



# Allentown

435 Hamilton Street  
Allentown, Pa. 18101

## Minutes - Final

### City Council

---

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

---

#### Public Hearing

#### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the Allentown City Council will consider for possible adoption an Ordinance amending the City of Allentown Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance. This proposed amendment, of which this Notice is a summary, proposes to amend the Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance by (i) rezoning certain parcels to B-5 Urban Commercial District, (ii) providing for a new Urban Transition Multi-Family Development use within the B-5 Urban Commercial District and the B-2 Central Business District and providing a definition of, and regulations relating to, such use, (iii) permitting Adaptive Reuse in the B-5 Urban Commercial District by Special Exception, (iv) increasing the height limitation for Hotels and Motels in the B-5 Urban Commercial District, (v) modifying parking requirements for Urban Transition Multi-Family Development, and (vi) providing for a repealer clause, a severability clause, and an effective date.

Under the authority and procedures of Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, as amended, the City Council of the City of Allentown, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania hereby approves and enacts the following map change and amendment to the City of Allentown Zoning Ordinance:

(i) rezoning certain parcels to B-5 Urban Commercial District, (ii) providing for a new Urban Transition Multi-Family Development use within the B-5 Urban Commercial District and the B-2 Central Business District and providing a definition of, and regulations relating to, such use, (iii) permitting Adaptive Reuse in the B-5 Urban Commercial District by Special Exception, (iv) increasing the height limitation for Hotels and Motels in the B-5 Urban Commercial District, (v) modifying parking requirements for Urban Transition Multi-Family Development, and (vi) providing for a repealer clause, a severability clause, and an effective date.

That the areas on the Zoning Map of the City of Allentown, as depicted by the shaded areas on Exhibit A, be rezoned to B-5 Urban Commercial District.

That all Ordinances, Resolutions, and/or other Regulations, including but not limited to prior Zoning Maps, inconsistent with the above provisions are repealed to the extent of their inconsistency.

Effective Date. That this Ordinance will take effect ten (10) days after final passage.

City Council will consider the foregoing at a Public Hearing on Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 6:30 PM, with a final vote scheduled during the City Council meeting at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers, 435 Hamilton Street, Allentown, PA 18101. Copies of the full text of this Ordinance are available to any interested party for examination and copying at cost at the City Clerk's Office or for inspection during regular business hours at the offices of this newspaper and the Lehigh County Department of Law. All interested parties are invited to comment. The meeting will be livestreamed. The link to the meeting can be found on the city website with the agenda and legislation at <https://www.allentownpa.gov>. Council will receive comments on the legislation prior to the meeting and will consider all comments from city residents. All comments must include name and address, including your city, and be emailed to [Michael.Hanlon@AllentownPa.gov](mailto:Michael.Hanlon@AllentownPa.gov) by 2:00 PM on the date of the meeting or you can enter your comments directly on the website. Comments received from city residents by that deadline will be forwarded to the Mayor and Council members prior to the meeting, timely received comments will also be posted on the City's webpage as a supporting document to the meeting.

[15-4029](#)

Bill 4

Amending the Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance of the City of Allentown by (i) rezoning certain parcels to B-5 Urban Commercial District, (ii) providing for a new Urban Transition Multi-Family Development use within the B-5 Urban Commercial District and the B-2 Central Business District and providing a definition of, and regulations relating to, such use, (iii) permitting Adaptive Reuse in the B-5 Urban Commercial District by Special Exception, (iv) increasing the height limitation for Hotels and Motels in the B-5 Urban Commercial District, (v) modifying parking requirements for Urban Transition Multi-Family Development, and (vi) providing for a repealer clause, a severability clause, and an effective date.

