

CITY OF JACKSONVILLE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
COMMISSION

Proceedings held on Wednesday, February 28, 2024,
commencing at 3:00 p.m., at the Ed Ball Building,
Room 851, 214 North Hogan Street, Jacksonville, Florida,
before Diane M. Tropa, FPR, a Notary Public in and for
the State of Florida at Large.

PRESENT:

MICHAEL MONTOYA, Acting Chairman.
JULIA EPSTEIN, Secretary.
MAX GLOBER, Commission Member.
WILLIAM HOFF, Commission Member.

ALSO PRESENT:

ARIMUS WELLS, Planning and Development Dept.
BRITTANY FIGUEROA, Planning and Development.
CARLA LOPERA, Office of General Counsel.
JOANNA SNYDER, Planning and Development Dept.

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1 you want to have any private conversations,
2 please go out into the hallway to do that.
3 And, also, I will try to maintain order
4 and rule, although this is my first time acting
5 as chairman in our chairman's absence, so
6 please forgive me if I make any errors.
7 With that, a motion to approve the
8 January 24th meeting minutes.
9 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Second.
10 MS. LOPERA: Someone has to make a motion,
11 Mr. Vice Chairman, not you.
12 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry. I didn't say I
13 ask for a motion.
14 MS. LOPERA: You'll entertain a motion.
15 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Entertain a motion.
16 Motion to approve the meeting minutes from
17 our previous meeting.
18 COMMISSIONER HOFF: I will second that.
19 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?
20 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.
21 THE CHAIRMAN: All those opposed?
22 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
23 THE CHAIRMAN: The ayes have it. The
24 meeting minutes are approved.
25 One other comment for you. If there's
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2

1 P R O C E E D I N G S
February 28, 2024 3:00 p.m.

2 - - -
3 THE CHAIRMAN: Welcome, everyone, to the
4 February 28th meeting of the Historic
5 Preservation Commission.
6 Let's start with some introductions,
7 please.
8 MS. FIGUEROA: Brittany Figueroa, Historic
9 Preservation section.
10 MR. WELLS: Arimus Wells, Historic
11 Preservation section.
12 MS. LOPERA: Carla Lopera, Office of
13 General Counsel.
14 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Julia Epstein,
15 commissioner.
16 THE CHAIRMAN: Michael Montoya, vice
17 chairman, acting chairman for today.
18 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Bill Hoff,
19 commissioner.
20 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Max Glober,
21 commissioner.
22 THE CHAIRMAN: Again, welcome, everyone.
23 Just for your information, if the meeting
24 goes long, we'll take a break every two hours.
25 We ask that you silence your cell phones. If
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4

1 anything during the course of today's meeting
2 that you need to bring forward to the
3 Commission, please don't come to the center of
4 the room because there are a lot of wires here.
5 Come around to the side where Joanna ...
6 So we'll start by calling out the deferred
7 items. We have COA-22-27451 at 2768 Riverside
8 Avenue. We have COA-23-28339 at 3664 Richmond
9 Street. We have COA-23-29186 at 2799 Selma
10 Street, and LS-23-01 at 538 Ellis Road South,
11 and LM-24-02 at 315 Forsyth Street West. So
12 those are the deferred items.
13 And then we have -- on the consent agenda,
14 we have COA-23-29719 at 2111 Liberty Street
15 North. We have COA-23-29932 at 2242 Myra
16 Street. We have COA-23-30108 at 3606 Boone
17 Park Avenue, COA-23-30123 at 3709 Hedrick
18 Street.
19 Is there anyone here to speak on any of
20 these items on the consent agenda?
21 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)
22 THE CHAIRMAN: So I'll open the public
23 hearing.
24 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes, I'd like to talk
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5

1 about the Liberty Street --
 2 Hey. So Bob Lienau. I'm representing
 3 Mike Mumford in the Liberty Street project.
 4 Just trying to put some awnings on there.
 5 We've got a safety issue at the front with rain
 6 coming in. Nice, slick terrazzo floor when you
 7 step in the building and just trying to get
 8 some safety and some water -- stop some water.
 9 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Anything else?
 10 MS. LOPERA: Through the Vice Chair, just
 11 to clarify for anyone in the audience and for
 12 you, sir, the items on the consent agenda will
 13 be voted on next. You can speak on them if you
 14 want, but you don't have to.
 15 MR. LIENAU: Okay.
 16 THE CHAIRMAN: And that's if you -- if you
 17 agree with the conditions of the consent
 18 agenda, if you have no objection to them,
 19 then --
 20 MR. LIENAU: So what is the -- so I'm
 21 sorry, I couldn't hear her real good. What is
 22 the -- what conditions -- what are the
 23 conditions on the awnings?
 24 MR. WELLS: So through the Chair, you
 25 should have received a staff report on Friday,
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6

1 last Friday, just outlining the conditions in
 2 the staff report, so if you're in agreeance
 3 with those, then that's why your application
 4 was placed on consent.
 5 MR. LIENAU: Okay. And I apologize. I'm
 6 filling in for Mike. He's out of state this
 7 week, so --
 8 All right. Well, do you recall what the
 9 conditions were?
 10 (Ms. Figueroa tenders document to
 11 Mr. Lienau.)
 12 MR. LIENAU: I mean, we're --
 13 THE CHAIRMAN: Sir, if you would like, you
 14 can read through those, and we'll hear from
 15 anyone else, and then you can come back up.
 16 MR. LIENAU: No. That's true. So I agree
 17 with that. So that means we can do -- proceed
 18 with the awnings, correct?
 19 THE CHAIRMAN: We'll vote.
 20 MR. LIENAU: Okay.
 21 All right. Thank you.
 22 THE CHAIRMAN: And so just to clarify for
 23 everyone, everything on the consent agenda has
 24 been reviewed by staff. They have had
 25 conversations with the applicant, and they've
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7

1 come to an agreement as to what will approve
 2 the project with conditions, and that's why
 3 it's on the consent agenda. So as long as you
 4 have no objection to the consent agenda,
 5 there's no need to necessarily come up and
 6 speak. If there's something that is a
 7 condition on the consent agenda that you, as
 8 the applicant, have an issue with, then you can
 9 come forward and make an argument for that
 10 condition that's on the consent agenda.
 11 Is there anyone else who would like to
 12 come up to speak?
 13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)
 14 THE CHAIRMAN: Come forward.
 15 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
 16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi. Good afternoon.
 17 My name is Kim Pryor, and I would like to
 18 request that Item Number 4, COA-23-30123, the
 19 demolition of the accessory structure at 3709
 20 Hedrick Street, be removed from the consent
 21 agenda so that we can have further discussion.
 22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
 23 Is there anyone else who wants to come
 24 forward and speak on -- towards one of the
 25 consent agenda items?
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8

