CITY OF EVANSTON

SPECIAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

COMMITTEE MEETING

RE:  ORDINANCE 32-O-08 - PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

FOR A MAP AMENDMENT & PLANNED DEVELOPMENT AT 708 CHURCH STREET. Consideration of a recommendation from the Plan Commission to rezone the property at 708 Church Street from D2 to D3, and to grant a Planned Development on that site of a 49-story residential and retail tower.

Transcribed Report of Proceedings of a public hearing on the above captioned matter, held May 7, 2008 at the Village Hall of Evanston, 2100 Ridge Avenue, 2nd Floor, Evanston, Illinois, at 6:52 p.m. and presided over by D. Holmes, Chair.

PRESENT:

D. HOLMES, CHAIR        L. JEAN-BAPTISTE
S. BERNSTEIN              M. WYNNE
E. TISDAHL                 A. RAINLEY
E. MORAN                  A. HANSEN
C. WOLLIN

STAFF:

J. WOLINSKI                 K. COX
D. MARINO

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CHAIRMAN HOLMES:  Good evening.  This is a special meeting of the Planning & Development Committee for the sole purpose of discussing the 708 Church Street development. We have a quorum and we're going to get started. We will take the first few minutes to have the developer to review recent materials and answer previous questions that might have been posed to them.

MR. FRIEDLAND:Thank you very much. For the record, my name is Steve Friedland representing the applicant. I really just have a few short comments for you at the outset. We again do want to thank the Council for holding a special meeting. We understand this is difficult with your busy schedules, but we appreciate being able to come in and take up the evening with respect to the project.

At the last Planning & Development Committee meeting on April 8th, we presented the revised drawings of the building. We assume you've now had a chance to review those, and we have our entire design team here with us tonight and we're ready to answer any questions you might have with respect to the building design.

Since the last meeting before the Planning & Development Committee, the City's real estate
consultant, US Equities, prepared a report, and Marty Stern testified at the EDC meeting last week. We want to note that one of the tasks that was given to US Equities was to make a qualitative assessment of the public benefits offered by the applicant. We have recited and listed our proposed public benefits on numerous occasions throughout this process, and I don't intend to go through them in any great detail again tonight.

What we do want to emphasize is that the US Equities' report substantiates what we've said for months, namely, that we are offering quantifiable public benefits to the City. Contrary to some of the public skepticism, there is no sleight of hand here with respect to public benefits. The TIF generated by the development, our affordable housing contribution, the commitment of silver LEED certification, and the Hahn building acquisition, restoration and land covenant result in millions of dollars of benefits to the City at millions of dollars of cost to the Applicant.

We believe that our proposed public benefits are more significant than any previously approved planned development has offered the City. We hope that
the US Equities' report at least puts to bed the
question of whether our financial numbers are solid and
reliable.

As you also know, this week we delivered to
you a booklet containing factual responses to many of
the issues we've heard in opposition to the proposal.
Throughout this process, we've listened to the testimony
and responded factually and directly to the issues that
were raised. However, the public meeting format and the
time constraints associated with it do not allow us to
address each issue as it is presented or raised by the
public. Our booklet addresses these issues in a clear
and concise manner.

Our responses to the Plan Commission's
conditions, the facts related to the downtown office
space, data regarding project economics, issues related
to the concerns regarding the loss of independent
retailers among other issues are addressed in the
booklet. We have all the members of the design and
development team here tonight and we're prepared to
address those issues along with any others you might
want to discuss.

One final note, we've tried in our
presentation of the development to give you our
perspective on how this proposal fits into the context
of Downtown Evanston. Redevelopment within Downtown
Evanston is not a new concept. It began a number of
years ago with projects like the Whole Foods, the Park
Evanston, the theater project and Sherman Plaza among
many other developments. These projects help to
revitalize Downtown Evanston and enhance its emerging
lifestyle character.

The Fountain Square block is the true center
of downtown and should be developed in a manner that
celebrates and acknowledges that central prominence. It
is in that context that we propose this development.
This development will continue to strengthen the
redevelopment of Downtown Evanston, and it will provide
the architectural capstone of Downtown Evanston,
acknowledging the significance of Fountain Square as the
center of the City.

With that, we're prepared to take any
questions you might have or however you're going to
proceed tonight.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Okay. Are there any
questions from the Council at this time or do you want
to reserve that until later? Until later? Okay, all right. Thank you.

MR. FRIEDLAND: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: We will now move into public comments. As stated previously, we will give 90 minutes to public comments. I would suggest that if you are part of a group or representing a group, maybe you guys want to put your heads together and choose one person so that you can maybe get a little bit more time, but we're going to stick really close to that 90 minutes. We have 30 people which means just about three minutes each. So, we won't be going below that, okay?

If we could start with Mr. Jim Corirossi?


MR. CORIROSSI: James Corirossi, I live at 1640 Maple Avenue in Evanston. I'm the president of the Downtown Residents Association (DRA) and I am speaking on behalf of the association.

In public comment meetings in both September 2007 and again in March 2008, the Downtown Residents Association stated its position on the 708 Church Street
project. In light of the revised project proposal presented by the developers at the April 8th P&D Committee meeting, we would like to reiterate our position. While we are for development in the downtown area, the City, in this case P&D Committee, should not proceed with adopting the project as proposed. As the most significant and visible area of the downtown, this core block should serve as a key example of rather than an exception to the City's strategic vision. The DRA carefully reviewed the downtown draft plan as presented in the December 2007 Plan Commission meeting. DRA holds that the 708 Church proposed building does not comply with the draft plan and the recommended changes from the DRA. The major recommended change was that that particular parcel be 30 stories or 300 feet. A summary of the DRA's key objections follow:

Public benefits. The public benefits proposed by the revised project have not really changed, nor has our position. The 708 Church project's contributions to the welfare of Evanston and its citizens are not substantial enough to warrant the developer's variance requested. In the consultant's report, we'd like to
clarify there were eight public benefits, three were quantifiable, three they could not put a number on, and two were very questionable, which leads me to believe that less than half are really public benefits.

Although we applaud the developer's proposed acquisition of the landmark Hahn building and the commitment to its restoration, we take issue with the request for three million of the TIF funds to offset the cost. Since we've put this together, we've read the consultant's report, and he concurs with that, that it is too much.

One of the questions we'd like to raise is once you remodel this, upgrade it, does it become Class A? And if it becomes Class A, what does that do with the tenants that are in it? That again destroys the Class B that we've talked about protecting in the downtown area.

Commercial office space. By tearing down the 708 Church site, the 35 professional offices that represent 130 service oriented businesses will most likely be gone. There is not enough Class B space to put all of them within the City of Evanston in the downtown area. The project would result on a loss of
46,000 square feet of affordable, commercial office space.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: I'm sorry, but it's been three minutes.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Chairman Holmes, I relinquish my three minutes to Jeff.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Thank you.

MR. CORIROSSI: Building height. The 708 project does not meet DRA's suggested maximum height, I reiterate, 30 stories, a maximum of 300 feet. If we required underground placement of parking, this would reduce the overall height and, we believe, bring it within what we feel would be acceptable for this development.

In conclusion, DRA asks that before you vote on the project, you carefully consider the opposing reasons the downtown residents have presented and the larger Evanston community have voiced about this project. In your deliberations, consider lack of significant public benefits, loss of affordable commercial space and viable business enterprises, the economic balance between commercial and residential, which includes height, zoning, impact on City services,
and the Evanston character. Quality of architecture is good but not a reason to build a building.

We ask that you make an enlightened and informed decision. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. STALLCUP: My name is Katie Stallcup. I live at 144 Greenwood Street, and I'm reading a statement from the Southeast Evanston Association (SEA).

The Southeast Evanston Association remains opposed to the proposed development at 708 Church Street. While the developers have reduced the height of the planned condominium tower, their revised project still does not address the many concerns of our community.

To state a few specifics:

First, the developers continue to request enormous zoning variances, far in excess of any that have been requested by other downtown projects. Even with the reduced height, the proposed building will dwarf other structures in town. The proposed size of the building does not reflect the character and needs of the City of Evanston. The building only reflects the profit motive of the developers. The City Council
should not be in the business of guaranteeing the 
profitability of individual projects. Instead, the City 
Council should focus on respecting and upholding the 
zoning ordinances.

Secondly, the proposed development continues 
to add 218 dwelling units to the downtown area. SEA 
concerns about traffic flow and loading berths have not 
been addressed or ameliorated.

Three, the proposed development provides less 
retail space than currently exists and no office space. 
SEA feels that this design will have a negative impact 
on the downtown community and the City's long term 
economic health.

And four, the developers offer no real public 
benefits in exchange for the massive zoning ordinances 
they are requesting. Zoning allowances, excuse me, they 
are requesting. SEA strongly rejects the consideration 
of the City-subsidized Hahn building renovation as a 
public benefit. Similarly, contributions to the City's 
affordable housing fund are mandated by law, and thus, 
cannot be considered a benefit.

In summary, the many problems with this 
development have not gone away. SEA urges the Planning
& Development Committee to reject this project. Thank
you.

  (Applause.)

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Thank you.

MS. LINDWALL: Hello, I'm Jeanne Lindwall, 625
Library Place. And I'm speaking briefly on behalf of
the Evanston Coalition for Responsible Development.

  You should have received John Kennedy's memo
on the economics of the tower proposal. John couldn't
be here tonight, and in the interest of time, I'm not
going to go into a detailed summary of the analysis but
generally concur with his conclusions and will do my
best to answer any questions you might have about that
memo. For anyone who is interested who didn't get a
copy of it, the memo is on the evanstoncrd.org web site.

  All models and projections are based on a
series of assumptions, and the various revenue analyses
that have been done for this project are no exception.
The results are only as good as the assumptions that go
into the model. When the development is fully assessed
and starts paying property taxes, it will generate
somewhere in the vicinity of three million dollars per
year in incremental property taxes. The total amount
that actually will go into the TIF fund is going to
depend on how quickly the project is built, the units
occupied, fully assessed and actually start paying
property taxes. In the meantime, the City will be
losing the revenue stream being generated by the
existing uses.

While the TIF is in place, there really won't
be much impact on individual property tax bills because
the funding is all going into the TIF fund. After the
TIF expires due to normal reassessment of property
throughout the City and the way tax levies are
calculated, any benefit to individual taxpayers really
won't be very noticeable to them.

My understanding, from talking to Bob
Rushlickie after last week's EDC meeting is that the TIF
projections assume that the development will be
completed and fully assessed for the 2011 tax year with
taxes payable the following year in 2012. Given the
history with Sherman Plaza where condo units are just
being individually taxed for the 2007 tax year, and
you'll start seeing the revenue later this fall, I think
that this is a very optimistic assumption. I should
note that the 1881 Oak project was approved despite a
negative Plan Commission recommendation in part with the hope that it would generate a few years of incremental revenue for the Downtown 2 TIF.

Using the incremental revenues generated by this project to help pay for the Hahn building may have caused to further impact the, you know, how much money goes into the TIF fund for other eligible projects within the Washington National TIF. And you know, that's going to depend in part about how an incentive would be, a reimbursement would be structured. And obviously, you know, that whole issue is still awaiting much more discussion and consideration.

Besides the economic arguments that have been made against this project, in my opinion, this is the wrong project for this site in terms of land use and scale and density. You've heard testimony from Con Savoy from Teska Associates concerning the lack of public benefit consistent with the development allowances being requested, and the perception that what is really being asked is spot zoning. I agree with his assessment.

The tower's density is significantly larger than anything else in the downtown and flies in the face
of the adopted planned development design guidelines
that call for buildings that are compatible in massing
and scale with surrounding buildings. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. BUCHANAN-TRUSDELL: My name is Kathy
Buchanan-Trusdell, and I have lived in Evanston for
about 26 years, and worked here in the community for
about 20 and currently rent space at 708 Church Street
and have enjoyed providing psychotherapy services there
for about five years.

So, my perspective is a bit more personal but
I just have a few words I wanted to say. I want to
thank you for this opportunity tonight to address the
Council and the people here. I do feel a little bit
like Hilary Clinton, you know, it doesn't look so good
right now but we're still swinging. So, I'll add my
voice again to the melee.

I am opposed to the construction of the tower
at 708 Church Street. And when I spoke before, I
mentioned some more specific reasons, the density, you
know, not reflecting the values of Evanston residents.
But I'm feeling now that we, the people here in the land
of we the people, have elected you, our Council members
to serve and represent us. It is a sacred and a solemn trust. And we have put you there to be our voice.
And we, the public, have spoken. We are speaking in a clear unmistakable voice. And we'll continue to speak until we are heard and until our wishes are represented accurately. Overwhelmingly, we the public and we the people are saying no to this tower that for many reasons does not appear viable to us. Neither financially, aesthetically, ecologically or culturally is the tower in our best interests.
So, we urge you, I urge you to conserve what is inherently Evanstonian and reflects the values and choices of its people. If in fact 708 Church Street must be torn down against the express wishes of an apparent majority of Evanston, why not build something truly viable and forward thinking? For instance, a truly green building using recycled materials and renewable energy sources. So, give us a building there that we can truly celebrate and be proud of and that would make a true contribution to our community. Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Thank you. The next five
people: Mr. Bob Atkins, Valerie True, Peter Sanchez, Barbara Rakley, and Jeff Smith.

