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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC HEARING

IN RE: FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 59 - 2011 ENTITLED
THE ZONING ORDINANCE FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON, BY
AMENDING SECTION 306 TABLE OF PERMITTED USES BY
DISTRICT; SECTION 307 B.4. TABLE OF LOT AND SETBACK
REQUIREMENTS BY DISTRICT; 601.A.5. MIXED-USE ADAPTIVE
REUSE; TABLE 6.1 OFF STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS;
SECTION 602.E. LOCATION OF PARKING.

HELD:

Thursday, January 12, 2012

LOCATION:

Council Chambers
Scranton City Hall
340 North Washington Avenue
Scranton, Pennsylvania

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR

OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

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CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

JANET EVANS, PRESIDENT

PAT ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

(Not present.)

ROBERT MCGOFF

FRANK JOYCE

(Not present.)

JOHN LOSCOMBE

NANCY KRAKE, CITY CLERK

CATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

BOYD HUGHES, SOLICITOR

(Not present.)

1 MS. EVANS: I'd like to call this
2 public hearing to order. Roll call, please.

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Here.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan. Mr.
6 Loscombe.

7 MR. LOSCOMBE: Here.

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Joyce. Mrs.
9 Evans.

10 MS. EVANS: Here. Notice of public
11 hearing is hereby given that Scranton City
12 Council will hold a public hearing on
13 Thursday, January 12, 2012, at 6:00 p.m. in
14 council chambers, second floor municipal
15 building, 340 North Washington Avenue,
16 Scranton, Pennsylvania. The purpose of said
17 public hearing is to hear testimony and
18 discuss the following:

19 FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 59 2011,
20 AMENDING THE FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 74, 1993,
21 AS AMENDED, ENTITLED "THE ZONING ORDINANCE
22 FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON" BY AMENDING
23 SECTION 306 TABLE OF PERMITTED USES BY
24 DISTRICT; SECTION 307 B.4. TABLE OF LOT AND
25 SETBACK REQUIREMENTS BY DISTRICT; 601.A.5.

1 MIXED-USE ADAPTIVE REUSE; TABLE 6.1 OFF
2 STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS; SECTION 602.E.
3 LOCATION OF PARKING.

4 Our first speaker is Dan Hubbard.

5 MR. HUBBARD: Good evening, Council.
6 Daniel Hubbard. I appreciate you guys
7 tabling this in the past. It did help. A
8 lot of the residents did get together and
9 discuss a lot of the ordinances ourselves
10 and then we did have a meeting with
11 Mr. Cordaro and another representative of
12 his company last Sunday at the Lace Works to
13 go over a lot of the projects.

14 Initially our concerns with the
15 project from the get-go were really based on
16 the dormitory part, college dormitory part
17 to allow that as a permitted use.
18 Mr. Cordaro and Mr. Braddock on Sunday did
19 indicate to us that any college
20 dormitory-style housing that would be in
21 there would probably be engineered towards
22 the medical school with the possibility of a
23 culinary school coming in there, which was
24 another part of the legislation that had
25 allowed a school to be permitted use, so we

1 did discuss that with them on Sunday and
2 they did inform us that it would be
3 something -- the dormitory part would be if
4 done in that phase would be geared towards
5 graduate students and the medical school, so
6 the residents really didn't have an
7 objection to that after we talked to them
8 about that. The legislation. The other --
9 obviously, I just touched on the school, we
10 talked about the culinary school.

11 The tavern part of the legislation
12 was another hot spot that kind of jumped out
13 of the neighborhood simply because Scranton
14 doesn't really need another bar. I don't
15 think any neighborhood in the city needs
16 another bar, but we were assured by the
17 gentlemen that this was going be part of a
18 restaurant that would be affiliated with
19 possibly the culinary school and that it
20 would not be a stand alone tavern.

21 So that based on that we really --
22 neither I nor any of the other residents
23 would have an objection to a restaurant with
24 a liquor license, certainly just did not
25 want another stand-alone bar in the

1 neighborhood because we do have within two
2 or three blocks of this facility there is
3 about five bars already, so it wasn't --
4 that wasn't a concern.

5 Parking, the off-street parking was
6 a concern, but that was addressed.
7 Originally we were going to ask based on
8 probably an older zoning map that was looked
9 at to have the 1400 block of Albright and
10 Gardner Avenue, the east side of Gardner and
11 the west side of Albright to be rezoned
12 because that was in the old map listed as an
13 IL to help mitigate any of the off-street
14 parking problems that would be coming into
15 the residential area, because the request
16 that they are asking for is to extend that
17 700 feet from the entrance of the building
18 but within the IL. Today when we did get
19 here they showed me an updated map that
20 indicates that those two blocks are already
21 considered -- zoned an R-2, so we don't have
22 any concern with that because that's outside
23 of the IL.