1 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)
 2 THE CHAIRMAN: No? Okay. Then I would
 3 entertain a motion.
 4 MS. LOPERA: Can you close the public
 5 hearing?
 6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. That's mistake
 7 number two.
 8 I'll close the public hearing.
 9 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: I'd like to make a
 10 motion to approve the consent agenda Items 1
 11 through 3.
 12 COMMISSIONER HOFF: I second.
 13 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?
 14 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.
 15 THE CHAIRMAN: All those opposed?
 16 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
 17 THE CHAIRMAN: The ayes have it.
 18 MS. LOPERA: So that means that you have
 19 approved Items 1 through 3.
 20 THE CHAIRMAN: The Commission has approved
 21 Items 1 through 3, and we'll move Item 4 to the
 22 COAs.
 23 Before we get to the COA list, we'll go
 24 through the historic designation item. It's
 25 LM-24-01.
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1 Is there anyone here to speak on behalf of
2 this item?

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)

4 THE CHAIRMAN: We'll hear from staff and
5 get a report and then you can come forward.

6 MS. FIGUEROA: This is the report of the
7 Planning and Development Department for a
8 designation of LM-24-01 at 1349 Market Street
9 North as a City of Jacksonville landmark. This
10 landmark designation is sponsored by the
11 property owner. The owner of the property is
12 House of Leaf & Bean, LLC.

13 Staff found that this application meets
14 two of the seven criteria, and the two criteria
15 include the following:

16 A, its value as a significant reminder of
17 the cultural, historical, architectural, or
18 archaeological heritage of the city, state, or
19 nation. The subject property is significant
20 because it is located in Springfield, which is
21 one of the oldest subdivisions in the city of
22 Jacksonville and contains a large collection of
23 historic residential buildings with a wide
24 variety of architectural styles.

25 Springfield contains 1,890 structures
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1 well-maintained over the years. There are no
2 records on file for any major alterations that
3 have occurred to the original building. The
4 only exterior alterations on file for the
5 building include brick repair and glass window
6 or door work.

7 Based on the findings of this report, the
8 Planning and Development Department recommends
9 that the Jacksonville Historic Preservation
10 Commission approve the designation of 1349
11 Market Street North, LM-24-01, as a City of
12 Jacksonville landmark.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. So I'll open
14 the public hearing to anyone who wants to speak
15 on behalf of this landmark designation.

16 Is the applicant here?

17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah? Please come forward.
19 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello. Good afternoon.

21 My name is Jonathan Raiti. I live at 224
22 Bowles Street, Neptune Beach, and I am a part
23 owner of the House of Leaf & Bean, LLC,
24 together with my wife, who is also present.

25 I thought the staff report was very well
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1 built before 1940 and retain enough of their
2 original physical character to embody
3 adequately a similar sense of time, place, and
4 historic association.

5 The subject property, located at 1349
6 Market Street North, consists of a one-story
7 masonry, vernacular style, commercial
8 structure. The structure is characterized by
9 its rectangular shape, brick exterior,
10 (indecipherable) glass storefront, and a flat
11 roof with a parapet.

12 In Springfield, most masonry vernacular
13 buildings are small apartments or commercial
14 buildings built within the 1900 to 1930 period.

15 In addition, this application meets G, its
16 suitability for preservation or restoration.
17 It has been the practice of the Planning and
18 Development Department to evaluate proposed
19 landmarks based on evidence of significant
20 exterior alterations that have negatively
21 impacted character-defining features as well as
22 represent alterations difficult, costly, or
23 impossible to reverse.

24 Not having any evidence of the significant
25 exterior deterioration, the structure has been
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1 prepared. Thank you very much. I think that
2 in addition to that, just point out that -- a
3 couple of statistics from the Springfield
4 Historic District's historic report on the
5 district. Apparently, most of the Boom Style
6 architecture after the Great Fire was basically
7 built in other areas outside of Springfield, so
8 very few were actually put into the Springfield
9 area.

10 Of the 1,890 buildings that Brittany
11 mentioned, there's 48 that are commercial and
12 201 that are masonry, so that overlapping kind
13 of set of circles is quite small. So we
14 recognize this as being a Georgian style,
15 commercial style, Boom Style architecture, and
16 we think it would be a great example of a
17 building to keep alive in the neighborhood and
18 to designate as a landmark, and, you know, just
19 let everybody remember how wonderful those
20 neighborhoods have been and keep them alive and
21 vital.

22 So I don't know if you have any questions
23 for me, but certainly happy to take them.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