MR. ATKINS:  Good evening. My name is Robert Atkins. I've been a resident of Evanston for more than 40 years. I'm also president of Northwestern Neighbors. Unless this Council fails to reject the present proposal, the Council should devote, in my judgment, to defer consideration of the proposal until the following:

1. The Council should release the tape recordings of the secret meetings held on February 5th and March 27th of last year regarding the tape recordings of these meetings that discussed the proposal.

2. Until an advisory referendum can be held on November 4th of this year where the citizens would have a right to be heard on this proposal.

At the Council's, at the February 5th and March 27th of '07, the Council considered and discussed the merits of the developer's proposal. In fact, representatives of the developer were invited and participated in one of these meetings. After the Illinois Attorney General's Office concluded that the Council violated the Open Meetings Act by holding the
March 27th meeting in secret, the Council released minutes of these meetings in response to my FOIA request. However, to my disappointment and the disappointment of many Evanstonians, the Council refused to release the tape recordings of these meetings. While the summary minutes do show the positions of some of the members of the Council, thereby raising questions concerning the objectivity and fairness of Council members voting on the issues here presented, clearly release of the tape recordings of these meetings would clear the air and permit the Council and the community alike to know exactly what their representative said and did at these meetings.

In addition, as I said before, in the name of transparency and accountability, the Council should defer voting on the pending resolution proposal until at least the tape recordings are submitted. In addition, as I indicated, let the people of this community decide on what their downtown should look like. There are many people in this community that wished they had a chance to tell their representatives what they really want their downtown to look like.

Hence, those that have opposed this plan, this
development plan, have taken the position that unless
the plan is rejected, we will propose to put on the
ballot of the November 4th election an advisory
referendum with respect to the height of buildings in
downtown. This truly would then show what the people as
a community wants in their downtown area. Thank you.

    (Applause.)

MS. TRUE: Good evening. I'm Valerie True. I
live at the corner of Sherman and Noyes Street, and I
came over because this is an issue that affects me very
strongly.

    Unfortunately, I wasn't wearing my glasses
when I came in, so I signed the list that I thought said
are you in favor or against this project. I didn't know
I was signing up to speak. So, I would just like to
second what the speakers have said before and I will
donate my time to the next speaker. Thank you.

    CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Thank you.

    (Applause.)

MR. SANCHEZ: So, do I get her time? Okay.

My name is Peter Sanchez and I live at 2228 Pioneer
Road.

    Since we are forced to be brief, I want to
present a short list of what I consider to be important reasons for why this skyscraper should not be built.

1. This project promises to dramatically alter the character of the City, potentially destroying Evanston's uniqueness and charm, and thus, requires very careful scrutiny.

2. A project of this magnitude should never be approved before the City approves a Comprehensive Downtown Plan. We are putting the cart before the horse, and in essence, predetermining the downtown plan.

3. We do not have convincing information demonstrating that this project will in fact yield a sizeable economic windfall for the City. Do we want to alter this City dramatically for a couple of million bucks?

4. Some of the negative effects will be increased pollution, traffic, noise, shadows, and increased demands for City services. A thorough analysis of these adverse effects should have been conducted.

5. For many of us, this skyscraper is not aesthetically pleasing and is by no means iconic. Evanston deserves and should demand a more
appealing downtown project.

6. The project has less rentable business space than the current building, which means less revenue than what a better project could potentially bring.

7. Building 218 additional condos during an economic recession at a time when there is a glut of unsold condos makes sense only if we know that in a few years an economic expansion will take place. No one can predict this.

8. In the short run, carrying out an enormous construction project in the heart of our downtown during an economic recession will undoubtedly hurt the City's economy since many nearby businesses will most likely experience a decline in sales during the lengthy construction phase.

9. The City generously allowed the developers to come up with a better project, and they came back with a slightly shorter but fatter skyscraper with the same number of units and with still no real public benefits. This doesn't demonstrate a good faith effort. Alderman Bernstein and Wynne essentially told the development team last time, you can't simply come back with a shorter building and
nothing else. Well, that's exactly what they did.

10. Evanston's downtown is extremely appealing to
developers for many reasons. We should be
negotiating from the position of strength rather
than weakness. If this property is in play as
Alderman Moran expressed at the last Economic
Commission meeting, then we should wait for a
better project that does not change Evanston's
character.

11. Despite the importance of this project, the City
has done little to properly inform residents about
it and to bring them into the decision making
process. Those of us who have become involved had
to continuously ask the City to provide
information. For example, as of only two days ago,
a resident going to the City's web site would learn
that Doggie Beach opened up on May 1 but would not
know that perhaps the most important meeting of the
year was taking place today.

Imagine, the P&D Committee decides to hold a
special meeting for residents to express their opinion
on the skyscraper, but the City doesn't announce it on
its own web page until two days before the meeting, and
only after I sent several emails requesting that it be posted on the web page. Why hold a special meeting for resident input but not make any effort to publicize that meeting to residents?

Finally but most important, despite the lack of openness and information, there is clear indication that most residents are vehemently opposed to this project. Literally thousands of signed petitions, placed signs on their lawns, attended numerous public meetings, written emails, and made phone calls. It would be a shame if Evanston, a City with a reputation of being progressive, approves a project that changes the character of the City dramatically and irreversibly when it seems clear that the majority of residents are against it.

We are not against development that preserves our City's unique appeal. Many development projects have been proposed in these chambers without the public outcry related to this project. We are, however, against the massive project that degrades our quality of life and of value and reputation of our City. Democracy is not about development, business interests, market opportunities, economic viability, or the proverbial
bottom line. Democracy is about citizens determining their own destiny, determining the shape of their community.

We Evanstonians want to control our destiny. We want to preserve our City's unique character. And we sincerely hope that our elected representatives and our City officials will do the right thing and assist us in this effort. Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Mr. Sanchez, would you please note that I did give you Ms. True's time.

MR. SANCHEZ: Thank you very much.

MS. RAKLEY: Good evening. Barbara Rakley, R-a-k-l-e-y, 2526 Grant Street.

Because of the financial situation in which Evanston finds itself, I can see how it would be tempting if I were sitting where you are sitting to grasp at any proposal that seemed to have any chance of helping the City financially, however arguable that financial benefit actually is. But I believe that as elected officials, you have a duty to represent the views of your constituents when it comes to your vote on this proposal. So, if you can, in good conscience,
conclude that the majority of your constituents support the proposal, you should by all means vote to recommend this project.

But I'm going to hazard a guess that most of you have not heard an overwhelming chorus of support for this project. I'm going to guess that the majority of your constituents have in fact expressed vehement opposition to the project. And I believe that you are sitting where you are as the voice of your constituents. So, I will urge you to cast your vote based on their voice as they have shared it with you, as we have shared it with you in phone calls, emails and public comments.

Inside yourselves, I believe, most of you know that your constituents are against the proposal you are considering tonight. I, therefore, urge you to vote against recommending approval of the proposed development at 708 Church. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. SMITH: Jeff Smith, 2724 Harrison. I'd like to thank the Committee for setting aside time to consider these map amendments. I've previously commented on public benefit and process issues and I won't reiterate those other than to say that I've
expressed that I would not be opposed to a project of this height nor by these developers under certain conditions I basically set forth in mid March and earlier. I don't believe those conditions have been met at this time.

I do want this Committee to consider tonight in its map making one issue that perhaps hasn't been stressed enough: gentrification in Evanston. Yesterday, in Indiana, I was observing five precincts on behalf of the Obama campaign and I observed a number of interactions between supporters and non-supporters that, to put it politely, reminded me just how far we have to go as a society. There are differences that divide us and that can only be bridged if we make the affirmative effort to reach out to each other and say, you are not just welcome but you are wanted.

General condition 3 of the Downtown Planned Development Standards requires that each planned development shall be compatible with and implement among other things "neighborhood planning." There has been a lot of construction in Evanston in the last decade. Census data indicate that during the same period, Evanston has lost thousands of its African American
resident population. However, whether these phenomena
are related, it's too early to definitively say, but
there appears to be not only a correlation but some
causative effect, and I don't think it's unique to
Evanston.

I don't know if adding a few thousand more
people stacked on top of each other in Downtown Evanston
will slow gentrification in Evanston or accelerate it.
I suspect, based on the data I've looked at, that it's
the latter. I only know that we haven't studied this
and we haven't approved specific projects with possible
cumulative impacts sufficiently in mind, and that
hurtling toward further map changes without thoughtful
consideration and public disclosure of where we want to
end up forecloses the possibility that our final
destination will be the product of anything we have
planned, and that we might lose some of the diversity
that we claim to cherish.

Decisions are tradeoffs. Some feel that new
collection downtown will generate ultimately funds
that may help our built environment. But I didn't move
here for the concrete, I moved here for the people. And
if paying for a new Fountain means we have to drive out
some of our neighbors, to me it's not worth the price.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Butler Adams, Jim Woods, Neela Deshmukh -- Neela Deshmukh I believe it is, Glenn Gray and Carl Bova.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can we allow for all citizens of Evanston to speak first before outsiders?

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Well, we have people who have businesses and work in Evanston. I think as being Evanstonians, we certainly want to be humane to that. So, we are allowing people to speak as they signed up, okay?

MR. ADAMS: My name is Butler Adams, I live at 6639 South St. Lawrence Avenue in Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Commissioners: There have been many people who have testified on the 708 Church project and the majority of the comments have been against the tower. Just because people speak against a project doesn't mean it shouldn't happen. Tall structures, short structures, old and new, can work together. One example of this is the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community in Chicago, a one-time suburb, you have old historic homes
mixed with old and new towers. They coexist without a problem.

There are several people of course in this room who are wearing buttons saying Stop the Tower, Stop the Skyscraper, and who have placards on their front yards. Evanston has had a building over 100 feet since the 1920's, and has had a tower over 200 feet since the 1970's.

At the March 17th Planning meeting, a question was raised by one of the Commissioners: What other suburban areas similar to Evanston have a building of substantial height? At that time, the developers were unable to answer the question, so I did a bit of research. Evanston, Illinois: estimated population of 75,500; case building, 277 feet tall. Southfield, Michigan: 78,000 people; 3000 Town Center is 402 feet tall. Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois: population 2,400; Oakbrook Terrace Tower, 418 feet, tallest building in the State of Illinois outside of Chicago.

It was mentioned in previous comments that the Fountain Square building should be renovated. I'm going to say that the majority of the buildings on the site are ugly except for the Hahn building, and if that
structure was renovated, the people who are working there will be displaced anyway. Also, if you force the developers to reduce the height of the tower, those tenants would still be displaced during construction.

   If you sit on a bag of sand, it tends to spread. Just like what happened at Sherman Plaza and Optima Horizons. You have short, squat buildings that have a wall effect, and I don't believe this is the effect that you want.

   The plan that was adopted and approved for downtown was just that, a plan. It wasn't written in stone nor blood. There is nothing wrong with changing or altering those plans. As the first gentleman who spoke said, it was a suggestion. The tower won't destroy the character of Evanston, it will enhance it.

   If an excess of condominiums in downtown and in the area is a concern, make the building a rental building.

   Coming up here, I did not notice any of the high rises in Evanston until I got up to Dempster and Hinman. It would not make that big of an impact. And if the area hadn't changed at all, this meeting wouldn't be held in this room. We would sitting in a teepee around a campfire.
People have stated on blogs that they would be scared of a fire happening in that building because of its excess height. Well, in a skyscraper, you would have to have sprinklers. I'd be more scared of being in this room and this building catching fire because I see no sprinklers in this room. I see nothing wrong with approving this tower and I hope that you do. Thank you.

Oh, finally, I do have something on transit oriented development because I do think that it would be a transit oriented development. I can't give it to you but I can let you see it. And I have photographs of tall, thin buildings in the City which are next to the short and historic buildings. You can see those pictures for yourselves. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. WOODS: Good evening. Jim Woods, 2436 Central Park Avenue. Normally I meet with you all in my role as a member of the Plan Commission. But tonight, I want to address you as a resident of Evanston of only 11 years, so I guess you could call me a newbie, and as an architect.

One thing I want to make very clear is that
neither I nor my firm work for developers. We work on
projects for public and private institutions, schools,
colleges and universities and municipalities.

I very much support the proposed project for
708 Church Street that you are deliberating about and
which many in Evanston have been discussing for months.
My support of this project relates specifically to
three basic ideas:

1) We as a community should be leading the
charge for sustainably designed communities, and the
number one thing we in the US need to do to become more
sustainable is to change the pattern of development that
has historically existed from suburban sprawl at the
periphery to the densification of older, closer-in
communities.

2) Downtown Evanston is the economic engine
of our community, and its success is imperative for all
of us for us to enjoy the amenities we wish to provide.
Improved parks and recreation opportunities, support of
the arts including a downtown performing arts venue has
often been discussed, upgraded public spaces such as
Fountain Square, a diverse community, affordable
housing, et cetera, are to be achieved only through this
kind of project. Continually upward spiraling property taxes will destroy what we have always admired in this community as much as anything else will.

Evanston is a small city with a real urban downtown. We are not an urban village, at least not in our downtown. For downtown to continue to thrive, we need to continue to develop it, adding residential units, businesses and retail establishments.

