

## STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

## PROCEEDINGS AT:

Providence City Hall  
City of Providence

IN RE: COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Public Hearing

DATE: April 21, 2003  
TIME: 6:00 P.M.  
PLACE: Providence City Hall  
25 Dorrance Street  
Providence, RI 02903

## BEFORE:

Kevin Jackson, Chairman  
Carol Romano, Vice Chairman  
Peter Mancini, Councilman  
Luis Aponte, Councilman  
Miquel Luna, Councilman

## SPEAKERS:

Gregg Mancini  
Warren Heyman  
Jenna Karlin  
Janel Costa

ORIGINAL

ALLIED COURT REPORTERS, INC.  
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CRANSTON, RI 02920  
(401) 946-5500

ALLIED COURT REPORTERS, INC. (401) 946-5500

1 (APRIL 21, 2003)

2 (MATTER COMMENCED AT 6:00 PM)

3 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: This public  
4 hearing will come to order tonight. The  
5 Committee on Finance is taking up one issue, and  
6 it's, "An ordinance establishing a tax  
7 stabilization for the Capital Hotels, LLC, to be  
8 located at 121-133 Fountain Street. (In City  
9 Council 2/20/03 - Council President Lombardi, By  
10 Request) (in committee April 2, 2003 & Con't)."

11 Let me lay over some ground rules. This is a  
12 public hearing. We will hear testimony from  
13 people either in favor of or against the project.  
14 This will not be a yes and no answer-type  
15 hearing. The council people will not ask  
16 questions, and you cannot gather information from  
17 us. Let me just introduce. To my right is  
18 Councilman Peter Mancini, a member of the Finance  
19 Committee, and to my left is Councilwoman Carol  
20 Romano, the Vice Chairman of the Finance  
21 Committee, and I am City Councilman Kevin  
22 Jackson, Chairman of the Finance Committee.

23 Seeing there's no opponents on the project,  
24 we will begin with the proponents. If I

1 mispronounce your name, I apologize. Please for  
2 the stenographer, give your name and address when  
3 you come to speak. First is Gregg Mancini.

4 MR. MANCINI: My name is Gregg  
5 Mancini, M-A-N-C-I-N-I. I am with 21st Century  
6 Labor Management Partnership. Councilman  
7 Jackson, I brought some brochures of our  
8 organization. I can leave them. The reason why  
9 I did that is I just want to give you a flavor of  
10 who we are and then reasons why we support the  
11 legislation. We're a coalition of contractors  
12 and construction labor unions. In total, we  
13 represent over 400 signatory contractors and over  
14 15,000 workers in the State of Rhode Island.

15 We're here to speak tonight on this  
16 particular project because first of all we think  
17 that it's a good project. The city will benefit  
18 from it, but also we have had conversations with  
19 Mr. Mesolella, and it's our impression that he is  
20 going to hire good, solid, well-paying jobs to  
21 constructive facilities, and that's our concern.  
22 Sometimes people come before cities and towns and  
23 state government and subsidies and go out and  
24 hire people and pay people with substandard,

1 non-prevailing wages, and so we think that --  
2 Mr. Mesolella, we commend him for it.

3 We also think this project, I think, greatly  
4 contributes to the residents of Providence. For  
5 those reasons we support it, and if anyone has  
6 any questions, I will take them. All set?

7 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Thank you,  
8 Mr. Mancini. Next speaker is Warren Heyman.

9 MR. HEYMAN: Good evening members of  
10 the council. My name is Warren Heyman. I am  
11 secretary and organizer with Local 217. I am  
12 here in support of the granting of tax  
13 stabilization to this project for four reasons.  
14 One, the developer has signed an agreement with  
15 us which shows his respect for the workers'  
16 rights to decide whether or not they want to have  
17 a union, and like when an employer signs one of  
18 those agreements, workers do decide to form a  
19 union which will shed decent wages and benefits.

20 Second, developers are also committed to  
21 workers in a variety of groups to do a training  
22 program to train neighborhood residents of the  
23 City of Providence and the skills they will need  
24 to work in the jobs that would be created after

1 the hotel is constructed.

2 Next, in order for our members who are  
3 currently working at the Westin and at the  
4 Convention Center and the Biltmore to have real  
5 job security, we need additional hotel rooms in  
6 the City of Providence. This hotel will help  
7 that.

8 Thirdly, maybe one of the most important  
9 reasons, is that the current property is not  
10 paying any taxes at all to the City of  
11 Providence, and by allowing this project to go  
12 forward here, we will begin to add property to  
13 the tax laws of the City of Providence.