25 MR. RAITI: Okay. Thank you.

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Anyone else want to speak?
 2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)
 3 THE CHAIRMAN: Come forward.
 4 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
 5 THE CHAIRMAN: Please state your name and
 6 address for the record.
 7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good afternoon.
 8 Kelvin Lewis, 1329 North Market Street.
 9 I'm the next-door neighbor, Mount Carmel
 10 Baptist Church, and so I have come today just
 11 to get a brief description of what the landmark
 12 entails, and it seems like on some
 13 correspondence that I received -- said it was
 14 to be a monument, and that just kind of piqued
 15 my interest.
 16 So my main question is, if the building is
 17 going to be named or if a name is going to be
 18 displayed on it, what would that name be, and
 19 what's the significance of the landmark, what
 20 latitude does the owner have with it, so I can
 21 know what are possibilities for it.
 22 MS. LOPERA: Through the Vice Chair to the
 23 speaker, so this is a public hearing for a
 24 landmark application to landmark the structure
 25 at 1349 Market Street North. If you have
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1 questions about the landmarking process and
 2 what that entails, I would recommend going
 3 online to the Planning Department's website,
 4 the City of Jacksonville's website, or contact
 5 the Planning Department to get more information
 6 about that.
 7 MR. LEWIS: Okay. But to be clear, this
 8 is a landmark and not a monument?
 9 THE CHAIRMAN: Correct. It's landmarking
 10 the building as a historic property.
 11 MR. LEWIS: Okay. And that's probably all
 12 I need to know, but --
 13 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
 14 Chair. Typically, too, if a building receives
 15 a name, it comes through the Commission for
 16 that name to be approved as well. So if there
 17 was any naming designation for a building, we
 18 would approve that at a different time.
 19 MR. LEWIS: So you can't just arbitrarily
 20 put a name on the building? It would have to
 21 be approved through the Chair -- through the
 22 board; is that correct?
 23 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yes, unless it's,
 24 like, a business name or something.
 25 MR. LEWIS: Right. And then with -- but
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1 if it's named after a person, it would have to
 2 be approved and we would get ample
 3 notification, correct?
 4 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Uh-huh.
 5 THE CHAIRMAN: There is a process, yes,
 6 sir.
 7 MR. LEWIS: That's all I need.
 8 Thank you.
 9 THE CHAIRMAN: Anyone else, please come
 10 forward.
 11 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
 12 THE CHAIRMAN: Please state your name and
 13 address.
 14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Mike Haskins, 417 West
 15 7th Street, Jacksonville, Florida 32206.
 16 I am the executive director of SPAR. I
 17 just wanted to state our support for
 18 landmarking this building. Appreciate the
 19 applicant's hard work to rehabilitate the
 20 historic structure.
 21 Thank you, all.
 22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
 23 Anyone else want to speak to this?
 24 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)
 25 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. We'll close the
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1 public hearing, and we'll entertain a motion.
 2 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Vice
 3 Chair, I need to declare ex parte. The
 4 applicant sent me an email about this in my
 5 former volunteer role a couple of months ago,
 6 and I forwarded that on to the correct people
 7 afterwards, so thanks.
 8 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
 9 So I'll entertain a motion.
 10 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Motion to approve
 11 the landmarking of LM-24-01.
 12 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?
 13 MS. LOPERA: You need a second.
 14 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Second.
 15 MS. LOPERA: Any discussion?
 16 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah. Any discussion?
 17 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
 18 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?
 19 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.
 20 THE CHAIRMAN: All opposed?
 21 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
 22 THE CHAIRMAN: So hearing none, we have
 23 approved the landmark application for 1349
 24 Market Street North.
 25 We'll move on to the COAs. Should we
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1 start with the Number 4 that was moved to the
2 COA agenda?

3 We'll start with -- so we'll start with
4 COA-23-30123, 3709 Hedrick Street, that was on
5 the consent agenda.

6 Can I have a staff report for this one?
7 MR. WELLS: Yes. All right. This is
8 COA-23-30123 for the property located at 3709
9 Hedrick Street. So the applicant seeks to
10 demolish a contributing accessory structure
11 that's located in the rear corner of the lot in
12 Riverside/Avondale. The structure is currently
13 located behind a two-story single-family home
14 that was constructed in 2019.

15 Due to the placement of the new
16 construction, the contributing accessory
17 structure is not visible from the street and is
18 considered by staff to be secondary in nature.

19 The lot is located on a block with
20 primarily two-story homes with a variety of
21 architectural influences from Mediterranean --

22 MS. PRYOR: Can you speak into the
23 microphone?

24 MR. WELLS: Yes. This is just a little
25 low. I'll try to speak a little louder. My
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1 apologies.

2 So, again, the lot is located on a block
3 with primarily two-story homes with a variety
4 of architectural influences from Mediterranean
5 Revival to ranch-style brick homes.

6 The applicant has supplied an
7 environmental report as evidence that the
8 current structure is currently uninhabitable
9 due to high levels of formaldehyde that poses a
10 cancer risk.

11 A structural report supplied by the
12 applicant also states that restoration efforts
13 would require removal of all the exterior
14 walls, which could lead to total collapse in
15 the course of work. Again, this structural
16 engineering letter that was provided by the
17 applicant states that the uninhabitable
18 structure requires removal of all exterior
19 walls and several structural improvements. As
20 such, we do find that this poses a health and
21 safety risk to the residents as well as the
22 surrounding community.

23 Key architectural features of the building
24 include its walls, windows, doors, roof shape,
25 and its relationship to the surrounding area.

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1 Again, according to that structural engineer's
2 letter, restoration of the existing structure
3 would require removal of all of the structure's
4 historic materials, thereby stripping of it --
5 stripping the building of its historic value,
6 which is consistent with several sections of
7 our Code.

8 Consistent with Section 307.106(n)(3),
9 it's the opinion of staff that the structure
10 itself does not have any design elements such
11 as building height, massing, and production
12 materials that will make reproduction difficult
13 or impossible.

14 Again, another option that we did pursue
15 in terms of demolitions, as always, is we asked
16 the applicant to consider feasible alternatives
17 to demolition such as relocation,
18 rehabilitation, mothballing, and reuse by the
19 current owner or prospective buyer. However,
20 once again, based on the applicant's structural
21 engineering report, no other feasible
22 alternatives to demolition are readily
23 apparently.

24 Moreover, if rehabilitation attempts were
25 made, the structure does not appear to have
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1 enough structural integrity for relocation to
2 be considered.

3 The applicant has expressed a willingness
4 to -- if the structure is demolished, to build
5 something similar in style in its place, but,
6 again, based on our findings and coupled with
7 the two structural engineering reports as well
8 as the environmental report stressing the need
9 to address the high levels of carcinogens,
10 staff forwards to you a recommendation for
11 approval of COA-23-30123.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Arimus.

13 Do we have any questions for staff?

14 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
15 Chair, did you go out and visit this structure?

16 I know, typically, when we receive just a
17 letter from a structural engineer, we tend to
18 look for more photographic evidence of the
19 structure failing, and I don't see any
20 photographic evidence of that. I'm not sure if
21 you guys went out there and, you know, saw
22 anything.