3) Architectural quality is a very subjective discussion, but in my opinion, this project would be the best of the new architecture in downtown. In many ways, the shorter building is more interesting architecturally while maintaining the vertical emphasis to the original design. A taller thin building will in many ways allow for more sunlight for greater periods of time than a shorter, wider building.

Just last weekend, a draft Climate Action Plan for the City of Evanston was unveiled largely in response to the City Council signing on to a proposal from the US Conference of Mayors to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. That draft plan says the City should continue to support and encourage high density mixed use green, high performing, transit oriented development.
This concept is reiterated in various sections of the draft plan for the downtown that the City has been working on for almost a year.

The proposed project for 708 Church Street clearly is an outgrowth of this basic concept. The rebirth of the downtowns of small and large American cities across the country over the past decade has clearly been linked to increases in residential units in those downtowns. The densification of downtowns has revitalized commercial real estate, and the quality, diversity and vibrancy of downtowns' activities.

We must also accommodate the businesses that have existed in the buildings in this location or other locations in or near downtown that may be more suitable for the economics and are less susceptible to redevelopment. Our downtown needs to be a diverse place which supports a broad array of retail, restaurant, office and other commercial businesses. So, I urge the Council as they have in the past to work with the developer and the businesses to see that they all find an appropriate home.

Would the project be stronger if there was underground parking and levels of office above the
I think so, but the economic viability of those things, given the economics of a particular site and its land cost, needs to be evaluated by the Council. It may not be feasible on this particular site given the economics.

Taking into consideration all these things, it is my opinion that the City of Evanston needs to approve this project which has the potential to continue to build on the past ten years of successful redevelopment of our downtown. This is a project that, to quote a recent article about some high rise buildings throughout history, "embodies Louis Sullivan's exhortation to celebrate the height of tall buildings and yet strives to be a good neighbor by meeting the adjacent city streets with relative modesty and saving its skyscraping gymnastics for where they're really needed, far above the bustling crowd.' Thank you.

MR. GRAY: Dear Aldermen and fellow Evanston friends, my name is Glenn Gray, 807 Davis Street.

The single largest reason you should not pass 708 Church Street project is the developers themselves: Mr. Anderson and Mr. Klutznick. The last time I spoke here, I raised the issue of the developers', Mr.
Anderson and Mr. Klutznick's bait-and-switch tactics. That evening, I suggested Mr. Anderson and Mr. Klutznick had no intention of buying and renovating the Hahn building unless they received the three-million-dollar TIF subsidy even though they suggested they would buy the building and not renovate it.

Last week, Mr. Anderson confirmed he would not go forward and purchase the Hahn building without us subsidizing it. So, the public benefit claimed by Mr. Anderson now must be paid for by us and, as we learned last week, overpaid for by you and me. The switch is now complete.

Back in the fall, when this project came before the Plan Commission, the Commissioners held long and exhaustive meetings debating the merits and issues concerning the application of 708 Church Street. Public comments were spirited. Many fine suggestions came out of those months worth of hearings.

When the application finally passed, it was qualified by several Commissioners requesting changes such as underground parking, newer materials on the base, a second story of office space, et cetera. Mr. Anderson and Mr. Klutznick's response to all the hard
work, hours of suggestions, specific Commissioner
requests was absolutely nothing. Basically, take it or
leave it.

The process then resumed in front of this
body, and all of you went through a similar process.
Hours and hours of debate, input, requests coupled with
special session meetings, public comments, your
considerable valued time, my time, their time--and to
what end? Only upon facing certain defeat of an ill-
conceived plan, Mr. Anderson and Mr. Klutznick requested
more time with promises to bring back a revised plan
addressing all the concerns.

Alderman Bernstein specifically cautioned Mr.
Anderson and Mr. Klutznick not to come back to this body
with just a shorter building, but to specifically
address the following points:

1. Why the overall reduction in square footage of
   retail and office space? This was not addressed.

2. The restoration of the Hahn building without City
   funding. This was most certainly addressed. Mr.
   Anderson and Mr. Klutznick have no intention of
   buying the Hahn building without us paying for it.

3. Silver LEED certification, not addressed. It may,
it may not happen without penalty or consequence.

Alderman Wynne requested how Mr. Anderson and Mr. Klutznick intend to handle the economics of the existing business and potential relocations. Not a word on this. It remains unanswered.

Alderman Baptiste requested that the Fountain Square renovation be addressed by the applicant. Remember, this was the original bait. What are you willing to contribute in actual money? Alderman Baptiste is still waiting for his answer.

Mr. Anderson and Mr. Klutznick have told us in no uncertain terms they will not make any meaningful changes. None, zero, take it or leave it. Mr. Anderson and Mr. Klutznick have not addressed this body's concerns, issues, suggestions or your very specific requests.

Nine months of trying to improve this project has resulted in one giant arrogant statement from Mr. Anderson and Mr. Klutznick: take it or leave it. After nine months, it's time for you, our aldermen, to take decisive action. Tell Mr. Anderson and Mr. Klutznick to leave it for someone else. Thank you.

(Applause.)
MR. BOVA: Carl Bova, 1322 Rosalie Street.

While others have so eloquently described their objections to the project on any number of bases with which I agree, nobody has brought up the 134-stall parking deficiency that is included in the application. So, I hope that you, as members of this Committee, consider the following in your deliberations, then soundly vote to reject the proposal as not in Evanston's best interest.

The 134-stall parking deficiency means that the developer will provide just 60 percent of the required number of spaces per the zoning requirements. Adequate opportunity to provide parking underground is available, yet the developer has opted not to provide that parking. Very little reason has been provided as to why the parking requirement cannot be met.

A survey of downtown residents, 265 respondents in the draft downtown plan, indicates that 1.38 vehicles are owned per household downtown, which is the same rate of ownership of vehicles as the rest of Evanston. Failure to provide 1.38 stalls per unit will result in excessive numbers of vehicles on the street, adding congestion towards streets, reducing the...
The FHWA has found in 1994 that there is a strong correlation between income and a number of vehicles owned per household. Since downtown residents are generally wealthier than the average citizen, they will tend to own more cars than average. This suggests no accommodation for fewer stalls than zoning requires. The graph from the FHWA is provided for your use as an attachment to my statement.

If the 134 cars are stored in public garages or in surrounding streets or in the neighborhoods, then we are subsidizing the developer for that number of stalls. At a minimum cost of about $20,000 per stall, the subsidy to the developer would be $2.68 million, and we have lost valuable spaces in the garages that are intended for us by visitors, workers and commuters, not residential parking.

The economic evaluation has not considered the $2.6 million subsidy for parking as a real cost to the City which it rightfully is. So, add this to the $3.0 million for the TIF assistance that is being requested.
This $5.68 million total subsidy is a highly tangible loss to the City and its citizens, a cost that we cannot afford at this time. Will we gain $5.6 million in benefits? Of course not.

I'd also like you to consider the following relative to development in general. The silver LEED certification --

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Mr. Bova, can you begin to wrap it up because you're past your time?

MR. BOVA: Sure thing. Sure thing. Silver LEED is next to last in green building.

John Norquist, former mayor of Milwaukee, has given testimony to suggest that a viable density in an urban environment is about 24 units per acre rather than 100 or 200 as being proposed in this case. What's the mix being proposed by this particular developer? A loss of retail, a huge loss of office space and, well, virtually a mix of condo upon condo in a sea of unsold condos. The MOS listed 501 condos, townhomes and co-ops on the market as of May 6th.

And what is Evanston gaining from this development? A glut of condos, fewer jobs, questionable sustainability, more congestion, threatened commerce,
lost parking garage capacity, and further subsidy to the
tune of $5.68 million. Your vote to reject is requested
at this time.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Did Ms. Neela Deshmukh --
no? Okay. Mr. Oliver Goold, Jean Esch, Robert
Heitzinger, okay, and Mike Vasilko. And Barbara Janes.

MR. GOOLD: Hi, I'm Oliver Goold. I live at
1730 Hinman Avenue. I represent the board of the 1730
Hinman Avenue building and the tenant owners of that
building.

First, I want to thank you all for your time
and attention. You do really make us feel as though
you're paying attention, and I hope you are.

So, we've got two kinds of decisions to make,
subjective decisions and objective decisions as I have
defined it. What will a 38-story tower do to the
charming residential character of our City? If we all
wanted a city of towers, we'd annex ourselves off to
Chicago. One of the gentlemen before me mentioned the
Kenwood-Hyde Park area. My wife spent 16 years as
editor of the Highwood Park Herald, the newspaper of
that community. We moved from Kenwood-Hyde Park to
Evanston because we wanted a tree line city with charming residential and economic positions, and we wanted a safe place to walk in the evening. But we spent a great deal. My wife could look out the window of her office as editor of the newspaper and see drug dealing going on on the street corner right below her building. We moved.

Do we want to compete with Old Orchard? With national chain stores, which is what they would rent to? Or do we want the delight and diversity of our own Main Street and Dempster. Let's keep Evanston as it has been for decades.

Have any of you walked down Orrington or Sherman when a 15 to 20-mile-an-hour greater wind is blowing? I did last week, when a 20-mile-an-hour wind was blowing and watched two old ladies start going down that street, turn around and go back and leave because they couldn't face the wind on their own two feet. Those are subjective decisions.

Objective decisions, is this project feasible under the conditions of vacancies and high rental percentage ownership existing today? Does it meet the legally established rules and regulations of this
Council? Have we considered what percentage of signed contracts are withdrawn or abandoned by the prospective tenant owners which are being used as a basis for the loan to build this project?

The developers are asking you as our representatives to overthrow all the previous planning and give them the ability to make money. Plus, they appear to be asking you to give them three million dollars to finish their task. At least, that's the word of our in-house 'independent' consultant that we heard recently.

What monetary gains is this project going to add to the City in the next ten years? We do not believe the benefits offered are worth the sacrifices it imposes on us. Please turn this request down. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. HEITZINGER: Good evening. My name is Robert Heitzinger, I live at 420 Church Street. I want to thank the Council for hearing us speak this evening. And in fact, I want to thank the developer for giving me a reason to get out more.

Now, we need development in Evanston, and it's
the lifeblood of any community. But when a project is so out of line with the needs and character of the community, it's the responsibility, and indeed the necessity, of citizens and elected officials to recognize that something is seriously wrong and put an end to it.

Now, the developers have continually stated that they know Evanston. But what is obvious to me and many people in this room is that they don't know the people of Evanston or they don't care about the people of Evanston. They have consistently been wrong about the height issue because this is not about height.

The opposition to this project is based on the fact that their proposal so completely exceeds zoning regulations that they'd be laughable except for the fact that some of you are seriously considering it.

(Applause.)

MR. HEITZINGER: Now, I want you to think about marketing for a minute just because we are being asked to buy the developer's marketing proposal. Now, companies spend millions of dollars to establish their brand through marketing plans. Is Evanston's brand a densely packed urban environment with tall buildings?
Is it Northwestern University?  Is it the Lighthouse?

Now, by the way, that's right up there so I think that's part of the answer to my rhetorical question.

Now, I had spring break recently and I had spent a couple of hours looking at the City's web site because I was really interested to see what are the images on the web site. Well, of the hundreds of images on the City's web site, fewer than ten show any kind of building at all above five stories. On the main page of the City's web site, there is a sailboat, there is the lighthouse, there is a picture of Fountain Square with the fountain actually working, but fewer than ten buildings above five stories, and two of an overview of the City showing any kind of dense urban environment at all.

Now, Evanston's brand is changing, but will we as its citizens control this? Or will the Council allow it to be set by developers who have no vested interest in this community? I believe that this kind of development is not the answer. And as architecture critic, Blair Kamin, wrote yesterday, "This tower needs to look like Evanston. Instead, it looks like anywhere.' Thank you.
MR. VASILKO: Good evening. My name is Mike Vasilko. I live at 2728 Reese in Evanston for 18 years. I would like to further my point of concern which I had written to you about, regarding 708 Church Street development. I'm not a fan of the tower, nor am I in vehement opposition to it. I'm trying to stay rather neutral on that subject.

But my interest is in that the 708 Church Street development and the Downtown Master Plan design efforts which should be independent, that they are independent and that one process does not intentionally or unintentionally influence the other. The goal of the Downtown Plan should be to represent the long term interest of Evanston and its residents and no one else.

I learned of the individuals involved in the 708 Church Street development when I attended the meeting here in February. I was previously aware the Downtown Plan was being designed by people I knew well, John Lamotte and Scott Ferris of the Lakota Group. In February, I noticed George Halek who is here today was part of the design team, and I know George well and respect him. And he works obviously for the Focus
Development team.

The four of us, John, Scott, George and myself and others have worked together for many years as principals of Lohan Associates. And I consider John, Scott and George, you know, to be gentlemen. However, I also believe that these prior relationships create a clear conflict of interest as it relates to the 708 Church Street project and that address, and that a disclosure of the prior relationships should have been filed with the City Manager.

The developer in this case, Focus Development, should be required as required by the code. The City Code, Section 1-18-3, reads in part, "The City Manager may require and the applicant shall submit such additional information which is reasonably intended to achieve disclosure of relevant interests of the entity seeking the approval of the City Council.' In other words, the obligation to disclose information of this type is that of the applicant's.

So, the facts are one of the senior members of the design team and the City's independent design consultants were close colleagues for many years. Friends, I think, beyond casual acquaintances. The
second fact is that the development team should have disclosed this type of information. It is, I believe, the intent of the disclosure articles of the City Code to protect the public interest.