14 I want to also comment because some people  
15 feel the private market should fund or support  
16 this project, and there should not be any public  
17 assistance, and our union follows hotel  
18 construction around the country. What's  
19 happening here is the norm which is private  
20 public partnerships for the development and  
21 construction of hotel projects in the urban area.  
22 It's going on in Boston, San Francisco, a number  
23 of major metropolitan areas that we follow. This  
24 is what's happening.

1 I want to comment that the Courtyard by  
2 Marriott Hotel which is across the street was  
3 granted a tax stabilization but did not sign nor  
4 do a training program of those jobs when compared  
5 to the jobs at the Westin and Convention Center.  
6 We have that as our substandard.

7 For all of those reasons we think this is a  
8 good project. We think the city should support a  
9 tax stabilization here. We think as a result of  
10 the commitments that the developers made both  
11 building trades as well as with us. It would  
12 build union jobs, and what would be left  
13 thereafter would be decent and many, meaning many  
14 neighborhood people living in the City of  
15 Providence will have the opportunity to apply  
16 for, be trained, and apply for and hopefully  
17 receive those jobs. Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Thank you,  
19 Mr. Heyman. I would like to recognize Councilman  
20 Luis Aponte, a member of the Finance Committee,  
21 Majority Leader, has entered the room, and  
22 Councilman Miguel Luna, also a member of the  
23 Finance Committee has entered the public hearing.  
24 The next speaker is Jenna Karlin.

1 MS. KARLIN: Hello. Good afternoon.  
2 My name is Jenna Karlin. I am an organizer with  
3 Local 217 of the Hotel and Restaurant Union. I  
4 am a resident of the City of Providence, and I  
5 want to speak to all of you specifically about  
6 the importance and the significance of the  
7 agreement that the developer has signed with us.  
8 It is an agreement, and it's very significant  
9 because it really enables the workers a choice  
10 whether or not they want to form a union again.  
11 It is a choice. It isn't about whether or not  
12 they want to form a union.

13 I do a lot of work in the community and with  
14 workers about organizing unions. The freedom of  
15 having that choice without fear, without  
16 intimidation, to make that choice within your own  
17 homes, within your own families is really  
18 important, and it's a real key way of building  
19 unions of this city and insures there are good  
20 jobs.

21 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Thank you,  
22 Ms. Karlin. Next to speak is Janella Costa.

23 MS. COSTA: Good afternoon, my name  
24 is Janel Costa. I grew up here in Providence,

1 and I currently reside in the Reservoir Triangle  
2 area. I am a single mother and banquet waitress.  
3 I work at the Providence Biltmore and Rhode  
4 Island Convention Center, and I am a member of  
5 the Local 217.

6 I am here to support the Fogarty Hotel  
7 project. This hotel developer has signed a  
8 card-count (sic) neutral agreement. It's an  
9 agreement with our union. Card-count neutral  
10 agreements are important because they provide  
11 workers the right to chose whether or not they  
12 want to form a union. Hotels will continue to be  
13 built in this city. It is important as they are  
14 built that they are also paying living wages and  
15 provide workers with the voice at work. The  
16 future of our city depends on the creation of  
17 good jobs. Good jobs will continue to improve  
18 our neighborhoods and are important for the City  
19 of Providence. I ask you to support the project.  
20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Thank you,  
22 Ms. Costa. Is there anyone else at this time  
23 that would like to speak in regards to this  
24 project? Seeing there's no one else, this will



1 conclude the public hearing. Give us five  
2 minutes, and we will have the committee meeting  
3 on the rise to take up this matter.

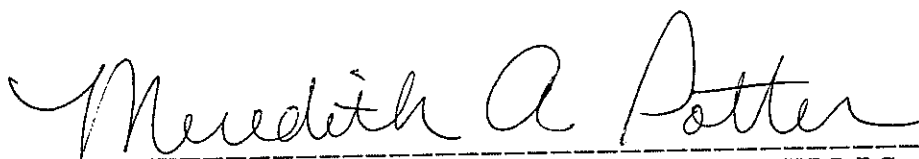
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## C E R T I F I C A T E

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4 I, Meredith A. Potter, do hereby  
5 certify that the foregoing is a true, accurate,  
6 and complete transcript of my notes taken at the  
7 above-entitled hearing.

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12 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my  
13 hand this 19th day of May 2003.

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MEREDITH A. POTTER, RPR, NOTARY PUBLIC  
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES 3/31/04

DATE: April 21, 2003

IN RE: City of Providence, Public Hearing

HEARING OF: Committee on Finance