the same
21 thing.

22 There are too many vagaries that I
23 have been hearing about, and please
24 don't rush to approve something that
25 because you get pressure from the

2 people who will make profits and the
3 rest of us will have to live with it.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
much.

6 After Nordrid we have?

7 MS. DEIERLEIN: Hestia De Vries.

8 MS. SPERO: Good evening. I am
9 keeping my comments very brief and
10 thank you for your stamina, and we were
11 listening too so we had to have stamina
12 also.

13 I am speaking specifically on one
14 point, actually I have three, but one
15 is the main point and this is with my
16 historical society hat.

17 I am very much concerned about
18 Yonkers history, and it's our heritage.
19 I am here 40 years in Yonkers coming
20 this year, but I consider it my
21 heritage.

22 Both the River Park Center and the
23 Cacace site are noted in the Draft
24 Environmental Impact Statement to have
25 a high sensitivity for cultural

2 resources relating to the 18th, 19th
3 and 20th century.

4 Only a very limited Phase I
5 cultural analysis was done in this
6 particular -- in the EIS for this
7 project.

8 Given the history of a center of
9 commerce, going back to the 16th
10 century, and the depth with which the
11 inlet existed and the various dams and
12 the mills and the ancillary buildings
13 and how the City developed is all part
14 of our history, and so consequently I
15 just seem to recall that we really--
16 first of all this as very limited, a
17 very limited valuation.

18 Just to give you an example, only
19 about 15, 18 years ago, I think it's
20 only Pat who might remember, maybe
you
21 Chuck too, there was a historic
22 significant sensitivity evaluation done
23 for INDEC, and it was only a Phase I,
24 the phase-- what they call the Phase
25 1-A study.

2 It ranged from-- first of all, it
3 was 39 pages. It ranged from the
4 previous 81 findings to general
5 sensitivity. It had a scope of work,
6 and this was a significantly smaller
7 area that was supposed to be
8 researched. The project never went
9 forward so it was never done, but given
10 the extensiveness of this particular
11 project, certainly Chicken Island, if
12 you have ever seen even maps from a
13 hundred years ago, there was literally
14 an island surrounded by water. There
15 were buildings everywhere, merchants
16 housing, warehouses.

17 Yes, it's pretty much all covered
18 over, and there may have been a reason
19 why it was covered over in 1910, 1915,
20 1920, but if you go into Rome, Greece,
21 if you go to Sweden, if you go to any
22 of the other countries, to Ireland, you
23 uncover parts of history that are
24 becoming very, very significant to the
25 culture being revived.

2 I can very much envision somewhere
3 here in Yonkers a cultural history
4 museum from Yonkers where artifacts are
5 displayed, where reenactments occur,
6 and as I said, I am not speaking on
7 behalf of the Historical Society, but
8 that is essentially what I am
9 envisioning.

10 I would very much like to see a
11 Phase 1-B scope done. First of all,
12 1-A has to be completed sufficiently
13 for this current EIS. It's totally
14 insufficient, and secondly, you then go
15 to the borings, you do the site
16 investigations and so on.

17 Yes, it will take time, but if you
18 lay out the scope of work, we need to
19 do it now, otherwise we won't have it
20 anymore, and I think we owe it to our
21 children, we owe it to our residents,
22 and given the economics, the current
23 world economics and this country's
24 economics, I think we need to proceed
25 with caution, and I hope this, you

2 know, will be taken into consideration
3 and you will request that.

4 I would like to thank Pat for
5 requesting a model, but I also would
6 like to take it a step further if I can
7 have one minute more.

8 MR. LESNICK: If it's very brief.

9 MS. SPERO: I can't help myself,
10 guys.

11 There was a model probably about
12 ten years old, you remember the big
13 model, Chuck. I would very much like
14 to have that model compared with what
15 is on the table now because it was a
16 very wonderful plan.

17 We had reservations with it at the
18 time, but I think it behooves us to do
19 a very sustainable development, but a
20 development that works for the next
21 hundred and so on years, but if we can
22 compare those two models and sort of
23 get a happy median on this.

24 One more thing and that's the a
25 license for community benefits --

2 MR. LESNICK: They have been
3 addressed.

4 MS. SPERO: I know it has, but I
5 am sort of heading the environmental
6 section, and I will submit something in
7 writing.

8 MR. LESNICK: Good.

9 MS. SPERO: Thank you very much.

10 MR. LESNICK: We appreciate it.

11 MS. DEIERLEIN: Hestia De Vries
12 and then Polli Jassal, Carol Adler and
13 Anton Reilly.

14 MS. DE VRIES: Good evening. As I
15 have been manning the Bates Hill table
16 in the breezeway I am well aware of
17 what has been said and what has not.
18 And yes, this is a shameless plug to
19 buy more coffee and cookies, so I am
20 going to make this personal.

21 In the Netherlands where I grew
22 up, as in all other European countries,
23 almost any town or city as old as
24 Yonkers has a genuine city center or
25 town center, a hub where people gather,

2 where events take place, a market, a
3 park, a harbor place, a church square
4 and it defines the town.

5 Those places are referred to when
6 people talk to each other to meet. If
7 your in Amsterdam, people will say
8 let's meet for a beer or, you know,
9 when you have a bachelor, party let's
10 meet at the dum, then we will go and
11 take it from there, and I am just sad
12 to see that at least I don't see it,
13 there is no urban vision in this plan
14 whatsoever. Everything seems to be
15 built to the very maximum.