**Attachments:** [PH - March 17 Script](#)  
[Bill 4 The Manhattan Building Company Inc. Ordinance](#)  
[Staff Report Front Street Rezone \(Manhattan\) Workshop](#)  
[acpc action](#)  
[2-9-21 ACPC minutes](#)  
[3-9-21 draft ACPC minutes](#)  
[ACP - Man P](#)  
[Letter from Mike Hanlon regarding Bill 4 Amending rezoning certain parcels to B5 Urban Commercial District](#)  
[The Manhattan Building Company Inc. List of Affected Parcels](#)  
[The Manhattan Building Company Inc. Ordinance -- 11-17-2020](#)  
[The Manhattan Building Company Inc. Proposed Zoning Map](#)  
[The Manhattan Building Company Inc. Rezoning Request Petition -- 11-17-2020](#)  
[The Manhattan Building Company Inc. Transmittal Letter -- Zoning Amendment](#)  
[Bill 4 Lehigh County Receipt](#)  
[Bill 4 Lehigh County Received Timestamp](#)  
[Letters of Support \(MBC Rezoning\)](#)  
[The Manhattan Building Company Inc. Planning Commission Presentation](#)  
[APA - Support Letter \(MBC Rezoning\)](#)  
[Rezoning Petition - Manhattan Building Co](#)  
[Letter from Lehigh Valley Planning Commission regarding - B5 Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendment](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 6](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 7](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 8](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 9](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 10](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 11](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 12](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 13](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 14](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 15](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 16](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 17](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 18](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 19](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 20](#)  
[Manhattan Bldg Co 21](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 22](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 23](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 24](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 25](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 26](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 27](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 28](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 29](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 30](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 31](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 32](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 33](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 34](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 1](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 2 \(002\)](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 3 \(002\)](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 4 \(002\)](#)

[Manhattan Bldg Co 5 \(002\)](#)

[The Morning Call Ad 6886216-Bill 4](#)

[ACCP](#)

[Allentown City Council Presentation](#)

[40J9014-4.14.21 Transmittal Letter - Section 108 Notice - Proof of Publication \(Manhattan Building Company\) Ordinance #15684](#)

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that they have to pay close attention to everything, including the tiny house.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that if there are members of the public that are watching they should be reassured that their comments will be read at the meeting on the 24th.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that he thinks there were some form letters.

Mr. Mike Hanlon stated for Courtesy of the Floor.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that this will be for the Public Hearing for March 17 in regards to Bill 4 - Amendment to the Zoning Code and Map. The rolls is taken and everybody is here, including the Mayor and the Solicitors and all Councilmembers, the City Clerk and somebody from IT. The purpose of this meeting is to take testimony of the adoption of the ordinance amendment for City Council for the City of Allentown Zoning Map and

Zoning Ordinance. Notice is hereby given that the Allentown City Council will consider for possible adoption an Ordinance amending the City of Allentown Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance. This proposed amendment, of which this Notice is a summary, proposes to amend the Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance by (i) rezoning certain parcels to B-5 Urban Commercial District, (ii) providing for a new Urban Transition Multi-Family Development use within the B-5 Urban Commercial District and the B-2 Central Business District and providing a definition of, and regulations relating to, such use, (iii) permitting Adaptive Reuse in the B-5 Urban Commercial District by Special Exception, (iv) increasing the height limitation for Hotels and Motels in the B-5 Urban Commercial District, (v) modifying parking requirements for Urban Transition Multi-Family Development, and (vi) providing for a repealer clause, a severability clause, and an effective date.

The stated that the Public Hearing was advertised in The Morning Call on March 1 and 9. The Proof of Publication is incorporated in the official City Clerk's record. The property was posted, the pictures of the posting and legal and various reports are on the city website along with the legislation and supporting materials. The procedures will be as follows: the petitioners will give a presentation to Council. John Palumbo will be presenting and members of the public may give statements by mail or telephone call. He stated that he thinks everybody has their number in support or opposition of the proposal. In the time permitted by Council can asked questions of the Petition on the City Council Agenda that follows further discussions and take place there. At the conclusion of all comments, the President of City Council states the record is now closed and the matter will be delivered on at tonight's regularly scheduled City Council meeting.