I witnessed several members of this Council freely disclosing the most minute details about having surgery at Evanston Hospital prior to approving a plan to expand the hospital. Those are minor, I think, not even conflicts of interest, but yet disclosures were made. And I think it sets an example that all applicants should follow, especially something of this magnitude that we're all considering here tonight.

I've written to everyone here on the Council, to the Plan Commissioners. I have not received really a comprehensive reply to my letter asking my original question, that question being: How did it come to be that these two parallel yet independent efforts coincided as of destiny or to have them meet at this address, 708 Church Street? So, clearly, to me this is something of a chicken and egg mystery: Which came first, the developer or the City plan? Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Mr. Vasilko, we do have an
answer for you. Mr. Cox? We did receive your letter, we did ask the City Manager, and we've had research done on it and we have an opinion.

MR. COX: Late yesterday I received a copy of Mr. Vasilko's letter which was dated April 24th and was addressed to --

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Could you identify yourself?

MR. COX: I'm sorry. My name is Ken Cox, I'm from the City of Evanston's Law Department. Late yesterday I received a copy of Mr. Vasilko's letter which was dated April 24th and addressed to the members of the Council as well as Mayor Morton which essentially related what Mr. Vasilko himself just said a few moments ago.

After reviewing it, the Law Department has two responses. One, a previous working relationship between these men, which to my understanding was a number of years ago, does not in and of itself constitute any kind of conflict of interest. Moreover, Mr. Vasilko makes multiple references to the City's Code of Ethics, and it should be pointed out that the majority, I should say the vast majority of the Code of Ethics applies to City
employees and City officials. And given the fact that
the developers are neither, and the City's consultants
for the Downtown Plan are at best outside consultants
and not direct employees, not every portion of the
Ethics Code would apply.

And moreover, and I think most importantly is
that Mr. Vasilko's understandings of the time line
between the Downtown Plan and the 708 Church Street
project don't match up with what has actually occurred
here. In his letter, Mr. Vasilko indicates that he
believes that the Lakota Group, the consultant for the
Downtown Plan, made recommendations to up-zone
essentially the block, the Fountain Square for lack of a
better term, where 708 Church Street is found, and that
thereafter, the developers -- well, they haven't quite
purchased it but they have a contract to purchase the
property at 708 Church Street and then thereafter they
proceeded to meet before this Committee for their
planned development. Essentially at the recommendation
of the outside consultant, the property became more
valuable because of a recommended increase in the
zoning. It was then acquired and now they're moving to
develop the project in accord with that rezoning.
Unfortunately, for Mr. Vasilko, again this is not entirely accurate. The Downtown Plan, at this point it's still just a draft and is still before the Plan Commission, has not been finally adopted. If I'm not mistaken, the next meeting on that is, I believe the 19th of -- next Wednesday night, excuse me, a week from tonight. So, that would be the 14th. And moreover, given the fact that the plan has not been adopted, there can be no rezoning in accord with the plan. The property still retains the zoning it had at the beginning of the process. And in fact, the ordinance that this Committee is considering includes a map amendment for the site in order to allow for this kind of development.

So, it's City's Law Department's opinion that there is no conflict of interest in this case.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Thank you, Mr. Cox. Okay, we can proceed with Ms. Esch.

MS. ESCH: Good evening, everybody. I have heard all the legal and opinions about this particular project. And I have to tell you that I am not here about that. I'm here because I've lived in Evanston, I think I first came here in January of 1944. And at that
time, we truly were called the City of Evanston but we
were a village. And of course, today we're not. Today
we are truly a city.

And I only want to speak as a long time
resident and tell you what my sentiments are. And my
sentiments are such that I have long loved Evanston and
have done a few things here and there relative to
various improvements we were making or what have you.
And I still like Evanston, but I have to tell you I
don't want to see that building go up because I think
it's out of character with our City.

We've done a couple of things before, it seems
to me I remember a time when we were discussing
Orrington Avenue was going to be turned into a wonderful
sale thing. And we were going to have all kinds of
sales and it was going to be marvelous. Well, what
happened was Old Orchard opened up and that killed the
whole deal, you know.

But as I said, I'm only here because I've been
here a long time. I have a lot of feeling for the City.
And the building simply is out of character and I'm
hoping you will think it over and go against it. Thank
you very much.

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MS. ESCH: I'm sorry, I didn't tell you my name. My name is Jean Esch and I live at 930 Washington Street in Evanston and I'm in a condo. I was one of those fortunate people that sold my house in time and bought a condo. And what more can I say? It shows my devotion to remaining in the City. Very well.

(Applause.)

MS. JANES: Good evening. My name is Barbara Janes. I live at 802 Colfax Street. And Madam Chairman, are you going to allow more citizen comment?

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: When you say, what do you mean more?

MS. JANES: Well, I know there are some other people who signed up.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: I have some more other people, that's why I'm watching the clock.

MS. JANES: Okay. And you will definitely call them?

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Well, when it's 90 minutes, I'm going to stop.

MS. JANES: Okay. I'm not going to be long. Well, that's what I'm wondering.
CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Yes. Yes, when it's 90 minutes I will stop.

MS. JANES: All right. I have basically two reasons for being here before you tonight. One is previously I submitted to you approximately 1,500 signatures on petitions that had been collected, and I have an additional 100, many of them collected by one of the speakers yet to come who will tell you about that. And so, this is, I did not have these previously so I will make copies and give them to Mrs. Morris tomorrow. But there are 100 here.

And then, just quickly, and I really don't want to take time, but there are three reasons why you should not approve this. One is economic. The proposal does not bring the economic benefits the developer claims they will. Legal. Your zoning ordinance that was just referred to requires you, and those are the rules you're supposed to follow, that any variations to a development must come with public benefits, and you've head they don't.

And thirdly, political. The people of Evanston, through their paper signatures, through their online signatures which you have seen, and yard signs
every corner of this City have said we do not want the
tower. And as been pointed out to you previously, you
are our elected representatives. It is your obligation
to represent your constituents. Your constituents want
you to vote no, so please do so. Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Mary De Joun, Susan Hughes,
Maria Van Bork, Judy Fiske, and Paul Barker, Stephen Yas
and Jonathan Perman.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can you add a name?

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: No, I don't think we will
have time.

MS. DE JOUN: Hi, my name is Mary De Joun. I
live at 833 Sherman Avenue and we've lived here for
about ten years. I’m here to read a letter that is from
the Network for Evanston's Future as I am a member of
that organization, of one of the sub-organizations of
that organization.

The Network for Evanston's Future developed
out of an organization called The Interreligious
Sustainability Circle founded in 1999 whose primary
mission was to promote the idea of earth stewardship
among local congregations. As meetings progressed,
attendees began to form separate but related groups, 
ultimately including Evanston's Energy Future, 
Evanston's Transportation Future, Evanston's 
Affordability Housing Future, Citizens' Lighthouse 
Community Land Trust, Evanston's Food Policy Council, 
and the Talking Farm. These groups all constitute the 
Network for Evanston's Future.

These groups join together each spring to 
organize an Earth Day program. In 2006, the gathering 
was addressed by the sustainability development 
coordinator from Portland, Oregon, and in 2007, by the 
mayor of Madison, Wisconsin. They both described 
innovations that were being implemented in their 
communities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. And as 
a result of these meetings, State Representative Julie 
Hamos obtained a grant to underwrite a sustainability 
coordinator position in the Evanston City Government. 
This past fall, the Network proposed formation of a 
City-Citizen Collaborative Climate Action Planning 
Process supervised by the City's sustainability staff 
and by representatives of the Network.

The Network interprets sustainability as 
including various ways in which a community attempts to
create a balance in its use and consumption of vital resources, some of which are non-renewable so that the community can maintain or improve the quality of life of its members of the long term. In other words, the community should consume resources only to the extent that they can be sustained in the decades to come. Sustainability also implies that both benefits and burdens for various mechanisms for assuring quality of life be fairly distributed among the members of the community.

In recent years, many residents of Evanston have become concerned about the increasing number and scale of high rise buildings in the downtown. They feel that the fundamental character of our City is being changed. The proposal for a 49-story condominium building, now reduced to 38 stories, has exacerbated their concerns. The Network for Evanston's Future regards residential and commercial development of high density close to mass transit as a positive feature for the downtown because it significantly reduces energy consumption in various ways and will serve to reduce the original carbon footprint.

At the same time, however, residential and
commercial developments should conform to a number of principals. At the most general level, residential and commercial developments in the downtown should communicate by their scale, style, price levels, innovations and amenities, the basic values that are widely shared in this community.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Can you begin to wrap it up? Because you're past three minutes.

MS. DE JOUN: Okay, yes. I'm speaking for a number of people but --

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: I understand but I want to get the rest of the people --

MS. HUGHES: I can donate some of my time.

MS. DE JOUN: I don't have much left.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Okay, go ahead.

MS. DE JOUN: So, new buildings should incorporate high standards of energy efficiency. For example, silver or higher LEED certification.

Developments should encourage and support residents in reducing the number of motor vehicles. Residential developments should include units that are affordable to median income members of the community. And downtown development should be multi-use, providing a
proportionate number of affordable rentals for small scaled businesses, medical and service professionals. And an important criteria in evaluating any development project should be to the degree to which public green and open spaces for recreation and social gathering are integrated into this design. So, NEF, as encouraged by recent indications of the City Council, understands that downtown development requires a very careful consideration of its different aspects and that a rush to closure on any particular project may result in a decision with long term consequences that will be difficult to negate and undo.

And so, this is, I believe you may have this letter already. This was addressed to the Mayor and all the Council members. Thank you for your time.

(Appplause.)

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Thank you.

MS. HUGHES: Good evening. My name is Susan Hughes. I live at 810 Lincoln Street, and I've lived there for 30 years plus. I appreciate this opportunity to speak tonight and I expect my presentation will be very brief.

I think that one fundamental issue that hasn't
really been discussed by very many people is the fact that I really don't think anyone in Evanston has asked that a skyscraper be built in Downtown Evanston. I mean, I've talked to a whole lot of people and I have yet to talk to anyone who really thought that this was, you know, a great idea, a wonderful thing. You know, woke up one morning thinking how much his or her life would be improved, you know, by having a skyscraper in Downtown Evanston. I'm not trying to make light of it. I just think that it's kind of a fundamental point that people really need to think about.

Such a tower, and it really doesn't matter whether it's 49 stories, whether it's 45 stories, whether it's 39 stories. I mean, basically, nobody really feels a need for this kind of building in Evanston. Such a tower is not part of any plan that's been ratified by the City.

As many of the speakers have noted, the real estate market is bad. The tower really makes no business sense right now. We have more condos in Evanston than we can presently sell. Most fundamentally, this building would forever change the skyline of Evanston. It will be very
difficult if this building is built for this Council or for future councils to refuse the next five or six requests that will come in from other developers for buildings 45, 50, 60 and 70 stories high. This tower has a potential to render Evanston unrecognizable in the future.

I know you all love Evanston. You wouldn't be doing this job otherwise. I urge you to please listen to the community that neither needs nor wants this building and reject it. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Paul Barker, 815 Oakton. I would like you, if you would, to enter an alternate universe for a moment in which the aldermen of the City are listening actively to what their citizens are saying and they realize that the character of a town and the quality of life in a town is a very fragile thing. They look at a project like this and they say, no, thank you, we don't do business that way. And then, what?

Then, they decide what sort of center they want in their town, what would be the optimum. They seek out citizen input and they set a height limit. And then, they decide what the balance between residential
and commercial will be. They set what standard of LEED certification they want. They decide how the appearance will support the character of Evanston. And then, they put out a request for proposal worldwide to the best, most forward-thinking architects in the world. And in the end, they get a central icon that is thoroughly green, world class, visionary and extraordinary. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. FISKE: Judy Fiske, 2319 Sherman Avenue in Evanston. I sold real estate for 20 years in Evanston. I have worked with developers on historic preservation projects for many years. I'm not against development. However, this is the wrong development for this site in Downtown Evanston, without a doubt.

I've spoken to you before. I think you all understand that my belief is that a shorter eight to ten-story office building on the site would generate the tax revenue that we need from this development and would be much more acceptable, especially to the downtown residents as well as residents of the immediate neighborhoods.

I've spoken to literally hundreds of people.
about this project. I now own a small retail store in Downtown Evanston. Literally, dozens of people have come in and this is the first topic on their minds. I have not seen any support for this building. I believe that it's incumbent upon you to vote this building down.

The last thing I want to say is that I had the privilege of living in Europe during the past decade for, off and on for a considerable period of time. I don't know any historic downtown, either in Switzerland, Germany or France, that really would allow a building like this. In building a building such as the one we're talking about, we're really giving away so much of the character of our downtown that actually brings people into our downtown and helps drive the economic engine that downtown truly is.

So, I implore you to vote this down. Let's look at something that does make a lot more sense for Evanston, not only now but in the long run. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. VAN BORK: My name is Maria Van Bork. I live at 1431 Ridge Avenue, and we've been living there for about 45 years. I come here as only a private person representing the 100 and more people that I have
approached for signatures to sign the petition. And they all have, out of the hundred plus, only four have said, no, thank you, I have no opinion. No one has said I want the tower built.