24 What homes are left in the IL on the
25 1500 block of Albright and/or Gardner really

1 come -- total up to I think about five homes
2 total spread over two full blocks, so really
3 it's not a problem for them. Those homes
4 are right next to the commercial facilities
5 already. They already have their driveways
6 and parking like that and that's really one
7 block closer to Greenridge Street and it
8 wouldn't be something that I would think
9 would be problem concerning this project.

10 They did show us that they do have a
11 significant amount of off-street parking
12 just, you know, as a neighborhood you would
13 be concerned. You know, people --
14 Greenridge we are fortunate. We have a
15 healthy amount of off-street -- on-street
16 parking in front of our homes without
17 passers or crowds and putting garbage cans
18 out to reserve spots and things like that,
19 so the residents were concerned about that.

20 They were really our only concerns
21 with this legislation. The project as put
22 forward is I think a good project for the
23 city, for the particular building. My only
24 concern is, and I did voice this on Sunday,
25 is that type of nonspecified use opened

1 ended legislation can lead to problems. It
2 can lead to problems down the road. We are
3 very well aware of other areas in the city
4 that have had problems due to open-ended
5 zoning changes that were just left suited
6 for one project.

7 I understand that this be would be
8 citywide, that this could possibly foster
9 the use of other facilities in the city to
10 change and that's a positive thing for the
11 city, but again, I do have reservations on
12 open ended unspecified use legislation in
13 the city. So I just hope that we can get
14 some of the things that we discussed on the
15 record today that these guys have agreed to,
16 the nonstanding tavern, things like that, to
17 help at least give us a basis to go forward
18 with this, but otherwise I would say all of
19 the residents we have talked to that either
20 attended the meeting were all in favor of
21 this. We would also like to see something
22 to be done with that building.

23 Any help the city can help these
24 guys with the surrounding facilities that
25 are in let's say not so good shape, falling

1 down, collapsing buildings to help mitigate
2 some more of the problems in the
3 neighborhood with those that are adjacent to
4 their property certainly would help and
5 clean up the neighborhood itself and move
6 this project forward and make this project
7 look more presentable too clients and keep
8 what they are going to try to get in there
9 so anything we can do to help clean up the
10 neighborhood and get it looking good so that
11 their project can be successful certainly we
12 would appreciate the city on that end of it
13 and we can discuss what specific addresses
14 and buildings we are talking about
15 surrounding their property that have seen to
16 have fallen onto blind eyes over the last
17 six or seven years.

18 So, yeah, I personally have no
19 objection to the project, I just have some
20 reservation on the legislation, and we did
21 address any concerns we had so no objections
22 here.

23 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Hubbard.

24 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you very much.

25 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else who

1 cares to address council?

2 MS. SCHUMACHER: I believe I signed
3 in, didn't I?

4 MS. EVANS: You may have signed the
5 wrong list. Yes, the other list.

6 MS. SCHUMACHER: Marie Schumacher.
7 I share -- as a matter of fact, if I may
8 give you these. This is the -- I believe
9 the adaptive reuse program pretty much
10 started in Los Angeles and you will notice
11 they are very specific as to the areas that
12 are covered and I think that's what's
13 missing from our -- the ordinance that we
14 have here that it can be any place. The
15 other thing I think there should be the
16 percent of the existing building that the
17 may be demolished, not let one thing
18 standing and change the entire footprint. I
19 think the building should have to be used as
20 is to maintain the architectural value.

21 And I would like to know what the --
22 the minimum size of apartments stays the
23 same as the rest of the ordinance for the
24 rest of the city -- or the rest of the
25 project or are they changed as well? Do you

1 know the answer to that?

2 MS. EVANS: I don't have any answer,
3 but I believe that either Don King or
4 perhaps one of the gentlemen who are in
5 attendance this evening can speak to your
6 questions.

7 MS. SCHUMACHER: The minimum size?

8 MR. KING: There is no change.

9 MS. SCHUMACHER: No change in the
10 rest of --

11 MR. KING: That's not mentioned in
12 here so it would still come unless it's --

13 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, as I say, I
14 would like see the areas of the city to
15 which this applies very specifically stated
16 in the ordinance and the percent of any
17 building that might be demolished to qualify
18 even within those, so thank you very much.

19 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Is there
20 anyone else who could like to address
21 council?

22 MR. JONES: If I can just for
23 purposes of the record, I'm attorney William
24 Jones and I'm representing the developer on
25 the project. We appreciate all of the

1 community support as well as the support
2 from the Lackawanna County Regional Planning
3 Commission and the Scranton Planning
4 Commission as well as city council offering
5 us the opportunity to first present this
6 plan at the caucus roughly a month ago.