Mr. John Palumbo asked Council if they can see the presentation. He stated that his attorney Joseph Fitzpatrick just texted him and let him know he is having some technical difficulties. He submitted a full presentation to Mike Hanlon that was giving to City Council as well as a lot of letters of support from local area residents and stakeholders. He stated that he would like to give a shorter presentation and open it up to answer questions that you may have. He stated that he is vice president of Real Estate Development at Manhattan Building Company. These proposed amendments and projects are a joint venture between Manhattan Building Company and Urban Residential Properties. Manhattan Building Company is a vertical integrated real estate firm. They handle all aspects of development from project conceptualization to completion. We have over a 35 year track record of successful construction and have been involved in an over \$2 billion real estate development in Hoboken and Jersey City. The reason that he thinks it is important is for them to understand that they are not the type of developers that would do one off

projects in different states throughout the country. A project in Florida, Texas, and California. He stated that they stay hyper focused on specific areas. In particular old industrial areas with the goal of transforming them into vibrant communities. They really consider themselves neighborhood builders. Most recently in Jersey City, the SOHO West Neighborhood was an old industrial area. Really a no-man's land tucked between the Holland Tunnel and Hoboken's border. It was kind of an area that Hoboken did not want to claim and Jersey City did not want to claim. When other people saw blight, we saw opportunity. we started developing in that area in 2011 with a Project called Cast Iron Lofts, followed by Cast Iron Lofts II, and now we are Hudson House which is an 1,100 unit, four phase development which includes infrastructure improvements and a new park for the city. They are proud to say, fast forward 10 years from 2011 SOHO West is the fastest growing neighborhood in Jersey City and they believe when it is all said and done if not the most or one of the most vibrant communities in the city. They want to take that same business model and bring it to Allentown's Riverfront. They see it as a city and area that has all the bones with all the tremendous riverfront. If they work together with the city and local area residents, they can be really transformed to one of the best mid-sized cities in the entire country. With that said, the Manhattan Building Company are only entertaining projects in Jersey City. In their neighborhood and the Allentown Riverfront. He stated that they are not entertaining any projects in any other cities or municipalities in the country. it is a joint venture partnership with Urban Residential Properties. They have a long-term commitment to Allentown and understand the importance of having local relationships and local track records to urban residential properties. They have over a decade of experience in the Allentown real estate market. They own and manage 100 units in the City of Allentown. They recently completed Riverview Lofts which is a 22 unit project on Allentown's riverfront. Their long-term commitment to the city and the partnership with Urban Residential Properties a local business with a decade of experience. They are also committed to moving their corporate headquarters from Jersey City to 207 N. Front Street which is their first phase of development, if Council would graciously approve the amendments. They are looking to staff the company with local Allentown residents. Just as they did in Jersey City. He stated that if they ask around about them, they are if not the only one of a very few developers who really go out of their way to hire local residents and will be bringing that same model to Allentown. They also hire local professionals such as FLB and Civic and local contractors. They give hiring preferences to Allentown residents. In other words, if you have two people who are qualified for the job and they have the same skill set and one is from Allentown and one is not from Allentown, the tie goes to the Allentown resident because they really think it is important to hire local. The proposal you have in front of you over the next 10 years will create a tremendous amount of jobs for

Allentown and Allentown residents. He stated that they look forward to working with local residents and the city to bring this plan to fruition. Another point is the URP job training program. This is a job training program for local Allentown youth in partnership with Allentown youth build. Essentially they take a tiered approach and teach Allentown youth all the trades necessary to own and operate their own buildings. Starting with painting, light carpentry, framing and sheetrock, plumbing, electrical, contracting. All the way through to contract management. The idea of the program is giving the kids an opportunity to have hands-on experience and essentially giving them the skill set that allows them to be able to provide for themselves. The greatest gift of all is giving the youth the opportunity to make it on their own and feel like this program has already seen some success, but was really a tremendous opportunity to create job opportunities for local Allentown youth throughout the city. Lastly, their commitment to invest in public parks and open spaces. In particular, Bucky Boyle Park. He met with several Councilmembers and just expressed how much of an opportunity we have with Bucky Boyle Parks. It is an eight acre park on the riverfront. Personally, he does not know another opportunity with sized park on the riverfront in a mid-size city in the entire northeast. We would be more than willing to invest their own capital and looking to do a public/private partnership to really revitalize that park into a world class riverfront park and is something that the city of Allentown and its residents would be proud of. He showed a few images of the existing conditions of some of their developments versus the proposals: 207 N. Front Street (sister building) The building is in rough condition and needs a little bit of love. He found that if you are driving down N. Front Street and look to the right you will have no idea you have an eight acre park and a riverfront. The first phase of our development will be called the Riverfront Lofts. As 25 unit mixed-use residential project with ground floor retail and commercial. If approved by Council and once developed this is where we will be moving Manhattan Building Company's corporate headquarters. He went over the existing conditions. This project will be developed in partnership with the Allentown Parking Authority. It was unanimously approved by APA board and the last missing piece to bring this project to fruition is the proposed amendments in front of you. This is the proposed projects. How this is structured is we will develop the project upon completion. We will dedicate the two story parking deck containing at least 72 spaces back to the APA to service the parking needs of local area residents. He compared the two projects: Allentown to Jersey City and stated that it looks eerily similar to one another. What they looking to do at 249 is something similar to what they are doing in Jersey City at the Cliffs Lofts which is a mixed-use development with integrated parking and commercial on the ground floor. This will be new construction, they pride themselves of incorporating the historical significance of the neighborhood into our buildings which as you can see in the design in front of you. A lot of