But I have crisscrossed the Dewey district where I live and I've gone very far in some areas to talk to my friends and my acquaintances from school and my children's friends. Everybody said please tell the Council not to go ahead with this and vote no. We are against it. This is not for Evanston. That's all I can say.

(Applause.)

MR. YAS: Good evening. My name is Stephen Yas. I'm a 30-year resident of Evanston and I need to disclose that I know most of the people in this room, both in the opposition and for the project. And in fact, I used to work with Mr. Vasilko as an officer at Lohan Associates and many of the other people here have as well. And it was a really good place to work, and it taught us how to be progressive and think out of the box.

And I think that, you know, in all my years in Evanston from 1979 to '87, I was on the Plan Commission,
we did the 1984 plan with an urban design section, talking about the quality of life and what we needed to do in the downtown to effectively compete against Old Orchard and have a downtown again. And one of the major aspects of that 1984 plan was to create more dense residential and downtown over retail, and that's what happened. You may like it or dislike it, but it's created the energy in downtown where basically Tuesday through Sunday there's people on the streets and it's very, very active.

And I think this project is in keeping with that. And actually if we can go back to the other perspective? I think if you can see this, and it was, I don't know if you have your books with you but it's actually page 2 of the brochure with the perspective of the building in it, and if you look at that closely and I'll try to be brief, you can see that the building is not that much taller than the other buildings in terms of perspective. And, no, if you look at the whole downtown and the way that downtown has grown, this is actually the crescendo and is in keeping with the things that were discussed at the workshop.

And the other thing I might add is that I
always see the opposition which is very vocal. I don't always see the people who are pro coming to all these meetings. And I see the same people in opposition, you know, at the Mather and other projects that have come before us. And I think that it's important to have a vision for the future, and most of society tends to like things just the way they were.

I spent six years on the Preservation Commission as well. And I'm very interested in preservation in Evanston, but I think the downtown is a whole different ball game in the way it grows. And to bring the vitality, you need the additional residential. And when I look at this project and I see the articulation of the building and the stepping of the building, that it corresponds to the 22-story mark and then the tower still going up, and then if you go to the building perspectives, the elevations, right here, if you look at this perspective, the south perspective, the fact clearly reveals between the other ends of the building the lower portions and the building is still rising.

I still think it's an elegant building and it has a very small floor plate when it gets to a higher
level. And the articulation and the stepping of the building on the other sides really adds to the variety of it. If we can go to the ground level pictures? I think the ground level here which was at five stories, it is now at four stories, and the articulation of the base is the best base of any building in all of Evanston. And I think it raises the bar with the materials and the articulation and the idea of lighting behind here and the ground level facades and maintaining that whole base that is in concert across the street with Sherman Avenue and the Sherman Plaza and relates to the other buildings around.

And then, in fact, the project that I'm working on at 1603 Orrington in its base with retail and the way it relates across the street will serve to strengthen the retail base on Orrington as a double-loaded corridor. And removing the ramp from Orrington Avenue also reinforces both sides of the street. I also think that you should think twice about including Fountain Square as part of this project as one of the developer benefits which they discussed earlier, and that's to be worked out between the City and the developers. But to lose that opportunity, in every
generation there's one opportunity to do a project and
to improve a downtown.

We have done it in the last eight to ten years
in this downtown. I don't think we should stop before
this project. I think maybe we should stop after this
project and add Fountain Square to that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Mr. Yas, would you get the
lights back there for us please?

MR. PERMAN: Good evening, Alderwoman Holmes
and members of the City Council. Thank you for giving
me the opportunity to speak. I'm Jonathan Perman and
I'm the executive director of the Evanston Chamber of
Commerce.

I've talked to you over the last couple of
months about retail issues concerning this project,
about economic issues concerning the project. And
tonight, I want to talk briefly about financial and
housing issues, and then also a note about office space.
And much of what I have to say is contained in the
materials that I'm handing out to you today.

I want to confirm some facts about this
project. Number one, and it's sort of ironic that we're
talking about economic and financial issues when just
down the hall and to the left is your blue ribbon commission trying to figure out a way out of a very challenging pension problem that Evanston has with Fire and Police pensions. But this project, if you look at over, not only the life of the TIF but then extended out for 20 more years to 2039, this project will yield to the City of Evanston about $24 million in property tax revenue. It will yield to the other taxing districts about $120 million. And so, you're looking at $140-145 million over the next 25 or 27 years.

I don't know of another project or another opportunity that we have right now in Evanston to bring that kind of revenue both to the City and then also to the schools. And perhaps that's why, and not specifically this project, that the Evanston Township High School Board recently approved the draft of the Downtown Plan, because they see an opportunity by readdressing how we do our zoning in the downtown, new revenue and new opportunities for Evanston's educational future.

Another point, by the way, the existing building would yield over that same period of time about seven million dollars. So, the existing building will
yield about six percent of what this project would yield.

The addition of 218 condominium units based on both national and regional figures that we have would yield about eight-and-a-half million dollars of new annual spending in Evanston for both retail and services. We've talked before about how a project like this has such a profound impact on the overall equalized assessed value of the City, and the fact that between the year 2000 and 2005, Evanston was able to add about one billion dollars to its EAV. And downtown construction accounted for 25 percent of that which is one of the reasons that your property taxes, based on its value, have actually come down.

On the housing market, let me state that we are not in a recession. We're simply not in a recession. But number two, it is fine to offer a snapshot at what the condominium market is, but if you look at over time, and we looked at the last year, we have gone from a 24-month supply of condos in the market in the fourth quarter of '06 to 12-month supply in '07. So, while the rest of the country has been struggling with an oversupply and with the sub-prime market, we
here in Evanston have actually done better than the rest of the country. I would call that in Evanston with a very, very resilient housing market.

I'm also of the belief that there will continue to be significant demand for vertical living in Evanston for three reasons. Number one, a growing senior population. Seniors accounted for 12-13 percent of the population since 1990; by 2050, they'll represent 19 percent. Number two, we're a smart city, and in order to compete for highly skilled employees, we need to offer housing options like this. And number three, when oil reaches well over $100 a barrel, places like Huntley and Plainfield and Sugar Grove are not where people are going to be locating. It is places like Evanston, transit oriented cities that are in a unique position to benefit from the change in lifestyle and the adjustment to fuel costs we're going to have.

On the affordable housing side, and this is the last point I'll make, the contribution of nearly $900,000 into the City's affordable housing fund will boost that fund by four and a half times of what it is today. So, a contribution like that will mean that 147 families could be provided with $6,000 in down payment
assistance which, according to City staff, is arguably
the greatest obstacle to home ownership in Evanston. Or
those same 147 families could be provided with
rehabilitation assistance grants, or leverage that money
into a number of other existing programs that the City
has for affordable housing. Those are some of the key
benefits that this project will yield.

The last point I want to make on office space,
and I have a chart to prove it, you've received
information about Downtown Evanston. The charts that
we've given you tonight show all of Evanston. Although
I'd like to be able to report something different, the
fact is that right now, for whether it's Class A, Class
B or Class C office space, there is plenty of space to
either relocate, to move or hopefully to bring new
business into.

We don't yet right now have a market to build
an eight or ten-story commercial office building in
Downtown Evanston, at least not without some assistance
which is something we might want to debate. On the
other hand, for those that want to come to Evanston and
office, there are plenty of options available. Thank
you very much.
CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Thank you.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can you share that report with us?

MR. PERMAN: I'd be glad to.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Thank you. That concludes the Citizens Comments. We're going to take about a five-minute break. And when we come back, we will be discussing among the Council members. Five minutes.

(Off the record.)

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Okay. We are going to get -- Jill, would you close the door? Could we ask you to please quiet down so that we can get started with our discussion? Thank you. Alderman Wynne?

ALDERMAN WYNNE: Yes, Madam Chair. I'd like to make a motion with respect to the project. I move to deny the recommendation of the Plan Commission with respect to the 708 Church project.

ALDERMAN HANSEN: Second.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Okay. It's been moved and seconded. Is there a discussion? Alderman Moran?

ALDERMAN MORAN: I guess what I would say here, I'll oppose this motion. And what I would say at a very minimum, this motion does not do good service to
the process that has been followed here in relation to
the proposers, all the people who have spent, you know,
many, many hours studying this. And quite frankly it's
getting close to home for me because I have spent an
awful lot of time as a number of other people have.

But what we need to do is we need to have a
discussion of this project and I think the idea of
trying to prevent a discussion of the project by this
Committee and/or the City Council does a vast
disservice, you know, to the proud tradition of Evanston
of going through issues like this and having a full and
fair discussion of it, and giving people an opportunity
to at least give credit to the people who have worked on
this thing, proposed on it, been for it, been against
it. They should have an opportunity to speak to it.
And I think it's wrong to suggest that that discussion
shouldn't take place at this Committee. This Committee
has not discussed it.

ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: Point of order, Madam
Chair. There has been a motion made, it's now subject
to discussion. Up or down. I mean, that's basically
where I think we are. So, what's your, I don't
understand the issue. The motion is on the floor and
it's been seconded. That's what we're doing. We're
debating the, there's been a motion made to deny the
recommendation of the Plan Commission.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Wynne?

ALDERMAN WYNNE: Well, I was just, since no
one else had put on their light, I'll go ahead and
discuss what my reasons are. And they are, many of the
points that were raised by so many of the speakers
tonight, I felt that, I took notes and I don't want to
reiterate everything that was said, but fundamentally, I
don't believe the public benefits here in any way
balance out the request for exploding our zoning
ordinance that has been made by the developer. I do
think that this has the opportunity to ruin our
downtown. I know Stephen Yas said it's an opportunity
to create some new downtown, but frankly I think that
this would so fundamentally alter the downtown that we
have carefully created.

And there are pluses and minuses to some of
the things that we've done over the last ten years that
I've been on the Council, but I think what we have done
is create new vibrancy in the downtown but we have
maintained the fundamental character. We've lost a
little bit of our charm but we added a lot of vibrancy.

This to me, when I look at this picture, it's so massively out of scale with everything that we already have in our downtown. I think, from my standpoint, it ruins what we have been trying to create. It does not, it makes Evanston something else, not what it's been.

I don't think the economic benefits are there. I think the discussion with Marty Stern last week indicated that a number of those benefits that the developer presented are not true benefits. They are questionable. I'm not sure the building can be built now and that was actually something that Marty raised. I'm very concerned about the loss of revenue. I'm concerned about the significantly negative impact to the businesses in the downtown. In my ward at the corner of Main and Chicago, we've had three major construction projects, and I can tell you what the effect is just on that vibrant commercial area. It's devastating. And I don't want to think about what would happen. That was in a time of great economic vibrancy. I don't want to think about what would happen to our downtown with this much construction happening in it.
I know that something will eventually be built there. A two-story is probably not going to last much longer. But, this is our opportunity but this is not the project.

So, for those reasons, Alderman Moran, and I've put in as many hours as everybody else has here, and I want to thank the public for all the hours that they've put in. It's very different being a private citizen when you have to become a zoning expert and have a full time other job. I appreciate that the developers have attempted to propose this project to us but it's not the right project for our downtown.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Moran, and then Alderman Tisdahl.

ALDERMAN MORAN: Thank you. As Alderman Wynne has pointed out, over the course of the last 10 to 15 years, there has been a lot done in order to revitalize a downtown that in the late 80's-early 90's was flat on its back. There was really nothing going on in Downtown Evanston. That was a product of a number of things, some of which related to some of the work that Mr. Klutznick's father had done in building Old Orchard and
removing from Downtown Evanston the previously vibrant mercantile and commercial area that had been here and moved out to the Eden's Expressway and Old Orchard Road. But nonetheless, Mr. Klutznick is coming back and doing what he can to bring some of that back.

This building, just to go back a little bit historically, some of you may remember the Washington Mutual headquarters building which sat dead and broken with a lot of windows out and so forth, where the Park Evanston now is. It was like that for years and there was nothing happening. And then, finally, John Buck came forward with a proposal for the Park Evanston where the Whole Foods is now, and said, you know, I'm going to take a chance on Evanston. So, he built that project, and it really was the beginning of the revitalization of Evanston.

We have all seen many other projects, both residential and otherwise, mixed use projects that have taken place since the early 90's when the Buck project came here. And what we have seen as a function of those projects is a tremendous revitalization of the Downtown Evanston area. Downtown Evanston, even though it has been revitalized, is like all other living organisms,
one either proceeds and improves or one begins to slide back.

My view of this and my vision of it, as we go forward in time, is that we should not take an approach that we have to retrench. We need to continue to move forward. The building that's being proposed here would be a significant improvement in the vitality of Downtown Evanston but all of Evanston. The facts that had been given to us suggests that there will be in excess of $20 million that would go into the Tax Increment Financing fund for this district between roughly 2010 and 2018 when it will end. That is a very significant figure. Also, there would be over a million dollars in sales taxes that would be generated.

The increment that would be received, that increment that would be received of, you know, somewhere between $20 and $25 million in that discrete period of time could be used to do a number of things. It could be used to rehab the landmark Hahn building. It could be used to purchase and demolish the Fountain Square building which, in my opinion, has been a blight on the downtown for as long as I can remember. It could be used to recreate Fountain Square to make it a true City
center, an aesthetic and cultural center.