23 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair to
24 Commissioner Epstein, we did do a site visit.
25 I'll need to look at my records to determine

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1 the date, but we did take some pictures in
 2 there. It should be in the book package
 3 itself. They might have been --
 4 MS. PRYOR: We can't hear you.
 5 MR. WELLS: So, again, the mic is very
 6 short, so I apologize in advance, but I have to
 7 lean over the table to get a little bit louder
 8 here.
 9 But, again, we did a site visit. We took
 10 pictures. They might be mixed in with the
 11 applicant's photos, but they are in there.
 12 I'll try to pull them up on the screen here.
 13 Thank you.
 14 THE CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?
 15 Questions for staff?
 16 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
 17 THE CHAIRMAN: Were there -- do we know
 18 when the -- when this accessory structure was
 19 last occupied? It seems to be functioning as
 20 an apartment and has air conditioning, and it's
 21 a habitable structure.
 22 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair -- or to the
 23 Vice Chair, I'll have to defer to the applicant
 24 on that. To my best ability or knowledge, I
 25 believe it was last occupied last year, but,
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1 again, I would rather confirm with the
 2 applicant.
 3 THE CHAIRMAN: And then another question
 4 for staff. Do we have history on --
 5 understanding that the primary structure is not
 6 a historic structure, the history of the
 7 property, what happened to the primary
 8 structure that I assume was historic that
 9 allowed the construction of a new building? Do
 10 we have any past history on the property?
 11 MR. WELLS: To the Vice Chair, not
 12 included within the report itself. To my best
 13 knowledge, I believe that the structure was a
 14 noncontributing structure, so hence the
 15 demolition, but I'll have to do some further
 16 research to determine when it was actually
 17 demolished.
 18 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.
 19 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
 20 Chair, so the way that I'm reading the report,
 21 and if it's incorrect -- I believe that there
 22 was some foam injected in the walls, and now
 23 it's -- that was done incorrectly, and it is a
 24 direct hazard. And to remove the foam, you
 25 have to remove the exterior walls, which is
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1 causing structural issues. Is that --
 2 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair to
 3 Commissioner Epstein, that is correct.
 4 And so just to answer your follow-up
 5 question you asked, the pictures -- we did take
 6 pictures. They are on the screen for you right
 7 now. And because of the nature of the
 8 building, we weren't able to inspect it from
 9 the inside, but from the exterior, we can see
 10 the injection foam spots.
 11 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: So it's not
 12 necessarily falling apart now, but the process
 13 of making it habitable to remove the chemical
 14 issue is what would make it fall apart?
 15 MR. WELLS: Correct.
 16 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Okay.
 17 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Vice
 18 Chair, a question for staff. Was the staff --
 19 did they need to wear any type of protective
 20 equipment while going inside due to this issue?
 21 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair to
 22 Commissioner Hoff, just to clarify, we did not
 23 inspect from the inside just because it was
 24 deemed already uninhabitable, so we just did
 25 our best and just took pictures from the
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1 exterior.
 2 THE CHAIRMAN: Is anyone here to speak on
 3 behalf of this demolition? Is the applicant
 4 here to speak on behalf of it?
 5 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)
 6 THE CHAIRMAN: I'll open the public
 7 hearing.
 8 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
 9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah, I'm Taylor King.
 10 My wife Christine and I own the property.
 11 THE CHAIRMAN: And your address, sir?
 12 MR. KING: Same address, 3709 Hedrick
 13 Street. There's only one parcel. So --
 14 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, yeah, please be sworn
 15 in.
 16 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
 17 right hand for me, please.
 18 MR. KING: (Complies.)
 19 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
 20 testimony you are about to give will be the
 21 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
 22 truth?
 23 MR. KING: Yes.
 24 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
 25 MR. KING: So as far as the last
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1 occupant -- we have two young kids. My parents
2 sometimes come in from out of town, stay at the
3 accessory unit. So the last time -- actually,
4 we had a baby in September. They came in
5 October. At that time, the contractor was
6 telling us that the fumes, the smell was not
7 toxic. My parents spent a night there, had a
8 headache the next day, said we're not staying
9 there anymore. It took us many months to come
10 to the conclusion. We had to hire an
11 environmental expert. The contractor actually
12 paid for that.

13 The environmental person did a VOC test,
14 formaldehyde test, and that's the environmental
15 report that we submitted. It says it's
16 off-gassing toxic fumes, formaldehyde, and
17 phenol. And by that point, it had permeated
18 the structure. So then we started going
19 through the process of how do we remediate.

20 So we started going through, okay, we've
21 got to -- the environmental guy, who is the --
22 he wears protective equipment whenever he goes
23 in there. I don't have personal protective
24 equipment. I used to go in there when they
25 told me it was nontoxic. I wish I hadn't. I

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1 don't go in there anymore.
2 We're worried about if a pipe bursts when
3 it's freezing, we have no way of knowing that
4 because I don't go over there anymore. It's in
5 our backyard. We can't hire someone to fix it
6 in good conscience because we can't -- no one
7 is going to go in there. If something happens,
8 it's a disaster. It's a total nightmare.

9 We have two young kids. My daughter used
10 to go over there. I told her, you cannot go
11 over there.

12 We started talking to contractors about
13 removing exterior walls because the
14 environmental expert was adamant about -- you
15 have got to get this removed. Before you even
16 start other remediation steps, you've got to
17 get the toxic-emitting material removed. We
18 started talking to multiple contractors that --
19 either they didn't want to touch it or they
20 said it's impossible.

21 Then we got the structural engineering
22 letter saying that all this work needs to be
23 done to remove -- that's going to make the
24 structure collapse, so no one is going to want
25 to -- even if it were somehow -- you know, no

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1 one is going to want to touch it for the risk
2 of it's going to collapse while they're
3 removing all the exterior siding.

4 It's permeated everything inside. We
5 don't want to -- we didn't want to tear this
6 down. I mean, we didn't -- when we put in
7 insulation in, we were trying to make it get
8 through the heat. I mean -- and then -- so now
9 we're dealing with trying to figure out if
10 we're going to sue the contractor over having
11 to demolish the house that we used to have my
12 parents stay at.

13 So I'm not sure what the objection is, but
14 if I hear whatever she has to say, I'd like a
15 chance to respond to that.

16 Anyway, the last person that stayed there
17 was my parents for one night when we thought it
18 was nontoxic at the time, and they were sick,
19 so they said we're not staying there anymore.

20 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
21 Chair, so did you -- you did hire a contractor
22 to do this foam work, and the foam failed, and
23 you are handling that separately?

24 MR. KING: Right.

25 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Do they --

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1 MR. KING: Unfortunately, not that this is
2 particularly relevant, but at this point, the
3 latest is their insurance is telling us there's
4 some kind of pollution exclusion, and they are
5 denying coverage, so we're going to be coming
6 out-of-pocket at this point, I believe.

7 You know, I've talked to a couple of
8 attorneys. I'm an attorney. I don't know
9 anything about this. It's not my area of
10 expertise. I wish I had a good answer. I
11 mean ...

12 But the biggest nightmare for us would be
13 denial of this because we have no way of fixing
14 this problem. It's unsafe. And it just -- we
15 don't even go over there anymore. The
16 furniture is in there. It's just sitting
17 there. It's been sitting there ever since we
18 found out, about Christmastime, that this was
19 going on.