16 Even the daylighting of the Saw
17 Mill River right across from the
18 station, what a gorgeous station we
19 have. Why not make that really, you
20 know, that's where you come in, or
21 that's where or government buildings
22 are.

23 That could be a square where it
24 could be a park with al fresco dining,
25 and if you look at the picture that I

2 have with me, it is stacked three
3 levels high of retail, and in the DEIS
4 it says that, and I'll read it to you.

5 Chapter One. Introduction. The
6 list of principles are first establish
7 an urban residential atmosphere. That
8 does not mean that it has to be
9 completely chock full of commerce, and
10 two, the second principle is to promote
11 a balance between building coverage and
12 open space, and honestly I don't see
13 any of that and I wonder why.

14 I have six more points and I will
15 go through them really quickly. First
16 of all, certain supporters of this plan
17 appear to be portraying people like me
18 as ungrateful for what the developers
19 are trying to do and what the
20 administration is trying to do. I am
21 not ungrateful. And I want to point
22 out that I do not believe that this is
23 a matter of black and white. It's not
24 you are either with us or against us.

25 I think many of us here this

2 evening are providing constructive
3 criticism. You can be in favor of
4 development, which I am truly, and
5 still say, but does it have to be this
6 outlandish?

7 I would be very grateful if there
8 will be a room for specialty shoe
9 stores so I don't have to go all the
10 way to Eastchester for shoes for my
11 son, but does it have to be in an 11
12 story mall? How many shoe stores do we
13 need? And if shoppers go to this mega
14 mall, will they still go to the same
15 chain stores on Central Avenue?

16 Wouldn't those jobs get lost? Who
17 will go there? It's not like Minnesota
18 where they have the Mall of America
19 where they fly in shopping hungry
20 Japanese by the bus loads.

21 Who will come here? In the video
22 that is currently on the SFC site,
23 Mayor Amicone is saying that these
24 projects will provide thousands of jobs
25 and I think that's great. I am just

2 wondering how many thousands are really
3 needed for the people in Yonkers.

4 With the project of this huge
5 scope, common sense suggests that there
6 won't be enough people in Yonkers to do
7 all this work, so why not just adjust
8 it down to a size that meets reasonable
9 proportions, proportions that will
10 sustain our current population and
11 people that move in.

12 Yonkers is already so heavy
13 populated. There are parking problems,
14 police problems, sewage problems and I
15 can go on.

16 More people does not mean more
17 buying power. There is a ceiling, a
18 point of reducing returns. We do not
19 need another New Rock City. Have you
20 been there lately? I don't know when
21 it was built, but I remember when I
22 came here, and now six years later it's
23 still an eerie ghost town except for
24 Friday and Saturday afternoons when
25 it's so full that you cannot turn

2 around without hitting somebody or
3 finding a parking spot. It's not a fun
4 place to go, and to go back to my
5 earlier point, it's not a place where I
6 would say oh, let's meet there, or
7 let's meet on the southwest corner of
8 the baseball field, that is not a place
9 to meet.

10 I am very sympathetic for those
11 people, especially those people that
12 spoke up here tonight who will get a
13 job building, but I just want to point
14 out that right now, if you look at the
15 towers, the trucks the vans that stand
16 there have addresses that come out of
17 Brooklyn and out of New Jersey, in
18 other words, those are not workers from
19 Yonkers. Thank you.

20 MR. LESNICK: Thank you.

21 MS. DEIERLEIN: Polli Jassal and
22 then Carol Adler and Anton Reilly.

23 MS. JASSAL: More than 50 public
24 meetings and longer than two years
25 since this project has been on board.

2 Wow.

3 Good evening, Council members,
4 ladies and gentlemen, thank you very
5 much for arranging this meeting and
6 getting everybody acquainted and
7 getting the questions.

8 On behalf of Indian American
9 Council of Yonkers and India Center, I
10 speak for myself and for my whole
11 Indian community. Most of the Indians
12 are high educated and are
13 professionals. They by nature are very
14 peaceful, industrious, family oriented
15 and promote education.

16 In 1978 we bought a piece of
17 property in the Village of Irvington.
18 Built a house and moved here in 1980.
19 Our children were in the elementary
20 grades. They had a project to do. We
21 were told to go and get the appropriate
22 supplies from a store called the Army
23 Navy store in Getty Square in Yonkers.

24 We didn't know Yonkers or even
25 know Getty Square. We got the

2 directions and came down to Getty
3 Square. I looked around, and it
4 reminded me of Times Square and the
5 Harlem of the 1980s. I couldn't wait
6 to make my purchases and leave the
7 area.

8 For over 30 years we passed
9 Yonkers on our way to Irvington and up
10 county never looking at Yonkers. Then,
11 the face started to change. Yonkers
12 started to change. There was a promise
13 of brighter future for Yonkers, a
14 future for Yonkers residents. There
15 was a ray of golden sunshine.

16 Usually when opportunity knocks,
17 most of the time we are not at home.
18 This time, the opportunity knocked and
19 we opened the door. This opportunity
20 came in the form of SFC and we let them
21 in. They are very established. They
22 could have gone anywhere in the country
23 for their next project, but they saw
24 Yonkers and stayed.

25 Ladies and gentlemen, we are very

2 fortunate that SFC with all their
3 credentials chose Yonkers. People who
4 never considered Yonkers began to think
5 Yonkers. It's possible driving
6 downtown, the riverfront and the close
7 proximity to New York City.