It could be enhanced by potentially the closure of other streets in the area to create a vibrant plaza and a true, beautiful center of Downtown Evanston. It could be used to potentially assist in the creation of further cultural facilities in the downtown area such as Jim Woods has suggested in his remarks where some of us have believed that Downtown Evanston is a great place to potentially develop a civic performing arts center, and we believe that that could happen and this could assist it.

It's been suggested that the building would, efforts would be made to have the building meet silver LEED certification. I believe, I can't swear to this, but I believe that there are only three or four buildings that exist currently in the City of Evanston that have achieved that level. And so, to get another one would be significant.

Other environmental considerations that would be addressed by the construction of this project, there was a lady here earlier tonight from the Network for the Future of Evanston and read a statement that we all heard. In relation to that statement which was an April
28th memo to the Council regarding the values of construction in the downtown area has the following points contained in it:

- Residential and commercial development of high density close to mass transit is a positive feature of downtown because it significantly reduces energy consumption in various ways and will serve to reduce the regional carbon footprint. This is the classic form of transit oriented development in many cities throughout the United States which I would suggest have a vision in relation to environmental and sustainable considerations.

- The same statement says that it's important to incorporate high standards of energy efficiency. For example, silver or higher level LEED certification, which it has been suggested this building will achieve.

- It also says that it encourages and supports residents in reducing the number of motor vehicles parked onsite by delinking residential units from parking spaces and by reducing fixed ratios of parking spaces to residential units.

- And some people have decried in their remarks tonight the fact that there is proposed in this building
fewer parking spaces that might otherwise be called for in the zoning ordinance, but the suggestion, a strong one that's being broadly discussed now is that somehow, some way, we need to be able to wean people off their dependence on vehicles. And one of the ways to accomplish that is to encourage the creation of buildings where people are encouraged to have fewer cars rather than more.

The other point that was mentioned in the Network for Evanston's Future statement says that there should be, according to their values, the promotion of the integration of open spaces for recreation and social gatherings into the design of proposed buildings. And in point of fact, a key aspect of this overall proposal is that very point, which is that if the plan were pursued, to get rid of the Fountain Square building and to recreate a beautiful Fountain Square that would be worthy of the City, that that would be consistent with the values set out in Evanston's Future's plan.

The further public benefits are nearly a million dollars that would go into the City's affordable housing fund. I have now read, I don't know how many times in how many emails or other written or oral
submissions, that the suggestion that apparently
affordable housing funding is no longer a value to the
City of Evanston because it's required statutorily, I
have seen it scores of times in messages to me saying,
well, you know, getting a million dollars to go in the
affordable housing fund isn't really a public value
because why? They're required to do it by statute.

The fact that the statute exists, the
inclusionary zoning statute that exists requires that
contribution, is a statement of public value. We have
passed a number of pieces of legislation over the course
of last years that we had to work very hard to get
passed, but we passed them because the belief was that
affordable housing was necessary in the City of
Evanston. And a project like this will give us a
million dollars to work towards those goals. And
whether it's required or not, it's a public value and it
just can't be denied.

The projection that we will get between $20
and $25 million between 2010 and 2018 also overlooks the
notion that was brought forth by Jonathan Perman tonight
that the project would yield $120 million to all taxing
districts over, you know, an expected life. And if one
were to focus simply on whether you like this building or you didn't like this building, maybe you wouldn't think about the fact that we'd be taking a pass on $20 and $25 million over the course of the remaining life of this TIF, or the $124 million over the course of the useful life of this building. But I must tell you that we up here are not, we don't have the luxury of looking at a proposal like this in isolation.

All of you have read about the fiscal difficulties that we have in the City right now. One major one is the shortcoming in terms of our funding of our Police and Fire pension which is, at this point we're told is we're short $140 million. Now, if you were sitting in my seat here tonight, I would ask this question of you. Would you give some consideration to giving the approval to a plan for the construction of a building that would return to the City $124 million over its useful life when we have an unfunded debt of $140 million and we don't have a plan, we're working on it but we don't have a plan to fund that shortfall, would you quickly dismiss it?

Okay. Well, you know, then you would need to talk to our firemen and our policemen about that. And
you would have to answer the questions that they ask of each one of us whether we think that we need to honor our obligations to fund their pensions. And that's a serious thing.

(Remarks from the audience.)

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Could we not -- this is not a dialogue between the audience and the Alderman. So, would you all please refrain? Thank you.

ALDERMAN MORAN: Thanks. The proposed plan has suggested that the Hahn building would be retained. The suggestion has been that simply because it has landmark designation, that it's completely hands off, and that's not true. Our Preservation Ordinance has provisions in it that allow for an assault on that landmark preservation, it's called a certificate of appropriateness. Somebody can ask to take that building down, they can come to the Preservation, they will get a hearing, and there have been instances where landmarked buildings have been removed.

And the Hahn building will not be exempt to that risk. The proposers of this project have said that if they can go ahead, they will covenant, in other words, they will write into a provision to the deed of
the Hahn that they will not take it down. And I would suggest to you that that covenant would be much more effective protection for that building than the landmark designation because it would essentially be a surrendering of the issue by the owner of the building. So, they would not be able to come in and ask that the landmark designation be removed.

The approval of this project would provide a unified vision for the block. Now, this is an important thing because some of the criticism has been that somehow we have not gotten around to looking at this particular project from an overall planning standpoint. But I would suggest to you that the very public discussion of the various components of this project have been the strongest exercise in terms of planning for a beautiful unified development, redevelopment really, of this area, the very core area of the downtown.

They include the dramatic new construction of the proposed 38-story building. It would involve the preservation of the landmarked and beautiful Hahn building. It could, it could if the project were approved, ultimately result in the removal of the
Fountain Square building which, I again contend, is a blight. It would take our disgraceful Fountain Square which I walk by numerous times every week and look at and I say to myself, how could we as a community, apparently a community that has such high aesthetic standards, let that Fountain Square go to such a horrid level that it's reached. It's terrible and we need to do better than that.

I would suggest this. An argument has been made that this project would destroy the character of Evanston. One question that I've had to ask myself is what comprises the character of Evanston? There was an interesting remark tonight about our web site and hundreds of photographs of it and not too many pictures of buildings five stories or taller. You know, I think in various respects the character of Evanston is not necessarily described by any particular block in the downtown, maybe not even by the downtown, although I'm going to come back to that in a second.

But the fact that we have a lake front, that we have a fabulous park system, that Northwestern University is here, that other schools are here, that we have beautiful architecture throughout our

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neighborhoods, our neighborhood districts, we have this tremendous transit system--these are the things that make Evanston unique. There are other things in the downtown area that I look at as being the repository of significant character of Evanston. You have places like the Hahn building. You have places like the Marshall Fields building, the Orrington Hotel, Chandlers after its beautiful rehabilitation of several years ago. Still sitting behind the facade of the GAP store is the lovely Varsity Theater.

You've still got the somewhat worn down but what I still think is a beautiful building, the Carlson building, you have the North Shore hotel. There are many other buildings in Downtown Evanston that contribute to the character of Evanston. And there is going to be, in my opinion, a strong effort to hold on to those buildings, none of which requires that this project be denied.

Part of the discussion of the downtown plan has been that we would perhaps ultimately establish what are referred to as traditional districts in the downtown area which would be another effort to preserve the traditional character of the downtown. We all know that
some of that traditional character has been removed. We know that there has been a lot of development in the downtown area, but it's contributed to the vitality of the City and that's an important thing. This particular block has been the focus of interest for numerous development groups over the course of time. And most of the people that I have talked to about the overall environment of the downtown area can see that this block is the heart of downtown. A companion discussion piece to that recognition is the fact that for many, many decades, people have talked about the development of downtown around a wedding cake principle, i.e., that the tallest buildings would be in the very center of the downtown, and there would be a cascade, a gradual diminution in the height of buildings as you move towards the outer perimeter of the downtown area, and then into the residential districts.

What the building would do is it would pay heed to the wedding cake principle. It would pay heed to the fact that people who have looked at the logical progression of the downtown redevelopment, that this is the center, and consistent with the wedding cake principle the largest building in downtown logically
would be in this block. And that's what we have in this proposal.

A couple of other points and then I'll wrap it up. Jeff Smith mentioned in his remarks tonight, said that he didn't understand whether this project would slow or expedite the gentrification of the City of Evanston. I can't tell you that I know the answer to that question, but I have an opinion about it. It's not necessarily a prediction but it's an opinion. And if we said no to this project, it would expedite the gentrification of the City of Evanston, in my opinion.

This year in our budgetary deliberations, we had proposals presented to us to close our branch libraries. We had a proposal to slash our human service funding by 20 percent which funding level has not been increased for 13 years, been static for 13 years. This project would give us a million dollars for affordable housing.

Now, take that $124 million and disregard it. Take the pension fund shortfall, disregard it. Forget getting more money for affordable housing. Come back next year with the recognition that we're going to get another suggestion that we cut human service funding,
that probably in the next couple of years we'll get another suggestion that we close the branch libraries rather than opening another one in the west side which should be done. None of these things can be done without money.

Why am I saying these things? Because from my perspective and I hope from this Council's perspective, you can't look at any particular piece of the work that we do here in isolation from everything else. Of course you have to focus on it from the standpoint of its merits and demerits, but there is a connectivity between these suggestions that is critical. And if you lose sight of it, you lose sight of how we're going to be able to bring this City forward.

So, I think that we have a lot that can be gained for the City through the approval of this project. Development is a difficult process. We've gone through this, you know, many, many times over the years. I've been on the City Council for 17 years. Virtually every major project that we've gone through, there is a yin and a yang to it. But the plain fact of the matter is Evanston is moving forward. We're progressing as a City.
Evanston is a desirable place to be. It's a wonderful place to be. But it requires a strong effort in economic development which I see this project as being a strong impetus for economic development on any number of fronts. It gives us an opportunity to revitalize a significant area in our downtown that really needs revitalization. And I would encourage everyone to please give consideration to all these matters and vote in favor of this proposal. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Tisdahl?

ALDERMAN TISDAHL: Thank you. This is not the capstone project that Evanston wants. The developers are wonderful developers. They have done a good job. But condo owners are not the pot of gold that will solve our financial problems in Evanston.

(Applause)

ALDERMAN TISDAHL: Condo owners pay taxes but then they want City services and we're supposed to give them to them. What having more residents does do is it is supposed to increase the sales tax. I am always told that the right number of residents to increase the sales tax is just a few more residents. And the problem with this proposal is that Mr. Klutznick, who has done great
work in Evanston which I appreciate, is not going to
redeem himself for the sins of Old Orchard by decreasing
the amount of retail space in Evanston. So, that is one
problem that I have with this project.

But be aware that some of what Alderman Moran
says is correct. We are giving up wonderful benefits.
And a lot of the economic analysis was correct. The
building permit fees, the transfer tax fees, those are
fees that would help us in our budget problems. I have
talked with the policemen and I have talked with the
firemen and I have explained to some of them my vote
here tonight. And it is true that there are economic
benefits in this plan that we are foregoing by, or that
I am willing to forego by my vote.

The three million dollars for the Hahn
building is another problem. You all have done an
excellent job of outlining all the reasons to vote no,
so I'm not going to go over them because you don't need
to hear them again. I certainly don't, although I
appreciate all your work.

I do want to warn you that I believe
personally that we cannot have the cheapest office space
in the middle of our downtown, that something will have
to eventually be done with the 708 building that is not
going to stay. I am not going to vote no on any project
because I so love the 708 building or the Hahn building.

So, with that caveat and because I am worried
about the current economy and I have many economists who
think that there will be an upturn in 2008 which is
included in the developer's plans, I do not believe
that, and my office, we've made a lot of money believing
that this was a recession that was coming and it was
going to be bad. I hope I'm wrong but that is what I
believe and that is another reason that I will be voting
no on this project.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Bernstein?

ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: Yes. I, too, will be
voting no on this project. And I think, you know, much
of what Eb said is absolutely true. We are in dire
straits now. But all development is a mixed blessing,
and I look for balance. And I was very serious and I
apologize to Mr. Anderson who has been trying to get in
touch with me, if in fact you wanted to modify the
provisions, I'm still willing to talk to you.

But the height of the building was never a
concern to me. My philosophy has always been if you want to go tall, go downtown so that we can maintain the solemnity of the neighborhoods. But I think this building was snake-bitten from the first. And let me indicate why and it's really probably a creature of its own success.

This closed-door meeting which was not a secret meeting, it was absolutely legitimate and it still frustrates me that the Attorney General never looked at the minutes of that meeting nor did she ask for the minutes of that meeting before she condemned us for having it. So, she doesn't exactly know other than what people may have told her about what actually went on in that meeting. But I think that there was a sense, I had a sense speaking for me that staff really was in favor of this project. And I think from an economic standpoint, a project like this has been what we have been doing.

And over my ten years and coming on 11 years on this Council, there has been a resurgence. And I voted for most of them, some of them that people wanted we didn't vote for. We don't vote for everything in a positive way. But suddenly, the results of this closed-
door meeting were reported in the Tribune and I really believe that people thought it was a done deal because that's what I have been hearing for the last year and a half.