7 With regard to that, I have several
8 items numbered one through seven that I
9 would like the stenographer to enter into
10 the record. Just by way of background for
11 the rest of the audience, the Scranton Lace
12 Building has had a long and I would hope a
13 continuous prosperous history for Scranton.
14 It has 600,000 square feet. There is
15 approximately 11 acres of ground. Our first
16 phase deals with the apartments, and we have
17 art(ch) space coming in with approximately
18 35 residential units and we'll have 40
19 residential units.

20 With regard to the structure itself,
21 in February we have already made application
22 it's going to be placed on the national
23 registry. That preserves the history and it
24 also deals with the last speaker's concerns
25 with regard to demolition. Obviously with

1 regard to demolition our plans would have to
2 comply with what is on the registry and,
3 obviously, what functions and makes this
4 city more attractive building, so at least
5 with regard to this particular building that
6 would be in there.

7 We do believe that this will be a
8 vibrant addition to the neighborhood. We
9 know that council supports the strengthening
10 of the neighborhoods. We will provide that
11 residential component in this area. There
12 is some blight that's around, one of the
13 speakers talked to it and hopefully we will
14 get this building that has been empty for
15 several decades up and in a prosperous use.
16 There are very vibrant neighborhoods in this
17 area and the city has just finished a rather
18 large flood control project with walking
19 trails that terminate down in this area and
20 that can all be used with regard to this
21 particular component.

22 The terms of the ordinance are very
23 specific and we have gone through this
24 process to provide for the protection of the
25 public. I do have, if I can with the

1 indulgence of council, a principal of the
2 firms that deals with the adaptive reuses.
3 They are taking existing uses for old
4 industrial sites, and what I think is
5 important to note is the comprehensive plan
6 for the City of Scranton, particularly for
7 the IL district, comes back with that we
8 should try to get conversions to the types
9 of dwellings and apartments that we are
10 placing in there, so I think that this fits
11 the purposes of your comprehensive plan as
12 well as the Municipalities Planning Code and
13 your own ordinance, that's why we have
14 always treated this application under
15 Section 108 of the City of Scranton
16 ordinance as coming from the planning
17 commission to the council. Obviously, we
18 appreciate all of the support that has been
19 given by the council in that area.

20 If I can, Mr. Constantine can come
21 up and provide some of the specifics for
22 council. Thank you.

23 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

24 MR. CONSTANTINE: Thank you. What
25 we provided for you is a couple of pieces of

1 information, including a planning report for
2 proposed zoning amendments related to the IL
3 light industrial in your package prepared by
4 me and my office dated November 16, and I'm
5 just going to quickly go over some of the
6 highlights in that context, and this goes
7 through how a new zoning category only
8 permitted in the IL light industrial zone,
9 it's called mixed use adapted reuse would
10 relate to the Pennsylvania Municipal
11 Planning Code as well as the community
12 development with respect to the City of
13 Scranton master plan.

14 I'm going to probably just skip
15 through the first section. What we provided
16 an overview of how mixed use, adaptive reuse
17 fits in the context of what's a happening in
18 term of national, regional and state smart
19 growth, sustainable historic preservation
20 movements. Scranton is not the only city in
21 the country, in the region, actually in the
22 world that's faced with trying to deal with
23 older industrial areas because the
24 industrial vocational patterns have changed.

25 In fact, there was an article on the

1 front page of today's Wall Street Journal
2 that even referenced in 1950 one out of
3 three jobs in America were in industry,
4 today it's less than one in ten so that's a
5 reflection of the fact that industry first
6 regionally then around the world.

7 And the challenge communities face
8 is what do you do when these larger
9 buildings that were built for another
10 purpose and another time, decades ago, and
11 so that's really the challenge in terms of
12 how you adaptively reuse this, how do we
13 (ch) it way, and I do want to point out that
14 there were two articles that we provided
15 that give a little context of this. One is
16 titled "Recycling Old Warehouses." It's
17 from the Urban Land Institute and it goes
18 through a number of different uses and one
19 of the specifics in here is the source of
20 the arts, space use that we are actually
21 proposing here. It's highlighted in a
22 number of them and there is another article
23 we provided from the daily green which is
24 called, "When thinking inside the box makes
25 sense," and it really talked from a historic

1 preservation perspective about the need to
2 use these older building. Preservation is,
3 in fact, a sustainable movement and the lead
4 movement have picked up on the theme that
5 the greenest building is one that already
6 exists, so the question is what do we need
7 to do to allow that to occur.

8 And one last thing, one of the
9 biggest constraints has been identified in
10 all of these state and national movements
11 trying to promote better forms of growth and
12 smart growth is overcoming zoning code and
13 other restrictions to reusing them.

14 So as far as how this proposed
15 zoning amendment relates to the Municipality
16 Planning Code, the MCP basically gives us an
17 intended purpose to encourage the
18 revitalization of urban centers. This will
19 do that.