8 We made our move to Yonkers only
9 four years ago. We had been watching
10 the redevelopment and downtown
11 riverfront with great interest. We do
12 want to bring the beauty back to
13 Yonkers where we can stroll with the
14 children and enjoy the beautiful
15 sunsets over the Palisades.

16 I urge you to see the potential of
17 this project and see that it moves fast
18 before the developers lose their
19 interest in our southwest economy.
20 This is our one time opportunity. It's
21 a lifetime opportunity, so let's all
22 enjoy this new lease of life for
23 Yonkers.

24 We all need to come together and
25 make it happen, make it realized. Let

2 Yonkers be where the mind is without
3 fear and the head is held high.

4 Into the heaven of freedom my
5 father, let my Yonkers residents await.
6 Thank you all and good night.

7 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
much.

8 MS. DEIERLEIN: Our next group of
9 speakers, Carol Adler, Anton Briley,
10 Stephen J. Kubasek, Joe Kozlowski and
11 Terry Nagai.

12 MR. LESNICK: Carol is not here.

13 MS. DEIERLEIN: Anton Briley.

14 MR. BRILEY: Good evening, ladies
15 and gentlemen, my name is Anton Briley
16 and I own two businesses on Palisades
17 Avenue. I am here representing the
18 business members of the Palisade Avenue
19 community, and we have a few concerns
20 that need to be addressed.

21 The biggest concern that we have
22 is the DEIS makes no mention, no
23 statement of how they are going to
24 address the small business owners like
25 me. I am sure that you are aware of

2 the footprint of this baseball stadium
 3 being expanded to Palisade Avenue.
 4 Well, I am very concerned about that
 5 because like I said, I just signed a
 6 lease in January for not one business,
 7 but two, and if this plan goes forward,
 8 I am a little bit concerned on number
 9 one, where am I going to go? Number
 10 two, how am I going to be able to
 11 support my family during this process
 12 that the stadium and downtown is being
 13 developed? And three, what is going to
 14 happen to my family and my businesses
 15 financially? How will be I be able to
 16 move back into the area?

17 This is a great concern because I
 18 heard everybody floating around \$7,000
 19 a month rent. I am telling you right
 20 now I pay \$1400 a month. To reach
 21 \$7,000, I don't know how I am going to
 22 do that, there is just no way possible.

23 The DEIS has made no mention of --
 24 no one has come to the small business
 25 owners on Palisades to work with us.

2 We are shaking in our boots. I mean,
 3 nobody is trying to hold back progress
 4 or anything like that, but the people
 5 who have been in the area are paying
 6 taxes, who put elected officials into
 7 office, who put up those voting signs
 8 and their businesses and stuff like
 9 that. Now we are feeling like hey,
 10 this big development is coming and this
 11 big 800 pound gorilla is in the room
 12 and nobody is paying attention.
 13 Everybody is all happy, you known, to
 14 show off this big 800 pound gorilla.

15 It remind me of the movie King
 16 Kong, when everybody is so happy to
 17 show the 800 pound gorilla and bring it
 18 to the show, but then the gets out of
 19 control, and nobody is keeping in mind
 20 the, you know, the record volume, or
 21 should I say the lack of record volume
 22 of trading on the New York Stock
 23 Exchange that we had yesterday. You
 24 know, there is great fears going on,
 25 the 30 year treasury bond down. We

2 have great fears going on now, and
 3 everybody is talking this grandeur, you
 4 know, Chicken Island is going to be
 5 developed and everything is going to be
 6 great, but nobody is considering the
 7 worst case scenario here.

8 You know, are we going to consider
 9 five percent capacity, ten percent
 10 capacity with all this development and
 11 after everything is done? Like I heard
 12 a couple of other speakers spoke
 13 earlier, they spoke of White Plains.

14 Well, great, the reason why their
 15 tax base is so great because they got a
 16 Walmart. We know how powerful
 Walmart
 17 is, but then the mom and pop stores
 18 like mine is getting pushed out
 19 because, you know, because of big
 20 business, big business, these giant
 21 chain stores are coming in and
 22 swallowing up mom and pop businesses
 23 like ours, and it's really frightening,
 24 you know, to small business owners like
 25 myself because we see these big

2 developers coming in, nobody is coming
 3 by, they are not coming by talking to
 4 us. They are taking pictures. They
 5 are pointing, you know, they are
 6 licking their chops, you know, at our
 7 business here that we took the time,
 8 our sweat, blood and tears to try to
 9 come to make a reality to try to feed
 10 our families, and now all of a sudden
 11 we see this big giant shadow coming to
 12 swallow us up, quite frankly, and no
 13 one from the city is coming to see the
 14 small business owners, and come to our
 15 aid and say hey, this is what we can do
 16 for you, and I know that this new
 17 developer is coming in, and here is how
 18 we can help you.

19 Everybody is just clapping and
 20 everybody is all gung ho, and we are
 21 ready for the new development, but, you
 22 know, have you guys went around and
 23 talked to the small business owners
 24 around-- how are you going to be able
 25 to support your family? What are you

2 going to do in the interim while these
3 guys are building up?

4 What are you going to say to your
5 clients, your customer base? You know,
6 What do we tell them, you know, while
7 they are doing all this development,
8 and it's very very frightening, you
9 know, and nobody is talking about the
10 small business owners.