the projects that we develop they developed in Jersey City, they give people tours and they will say what was this before. Ultimately, they would think it was an old factory or an old warehouse, but it is actually new construction, but they really take pride in making sure the historical significance of the neighborhood and the character of our neighborhood is implemented into our projects whether it is an adaptive re-use or a new development project. He went over the overall concept plan for the Lehigh Riverfront. He submitted a full presentation outlining all the due diligence and research they did prior to submitting this rezoning request. The thousand foot view of what they call is three-pronged approach getting feedback from city staff, agencies, officials and local area residents to determine the needs of the neighborhood. In order to satisfy that they have been meeting with city staff and Planning since 2019 and went through several iteration before arriving to the amendments today. They have also discussed the possibility going to Zoning Board for certain phases. It was ultimately recommended by Plan and they agree that a comprehensive rezoning approach is the best approach to really bring the Lehigh River Master Plan to fruition. Letters of support were submitted from all kinds of different people. They received a lot of positive feedback and feels that this is something that really expedite Allentown's renaissance. It is really incredible what JB is able to do downtown Center City. He stated that he met with JB and he also agrees that the Riverfront is so critical to Allentown's renaissance. He is hopeful that the board is supportive of his proposal. The second prong was a review of Allentown's Vision 2030 Plan so they can best understand the goals and objectives to determine the best path for implementation as well as the review of the Lehigh Riverfront Master Plan to understand goals and objectives to determine the best path forward. We believe the proposal in front of you will help the Lehigh Riverfront Master Plan as well as Allentown Vision 2030 Plan to come to fruition. He read the Plans multiple times. The city spend so much time, energy and research putting together beautiful conception Plan. The underline zoning was never amended to allow the Lehigh Riverfront Master Plan to be implemented. He went over a brief overview of the Concept Site Plan: 207 N. Front Street (First Phase) - mixed-use residential, 249 N. Front Street (second phase). They have Option Agreements with Neuweiler and the Old Iron Mountain sites. The Ruckus Group is preparing to begin construction on the first phase of Neuweiler and if the amendments are approved, the next steps is the Master Plans of Neuweiler site and Old Iron Mountain site and Bucky Boyle Park to try to come up with a comprehensive plan and implement a world class riverfront on Allentown's Riverfront.

Mr. Julio Guridy thanked Mr. Palumbo and asked if there were any questions from the dais.



Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that he thought Mr. Guridy would take comments from the public first. You have a number of letters in your packet and the website supporting it. He stated that he had two people that want to speak.

Ms. Erin Keller stated that she did not get a chance to proofread it. She stated that really was worked up about the word bastardized. There is nothing bastardized about that neighborhood. Her grandparents found a way to make a very decent living starting out as immigrants speaking German in that neighborhood. The fact that you want to go in there and use the NIZ in a way that it should not be used. It is meant to help subsidize the city to provide affordable housing. The fact that you want to build luxury housing, including eight story buildings in the middle of a neighborhood that has small row homes. She stated that she is assuming that they bought up a number of the row homes. What happens when the row homes are not going to sell. Are you going to take them by eminent domain like you did on Hamilton Street. She stated that her vote is no and if anyone on City Council vote for this, she can promise them she will not be voting for them for Mayor and will be actively be working against you.