20 Also to encourage the preservation
21 of historic resources through rezoning this
22 will do that. It also tries to promote the
23 conservation of energy through the use of
24 planning practices. There is a lot of
25 energy that's already contained within the

1 bricks and the steel and everything that's
2 in that building. I'm not going to go into
3 others, but I have a number of other points
4 that the Municipalities Planning Code would
5 support with this rezoning that are also in
6 the report.

7 The Municipalities Planning Code
8 also encourages innovation, promotion of
9 flexibility, the promotion of the local
10 economy and the promotion of ingenuity in
11 development, and I think what you have
12 before you would meet all of those as well
13 as promoting and preserving areas of
14 historic significance.

15 So lastly, the Municipalities
16 Planning Code suggests that we should design
17 zoning provisions to achieve purposes
18 including the prevention of blight. Well,
19 you know, specifically the threat of blight
20 resulting from a large vacant warehouse
21 building in this particular case would be
22 effectively eliminated, so all of these
23 provisions in the Municipalities Planning
24 Code basically give you the policy that --
25 the policy framework in which to look at

1 this.

2 Now, the important piece is
3 providing the consistency with a local
4 master plan and that's also required in the
5 Municipalities Planning Code. The master
6 plan is your blueprint for change. I'm just
7 going to quote one thing out of it because
8 it sets the tone, "Change is inevitable.
9 Conditions change, people change, Scranton
10 changes. The secret to a successful
11 community is to manage change. If change is
12 controlled and managed wisely, the city
13 grows and prospers."

14 That's out of the master plan. So
15 here are a couple of things the master plan
16 suggests that relates to what's proposed
17 here tonight. First, it's suggested that we
18 use the zoning ordinance and develop it in a
19 accordance with a land use component of the
20 master plan. In the land use component, we
21 have provided 12 different points that this
22 would be supportive of. I'm just going to
23 give you one. In light industrial districts
24 provide for conversions of historic
25 industrial buildings into apartments if

1 adjacent to a residential area. This is
2 obviously one of the things that is
3 consistent here.

4 Under the Economic Development and
5 Tourism section of your city master plan,
6 I'm going to give you three -- just three of
7 the points that this would enact. One is
8 work aggressively to reuse the large number
9 of vacant and under utilized industrial
10 buildings available for sale or lease
11 throughout the city. Reuse of available
12 space represents a major challenge to the
13 city's economy. Obvious.

14 Two, target selected older
15 industrial buildings in key locations for
16 renovations.

17 The third one to direct business
18 activity to business areas to assure the
19 fullest use of existing older commercial
20 buildings, so the master plan is suggesting
21 and directing that you do this.

22 There is eight other points out of
23 the economic development and tourism section
24 I'm not going to read from them, but they
25 are in front of you, one of which also

1 encourages the development of various types
2 much business incubators and under the
3 tourism section of the master plan it
4 suggestions that efforts should be made to
5 work with developers to consider
6 establishing an arts incubator, that's in
7 quotes in the master plan, to encourage
8 artists to locate within Scranton. The
9 facility could include a building that
10 allows people to watch artists create new
11 work within separate work areas. An art's
12 incubator could offer opportunities for
13 artists to sell their work directly to
14 customers. Obviously, that's something that
15 we envision happening here is artist space
16 in the early phase.

17 And then lastly under the historic
18 preservation section of your master plan
19 there are two points that just are obviously
20 important. To direct business activity to
21 business areas to ensure the fullest use of
22 existing older commercial buildings; and
23 two, to recognize and encourage the
24 recreation and preservation of the city's
25 important historic and architecturally

1 significant buildings and sites.

2 So if you go and look at both of
3 Municipalities Planning Code and then onto
4 the consistency with the master plan, this
5 zone changes meets the tests of the
6 Municipalities Planning Code. It's
7 obviously highly consistent, in my opinion,
8 with the city's master plan, and also more
9 importantly, it's not inconsistent with any
10 of the goal or intent of the Municipalities
11 Planning Code or anything that's contained
12 within the city's master plan, so not only
13 does it move it forward, it's not contrary
14 with anything that exists there today.
15 That's just an overview. Thank you.

16 MS. EVANS: Thank you,
17 Mr. Constantine.

18 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,
19 citizen of Scranton. I was listening to --
20 that they were saying about that building I
21 think he said seven decades, was I right or
22 wrong?

23 MR. JONES: The building itself?

24 MR. SBARAGLIA: Yeah, vacant.

25 MR. JONES: Oh, no, several.

1 MR. SBARAGLIA: Several decades.

2 MR. JONES: It's probably in excess
3 of ten years.

4 MR. SBARAGLIA: Three or four,
5 because I knew parts of that building -- I
6 took care of the elevators in there, so I
7 know the building, I have been through it
8 all, okay? I know parts of it was being
9 used as a warehouse, warehousing. So
10 something ought to be done with the
11 building, but we got have the truth to
12 develop what they want to do.

13 Now, we know the building was being
14 used as part of a warehouse, maybe even
15 still being used as part of the warehouse.
16 Is part of that building being used as a
17 warehouse?