11 I mean, we are there. I mean,
12 they are talking about people urinating
13 in Chicken Island at 11 o'clock at
14 night, but what about the people who
15 get up and go to work every day to make
16 downtown Yonkers development, you
know,
17 to make downtown Yonkers, Getty
Square,
18 you know, what it is right now and, you
19 know, we are paying those taxes.

20 As far as the people urinating on
21 Chicken Island, that is a quality of
22 life issue. We don't need to dump
23 several billion dollars. We don't need
24 to empty out Warren Buffet or Bill
25 Gates bank account, you know, to put in

2 the downtown development just for a
3 quality of life issue.

4 You know, if that is what it is, I
5 really don't think that we need to go
6 that way. I really think that
7 attention needs to be made to the
8 people who are the small business
9 owners, the ones who are really
10 affected, not only the residential
11 people. Thank you.

12 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
much.

13 MS. DEIERLEIN: Stephen Kubasek
14 and Joe Kozlowski.

15 MR. KUBASEK: City Council
16 President, Majority Leader, Minority
17 Leader, City Clerk, my name is Stephen
18 Kubasek and I have been a life-long
19 resident of the City of Yonkers. I am
20 retired now three years and busier than
21 I have ever been in my line of work. I
22 am doing a lot of things around the
23 house and cleaning up and started to
24 clean up a lot of paperwork, and I
25 accumulated a lot of paperwork,

2 especially when I was a City Council
3 person, but I never throw anything
4 away, all the memos and the booklet's
5 and the reports and so on and so forth,
6 and I started coming across weeks ago a
7 lot of different items concerning Getty
8 Square.

9 I ran across the Ginsberg Taubman
10 report back in the 70's, and I had
11 articles and memos on the infamous
12 fountains that were brought in and
13 put-- the fountain that was put in
14 Getty Square and the clock tower that
15 worked for a while and then didn't tell
16 the right time and finally didn't tell
17 time at all, and the facade program.
18 The facade program was maybe two or
19 three of them, everybody was getting a
20 new facade. They were getting the same
21 type of aluminum front and the letters
22 and so on and so forth, and of course
23 that all went down, the stores went out
24 of business and the facade program went
25 down too.

2 Then we had the waterfront
3 development as Mayor Martinelli alluded
4 to. The Scrimshaw House was the only
5 thing that came about from that, and
6 all of the above paperwork all went to
7 the recycling bin, just had to get rid
8 of it.

9 The sad part is, that these are
10 all good intentions. These were all
11 things that were done to redevelop
12 Getty Square and the surrounding area,
13 but nothing was done on a comprehensive
14 basis where it was all piecemeal. It
15 was either a facade program, it was a
16 fountain in Getty Square, but nothing
17 was done on a comprehensive basis as is
18 being proposed now.

19 Also another point is, that most
20 of these programs had federal money
21 attached to them. If you didn't do
22 this, you didn't get this. If you
23 didn't comply with this, you didn't
24 comply with this, one of the biggest
25 things was the Otis Elevator

2 development on Warburton Avenue. I
3 wasn't in the Council then but I came
4 in right after that, and in order to
5 get nine million dollars to redevelop,
6 and we had all the employees from Otis
7 screaming, we had to bring in the
8 Riverview One Housing, Riverview Two
9 Housing, all those towers had to come
10 in because that is what the federal
11 government said.

12 So here you really don't have
13 federal strings attached. It's true,
14 we also met the dead-enders as Mayor
15 Martinelli said because of Judge Sand
16 and the housing and school
17 discrimination case, so we never really
18 got a chance to get anything off the
19 ground if there was going to be
20 anything with the waterfront
21 development.

22 In Yonkers, in the last 12 years
23 downtown we have seen action in the
24 form of concrete, brick, steel and
25 glass, we have seen the library, we

2 have seen various rentals on the
3 waterfront. We have seen the
4 revitalization of the Scrimshaw House,
5 restaurants on the pier, on Main
6 Street, the trolley car barn.

7 We have seen Yonkers move ahead in
8 other areas too, Costco, Stu Leonards,
9 Home Depot, all of which has brought
10 jobs and lowered the tax base, and all
11 of those projects too I might remember
12 met opposition, but who knows about the
13 proposed real estate tax that is now
14 being proposed for nine percent might
15 have been 19 percent if we didn't have
16 the above development.

17 Now, in this plan there are so
18 many facets of it. I heard mention
19 about the ballpark. You know what,
20 after Yankee Stadium is finished, and
21 they are going to be charged \$75 to \$80
22 for a bleacher seat, probably a lot of
23 people will want to take their families
24 to the ballpark here, and as mentioned,
25 there are a lot of amenities. I think

2 Pat Gambardella mentioned that in the
3 area, and it's probably a nice day to
4 treat and go out see a ballgame.

5 In conclusion, I would like to
6 mention that Yonkers was incorporated
7 as a city in 1872. Wouldn't it be nice
8 if in the year 2012, the 140th
9 anniversary, that most of this plan
10 would be complete.

11 Certainly economic times dictate
12 that now is the time to act, and in 30
13 to 40 years we certainly don't want to
14 look back and say look at this nice
15 literature, look at these power points,
16 look at these videos, only to say too
17 bad it never got off the ground.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. LESNICK: Thank you very
20 much.