Mr. Julio Guridy thanked Ms. Keller for her comments. He stated that they will take that under consideration.

Mr. James Spang spoke about the Riverfront Project. The plans for the 200 and 300 block of Front Street are no brainers. The other projects at the 500 block of Front Street are very cumbersome. The City Council reserves the right to review the Master Plan when you change the zoning. (inaudible)

Mr. Julio Guridy thanked Mr. Spang for his support.

Mr. Ed Zucal thanked Mr. Palumbo for taking the time out of your schedule to come here and the interest in helping to develop Allentown. Obviously, the redevelopment needs to continue in the city. It seems like you are interested to creating and keeping jobs in the city. You mentioned the URP. Are you going to consider apprenticeship programs?

Mr. John Palumbo stated that in a way it is an apprenticeship program in its own right. His partner, Alex Wright started in Allentown 10 years ago. He came from very humble beginnings and grew up in the projects in Queens and was able to scrape up his life savings and buy a dilapidated building at 5th and Gordon back in 2011. He had no resources and no expertise. He actually slept on the floor of that building while he rehabilitated it for three years. You fast forward 10 years and he now owns 20 buildings in the city. He is the first local minority developer to do a major project in Allentown at the Riverfront. Having an outside trades program with Alex as the lead

really shows the Allentown youth that anything is possible if you have a great work ethics and a positive attitude and willing to work hard every day. The idea is to expand the program at Riverview Lofts II with 10 program participants and have them working with our onsite staff as well as Alex every day to see the project from conceptualization to completion and teaching them each one of those trades. He kind of grew up in a generation where you were always taught in order to make a good living you need to go to college. While he thinks it's great that people will go to college and education is important it is not for everybody. Learning a trade and a skill set is so important and we believe that this program would implement. Ultimately teach Allentown youth a skill set to do it on their own. The hope is that once they learn a skill set, they will turn around and they will do the same thing for other local minority youth in the neighborhood. It has this type of snowball effect that creates 100s of local minority jobs in the next decade.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked Mr. Palumbo will he be using local labor that is already established.

Mr. John Palumbo stated that they are going to be using as much local labor as they possibly can. Basically, their business model in Jersey City is to use local contractors and hire locals. Essentially, what they are doing is moving their headquarters out to Allentown and using all local contractors and employees. They are really looking to staff up and build their locals relationships which Alex has already been using the local contractors from Allentown from the last 10 years.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked if it is any type of agreement, like a Community Workforce Agreement.

Mr. Joe Fitzpatrick stated that they are at a point. They can't build on what they are talking about. John and Alex have made commitments to hire local, but this is a first baby step in a long process. They are asking the city to do is modify the zoning ordinance to permit some forward-looking development. They can't even go to contractors whether it is union or local workforce initiatives. They don't have solid development plans that are engineered and drawn up to be presented at this stage. Right now, we are asking the City of Allentown Council to bless this zoning concept so we can take the next step. After a good year and a half, this is our very first baby step.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that he is going off of what Mr. Palumbo has presented to Council.

Mr. Joe Fitzpatrick stated that he understands. He stated that John did a

masterful job presenting what this is all about. We have been working with the city for a very long time. He wants to respond to Ms. Keller. He stated that he can see everything and hear everything and could not speak. The bastardize phrase was attributed to him and he used the word, but a lot of things in The Morning Call and every local newspaper, the context was and the Planning Commissioners were there and some of the people on the call were part of that Planning Commission. He stated that he is an Allentown guy. He went to high school five blocks away at Central Catholic. Their first home in Allentown, he and his wife bought and restored a condemned city row on Linden Street. He is not one to denigrate where he comes from. That being said, he was talking going way back because he is an Allentown boy of the history of the 80s and 90s going back to the Daddona Administration when it was wild west zoning. He said that nice single family rows were chopped up and bastardized by out of town landlords that did not take care of it. He stated that he has ultimate respect for the neighborhood. He stated that he is of that and of the Lehigh Valley and Allentown and while the word was used, it was not in the context at all of the neighborhood, of the city, of the ward, of the riverfront. It was about landlords that don't care of properties and cut them up. He stated that he just wanted to clarify it. If he offended, his apologies. He figured it would be some blowback when he saw that quote.