And in fact, my sense is, you know, we talk about conspiracy theories about architects having known architects in former lives, but my sense is that the reason that the downtown plan folks came up with a 50-story number for 708 initially is because they were reflecting what they thought we wanted. And that's, you know, I mean it was, that's what I think happened. And I really got the sense reading this transcript from the Plan Commission, and I've read numerous and created numerous transcripts for the Plan Commission historically, but I thought that the Plan Commission, too, was responding to what they thought was the will of the Council.

And having said that, this would have been and, you know, will be if it ever gets built, you know, the tallest building in this community. And I look to the people on the Plan Commission, knowledgeable people who we don't pay to do this good service for us, a building of this magnitude to me should have come out of
there gang-busters. Very strong representation, let's
do it, we can't not do it. And that wasn't what
happened.

There was a four to three vote. And among the
four, we heard the chair of the Commission get up here
tonight and say that his vote was in effect conditioned
on certain things happening which the developer, because
of financial reasons, couldn't get accomplished. It's
regrettable but, you know, that's something in the
reality of the dollar and we have to live within our
means. And we've actually probably created our own
problem here because the higher we let the buildings go,
the greater the values go. If now we send a message to
the community that we have limitations, the prices will
probably come down to equate with those limitations.

But we had this meeting, then the publication
in the Tribune, and then suddenly it was off to the
races. Everybody was presuming that this was a done
deal. And in this era of political cynicism where
nobody believes anything a public official says, I
think, you know, we're all painted with this brush. Why
bother? Forget about it.

I don't know what the character of Evanston
is. I believe that Evanston is not suburban, it's semi-urban. Go downtown, that's where our vitality should be. My child used to come home and say, Dad, what the hell have you done to our City, when she would come back from college. But I would go down and I would say ka-ching, ka-ching because in fact, even though our taxes have not gone down, they haven't gone up to the extent that they would have but for what's happened downtown.

And we have been blessed with the movie theaters. We've been blessed with our cottage industry of restaurants. Those are the only things that have maintained our sales tax stability over the time when most other communities have lost this, they've actually gone in a downward direction.

We are not going to compete with Old Orchard. Even if we equaled or did better than what the existing commercial is in this building, people want a critical mass. We don't have the available space. We have to play the cards we're dealt. Evanston is less than eight square miles as of the last census. We are not going to be able to have numerous different venues from which people can choose.
So, we started on this plan. The Plan Commissioners, for the first time in my recollection, came out with very strong written dissenting opinions, quite honestly two of which I thought were right one, one of which I thought was more appropriate from a Preservation Commission than for the Plan Commission, but they had valid points. Again, the four that voted for had concerns. With a building of this magnitude, there really shouldn't be any concerns, although there are always going to be any concerns.

We're making a decision tonight as we do every night. Up here at this dais, we have no idea what the future will bring. We're only doing our homework, and I promise you everybody on this dais has a love of this community uppermost in his or her heart. That's why we're here. That's why we work.

We all have different sensibilities, different feelings about how we're going to arrive there. And I think every vote I make, and I'll go home and I'll question this vote, I just hope and pray that the future will show that I'm more correct than I was wrong. But when I asked the developer at the last meeting to please come forward and see if he could enhance the public
benefit, $880,000 for affordable housing is wonderful, but the character of the community wouldn't necessarily be changed because I don't think that another tall building downtown is going to change the character, but the feeling, the pervasive feeling throughout this entire process, if in fact this Council passes it tonight, I think there will be grave damage to the psyche of this community and the spirit of this community.

And in effect, Eb, you're absolutely right, gentrification. Unfortunately, I've spoken of this before. Since before I moved into this community when I was living next door in Skokie, there has been a subtle gentrification. We can't stop it. If we had all the money in the world, we could acquire all the land we need and sell it to only people that we wanted to maintain our diversity. That's not going to happen. That's not the reality that we're going to be facing in years to come.

But there is a spirit in this community and I don't, you know, I talked to everybody who'll talk to me. I tried to listen to everybody. But I do go to certain people for certain input who I know are
absolutely, totally out of the realm of what's going on. They may not read the papers. They certainly would never think to come to a meeting. They are just Evanstonians who came here with a love for this community, and again, with a spirit and a heart that to me was Evanston and why I brought my kids here.

But these folks were concerned about this development. They didn't know why, but it was just this overwhelming feeling. And that's, I think, the large reason for which I'm going to vote against this proposal. If in fact the developer would have been able to make the numbers work, and I was a little frustrated with Marty Stern at the Economic Development Committee because he accepted and went with the assumptions of the developer. They may be a 100 percent right, but what I wanted him to do as my consultant would be to challenge those assumptions. And fortunately, there were a couple of speakers who did that, and that's just, you know, a real problem that I had with this.

The alleged benefit of the Hahn building, arrogance. I mean, I don't understand how in conscience you could have asked us who controls the destiny of that building anyway to have a one vision for that block. It
was your vision, not necessarily our vision. I don't know if we have a vision. And the fact that we want a ten-story office building, we may or may not get it if somebody wants to build it and if the economics work.

So, you know, we're going to get a downtown plan which is as good as the ability of the market to do what we are asking it to do. If they don't want to do it, if it won't work financially, it's not going to happen. But my vote tonight is largely for all the reasons you good people have set forward and a whole lot more.

Mr. Bova came to us, the gentleman who talked about the reduction in the parking, he's a parking consultant. And in my practice and up here, I've always talked about transit oriented development. We have the proximity to the train, to the L, therefore, people don't need the cars they have. He took a survey of Sherman Plaza. He went in at 4:00 o'clock in the morning, looked over at the secreted area where the residents were living, and then looked at the other cars where the residents were parked in the parking lot. That's what we have found to be the fact.

You know, this Council elevated the parking
demands. We used to be 1 to 1, one condo, one parking.

And then we started talking about bedrooms and we
enhanced it that way. Eventually, you know, I hope that
people understand that we're eating ourselves alive and
that they'll stop with two and three cars per family.

But in the short term, the fact that you're not giving
them a place to put them in the confines of their
building is not necessarily going to stop them from
buying a car.

So, you know, I think that's something that,
plus the fact the folks who are going to be able to
afford these condominiums are probably at my end of the
spectrum. And unless they're thinking about their
children and the world hopefully that we're leaving for
them, their mind set is different. It's raised in a
different context.

What else? I've probably said enough. You
know, I really do apologize to Mr. Klutznick, but
another thing that I just, you know, I hope you're right
but we have been sitting up here these last months
granting extension after extension after extension from
competent developers who say, hey, we can't get it done.

The market is against us, we need additional time. The
Sherman Plaza project took eight years in the strongest economy that this nation has ever seen. So, I'm hoping to God you're prophetic but I'm more of a pessimist in terms of the economy. I think we're going to have to work through some problems.

But I wish that there were more reasons for which I can vote for this because I thought, you know, when I first saw it, it would be kind of neat to have the tallest building outside of the Loop. But that's not what's going to define this community in my mind. And what is going to define this community is a sensitivity to people, and my people and the hearts and minds of the people that I have conferred with who really are never in this chamber. You know, you good people are wonderful to see, but we see you a lot, and God bless you and come back.

But you know, the people who don't know, and I've gotten, my neighbor immediately next door to me, I have a sign in the ground and Shirley put it up and she was a little concerned that I might be frustrated by it. I love her but she is a hardworking woman who has, you know, raised children on her own and she just had this sense, she didn't know why, and perhaps the greatest
part of my vote is because I have this sense. I love this community. We need the money badly, but I don't want to hurt it and I think this would hurt it more than it would help it.

(Applause.)

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: I don't see any more -- oh, Alderman Jean-Baptiste, then Alderman Hansen.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Thank you. Thank you, Alderman Holmes. I want to just make a couple of statements. One, I think that the issue that Mr. Atkins had taken on and had basically ran a sort of campaign of criticism of members of the Council because staff had called us into an executive session to discuss real estate, which is appropriate, and in the context of that discussion, we were shown an image of the 708 block that included the Fountain Square that was beautiful, and so, you know, for many of us, we thought it was amazing, an amazing vision that if we were able to achieve that level of renovation for the Fountain Square to bring the area to life, that it would be beautiful.

So, you know, to belittle, you know, our ability to be able to think and that we were taken into the pockets or the vests of the developers by a half-
hour interaction or 45 minutes interaction is to me to really demean and disrespect our political position and the kind of sacrifices that we make in the service of the City. So, I reject that kind of criticism and I will continue to do so whenever I have the opportunity to respond.

One of the criticisms that was raised here is that the people have demanded that we vote in a particular direction, and therefore, as their representative that's what we should do. You know, we do go through these processes often. Almost every other week, we're presented with a stack of items to decide upon. And people have different perspectives on them, they have different opinions. And we have to make some kind of judgment on the information that we know.

And so, on the one hand, while, you know, those who have opposed this project have done a great job of organizing and informing us and raising all arguments, but it cannot be assumed that because you have done a lot of homework, you have stayed at the barricades, that that means then that we ought to move in the direction that you demand. Because I don't think that's why you elected us. You elected us to try to
make some independent judgments.

Now, with regard to the project itself, Alderman Wynne started out by saying the site will eventually be developed. I've heard other comments where, you know, even some of you have said, well, yes, the site may eventually be developed. And the reason why you say that is because the trend generally in the downtown area is that, you know, you have developers come in, you know, two-story buildings just have not lasted. And in fact, the proposed plan have contemplated Davis Street as a street where many of the buildings will be kept at the height that they are now so that we can preserve some history.

But because this particular building, 708, is right in the heart of the downtown, it's on the other side of the street from Sherman Plaza, and I know some of you remember what Sherman Plaza looked like a couple of years back, it was a blight to the max. And if you think about that whole square block, that whole square block was not, you know, a benefit to the City. It is now beautiful. A great job has been done. Some of you may disagree with, you know, some nuances, but I think that most of us are pretty proud of what's been
achieved.

So, to contemplate that the east side of that block will eventually get the attention of a developer and would need to be redeveloped is not farfetched. I think that, you know, the radical proposal of 49 stories did, you know, create such hard opposition that it has been very difficult to overcome in the discussion. As you reduced it to 38, the image still remains in people's mind as represented on these yard signs that they have been circulating.

So, the question for me is do we throw the baby out with the bath water or do we make a motion and table this and talk frankly to the developer about our issues? If this site is eventually going to be developed, what do we want? Number one, I think that, you know, that height is not something that the community supports. And so, we may need to come back with a proposal that really reduces the height further and try to be as consistent with the height that we have. I mean, right now we have, the tallest building is about 27 stories height, tall. And so, we may have to consider some compromise.

The other issue is if this site is to be
developed, that means eventually we will displace some
of the commercial business owners, some of the retail
establishments, we will displace some of the existing
tenants, and so, can there be some steps taken to make
sure that these people, right now these entities, are
relocated within the City, some place that's suitable
for them so that they can continue to do business. I'm
sure that many of them in their search, and some of them
have testified here, that as they sought alternative
sites, that they have not yet found places that are
suitable. So, they're open to considering options to
the extent that we can facilitate those options.

The discussion about the City providing the
three or two million dollars for the developer to
purchase the Hahn building and do the renovation, it
doesn't sit well with me. But you know, that doesn't
mean that we ought not give some attention to that
discussion. Because if the project, an eventual project
generates a significant amount of TIF money, then
ultimately that TIF money is for the purpose of
reinvestment.

And so, we have to think about what do we do?
I mean if somebody comes back a year later, do we think

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about that? Do we consider that kind of proposal? How much of it can we afford to give? And what is the exchange? What is the developer willing to do alternatively?

In this instance, you know, for me it would be a significant renovation of the Fountain Square and perhaps some kind of plan to incorporate the Fountain Square building in some way, shape or form into the overall renovation of that area. So, I don't think that we can just reject outright the request for TIF money to be used to renovate the Hahn building, but we ought to try to negotiate that kind of proposal.

The other issue is that the developer has said, look, I will not demolish until I have 100 percent of my financing in place. And so, that is significant because you're right, we are in an economic climate that makes all of us uncomfortable with the notion that such a development can go forward at this particular point in time. We question it. And so, are there some measures, some steps that could be taken to make sure that we secure our best interests in the City?

One of the things that I think is an important consideration in that same vein is that two put 218 new
condos on a market right now that is already saturated
does depress the value of the units that are available
now. And so, if this project depends on good time to
begin and to be completed, why don't we think about this
project, see if we can negotiate with the developer some
of the modifications that people have suggested here?
I've taken notes as well.

There's a lot of, people have a lot of ideas.
But you know, I think people basically are saying, you
know, this is the wrong project for this particular
location because we're talking about the height. You
know, if it were 27 stories, if it were 30 stories,
because eventually that piece of property will be
redeveloped, people. You know, if it were lower, if
there were some modifications, you know, could we think
about it? Could we partner with this developer that has
done quality work in this City and move forward?

So, to say no at this particular point in time
without allowing the developer to back up by tabling
this, back up, think about the criticism, think about
what you hear from us, and come back with modifications
that maybe reflects some degree of compromise, that may
reflect a greater degree of investment in public
benefits, perhaps we could go forward. Because this is,
I don't know who else we'll get eventually to come and
do this kind of project, but anybody who buys that piece
of property who decides to go ahead and tear it down
and, you know, build within, you know, what the zoning
allowances would allow or as for, you know, low level of
benefits, you know, that kind of project may pass, you
know. But is it the kind of quality project that we
want at that location?