21 MS. DEIERLEIN: Joe Kozlowski.

22 MR. LESNICK: Joe's on deck.

23 MS. DEIERLEIN: And then Terry
24 Nagai, I believe, Martin McCloyne, Joan
25 Louisa Gianetto, I guess. Mr.
Kozlowski.

2 MR. KOZLOWSKI: All set? Okay. I
3 am with the Friends of the old Croton
4 Aqueduct. I am a member of the Board
5 of Directors, and the aqueduct most
6 people think of is running north to
7 south. However, in Yonkers we have an
8 east to west portion that is along
9 Ashburton Avenue where you guys are
10 redeveloping now, and with this project
11 is going to affect our viewshed with
12 this 50 story building, and also going
13 back a few years we participated in the
14 River Fest.

15 We are kind of running out of
16 places on the river that people can go
17 to, so this last -- where Palisades
18 Point is, we would like to have that
19 preserved somehow to have more open
20 space so that we can have activities to
21 bring the people that represent open
22 space to have a place to go and enjoy
23 the river along with everybody else
24 during the years, so what I want to do
25 is give this to the gentleman here with

2 a statement that we have, and one of
3 the maps of the Saw Mill, and I would
4 like to-- while I am on the Board of
5 Directors, I am also a resident of the
6 City of Yonkers, and reading the DEIS I
7 have a couple of questions as a
8 resident of the City of Yonkers
9 divorced from the Friends of the
10 friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct.

11 On the Saw Mill with the
12 daylighting, there is a certain amount
13 of money that is available, and how I
14 interpret this thing is, that the
15 developers are using the money to buy
16 buildings.

17 If we have the 35 million or 24
18 million dollars, we need to buy the
19 rear yards of some of these buildings
20 on Main Street and daylight along
21 Larkin Plaza which we already own, so
22 if we use the 24 million, we can do
23 this before development happens or it
24 doesn't happen, so, in other words, we
25 shouldn't be giving that state money to

2 the developer, it's supposed to be used
3 for opening the Saw Mill and
4 daylighting this which we can do, we
5 don't need the developer for that part,
6 and also in the DEIS the traffic on
7 Yonkers Avenue and Nepperhan, way
8 back
9 when before they made the arterial,
10 Yonkers Avenue, you had a northbound
11 where you can go north. You don't have
12 that now. You have an overpass and
13 with the school busing that you have
14 now, if you have accidents, you need
15 another way to get to, say, Ashburton
16 Avenue or to downtown Yonkers, because
17 if one end is cut off, you create a
18 traffic jam that goes down to the Saw
19 Mill.

20 I mean, even now you wait like 10
21 or 15 minutes for the lights to change,
22 so we need to do this, and the
23 developer needs to address this because
24 you are going to put so many people,
25 three thousand people, folks, you need
to have another way in, you have to

2 have another way in and another way
3 out.

4 Also at Nepperhan Avenue and
5 Chestnut Street which is also, I guess,
6 paved over with a wall, that needs to
7 be opened up too to have another
8 access, and along Elm Street and Linden
9 Street having an access to Park Hill
10 Avenue.

11 You need to move parking at least
12 on one side of the street from there,
13 because if you do have these backups
14 and people need to get to wherever they
15 have to go, or even emergency vehicles,
16 we need alternate access if you are
17 going to bring this amount of people
18 into the city, into the downtown area.
19 I didn't see that addressed in the
20 DEIS.

21 And a few speakers mentioned the
22 previous master plan, I guess, which is
23 still current, and we should be using
24 our, I guess, the way the developers
25 come in, they should be using our plan

2 but they are not. They are coming in
3 with their own plans, and their own
4 plans are way out of scale from what
5 our current master plan for the
6 waterfront was, which was about two to
7 eight story buildings, and that's what
8 we currently have on the books. I
9 think Mr. Arcaro mentioned that too,
10 and so this should be where it is, so
11 this development here is way out of
12 scale, so that wasn't in the DEIS, it
13 doesn't mention that.

14 And also last night I listened to
15 the budget hearing. I happened to
16 check it out with Commissioner Pagano
17 who said there is additional costs and
18 additional manpower needed for these
19 high-rise incidents, whether they be
20 fires or shootings or whatever that
21 goes on that the Fire Department and
22 the Police Department are involved in,
23 so this has to be factored in because
24 it's going to cost us a lot of money.

25 Even though the developer puts up

2 the building, gets the tax abatement,
3 he leaves and we are stuck with it, so
4 that needs to be dealt with, and also
5 an alternate for the Chicken Island
6 could be something that we can do
7 without the developer.

8 If he says we can't do it or the
9 City is saying we aren't getting a good
10 deal, we should have a Walmart, Target,
11 a super Stop and Shop because this area
12 of Yonkers is not served by any type of
13 supermarkets, a CVS that could be built
14 on the existing structure, and also at
15 the budget hearing you had the
16 Waterfront Director's Office. You can
17 eliminate that because planning and
18 engineering should be doing the work of
19 this waterfront gentleman that has six
20 hundred thousand dollars worth of
21 stuff, plus a four hundred dollar, what
22 do you call it, gasoline and things.
23 Thank you.

24 MS. DEIERLEIN: Terry Nagai.
25 Martin McCoyne. John Louisa Gianetto.

2 Patti Breen.

3 MR. LESNICK: We are in the ninth
4 inning now.

5 MS. DEIERLEIN: Bill Dennison.
6 Patti?

7 MS. BREEN: I am coming. I was
8 napping. I like being last.

9 MR. LESNICK: You may not be last.

10 MS. BREEN: Your eyes are closing.
11 Thank you. As you know, I am for the
12 project.

13 MR. LESNICK: Thank you.

14 MS. BREEN: I think I am for the
15 project. The reason I felt I needed to
16 come back was because I think this
17 project is projecting an image, the
18 image that Yonkers needs to bring
19 Yonkers forward.