18 MR. CORDARO: Currently, no.

19 THE COURT: What was the last time
20 it was used?

21 MR. CORDARO: 2006.

22 MR. SBARAGLIA: Okay, so that's how
23 long it has been there, okay? So it's
24 truly if you want to use several I guess it
25 falls within that piece of -- you know, that

1 time period, but really it is a beautiful
2 building, something should be done with it.
3 Like I said, I worked in it, I know back and
4 forth because I took care of all of the
5 elevators, but I just wanted to remember
6 that it hasn't been just sitting there all
7 them years, okay, it has been used as a
8 warehouse, so you do know that, but that
9 doesn't really come up where it is now.

10 I'm not in that neighborhood. I
11 don't live in that neighborhood. I know the
12 building was flooded since they built the
13 dike and it probably has a good protection,
14 but like I said before, you got to start
15 with the truth as much as you can. You and
16 I know that we are taking a good piece of
17 that action down there and we are getting
18 very little in return unless we are going to
19 get a good tax base. That's what the whole
20 thing is. If you are going to spend \$3
21 million as a grant let's get something back.
22 This is what you got to do. You got to look
23 at the tax records down there and see what's
24 going object and the tax rolls for. I don't
25 want another deal like the mall for

1 \$400,000. This has got to stop. This is
2 why we are in trouble today. People got to
3 look at what they are doing and look at all
4 aspects of it. Otherwise, you are not
5 really getting any kind of a deal. Somebody
6 is getting rich, but the residents are
7 getting poor. Thank you.

8 MS. EVANS: Thank you,
9 Mr. Sbaraglia. Is there anyone else?

10 MR. QUINN: Ozzie Quinn, Taxpayers'
11 Association. I understand that you
12 mentioned that you spoke with the
13 neighborhood representative?

14 MR. JONES: Yes, we did.
15 Mr. Hubbard spoke in support of the project
16 earlier for the public hearing this evening.

17 MR. QUINN: What was -- you
18 mentioned Barbara Maranucci.

19 MR. JONES: Barbara Maranucci, the
20 group they were approached prior to that and
21 they were in support of it. I understand
22 that this is -- if I may approach? There
23 are two different neighborhood groups down
24 there, the principal over time has dealt
25 with Mrs. Maranucci's group and then met and

1 spent extensive time with Mr. Hubbard's
2 groups and we are very appreciative of their
3 testimony this evening in support of the
4 project.

5 MR. QUINN: Okay. I know that the
6 Park Place Neighborhood Association is on
7 the other side of the river, she doesn't has
8 no control in regard to the Lace Works per
9 se.

10 Now, I worked the flood in 1996 down
11 there and they formed a project area
12 committee and at that time there was Charles
13 Richter, he was relocated out of there, and
14 they do have another representative that
15 lives on East Market Street and I just -- I
16 know that they met several times at the old
17 St. Joseph's Lithuanian Church and I think
18 it would prudent if you spoke with those
19 people, okay?

20 They are the people who live right
21 next to door to that place and I doubt if
22 that's been vacant a decade because I know
23 my wife has done some shopping down there
24 and buying lace curtains and lace table
25 spreads and everything, so I question that,

1 too.

2 So we all know and all do respect
3 Barbara Maranucci is a Mayor Doherty big
4 contributor, was appointed by Mayor Doherty,
5 her brother is the president of the
6 Recreation Committee, and this sort of
7 taints that, okay, in all due respect to
8 that, okay, so I think that they actually
9 should have a neighborhood meeting being
10 that I was involved in the organization.
11 Thank you.

12 MR. JONES: Thank you very much.
13 Just to reiterate, we did meet with the
14 affected group at our facility on Sunday and
15 some of the neighbors that live right there
16 next to it participated in it. And as we go
17 forward with the -- as we go forward with
18 the project it's the developer's position
19 that we are going to coordinate activities,
20 construction activities, someone came up
21 with that, that's why they are spending a
22 substantial sum of money to reinvigorate
23 that particular building, and hopefully we
24 will have an asset for the City of Scranton
25 we can all be proud of.

1 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

2 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.

3 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

4 MR. MORGAN: Well, once again I'm
5 probably going to go against everybody else
6 in this room today, but I think this project
7 is a waste of money, state money. I don't
8 think it should ever -- should have been
9 funded. We are throwing \$4 million -- well,
10 probably plus \$4 million away. We have got
11 multiple empty apartment units scattered
12 throughout the whole city. The only real
13 purpose this building could have served for
14 the City of Scranton would have been a light
15 industrial development. We don't need any
16 more museums, we don't need more nonprofits,
17 Mrs. Evans, we have stood here and listened
18 to council talked about how the city is
19 being overrun by nonprofits. I don't know
20 if it's still in the plan to put a gym in
21 that building or not, but I did look at the
22 project because Mr. Joyce had spoken about
23 it numerous times and I did go in and got
24 the packet off of Mrs. Krake.