20 Before that, the contractor was adamant
21 about -- he kept telling me the smell is
22 nontoxic, it's going to eventually stop
23 off-gassing, give it more time, give it more
24 time, give it more time. The environmental guy
25 said -- and I'm not an environmental person.

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1 He's smarter than me because he wears personal
2 protective equipment. He said -- I don't know
3 if this is conveyed in the long report -- that
4 it will never stop. Even if it hadn't
5 permeated the structure, that it will never
6 stop off-gassing because of the way it has --
7 it's not going to cure.

8 And there's so much of it. There's so
9 much space because it's not -- it's not a
10 to-code framing. There's so much space in
11 there that's unusual because, normally, there's
12 set 2-by-4s. So whenever they inject the foam
13 in there, it's not going to be like this. So
14 that, I think, was part of the problem, but
15 there's just so much foam in there that is also
16 contributing to the problem. If it was a small
17 amount that was giving out toxic gas, that
18 would be bad anyway, but it's a large amount of
19 this product that's giving off phenol, which
20 I'd never heard of before this, and
21 formaldehyde.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: And I assume that when
23 the -- I assume that when the foam was
24 installed, it was done with a permit, and it
25 was an approved product or -- I mean, I'm

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1 trying to understand how a product --
2 MR. KING: The contractors, USA
3 Insulation, we paid them \$8,500 to install the
4 insulation, and it's -- you know, you can look
5 at their website. I'm sure that the insulation
6 is not supposed to off-gas toxic fumes, so I
7 don't know what went wrong. I'm not aware of
8 the --

9 Part of the problem is that they -- they
10 drilled holes to inject the foam, and now that
11 it's in there, they can't just reopen up the
12 holes to get it out. And the environmental
13 person also said it's important -- the
14 environmental person said it's important that
15 whoever does this -- I don't know if I was even
16 supposed to do it myself or watch the
17 contractor that does it -- picks out every last
18 little bit of this that's surrounding the
19 entire house. He was --

20 That's what he told me, is that you've got
21 to make sure they get every last -- it's very
22 important, before you do all these remedial
23 steps, that every last little bit comes out, so
24 that's, I suppose, part of the reason why all
25 the exterior walls have to be removed, and I'm

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1 not sure if the engineer's letter goes into
2 more detail about that.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: And then the last question.
4 You're applying for demolition. I'm
5 assuming you have anticipated demolition. What
6 is the -- what are the environmental
7 ramifications of the demolition of the
8 structure if the materials inside it are
9 off-gassing hazardous gases? How is that going
10 to be handled?

11 MR. KING: Okay. So I think that -- that
12 it -- the off-gassing takes time for it to
13 build up in the house, and it's not -- it's not
14 a situation where it's -- it's not radioactive
15 is my -- you know, it's not like it's going
16 to -- unless you -- you know, as long as no one
17 is going up and picking it up and ingesting it,
18 if it's in the open air, it's not going to be a
19 biohazard to the surrounding area.

20 I'm not sure about how exactly it needs to
21 be disposed of, but my understanding is, if it
22 gets demolished, that there's no -- it doesn't
23 need to go to, like, a biohazard facility.
24 That's my understanding. We could revisit that
25 with the environmental expert, though.

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1 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Vice
2 Chair, a question for the applicant.
3 You mentioned that you spoke with multiple
4 contractors about doing this job. You have the
5 letter from one. What are the others that you
6 spoke with?

7 MR. KING: McDowell & Ariail. McDowell &
8 Ariail. And I think the other people were
9 probably just -- I called, left messages, and
10 they probably thought, no thanks. I can't
11 remember anybody else specific.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Any other questions for the
13 applicant?

14 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.
16 We may call you back up.

17 Anyone else here to speak on this
18 demolition?

19 (Ms. Pryor approaches the podium.)

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Please state your name and
21 address and be sworn in.

22 MS. PRYOR: My name is Kim Pryor, 245 West
23 5th Street.

24 THE REPORTER: If you would please raise
25 your right hand.

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1 MS. PRYOR: (Complies.)
 2 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
 3 Do you affirm that the testimony you're
 4 about to give will be the truth, the whole
 5 truth, and nothing but the truth?
 6 MS. PRYOR: I do.
 7 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
 8 MS. PRYOR: The first thing that I want to
 9 say is that I am very sorry that this has
 10 occurred to this homeowner. It is a tragedy
 11 with this spray foam insulation issue.
 12 That being said, I believe that we have
 13 more than -- there's more than one way to skin
 14 a cat, if you will. Everything that I've heard
 15 is -- talks about taking off the exterior
 16 siding and cleaning things and everything else.
 17 Well, let's talk about -- and they're
 18 worried about imminent collapse and things if
 19 you take that off. Well, you're not going to
 20 take every bit of siding off the entire
 21 structure at one time. You would do a little
 22 bit at a time and remove it and clean it and
 23 put it back. At least that's how I would do
 24 it.
 25 The interior -- from what I read in the
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1 is not. That makes this particular structure
 2 that much even more important.
 3 You know, I am here because this was
 4 listed as a demolition, and as many of you
 5 know, Preservation SOS is here to save the
 6 houses. That's what it is. And this beautiful
 7 accessory structure is one that also needs to
 8 be saved. If this -- if this is allowed, it
 9 will set a precedent that all you've got to do
 10 is go inject spray foam in your walls, and
 11 you'll be able to demolish your house. That's
 12 a dangerous, dangerous path to take, and so I
 13 urge this commission to deny this application
 14 and have you go back to their -- the insulation
 15 company.
 16 Thank you.
 17 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
 18 Anyone else here to speak on this?
 19 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)
 20 THE CHAIRMAN: Then we'll close the public
 21 hearing and entertain a motion.
 22 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Motion to approve
 23 the demolition of COA-23-30123.
 24 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Second.
 25 THE CHAIRMAN: Discussion?
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1 report, the interior is lath and plaster, so
 2 even if you take the siding off, that lath and
 3 plaster is going to provide some support as
 4 well, so that could be done. But how about
 5 approaching this from the inside? You know,
 6 you don't necessarily have to take the siding
 7 off, which does provide structural integrity.
 8 You could take the lath and plaster off and
 9 clean it from the inside.
 10 I heard the homeowner talk about the
 11 insulation company, USA Insulation, is having
 12 an issue with their insurance not covering
 13 this. Well, I think that's an issue that they
 14 need to continue to fight because they need to
 15 pay for this.
 16 My question here is, what type of foam was
 17 used? Is that foam still sold and installed
 18 today? And what caused this foam not to cure
 19 properly? Was there a problem with the way
 20 that it was installed? Things of that nature.
 21 And then I also have environmental
 22 concerns. You know, what will happen with the
 23 demolition and so forth? Yes, this is an
 24 accessory structure, but it is an historic
 25 structure, especially given that the main house
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1 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
 2 THE CHAIRMAN: I'll start. This is a
 3 tough one. This is really tough. I went by
 4 this accessory structure today. Just some
 5 background information. Yes, it is not visible
 6 from the primary structure street address from
 7 Hedrick, but the property has an alley, and
 8 it's very visible from Van Wert when you drive
 9 through the neighborhood, so it is a part of
 10 the community, and it is -- it is a historic
 11 structure.
 12 And we've heard from the applicant and the
 13 citizen, both expressing the sincere value that
 14 they see of the structure, but we're in a
 15 predicament here. This is hard for me.
 16 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yeah, through the
 17 Vice Chair, I think the biggest thing for me
 18 would be, you know, asking them to do any kind
 19 of remediation to try and save this.
 20 I don't know where -- I don't know if we
 21 can even quantify how this has gone wrong. And
 22 if it has gone wrong in a way that has
 23 impregnated the plaster -- the lath and plaster
 24 on the interior, how do you clean that? Do you
 25 have to just basically strip this whole thing
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1 apart to get it back to a safe standard, and,
 2 you know, what happens then?
 3 It's tricky because it's a, you know,
 4 health -- it's health, safety and welfare of
 5 the people that own the house, on top of the
 6 historic. And I think when we're talking about
 7 a possible dangerous situation, it's a little
 8 bit of an important thing to look at.
 9 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Yeah, through the
 10 Vice Chair, I agree with my fellow
 11 commissioner -- commissioner's comments.
 12 I've been on this board for a number of
 13 years, and I can tell you I've not seen staff
 14 recommend a demolition very many times, and I
 15 know we take no pleasure in that. But I
 16 appreciate the staff report, and I -- and I
 17 support this.
 18 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Vice
 19 Chair, I am struggling with this because
 20 there's a lot of hypotheticals here. If the
 21 applicant has talked to a limited number of
 22 contractors and if the structure is not a --
 23 it's not a risk to fall, it could
 24 hypothetically be, if a contractor starts to
 25 work on it, a certain way to remedy the issue.