20 The image of Yonkers now is, I
21 think we are still waiting for the
22 prince on the white horse from Albany.
23 Maybe it's Governor Patterson or Andrea
24 Stewart Cousins that is going to
25 deliver the money to fix the problem in

2 Yonkers, the problem that we can't get
3 rid of, the nuisance taxes, the one and
4 a half percent exit tax, the ten
5 percent on our state tax that keeps
6 people out of our city, and until we
7 bring more tax dollars into our city,
8 we cannot get rid of those nuisance
9 taxes.

10 So it's a great project. They
11 have thought hard. It's a great
12 company. People may think it's too
13 big. It's taking up that whole
14 riverfront. Well, the reality is,
15 there is not much of that riverfront
16 that you and I can use today. It's
17 brown fields. You have got the old
18 Glenwood Lighthouse. That thing needs
19 to be torn down. We need to get that
20 down.

21 We have got the old lighthouse
22 restaurant. We have got Altman
23 Lighting. When was the last time you
24 took your kids on a picnic to Altman
25 Lighting or to the lighthouse

2 restaurant?

3 We don't use the land down there.
4 It's not a great riverfront. It looks
5 like hell, and it's our job to get it
6 fixed.

7 I know everybody has an opinion
8 and different views, but we have as a
9 developer-- maybe it's bigger than many
10 people think, but it's about
11 compromise, and I much rather see what
12 is going to come than wait for what
13 they think they are going to get
14 because there is no money to do what
15 they want.

16 The state is not going to clean it
17 up. If Federal Government is not going
18 to clean it up and Yonkers taxpayers
19 aren't going to have the money.

20 Yonkers is getting older. Our
21 parents-- we are getting older. We
22 don't want to have to leave, and if the
23 taxes keep going up, we all have to go
24 because it's getting higher and higher.

25 Next year these-- I love the line,

2 the lady sitting over there,
3 professional complainers. I can't wait
4 until we get to the next budget time
5 and they come out and complain because
6 their taxes are going up nine or 15
7 percent.

8 So please look at this. You have
9 got to stamp that report-- read that
10 report. I can't even say it I am so
11 tired. Please, let's get through it
12 and let's not wait another week. I am
13 so disappointed that we left this open
14 again.

15 We really need to move forward, so
16 thank you. Good night.

17 MR. LESNICK: Thank you. Good
18 night.

19 MS. DEIERLEIN: And Mr. President
20 I call the last group of speakers.
21 Bill Dennison, Gary Weinberg.

22 MR. LESNICK: Gary is here.

23 MS. DEIERLEIN: Terry Laguy and
24 Lorraine Palais and last one of all,
25 Elliot Palais.

2 MR. WEINBERG: Good evening. I
3 will try to be brief so that you can
4 all be out of here.

5 My name is Gary Weinberg. I am
6 President of the co-op at 1085
7 Warburton Avenue which is the northwest
8 corner of Yonkers right by the
9 Graystone train station.

10 First I want to say this is an
11 excellent opportunity for Yonkers, and
12 there are a lot of good things that can
13 come about from this project.

14 I would focus on three things.
15 Number one, the best views. This is a
16 north south issue. I will touch on
17 traffic, and then the issue of
18 oversight of the project.

19 We currently have a view that
20 extends of New York City from Citicorp.
21 We see the top of the Chrysler
22 Building. We see the Empire State
23 Building, and then all the way across
24 the George Washington Bridge, and of
25 course up the river.

2 We have an apartment building at
3 the Glenwood Train Station and that is
4 the biggest obstruction to our view
5 currently, and we have these two
6 smokestacks at the power station at the
7 Glenwood Train Station which while it
8 would be nice if they weren't there at
9 all, I guess it is best keeping them as
10 a historic monument as opposed to a
11 proposal to replace that with an entire
12 building.

13 I went back and used my Eagle Boy
14 Scout skills to do a little bit of
15 mapping to get an idea of what was
16 going happen when these proposed
17 buildings on the waterfront goes up.

18 We started with a small map that
19 was included with all the materials and
20 projected that forward.

21 MR. LESNICK: Mark, if you can
22 help him with that.

23 MR. WEINBERG: This shows one
end
24 to my far right is where our building
25 is at the northwest corner of Yonkers

2 extending all the way to New York City,
3 and gives you an idea of the scale of
4 what affects our city:

5 I marked off, just to get a feel
6 what would be blocked by the 25 story
7 building at the waterfront, and without
8 going into a lot of detail, what it
9 shows here, I will summarize it, that
10 when we look at the building at
11 Glenwood, it extends to, or appears to
12 extend a little bit from what we see as
13 the right side, the western most to
14 beyond the left side, the eastern most
15 which blocks part of what we see in the
16 city on both sides.

17 Fortunately it doesn't appear, and
18 I say appear because my mapping skills
19 aren't perfect with everything that I
20 pulled together, to go as far as the
21 Empire State Building from where we
22 are.

23 The point is, that this is an area
24 that affects property values. It
25 affects the views. It affects the City

2 of Yonkers and it needs to be
3 considered as that view corridor all
4 the way down to the City.