Mr. John Palumbo piggybacked off of what Joe Fitzpatrick stated he wants to make it clear to everyone on Council. We are not talking about condemnation here. We are talking about revitalizes old vacant warehouses such as Neuweiler, American Atelier and antiquated and outdated service parking lots. They are not looking to condemn people's homes. All of their projects are outlined in the Lehigh Riverfront Master Plan and Allentown Vision 2030. There are for old blighted warehouses and surface parking lots.

Mr. Julio Guridy thanked Mr. Palumbo and stated that Council understands that. The city has not spoken about condemning anybody's property. They have never talked about in regards to this project. He stated that they still have one person who wants to speak from the public.

Ms. Cheryl Haughney asked about the residential units. One of her concerns in the previous development projects in our city is not seeing the opportunity for the residential condominiums ownership. Just so that people are clear condominiums are not a style of architecture. Condominiums could be a single family detached house or high-rise multi-unit. It is a style of ownership. We have prime real estate. Riverfront real estate and she would like to see the opportunity for John and Jane Q public to be live-in owners. It would spread the wealth, have occupied units, people are invested in the city and living in these units. She stated that she

has not heard anybody talk about condominium units. All she heard about is rental residential units.

Mr. John Palumbo stated that he appreciates the comment and believes there is a market for condominiums, but as Joe Fitzpatrick said we really not at the stage at this point. Now, in front of you is the Zoning stage. Each one of the projects have to go back to the city and Planning Commission for final approval. He stated that he hears her loud and clear and it is an opportunity for condominiums on some of the projects at the riverfront, but no development is going to take place unless the Zoning that is proposed is implemented.

Ms. Cheryl Haughney stated that she hears that, but it would make her feel a lot better if she knows that residential condominiums units will be available. She is concerned because we have become a city of all rental units. It is very difficult to get people to buy into being in the city long-term if you don't have a piece of homeownership. In the past, she heard the old Textile Factories were bought and granted zoning relief to do apartments. One of the arguments was the none of the banks were lending for condominiums. Those days have come and gone by in the past several years. In fact, if you look throughout Lehigh County the majority of 55 + communities are all condominium ownership. It will be criminal to have prime real estate in the city and not offer John and Jane Q public the opportunity to have a piece of that. She is also weary of the fact that a lot of land ownerships in particular Center City and the surrounding area is being concentrated in the hands of the very few. She stated that it is a dangerous precedent. Residential condominium units would give opportunities for ownership is something that she wants the plan to include once you get passed the initial approval stages.

Mr. Julio Guridy thanked Ms. Haughney and stated that it is a great idea actually.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that he thinks Council knows that this is not a zoning petition. It is a change to the map.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated he knows it is, but it is a great idea. It is nice to hear. It is nothing to do with this right now, but it is a good idea.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that he just wants to mention that it was 43 years ago that he first started with the city as a police officer and that was his district to work on the truck. The whole Front Street area and the east side and he remembers those days. It was very vibrant. Many of the businesses and the industries were still flourishing then at that time. That is no longer the case. He stated that when he drives through there now, it is