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1 These structures are very important to us, and
 2 so the idea, as Commissioner Globber said, of us
 3 approving the demolition of any structure in
 4 the historic district is very difficult for us,
 5 but this is a -- this is a different kind of
 6 situation.
 7 I, too, have questions about how a
 8 material was approved through the Building
 9 Department that gets used in a structure if it
 10 had a permit, and then it becomes toxic.
 11 That -- I know it's not a skin -- it's not a
 12 skin issue, so it may not have had to have had
 13 a Florida Product Approval Number, but when you
 14 go in for a permit, things are approved. I'm
 15 just wondering the process of that.
 16 And maybe that is another question for
 17 staff. Do we have any information about that?
 18 How was this product approved for use in the
 19 construction?
 20 MR. WELLS: To the Vice Chair, I did do a
 21 preliminary search just to see if any permits
 22 related to the injection foam was applied for,
 23 and I did not see any, so that may be the issue
 24 in and of itself, but, also, I -- I'm not too
 25 sure if you even need a permit for that, so ...

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1 So that's -- there's a lot of unknowns there.
 2 On the other hand, it's not the primary
 3 structure, and it's not readily seen, I guess,
 4 from the street. And, hypothetically, there
 5 would be little historic fabric of the
 6 structure left if it was remedied.
 7 So just kind of thinking out loud here.
 8 THE CHAIRMAN: Just to elaborate on the
 9 scenarios that were spoken to, the idea of
 10 removing the exterior skin of the structure to
 11 remove the insulation, that is one way to do
 12 it. You could go from the inside, removing the
 13 lath, and that would contain the hazardous
 14 material because you would be operating within
 15 the structure of the home rather than letting
 16 friable materials get into the air, which was
 17 my question earlier about what is the plan for
 18 demolition of such a structure. Like, how do
 19 you contain that if it is demolished?
 20 But as Commissioner Epstein said, the
 21 health and safety and the risk of that, that's
 22 a pretty big factor. That's a pretty big
 23 factor. I do, as a commissioner on this --
 24 with this historic preservation, these
 25 structures are -- there's a reason we're here.

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1 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
 2 Chair, just a basic understanding of how the
 3 spray foam insulation works. It's my -- I'm
 4 sorry. It's my understanding that if it's not
 5 mixed correctly and it's not applied correctly
 6 or if there is a -- there's recommendations for
 7 temperatures. There's recommendations for
 8 humidity. There's all sorts of recommendations
 9 that go with using that, and if it is not
 10 inserted or applied in the correct manner, then
 11 it can have a failure like this and it will not
 12 cure. And when it doesn't cure, it's not like
 13 you can just take it off things. It's sticky.
 14 It makes its way into materials. It's not like
 15 you're just going in there and scraping it out
 16 and that's it. It's not a great situation when
 17 it fails like this.
 18 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, we have a motion on
 19 the floor and it's been seconded. Are we ready
 20 for a vote? Do we need more discussion? Are
 21 there more questions?
 22 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,
 23 I think this is tough. I don't think any of us
 24 take any satisfaction in watching anything come
 25 down. And, like we said, the staff does not

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1 usually recommend a demolition unless there's a
2 good reason, and I just -- this is a tough one
3 and it's tough.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Could we hear from the
5 applicant one more time? I have some questions
6 for the applicant.

7 (Mr. King approaches the podium.)

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

9 MR. KING: I guess to the point, again,
10 it's the -- let's say we spend \$100,000 trying
11 to fix the issue and we do another VOC test and
12 it comes back unsatisfactory levels of
13 formaldehyde, okay, do we go back and spend
14 another 100,000 trying to figure out where the
15 contractor didn't remove something properly or
16 it's permeated the wood? I mean, it's been in
17 there for months now, so -- and then what's
18 left of the structure at that point that's
19 historical?