5 Pat McDow has recommended that
6 there be a 3D model. In all these
7 considerations we have to consider the
8 environment, not just what we have here
9 in Yonkers, but what is viewed beyond,
10 and it's important that be a part of
11 that consideration.

12 The waterfront is the most
13 significant part that affects the
14 views. The 50 story tower behind that
15 is also a concern, but less in terms of
16 what we see from our area.

17 The other areas I will touch on
18 briefly, number one, traffic.
19 Obviously the City Council is aware of
20 traffic issues on Executive Boulevard,
21 so it's critical that studies go as far
22 up the river, or up to northern Yonkers
23 to Executive Boulevard to consider
24 those traffic issues, and finally my
25 third point has to do with oversight of

2 the projects.

3 We are at 1058 Warburton Avenue.
4 We have a project right next door, 1077
5 Warburton Avenue. We have major issues
6 dealing with a developer and things
7 that pertain to health and safety
8 issues that we have brought attention
9 to the City Council and we appreciate
10 being heard, and these issues are a
11 small scale of what will go on with a
12 project like, this so we appreciate
13 oversight being an important part of
14 the project. Thank you.

15 MS. DEIERLEIN: Terry Laguy. Is
16 Terry here?

17 MR. LESNICK: Terry is here.

18 MS. LAGUY: Good evening. I was
19 determined to weather this out tonight
20 because I couldn't do it last time.

21 All right.

22 Good evening, everyone, to our
23 City Council members, I am going to
24 appeal to you not just representing
25 your districts, but to all of us in

2 Yonkers tonight regarding the SFC's
3 Phase I overdevelopment.

4 I know that you've all considered
5 how you want to do the best for
6 Yonkers. You have been brave enough to
7 run for office, and I know you had
8 very, very deep seated, very laudable
9 interests, and therefore again I will
10 be appealing to your being carrying,
11 responsible, ethical, wise in your
12 decisions.

13 I hope also, in calling Yonkers
14 the City of vision, it ain't just going
15 to be myopic, nearsighted. It has to
16 be farsighted also, so what I am going
17 to say concerns not just us now living
18 here, but also for those living here in
19 the future.

20 First of all, please do not
21 approve of this Phase I project unless
22 there is a definite protection of our
23 small businesses. As you heard
24 tonight, they are worried sick about
25 what is going to happen to them when

2 the rents go beyond their means.

3 You have got to put in a definite
4 protection of these small businesses in
5 the downtown Getty Square area,
6 Palisades, west side.

7 Jorge Funes, he was up here
8 talking about his Palisades business
9 and then someone else here. Here is
10 what I propose.

11 Using the -- I got my notes.
12 Using the TIFP language, I propose to
13 help these folks who have been loyal
14 and hard working citizens of Yonkers,
15 and they are Yonkers, especially in the
16 Getty Square area. We want to keep the
17 diversity there.

18 I am challenging you. Have the
19 Yonkers area and Getty Square be
20 diverse economically and culturally.
21 Let's keep that there, all right? How
22 do I propose this? Using the TIFP
23 language, let's set up a rent increment
24 payment office.

25 In short, RIP office. I hope the

2 RIP stands for rent increment payment
3 and never rest in piece, okay. This
4 would be the RIP office where after
5 perhaps the rent becomes greater than
6 one-third of their income, just like
7 the way we try to keep our rents
8 one-third of what we bring in, once it
9 goes past that, this office will help
10 them pay for what they cannot afford,
11 and this is something new.

12 I am not proposing a small
13 business help and so forth, and if the
14 TIFP does go by, does pass, part of it
15 does belong to the City. It's not just
16 for the infrastructure, that money can
17 be used for the RIP office. Please
18 help these folks.

19 Secondly, I am challenging you
20 also to be creators, originators, not
21 just going by what the state and the
22 city and the county have as policies.
23 What am I saying?

24 I sent away for the state coastal
25 policies from Albany. Well, guess what

2 year it was printed in? 1982. So
3 there is nothing in here about global
4 warming and it's effects. You've got
5 to be originators and creators.

6 All right, what does this mean in
7 terms of global warming? That can't be
8 five minutes.

9 MR. LESNICK: That's five minutes.

10 MS. LAGUY: I propose a moratorium
11 on river housing. Do not approve of
12 the two 25 story towers because the
13 affects of global warming means our sea
14 levels are rising, and you are going to
15 approve of such a project of putting
16 all those people down there where their
17 investments and their lives are going
18 to be put in danger?

19 All right, I will just end it by
20 saying in the next century, every ten
21 years there is a prediction of coastal
22 flooding. Can you imagine the lawsuits
23 that will be coming up? Do you want to
24 be responsible for putting people down
25 there anymore?

2 I can't believe it's five minutes.

3 I will continue writing.

4 MR. LESNICK: Thank you. You have
5 until the 30th of May to keep writing.

6 MS. DEIERLEIN: Lorraine Palais.

7 MS. PALAIS: I got to be the last
8 one because I luckily went to the
9 awards ceremony for our Yonkers Police
10 and I was so proud to be there.

11 They talk about history repeating
12 itself. Please, God, hopefully that's
13 not what is going to happen in Yonkers.
14 I have got to tell you a little story,
15 and Joan, you might remember this
16 happening, you were very young at the
17 time, but back in 1973 at the last City
18 Council meeting of the year, December,
19 1973, on the agenda, on the legislation
20 that was being drafted was the plans to
21 approve a building that was to be
22 constructed across the street from
23 Yonkers -- from City Hall on Nepperhan
24 Avenue where SFC is now talking about a
25 hotel.