25 I think we need to move in a new

1 direction and I think that as we continue to
2 throw millions of dollars around this city
3 we fail to realize that we can't rent the
4 properties that are already vacant, and I
5 just think when we keep coming to the public
6 trough for millions of dollars, regardless
7 of the project, with no industrial
8 development, no light manufacturing, this is
9 a nation that needs job. I just hope that
10 if it's possible for this council to vote
11 against this project it would do it.

12 I have been in that building, I've
13 been from the kitchens and the bowling alley
14 all the way down to the basement, I have
15 been throughout that whole building. There
16 probably isn't another building like that in
17 this city with the ability to hold the
18 amount of the weight those floors are
19 designed to hold.

20 Now, I know they took all the
21 machines or allegedly most of the machines
22 out of there for scrap, but I just think
23 that we have North Scranton Junior High
24 School that's still sitting up there vacant,
25 we have multiple project across the city are

1 vacant, and I think it's time to realize
2 that we are a city with the serious shortage
3 of police officers and firemen because we
4 can't fund their positions and as long as we
5 keep using state money to destroy our
6 infrastructure and keep playing these silly
7 games with money, we have got residents of
8 this city down in front of the county
9 commissioners asking them to reopen the
10 budget, we have had our own budget problems
11 here and I don't see how one city councilman
12 or the mayor I am himself can say that
13 spending \$4 million in grant money at the
14 former Scranton Lace building is a good
15 project.

16 This community needs a council and
17 mayor who understands that the real problems
18 of this city are a lack of jobs. We have--
19 look at the Connell building, look at all of
20 the apartments we are converting and our
21 neighborhoods are falling apart. We had a
22 police officer chased down the street with a
23 baseball bat the other day. I mean, where
24 are our priorities at? We need to start
25 worrying about the average resident of this

1 city, okay. We have listened a lot of
2 these -- all of this development that's
3 coming our way, we need jobs here. The mall
4 is collapsing, we need a change direction
5 and the Scranton Lace project is the wrong
6 project. I have read it, I understand it, I
7 have been in the building, I know the
8 capabilities of the building.

9 Are some of the buildings run down
10 and in need of either renovation or to be
11 demolished? I don't know, but I'll tell you
12 one thing we don't need more apartments and
13 we don't need more nonprofits. I think we
14 have plenty of both and a lack of a
15 meaningful job market and a stable tax
16 structure. Thank you.

17 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you.

18 MR. LUDWINSKY: Good evening,
19 Council and members of the community. My
20 name is John Ludwinsky and I'm a local
21 resident here. I have about a realtor,
22 commercial/ residential realtor in the City
23 of Scranton for almost seven years and when
24 I say full-time it is seven days a week. So
25 heard that this was going to be discussed

1 this evening and I think that anything that
2 could be done for blighted properties in the
3 city is a major plus, especially a project
4 of this magnitude.

5 As many of the residents here know,
6 I mean, it doesn't matter where you live,
7 North Scranton, South Scranton, East
8 Mountain, Greenridge, foreclosures
9 everywhere, boarded up condemned homes. No
10 money, criminal activity, and I disagree
11 with some of the members here because the
12 rental demand in Scranton is very high. The
13 Connell building, for instance, I'm pretty
14 sure that they are at full capacity. There
15 is waiting lists for that. You know, but a
16 historic structure like this if something
17 doesn't do something with it it's going to
18 lay vacant, abandoned, homeless, criminal
19 activity like everybody knows with every
20 other structure.

21 And I heard something mentioned
22 about the grants, to me \$4 million of a
23 grant is not a waste of money. And, excuse
24 me, what's the total project cost going to
25 be on this roughly?

1 MR. CORDARO: About 60 million.

2 MR. LUDWINSKY: About \$60 million,
3 so if that miniscule \$4 million is not going
4 to go to this massive project it will be
5 spent, you know, somewhere else, and I just
6 had to come here and voice my opinion from
7 what I see and I think that this project
8 would be a phenomenal opportunity not only
9 for the city, for the whole community, the
10 county, etcetera. Thank you.

11 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

12 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you.

13 MR. JACKOWITZ: Bill Jackowitz,
14 South Scranton resident and member of the
15 Taxpayers' Association. I'm in favor of the
16 project as long as the project is for real,
17 and what I mean by that is the citizens and
18 residents of Scranton we have burnt so many
19 times. Look at the 500 block of Lackawanna
20 Avenue, that was supposed to be -- that's 29
21 million, 30 million dollars worth of the
22 taxpayers' money. Every one of those
23 buildings is vacant. There is supposedly
24 apartments, loft apartments in the 500 block
25 of Lackawanna Avenue in those buildings.