20 So it's a health and safety issue for me,
21 my wife. No one can stay -- and if we did all
22 this work and then someone comes and stays
23 there, how -- we don't even know -- it's just
24 too many unknowns. We can't -- I'm not sure we
25 could even -- we're just stuck. We're just

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1 stuck with this building sitting there
2 indefinitely, unlivable, and it's not --

3 I mean, maybe it was beautiful once upon a
4 time, and we were happy to have it, to have
5 people stay there, but it's -- look at it. I
6 mean, it's not that beautiful now, and it's --
7 it's a -- it's unlivable inside. It's got
8 toxic formaldehyde and phenol inside.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: So a question for you, and
10 this isn't meant to be adversarial at all.

11 These are just questions. Do you -- is there
12 an intention, after the demolition, to rebuild
13 a guest house on the property, or what are the
14 plans for the property?

15 MR. KING: We would like to rebuild
16 something similar, yes.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: And if there was -- and
18 this is -- Commissioner Hoff used the word
19 "hypothetical" earlier. This is highly
20 hypothetical, but if there was a way to remove
21 the foam -- and I'm not going to propose one
22 because I'm neither an engineer nor an
23 environmentalist either, but if there was a way
24 to -- within a reasonable, economical way to
25 remove the foam without destroying the

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1 structure of the existing building, accessory
2 structure, would you be open to that?

3 MR. KING: Well, yes, but we feel like we
4 explored that fully. We went through -- when
5 this first -- well, when the insulation was
6 installed, the contractor told us initially
7 that it was going to stop smelling in a week or
8 two. That was back in August. So I said,
9 okay. This is when my wife was pregnant, so I
10 wasn't -- she kept on telling me, don't worry
11 about it; it's going to -- give them more time,
12 so stop stressing about it. So we gave them a
13 couple of weeks.

14 Then guess what? The smell didn't go
15 away. And this is when he's telling me it's
16 nontoxic. So he brought in industrial fans.
17 We were using -- we were running -- what do you
18 call them? Dehumidifiers. I was running air
19 purifiers, which was ridiculous. If -- we
20 ended up -- he rented a -- what do you call it?
21 Oxidizer. Ozone. Ozone machine. We did an
22 ozone machine.

23 He started -- he went under the structure
24 to try to rip out -- he said, oh, this area is
25 the area, or this area was the thickest area.

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1 He removed some of that. So we went through
2 several steps of, oh, this is going to be --

3 And step after step after step after step,
4 every time, the contractor said, this is going
5 to do it. And you go back and then -- oh, give
6 it a week. And you air out all the windows --
7 and if you air out all windows, if you leave it
8 open, the smell is going to get better. It's
9 not going to smell as bad.

10 So I go back and -- oh, it's smelling
11 better. It's aired out now. It's okay. So
12 we -- we went through a lot of that, and that
13 got us to the point of -- and I contacted
14 different environmental people -- 1,500 bucks
15 for something that isn't toxic. It just
16 smells. You know, we're going to do that, so
17 we hired --

18 And then we hired the environmental guy,
19 and it's only -- the environmental person told
20 me that the regular VOC test doesn't include
21 formaldehyde, so he had to -- on his own, he
22 was -- he knew what he was doing. He smelled
23 something and said, I'm going to order an extra
24 formaldehyde test on his own. That's how we
25 discovered the formaldehyde.

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1 Then when it came back that it was toxic,
 2 the contractor, the first thing he said was,
 3 well, that's great news because our product
 4 doesn't contain formaldehyde, so it's something
 5 else with the house; it's your fault. And then
 6 we took a -- they took a sample of that, sent
 7 that sample off for testing. Formaldehyde.
 8 It's definitely the insulation.
 9 So we -- we went through a lot of steps,
 10 and -- and then we thought, okay, remediate.
 11 Here's the steps to remediate. And we started
 12 contacting, you know, the structural engineer,
 13 Cardinal, McDowell & Ariail. I did call other
 14 people -- I can't remember the names of them,
 15 but, you know -- and so I just don't see it
 16 being --
 17 You know, I'm not an expert. I'm not a
 18 structural engineer. I'm not an environmental
 19 expert, but it does scare me thinking about
 20 doing a lot of the work, and then who is going
 21 to -- because -- do you want to stay there?
 22 You want to be the guinea pig? Who wants to be
 23 the guinea pig, you know.
 24 And I can't, in good conscience, rent it
 25 out, let my parents stay there, let my kids go
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1 over there. I mean, I just don't -- that seems
 2 crazy.
 3 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.
 4 MR. KING: And then they get cancer ten
 5 years later. I mean ...
 6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
 7 So we've heard from the applicant.
 8 There's the investigation done. There's
 9 discovery of hazardous materials and fumes.
 10 There are attempts for remediation. It's, we
 11 won't say, impossible because that's an
 12 extremist position, but our -- nothing is
 13 available to make that happen. And of our own
 14 knowledge about materials like this and how
 15 sticky they are and impregnating materials, the
 16 idea of eliminating it from the structure and
 17 leaving the structure in place seems unlikely.
 18 MS. PRYOR: Can you speak into microphone,
 19 please?
 20 THE CHAIRMAN: The idea of removing the
 21 foam from the building and actually getting it
 22 all out of the structure seems unlikely because
 23 of the fluid nature of the material and the way
 24 it permeates and impregnates materials like
 25 wood. You would have to replace the structure.
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1 So it is a -- it is a health and safety issue.
 2 I think staff has done a really good job
 3 on the report of this.
 4 I will entertain any more discussion, but
 5 I think we need to put this to the vote.
 6 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,
 7 just to -- I don't know how much formaldehyde
 8 is bad. And I know that it says this was a
 9 high level, and it looks like the kind of OSHA
 10 standard is .75 parts per million for
 11 formaldehyde. And if you take what we've been
 12 given and convert it to that, this is 86 parts
 13 per million, and .75 is what OSHA is saying is
 14 bad. So it's not like this is -- this is quite
 15 severe. This is some more information.
 16 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Some context.
 17 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: It's not like it's
 18 a little bit bad.
 19 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
 20 Well, hearing no further discussion, I
 21 think we need to vote. There's a motion on the
 22 floor to approve the demolition of the
 23 structure.
 24 All those in favor?
 25 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Aye.
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1 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Aye.
 2 THE CHAIRMAN: Aye.
 3 Any opposed?
 4 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Nay.
 5 MS. LOPERA: Through the Vice Chair, just
 6 to confirm, there was one nay? Mr. Hoff was a
 7 nay?
 8 THE CHAIRMAN: (Nods head.)
 9 And, Legal, does there need to be a
 10 statement of reason of opposition?
 11 MS. LOPERA: No.
 12 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Well, the ayes
 13 have it.
 14 By your action, we have approved the
 15 demolition of 3709 Hedrick Street,
 16 COA-23-30123.
 17 And we'll move on to the next COA, which
 18 is COA-23-30131, Riverside/Avondale, 132 6th
 19 Street East.
 20 Can I have a staff report?
 21 MR. WELLS: So this is application
 22 COA-23-30131 for the property located at 132
 23 6th Street East. The applicant seeks to
 24 construct a two-story single-family home. The
 25 property is currently vacant. It has an
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1 existing foundation that was never built upon.