many blighted buildings. The old Bethlehem Furniture, the Neuweiler Brewery. He stated that he is excited about this project. It is important for them to get moving on it. When you look at the downtown and the amount of development that has happened here and you look at the waterfront that has not even started yet. This will be a great springboard to start moving that along. It is important for us to do that. At this point, we are looking at the zoning changes. He stated that it is very important for them to do this and will be supportive of it.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that she agrees with Mr. Hendricks. There are so many pluses to this and the number 1 plus is that we have been talking about it for so long, jobs. We will have their headquarters here. We are going to have jobs. He is willing to spend money for our parks and open space and so many of the other things. She does also agree with the last caller, she has been an advocate for homeownership for six years now. She believes it is what they had in the 50s, 60s and 70s where people had roots and lived in this city and our school district. They went to our schools. She stated that she agrees with Ms. Haughney, there are rentals, rentals, rentals. She stated that she knows that is not what they are here for. They are here to approve this which she is going to because she thinks it is a wonderful thing. To consider condominiums as opposed to rentals is something that she would be in favor of. Everything is a plus from being able to give them jobs. To have an incentives for the programs that you were talking about. She stated that she is in favor of it. Let's try to consider ownership.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that she believes that it is a great project. She grew up in that area. She really would like to see the blighted properties fixed up and beautified because it is needed.

Mr. Joshua Siegel stated that he had the pleasure of sitting down with Mr. Palumbo several months ago. They talked about the initial outlay of the project. Obviously, whenever it comes a development, his priority is how it is going to impact the community. How does the local community benefit and he was more than pleased and significantly reassured by the fact that there is a real strong commitment to utilizing local labor. Obviously, they do a lot of development in Jersey in Hoboken, Jersey City. In Jersey, union labor is a very strong force so definitely anytime a project is built in the City of Allentown, he would like to see an emphasis of the local labor force. Especially, unionized labor. He stated that it is important that they support the men and women of our trades who learn a skill, who understands the appreciation of a hard days work. Working with you hands and learning a craft and trade. It is really a lost art. He was also overjoyed, again, he knows with zoning that this project speaks to really the fact that it is an upwards trajectory for Allentown right now. If we think of all the projects we

heard about over the past couple of weeks. The rezoning of the Allentown State Hospital, the two warehouses going on the east side. There really is an enormous opportunity to make Allentown a premier mid-size city with tremendous amounts of mixed-use development. In addition to that, it is not often that you get a developer that is actually looking to spend their private capital in a way it benefits the community. Their willingness to invest in Bucky Boyle which he thinks it is a park that has been thoroughly under appreciated and under invested in. It does not necessarily gets the love that it deserves. It is a keeper. For the first and six wards, it is the only opportunity for recreational experiences and to make that a world class water park. He had conversations with Manhattan Building Company about this as well as our own Parks and Recreation Department. There are some really ambitious things we could do for Bucky Boyle to make it a premier, one of the kind, state of the art both attraction and waterfront park. He stated that he is excited about this project. Especially the commitment to educate local youth and then give them the skills and resources so they can be their own entrepreneurs, their own tradesmen. Those are absolute positives. There is also that strong commitment to community benefits that we need and above all else, there is a comprehensive vision there. We need to be constructive partners and continue to come back as an entity that is consulted with and act on the driver's seat. The one thing that we need to be here as visionaries to help steer this process. The project has untold promise and certainly it is a part of the city that has not gotten the same degree, investment and attention that the best of Allentown has. It is time that the benefits of Allentown development starts to spread out for the rest of the communities and the rest of the neighborhoods. He thinks a project like this has the capacity and the ability to catalyze an investment and the fact that they are coming to Allentown is a reflection of the city's best days are ahead. People are started to take notice around the country and other parts of the country and other cities and recognize the potential that Allentown has and they want to be a part of that future. Moving their headquarter here is not just their commitment, but their confidence of what the city can become. He stated that he looks forward to the next decade of their work and what they can turn Bucky Boyle into together and what that area can be with that strong commitment to the community and working with the city as a partner. He stated that he certainly supports the rezoning.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach thanked the two gentlemen that took the time to meet with her two or so months ago. the commitment to hire Allentown residents and even going further to hire 25 percent local minority contractors. Locally, the city has 165 Black owned businesses so we definitely have a plethora of folks to contract with. She is wondering based on the work that has been done in Jersey with hiring local folks, do you all have a model that you tend to use to meet those metrics or what is the plan to achieve that.

Mr. John Palumbo stated that we can work together to achieve that goal. In Jersey City, we were working with some of the contractors for the last 30 years. Those are relationships that are in place and they do their best effort to hire local minorities in Jersey City. In Allentown, it is fresh slate. We are really building our team out here. They want to hire local minority contractors. We are looking to expand that. Anybody on Council, including yourself who has any local minority contractors that are qualified and interested in work, please feel free to pass his information along and we would love to work with them.