1 They are vacant.

2 As far as the Connell building and
3 some of the other buildings, yeah, those
4 apartments are full and they will probably
5 always remain because of the transfer of
6 students coming in and out, okay, but the
7 majority of the people who are living in
8 those apartments down there are students and
9 transients, people who come in for three
10 years, four years, go to school, they are
11 going to leave, and they are going to be
12 replaced by other students. Because let's
13 face it, there are no jobs in the City of
14 Scranton.

15 And I agree with Mr. Morgan, I have
16 been speaking about this for nine years
17 about the lack of jobs, but more importantly
18 the lack of the wages in the City of
19 Scranton, okay, and until we get jobs that
20 pay a liveable wage Scranton will remain
21 distressed and always be a distressed city.

22 Now, I'm in favor of any project
23 that is going to enhance the City of
24 Scranton, going to enhance the beauty of the
25 City of Scranton and the appearance, going

1 to create jobs, but the jobs have to be jobs
2 that pay a liveable wage. \$8 an hour jobs,
3 \$9 an hour, hey, come one, people can't
4 survive on that anymore. So I'm just hoping
5 that this is a realistic project, I hope the
6 people who are moving in here and the
7 companies are going to come here are going
8 to be committed to the City of Scranton and
9 they are going to stay and they are going to
10 pay their taxes, okay, because if they don't
11 pay taxes all they are going to do is be
12 like all of the other nonprofits and all of
13 the other people who have coming in here and
14 have lived off the back of the residents of
15 the City of Scranton and the taxpayers.

16 So, like I said, I'm in favor of any
17 project. I was in favor of the 500 block of
18 Lackawanna Avenue, but look at it, it's
19 vacant. There is nothing there. There is
20 no jobs there, there is no people working
21 there. Drive down there any time of the day
22 you don't -- the sidewalks, check the
23 sidewalks out. The sidewalks are already
24 starting to deteriorate, so if it's a viable
25 project, hey, go for it, but if it's not I

1 just hope the citizens aren't being taken
2 for a ride then.

3 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you.

4 MR. HUBBARD: If I might just touch
5 on a couple points. Dan Hubbard. The
6 residents of lower Greenridge that Mr. Ozzie
7 Quinn is discussing, most of them, Richert
8 doesn't live in the neighborhood, the other
9 gentlemen he is talking about I don't know
10 who they are. This predates -- well, it
11 doesn't predate it, the guy was only in the
12 neighborhood for about three years when the
13 '96 flood hit so that group in general they
14 were mainly over in the Nay Aug area behind
15 the Giant, because if you remember the '96
16 flood that was the only part of lower
17 Greenridge got hit. Our specific
18 neighborhood, the 13 -- well, 14, 1500
19 blocks of Gardner and Albright did not get
20 flooded in '96. That was the meeting they
21 reserved to the area over behind Giant
22 market.

23 As far as the residents that live
24 right immediately adjacent to this building,
25 the residents that live directly across the

1 street from this facility were in attendance
2 on Sunday and they were in attendance at my
3 house at the previous meeting, and Mr. Carl
4 Kupchunas who lives across the street he is
5 here tonight as well, so there is a fairly
6 good representation of the immediate
7 residents that live adjacent to that
8 structure. Let's face it, there is not a
9 lot of houses around that particular
10 building, but the neighborhood does abut
11 against this. So the residents that are
12 going to be directly effected by this have
13 been brought up-to-date on this.

14 A couple of other points, North
15 Scranton Junior High School was viable
16 structure, a viable building that was
17 removed from it's use as a school and sold
18 to be converted to something else. That
19 building is empty. It has been empty and
20 pretty much inactive other than thieves and
21 robbers stealing copper since 2006. I drive
22 by the building every day, I live a stone's
23 throw from this facility. It has been quiet
24 since 2006. The flooding in the building
25 was really limited to any basement or

1 subbasement areas, none of the first floor
2 of the building, parts of the building were
3 flooded because they are raised above. You
4 go in the front door you have to walk up
5 steps to get to the first floor of the
6 building so they didn't take a significant
7 hit in the flooding other in the basement
8 areas. There was no structural damage done
9 in the floods.

10 So everything that has been
11 addressed with this is kind of -- the
12 building is sitting empty and if this
13 project for any reason doesn't happen and it
14 falls through the building will continue to
15 sit empty. So it's really -- it's not --
16 it's no harm no foul here. If the project
17 for some reason doesn't happen it's not
18 going to change the status of the building.
19 It's empty. Empty is empty. You can't get
20 any more or less empty than it is, so as far
21 as it being a manufacturing facility, by no
22 stretch of the imagination would I ever want
23 to have any type of manufacturing facility
24 in my neighborhood. I'm sorry. Sure the
25 area needs jobs, but lets face it, small