2 The architect for that was Iam Pai
3 (Ph.), a very well renowned architect
4 at the time, and the thing had all been
5 approved, and at the last meeting, they
6 started talking about putting it into
7 committee again, and this went on for
8 quite a while. Why are we putting it
9 off? Why are we doing this? You know,
10 it's all approved, and the late
11 Councilman, Jim Walsh finally said, who
12 cares whose name is on the plaque? And
13 all of us realized what was going on.

14 If it was approved that day, the
15 plaque in the city building that was to
16 be built would have the name of the
17 mayor, Alfred Delbello.

18 If it went over to January, the
19 incoming mayor, Angelo Martinelli who
20 got up here and talked about things
21 going well, he was one of the reasons
22 things did not get built, but anyway,
23 because they had a majority, it did go
24 over and it never got built.

25 While everybody talked about it,

2 and we needed the building, and we
3 still need it, 34 years later we still
4 do not have a building built across the
5 street from City Hall to house
6 departments that we needed.

7 Unfortunately, I don't have
8 another 34 years. I'd love to live
9 another 34 years. But I am realistic
10 about it.

11 I want to see some things done
12 now. I know there are things in this
13 plan that we'd like to change, and I
14 understand from listening to Mr.
15 Cappelli, and I watched the proceedings
16 on television two weeks ago, said that
17 he was going to listen to our concerns.

18 I am certain there are a lot of
19 things that people are concerned about
20 that he will listen to and we can
21 change, but we cannot keep talking and
22 talking.

23 In 1973, Talbin Corporation wanted
24 to build what is now Executive
25 Boulevard, and everybody screamed
about

2 who needs a hotel there, green space,
3 green space, green space. Well, I just
4 went past it on the way to the awards
5 ceremony at Untermeyer Park and there
6 is this hotel going up, so it took 34
7 years, but we are going to get that
8 hotel.

9 In 1987, Wilmorite Corporation
10 wanted to build, and we talked about it
11 and talked about it and talked about
12 it, and they got tired of talking and
13 they left and we still don't have a
14 decent place.

15 All I know is, if we had allowed
16 Talbin Corporation to build what they
17 wanted to on what is now Executive
18 Boulevard, White Plains would not have
19 the Galleria, it would have been in
20 Yonkers. We keep talking things and
21 people go other places.

22 Target, we could have had one up
23 where Stu Leonards is now. Talbin
24 Corporation, well, they got tired of
25 talking, so we have got one in the

2 Bronx, we have got one in Mount Vernon,
3 Yonkers gets nothing. Stop talking.
4 Start doing something that is
5 important.

6 Finally, say yes to this project.
7 There are things that I'd like to see
8 changed in it, but I would like to see
9 it started, because from what I
10 understand, we are going to run out of
11 the chances of the money that is slowly
12 being pulled back in New York City, and
13 we are going to lose the chance of
14 having that money here.

15 MR. LESNICK: Thank you. Our last
16 speaker is a former Councilman again,
17 Elliot Palais.

18 MR. PALAIS: Thank you very much,
19 Mr. Speaker. Being the last one I
20 guess presents a problem.

21 If I go back some years, some of
22 you may remember when asbestos wasn't
23 a
24 dirty word, and Tommy Mandville was
25 the
26 playboy of note, and he had a hobby of
27 collecting wives, and when he was

2 getting married for the eighth time,
3 television asked him how do you feel
4 about this? His answer was, I know
5 what I have to do, the question is how
6 do I make it interesting? And that's
7 my job tonight.

8 You heard Steve Kubasek. You
9 heard Mayor Martinelli. You will hear
10 from me. I would not like to see you
11 coming before a future Councilman
12 saying the things that we are saying.
13 Talbin slipped away. The Wilmorite
14 people slipped away. We don't want to
15 see SFC slip away.

16 We know there are problems. We
17 know what the people on Palisades
18 Avenue -- people on Main Street are
19 concerned about.

20 Yes, we can listen to them, but
21 please, if we start this project, we
22 will not lose an opportunity and you
23 won't have to stand up apologetic
24 before a Council such as yourself and
25 say we could have, we would have, we

2 should have.

3 I thank you very much. It's been
4 a long evening. I was going to ask you
5 to stand up for 30 seconds of my time
6 to stretch, but you took a break
7 anyway, so thank you very much and
8 thank you.

9 MR. LESNICK: Thank you and good
10 night and good morning. Not there yet.

11 That concludes this public
12 hearing. As was stated earlier, the
13 public comment period will stay open
14 until the 30th of May. If you are
15 watching this on Channel 78, as it gets
16 rebroadcasted through the month you
17 have until the 30th of May to get your
18 comments into the City Council
19 President's office.

20 Thank you very much.

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23
24
25

1 CERTIFICATION 273

2

3 STATE OF NEW YORK)

4) ss.

5 COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER)

6 I, HOWARD BRESHIN, a Court
Reporter

7 and Notary Public within and for the State of
New

8 York, do hereby certify:

9 That I reported the proceedings that
10 are hereinbefore set forth, and that such
11 transcript is a true and accurate record of said
12 proceedings.

13 I further certify that I am not
14 related to any of the parties to this action by
15 blood or marriage, and that I am in no way
16 interested in the outcome of this matter.

17 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have
hereunto
18 set my hand.

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HOWARD BRESHIN,
SENIOR COURT REPORTER