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that his attorney may advise him probably not to answer this right now, but it sounds like everything you all are talking about would be elements of a Community Benefits Agreement. You are talking about jobs. You are talking about fixing up a playground. In one of the renderings there are even some environmental aspects with a green roof. Is that something, if you can't speak to be willing to enter into a Community Agreement here, is that something that in other communities you guys have entered into.

Mr. John Palumbo stated that they never entered into. In Jersey City, they developed a park for the city and they entered into an agreement for that. In terms of local labor, they have never entered into a Project Labor Agreement, but they are a mixed shop and you can ask around the local unions. He stated that they love them out in Jersey City because we make our best efforts and we employ a lot of different people. He stated that they are a little premature to talk about specific agreements, but once this is approved he would be more than willing to sit down with each and every person on Council as well as the city's administration to make everybody feel comfortable that the commitments that they are making with this proposal are real commitments. He stated that he just want to be judge by their actions and not off

Enactment No: 15684

Ms. Ce Ce Gerlach stated that she appreciates that and hears and understands the concerns of folks that may have been written in or called in. With this project, there are pros and cons with everything. It brings jobs and there is a commitment to hire local. There is a commitment to hire minority owned contractors. There is a commitment to help with Parks and Recreation. There is a concern that gentrification will occur and more than likely it will. It will be interesting if this passes what that conversation looks like with you all on how to maybe mitigate that. It won't stop it, but how do we mitigate some of that gentrification that will natural happen. She stated that she thinks that is all she has and will think about how she will vote later.

Mr. Julio Guridy thanked Ms. Gerlach and stated that he too believes that it is an excellent project. Part of his dreams even before he came on City Council was to see the redevelopment of the riverfront area and taking into account Bucky Boyle Park and the Neuweiler Building which is a historical building. Way before he came to City Council over 20 years ago. We used to have a big sign by the riverfront when you come into the city. It used to be on a billboard right on Seventh Street at the city line right by the bridge. We had another one down by where American On Wheels is. Some of you who been here for a long time may remember those signs which says the development of the riverfront with nice pictures over there. It was during the time of Bill Heydt. He stated that he is showing his age. He stated that he don't know if Mike remembers that.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated a lot of Waterfront Studies.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that they had the Riverfront Master Plan in which they met over at the America On Wheels Museum. It was a beautiful plan and he thought things were going on and they were going to do something. That was close to 10 years ago. We thought it was going to happen right away. He is still talking about it. He stated that when he saw this project and heard about it. What he did was first of all, he went over to Jersey City to see what they have done over there. He has a friend who is the County Clerk in Jersey City, Junior Maldonado. He invited him over and he saw this and said wow. This is really really nice. Can we do something like this in Allentown? That was a while ago and now we are coming into this part and it is exciting to see some of the concept drawings of this and what it can turn out to be. He stated that he is really really excited to see this project going and Chief Spang who lives in the area called him the other day and talked to him. He stated to Chief Spang, you have to talk to them to see what it is and how it is going to be because he lives in that area. You heard him speak. He is delighted to see it coming. He thinks talking about hiring some people, workers and contractors and asking for our support to get on contractors. He stated that he talked to some of the labor unions and they have some apprenticeship programs and they are having a hard time here locally. If you go to IBEW or some of the other unions, they are having a hard time getting people to take the apprenticeship program. He encourages everybody here and people in the public to send people to those apprenticeship programs. They are always calling and they are always looking. He recommended that they look at all of this in general for right now. This is just the beginning of this. This is baby steps into this project. He stated that he is obviously going to vote for this and the developers and Alex, who is a minority developer, and he would like to see a minority developer to work on this and also John Palumbo who has been forthright with Council. He stated that he agrees with him and Candida Affa in regards to and he would love to if he could have an apartment there. It is



a great thing. Looking at the river is something that people love to do and he thinks it is excellent proposal.

**ADJOURNED: 7:29 PM**