1 manufacturing is far and few in-between in
2 this area. What companies do work in
3 manufacturing are not in the City of
4 Scranton, they are in the Keystone
5 Industrial Park, they are up in the Archbald
6 Industry Parks. I have worked at machine
7 shops in the city and they have left the
8 city. The machine shop I worked for years
9 has left the city, they are gone. They are
10 in Dunmore. There is a very limited
11 manufacturing base left in this country to
12 begin with and I think it's ridiculous to
13 take a facility like this and try to turn it
14 back into a manufacturing facility when the
15 tax base in Scranton, the tax setup in
16 Scranton is not conducive to business right
17 now, it's not just. I mean, between the
18 business taxes, mercantile taxes, wage
19 taxes, nobody is going to want to open up a
20 manufacturing plant in Scranton. I mean,
21 that's why they are all in Keystone
22 Industrial Park. That's why most of the
23 businesses in the Keystone Industrial Park
24 are former businesses from within the City
25 of Scranton.

1 So if this proposed use that these
2 guys have will help turn this building into
3 something that will be vibrant maybe ten
4 years down the road it's still better than a
5 building sitting empty, and if for any
6 reason it doesn't happen, it's not changing
7 anything in the neighborhood. It's empty.

8 So at least let's give these guys a
9 chance to do something with the building
10 because we can all say, "Let's turn it into
11 a --" it's already zoned IL. If there was
12 such a demand for manufacturing businesses
13 in the city they would have already
14 approached Mr. Cordaro about the building to
15 put manufacturing in there. It's not
16 happening. I mean, it hasn't been a real
17 manufacturing facility since -- when was the
18 last time they did any major manufacturing
19 in there?

20 MR. CORDARO: The mid 90's.

21 MR. HUBBARD: The mid 90's. And
22 there -- are the equipment is gone, the
23 rooms are -- from what I was told there is
24 only a few looms left in the building and
25 they are going to be used as museum pieces

1 for the Lackawanna Valley Heritage Group.
2 So, you know, to me, I think that if we can
3 put something in there that's going to be
4 better than empty that we should try to at
5 least encourage this. I don't necessarily
6 agree with everything being funded by the
7 public funds, but this is a good use for
8 grant money if it can happen, and if it
9 doesn't it doesn't change the neighborhood.

10 And to compare grant money going to
11 this project to something that can be used
12 towards police and fire protection in the
13 city is ridiculous because we know that the
14 grant money for police and fire protection
15 is there, the city is just choosing not to
16 use it. So to say that this is going to
17 take away from our public safety by giving
18 them -- by them getting a grant to get this
19 project off the ground is false. We all
20 know that is patently false because the
21 money for the grant money to use for public
22 safety is there, it's just not being used.

23 So I don't want the public to be
24 thinking that this project is going to be
25 taking money away from public safety when

1 it's not. It's not. And to say that public
2 safety is effected by grant money going to
3 these guys and not to public safety, that's
4 not right to say that either. It's really
5 not.

6 And if it could -- if manufacturing
7 is going to be something viable in there I
8 honestly think that structure like this
9 would have been a viable manufacturing
10 facility and would have continued to be a
11 viable manufacturing facility if we had that
12 type of a business base in this city, and we
13 don't, and every year this country losses
14 more and more and more manufacturing jobs
15 overseas. Just recently they started to
16 bring stuff back into this country, but it's
17 going to be a long time and certainly not in
18 my lifetime and probably not in my son's
19 lifetime that we will ever see this country
20 be the manufacturing giant that it used to
21 be because when it really comes down to it
22 we can't compete with Mexico, China and any
23 other country overseas.

24 So this to me is a better direction
25 than the direction the building is going in

1 now, which is no direction, and I certainly
2 would like to see this project at least get
3 off the ground.

4 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Is there
5 anyone else who would like to address
6 council?

7 MR. ELLMAN: Well, as council knows
8 I like to speak for the little people in
9 town, the few taxpayers that are left. We
10 are just fed up with the rich getting richer
11 on grants and loans and loopholes in the tax
12 laws. It's just -- if these people can't
13 get their funding and pay taxes I just don't
14 see where in the world we need them any
15 longer. It's time to put your foot down and
16 draw a line in the sand for God's sake.

17 We got the Goodwill, they had good
18 intentions, it's ten or 12 years it's
19 sitting there. Paul Mansour got money for
20 the Woolworth house that's never been
21 touched. You got a 150 houses out on Keyser
22 Avenue they got everything that I don't and
23 they don't pay taxes. They got a school
24 across the street, and it's just they are
25 there because of a loophole. It's just time

1 to quit. Like I said, you people want
2 something, pay taxes and build it with other
3 money besides state grants and loans.
4 Enough is enough of this. Our taxes are a
5 third higher than they should be because of
6 the University of Scranton and others and we
7 need tax money, we don't need promises no
8 more.

9 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else? I
10 thank all of you for your participation this
11 evening. This meeting is adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes of testimony taken by me at the hearing of the above-captioned matter and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the same to the best of my ability.

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
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