So, I think that, what I would suggest is that
we table this matter at this particular point in time
and consider, you know, give the developer a chance to
come back with some radical kind of responses to what's
been put on the table to see if they would consider some
different directions.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Hansen?

ALDERMAN HANSEN: Alderman Jean-Baptiste, I
admire your willingness not only in this project but in
many things that we have discussed here to come to a
compromise. And I know and we all know that not
everything, not every decision that we make, be it a PUD
or an ordinance or a resolution is ever going to be
agreed upon 100 percent by every Evanstonian. So, I
admire your willingness to do that. However, we have
continued this project and we have given a signal to the
developers that at least in the area of public benefits
come back with something more substantial in relation to
this project that you're proposing, and that hasn't been
done.

I'm not going to go into and talk about every
fine point of their public benefits because I don't
believe the public benefits are there. I don't believe
they're real, and I believe they're minimal in relation
to this project.

When we talk about PUD's and the major site
allowances that are asked for, not only by these
developers but the others who have come before us, one
of the things that it's their burden to show is the
public benefits. And that hasn't been shown in this
case in relationship to their site allowances that
they're asking for. The burden is on the developer to
show us those public benefits. It's not on us as a
Council. If it were on us, we'd be the development
team, we'd be the architects, we'd be the economists,
and I'm not either of those three things.

And I truly believe that when developers come
to the City of Evanston through our Plan Commission,
through P&D, through Council, it's their burden to show
us the public benefits. And that, I do not see that in
this case. That hasn't happened here.

I am not saying no, just as everyone else has
said here tonight, I am not saying no to development in
this area. I think it's going to happen. But I am
saying no to this project because the public benefits
aren't there.

(Applause.)

ALDERMAN HANSEN: And because it's not our
burden, it's theirs.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Moran?

ALDERMAN MORAN: Madam Chair, I move that the
matter be tabled until such time as this City Council
has adopted a new downtown plan.

ALDERMAN WYNNE: If I can --

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: We already have a motion on
the floor.

ALDERMAN WYNNE: There's a motion on the
floor.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Well, you can, this
overrides that.
ALDERMAN MORAN: I'm moving to table that.
ALDERMAN RAINEY: I second that.
ALDERMAN WYNNE: Point of order, Madam Chair.
CHAIRMAN HOLMES: One second.
ALDERMAN WYNNE: Can we hear from the legal
counsel as to whether a table, a motion to table
overrides a motion on the floor?
ALDERMAN RAINEY: Point of order, Madam Chair.
One of the things that a motion to table does is it
moves to table the current motion that is before us.
Those are the rules.
ALDERMAN WYNNE: I'd like --
CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Just one minute. Can we
just ask the legal counsel?
ALDERMAN RAINEY: Sure, absolutely.
MR. COX: When determining questions of
parliamentary procedure, the first place to look
naturally would be the rules of the particular body.
I've been reviewing the rules of the Planning &
Development Committee, and Rule 9-B states that, "The
Chair of the Committee subject to overruling by the
Committee shall decide any matters relating to the
class conduct of the meeting not specifically provided for in
these rules.' The rules do not have a comprehensive
table of motions and their precedents. So, at this
point, the rules of this Committee indicate that the
Chair would make a decision as to which motion would
take precedence.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: But what about Roberts
rules?

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Why not defer it to
the Council rules?

ALDERMAN WYNNE: They don't say. It doesn't
say. But we're meeting as P&D.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Can I ask --
ALDERMAN RAINEY: You have to have something
to table. That's the point of tabling.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: What does the Council
rules say?

ALDERMAN WYNNE: It's P&D rules that we're
under.

MR. COX: I have to say at this point that I
don't know off the top of my head what the Council rules
say. I've been referring to this Committee's rules
since you're currently meeting as a Planning &
Development Committee and not as a Council. I can take
time to refer to those as well, if you'd like further assistance.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: I need further assistance but I'm trying to read Roberts rules so I can see what that says.

ALDERMAN WYNNE: I believe that --

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Well, they say you have the authority, then you've got to exercise it. It may be reviewable.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Well, I understand that and I don't mind doing that. But I just want to make sure I'm doing it on solid grounds.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Go ahead. Then we need to --

ALDERMAN TISDAHL: The Chair is doing a fine job, just everybody let her do it.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Do we need a five-minute break then if you need to do it?

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: No, I'm just going to -- give me a second. I'm trying to look.

ALDERMAN WYNNE: No pressure, Delores.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: None whatsoever.

ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: Can I raise a point of
1 order?
2    CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Go ahead, Alderman
3 Bernstein.
4    ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: I mean, a motion to table
5 until such time as we get a downtown plan might not be
6 consistent with the wishes of this developer.
7    ALDERMAN RAINERY: They can always withdraw.
8    ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: All right. But you know,
9 I mean, the question I guess I have then, and I've heard
10 that the height was backed into, then the numbers
11 were --
12    ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: You're doing a point
13 of order and you wanted to --
14    ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: True, it's not a point of
15 order.
16    ALDERMAN RAINERY: A motion to table is not
17 debatable.
18    ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: You're right. But I was
19 just wondering are we doing something that might benefit
20 down the --
21    ALDERMAN RAINERY: A motion to table is not
22 debatable.
23    CHAIRMAN HOLMES: That's true, but with the
motion already on the floor, that's what I was concerned about.

ALDERMAN RAINNEY: No, I know. I'm talking to him, not you.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Oh, okay. All right then.

ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: I'm out of order, talk to the Chair.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: I wasn't worried about that, I was worried about with there being a motion already on the floor, that with the table --

ALDERMAN RAINNEY: You have to have something to table.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: We need the Mayor right now because she would know.

ALDERMAN RAINNEY: You can't just table something that's not before us.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: You have to have something to table, so therefore, the motion would be -- you have to have something to table. And the motion on the floor was to deny the project. Then, the motion to table would be in order because it would be motioning to table the motion to deny. Is that, am I not correct?

ALDERMAN MORAN: That is my motion.
CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Okay, I mean, that's what I'm seeing.

ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: We can overrule you. We can overrule your decision.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Well, it's been moved and seconded to table.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Who seconded?

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Yes, it was.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Who?

ALDERMAN RAINEY: I seconded it.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Jean-Baptiste made the motion and Ann Rainey seconded.

ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: Actually Eb made the motion but same difference. They look alike.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Now wait just a minute. I know Lionel also said he moved to table as well. In his long speech, he said that.

ALDERMAN HANSEN: Point of order. If in terms of, Mr. Cox, in terms of, since there are no, under our Planning & Development rules, since there are no specific rules as to certain motions, is that what you said previously?

MR. COX: That's correct.
ALDERMAN HANSEN: Okay.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Except the Chair is choosing to use the Roberts Rules of Order.

ALDERMAN HANSEN: That's fine. I'm just looking at our Council rules that talks about motion to table any matter. And I don't know if you can find it in Roberts Rules of Order but it says that, "A motion to table any manner is not debatable and if adopted by a majority vote of aldermen present." So, we need to take a vote on tabling it.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: That's what I was trying to get to.

ALDERMAN HANSEN: Okay, I'm sorry.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: So, it's been moved and seconded to table the motion to deny. And we need to -- is that right?

ALDERMAN HANSEN: Take a vote.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: So, all in favor? Roll call, we'll do a roll call vote. Okay. All right. Alderman Wynne? All in favor to table the motion to deny.

ALDERMAN TISDAHL: Until the downtown plan is
approved.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Until the downtown plan is approved.

ALDERMAN WYNNE: Are you calling on me?

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: We're taking the roll call starting with Alderman Wollin. Alderman Wollin.

ALDERMAN WOLLIN: Aye.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Baptiste.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Aye.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Wynne.

ALDERMAN WYNNE: No.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Bernstein.

ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: Aye.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Moran.

ALDERMAN MORAN: Aye.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Tisdahl.

ALDERMAN TISDAHL: No.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Rainey.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Aye.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Hansen.

ALDERMAN HANSEN: No.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Okay. And the Chair will vote no. We have five ayes and four noes so we'll
table. Tabled until the downtown plan is adopted.

ALDERMAN MORAN: Move adjournment.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: We need a --

MR. WOLINSKI: Madam Chair, just a question.

Point of order. So, I'm assuming that this should not be on your agenda, at the Council agenda for the 12th or the P&D agenda for the 12th?

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Absolutely.

MR. WOLINSKI: Okay, very good. I may have raised a point of order, I apologize.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Point of information, Madam Chair.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Yes?

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Mr. Wolinski, can you give us some idea of what you project to be the final decisions by the Plan Commission on the downtown plan?

When are we going to see this?

MR. WOLINSKI: Let me ask Dennis Marino to speak to that since he's been working with the Plan Commission on it.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Because not having ever been able to comment on this whole matter, I think this is urgent and this, my vote had nothing to do with delaying
this project or anything. I think we need to get the
downtown plan before us. I think it's been the 800-
pound gorilla in the room when considering this project.
And I, you know, if there is any way we can send a
message to get this before us?

MR. MARINO: I think, as you know, the Plan
Commission has been working on the downtown plan
diligently. This is the draft recommendation from the
consulting team. They've been working on it for many
months. They will meet next Wednesday night on that
subject. At that time, they'll be reviewing the last
chapter in the recommended plan. Then they have to
return to a number of issues, several issues where they
did not have consensus. They did have consensus on many
issues in the plan.

I think it's very likely that next Wednesday
night won't be sufficient, that it will at least take
another month in that regard. But certainly you, as
Planning & Development Committee, can also give
direction as to when you would like to see the plan in
front of you. But what I would anticipate at this point
is June, but that also is up to the Plan Commission in
terms of completing the work, but based on where we are
at this point.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: June, your answer is June.

MR. MARINO: My forecast would be June but that's obviously, the Plan Commission membership has to be able to go through its work in a way that they're satisfied with before they make their recommendation. But as I said, next Wednesday night, we'll be on the last chapter, the form-based coding chapter and that's the last substantial item before we return to the issues that do not have consensus. And those issues include four to six things at this point. So, my best estimate would be two meetings.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Two meetings, okay.

ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: We have staff concerns, too, that may slow it down.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Alderman Jean-Baptiste?

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Yes. Since, you know, once we table a particular matter, to take it off table usually would take, you know, a motion seconded by another alderman. What I would suggest is that we assure that we send out notice of intent to take it off table so people are not caught off guard, so that, you know, those who have been engaged in the discussion are
fully aware when this item will be back on table, off table.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Off table.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: After we approve the plan.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Yes, I understand that but I'm saying --

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Oh, yes, you know what, you're right, you're right.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: But we're thinking maybe June. It will be June.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Can we get agreement on that?

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Absolutely.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: I would agree, yes. All right. Aldermen, could we have a motion to adjourn to executive session?

ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: Do we have to go at the Council first?

MR. WOLINSKI: Pardon me, Madam Chair. Two points, one that Alderman Jean-Baptiste almost addressed and one which Alderman Bernstein is now raising. Given the fact that the ordinance and the motion to deny has been tabled, however, and given as Alderman Rainey asked
that the date when the downtown plan might be adopted is
at this point uncertain, this should be considered as a
motion to table but not to a date certain. So, at this
point, and this is based also upon a recent history with
the 1890 Maple Ordinance which was also tabled for a
time, it should remain on the upcoming agendas for
Planning & Development as a tabled item.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: As a tabled, you're right.
MR. WOLINSKI: So that if at some point there
were supports and if say the downtown plan were delayed
indefinitely, an alderman could move to take it off the
table and with a second from another alderman there
could be a vote.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: No, I disagree with that.
We've made a motion to table based on a specific act,
and that act is once we pass the downtown plan.

ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: It's not a specific date.
ALDERMAN RAINEY: No, we did not set a date.
We said an event.

ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: That's right, that's what
he's saying.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Right.
ALDERMAN BERNSTEIN: It's tabled generally.
ALDERMAN RAINEY: Right. I mean, I agree it should be on the yellow agenda, but I do not agree that any alderman can willy-nilly remove this from the table until the downtown plan has been approved. And if it isn't approved, then you know, nothing happens.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Is that in disagreement with what you're saying?

MR. WOLINSKI: Again, my point would be that given the fact that the downtown plan does not have a date certain, that it would seem to be a motion that's been tabled generally which a motion that's been tabled generally could be taken off the table even at the same meeting or at a subsequent meeting thereafter. But only due to the fact that the downtown plan is at this point, it's nebulous as to when it might be adopted. If there were a definite deadline in time, that would be a different issue.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Except that we have agreed that we're not going to do that. So --

MR. WOLINSKI: That's a separate issue, if the Committee agrees to abide by that.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Okay.

MR. WOLINSKI: The second point that Alderman
Bernstein brought up is when you mentioned going to executive session. Again, at this point you're just meeting as a Planning & Development Committee. So, the proper point at this point would be to adjourn this Committee meeting and then begin the special meeting of the City Council, and then immediately go into executive session thereafter.

CHAIRMAN HOLMES: Okay. Then, can we make a motion for adjournment?

ALDERMAN MORAN: Move to adjourn.

ALDERMAN HANSEN: Move adjournment.

ALDERMAN RAINEY: Second.

ALDERMAN JEAN-BAPTISTE: Second.

(Chorus of ayes.)

(Whereupon, the hearing in the above-titled cause was concluded at 10:03 p.m.)