2 As proposed, the building will consist of
3 a hip roof with a nested gable. Primary
4 materials of the structure include asphalt
5 shingles for the roof, 1-over-1 vinyl windows,
6 fiber cement lap siding, a wood railing with
7 2-by-2 spindles, and a concrete block with
8 stucco finish for the foundation wall.

9 Overall, we find that the proposed
10 structure, given its architectural features and
11 design, is consistent with our Ordinance Code
12 as well as the Springfield Design Guidelines.

13 The only issue that we did have is just,
14 given the abundance of full-width porches along
15 the block, we did ask that the -- we did
16 condition the staff report to modify the
17 elevations to include a full-width porch.

18 So since the publishing of the staff
19 report, the applicant has provided updated
20 elevation drawings. So we are in support of
21 those elevation drawings; however, we do need
22 to update our condition in accordance with the
23 new elevation drawings as well as receive the
24 updated site plan. But other than that, we are
25 in support of the staff report [sic].

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1 both from SPAR and from staff, HPC staff, about
2 the elevations. We took another look at it.
3 We agreed with them. We studied. We did four
4 more studies of elevations. We settled on this
5 one that we're going to bring up.

6 We also took the opportunity to redesign
7 the master bathroom, but it didn't affect the
8 windows.

9 So these are the new elevations. We took
10 the porch all the way across the front. There
11 was other conditions on the windows on other
12 sides of the house we also made corrections to.

13 I'm here to answer any questions you have.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Do we have any questions
15 for the applicant?

16 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

17 THE CHAIRMAN: No?

18 Thank you. If we need you, we'll call you
19 back up.

20 MR. SHACTER: Thank you. Appreciate it.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anyone else here
22 to speak on this COA? If so, please come up.

23 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

24 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Hearing none --

25 MR. WELLS: So through the Chair to the

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Any questions for staff?

2 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Hearing none, we'll open
4 the public hearing.

5 Is the applicant here to speak on behalf
6 of the COA?

7 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Please state your name and
9 address and be sworn in.

10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: David Shacter, 1334
11 Walnut Street, Jacksonville 32206.

12 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
13 right hand, please.

14 MR. SHACTER: (Complies.)

15 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
16 testimony you are about to give will be the
17 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
18 truth?

19 MR. SHACTER: I do.

20 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

21 MR. SHACTER: Arimus, do you have the
22 updated --

23 MR. WELLS: Yes, I'm pulling them up right
24 now.

25 MR. SHACTER: Okay. Yeah, we had comments

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1 Commission, there are four conditions that need
2 to be modified or removed just because this --
3 again, this was based on the original elevation
4 plans.

5 So Condition 1 that pertains to the
6 revised elevations dated January 26th, that
7 needs to be updated to February 21st. And then
8 Number 2, we haven't received an updated site
9 plan just yet, so I don't know where you -- if
10 the applicant is able -- if they have one
11 already that they could provide, that needs to
12 be addressed. And then Conditions 13 and 14
13 just should be stricken.

14 MR. SHACTER: I can make a comment about
15 the site plan. This particular site is an
16 existing foundation SRG concrete porch slab,
17 and so where the house is placed, you know, is
18 not moveable. And we didn't like the old SRG
19 plan; it was outdated. We totally redesigned
20 it, actually added a little bit to it on the
21 front and back, but the -- the location of the
22 house is pretty well fixed.

23 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair
24 to the staff, so you're just looking for the
25 site plan to be updated to show the front porch

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1 being enlarged because right now it doesn't?
 2 MR. WELLS: That's correct.
 3 MR. SHACTER: Okay. That's not a problem.
 4 We can definitely do that.
 5 THE CHAIRMAN: So that will be provided?
 6 MR. SHACTER: Yes, I could have that to
 7 you tomorrow.
 8 THE CHAIRMAN: Is that a sufficient
 9 response for staff?
 10 MR. WELLS: To the Vice Chair, yes, I
 11 think Condition 2 just needs to be modified
 12 verbiage-wise.
 13 THE CHAIRMAN: That that site plan will be
 14 provided prior to the final COA being issued?
 15 Would that be sufficient?
 16 MR. WELL: Yeah, that could work. That
 17 could work.
 18 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Thank you.
 19 MR. SHACTER: Just a site plan, updated?
 20 MR. WELLS: Yes.
 21 MR. SHACTER: Okay. No problem. Thank
 22 you.
 23 Is there any other questions?
 24 THE CHAIRMAN: No, but keep your shoes on.
 25 Is there anyone else to speak on this COA?

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1 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)
 2 THE CHAIRMAN: Then we'll close the public
 3 hearing, and I'll entertain a motion,
 4 understanding recommendations from staff about
 5 some amendments.
 6 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Motion to approve
 7 COA-23-30131 with altering Condition Number 1
 8 to revise the date of the elevation drawings to
 9 February 21st, and modifying the condition for
 10 Number 2 to read that the owner will provide an
 11 updated site plan that is representative of the
 12 drawings that were submitted on February 21st,
 13 and Items Number 13 and 14 under the conditions
 14 be removed.
 15 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Second.
 16 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?
 17 MS. LOPERA: Did anyone have any
 18 discussion?
 19 THE CHAIRMAN: So close. We're so close.
 20 Any discussion?
 21 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
 22 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?
 23 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.
 24 THE CHAIRMAN: All those opposed?
 25 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Hearing none, COA-23-30131
 2 is approved with conditions.
 3 MR. SHACTER: Thank you.
 4 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. The next COA on
 5 the docket is COA-24-30146, 1422 Liberty Street
 6 North.
 7 Do we have a staff report?
 8 MR. WELLS: Yes. So COA-24-30146, for the
 9 property located at 1422 North Liberty Street,
 10 seeks to demolish a contributing structure -- a
 11 two-story contributing structure. The
 12 structure is currently located on the interior
 13 lot and it is characterized as having a frame
 14 vernacular style building with significant
 15 alterations over the years.
 16 The current owner acquired the subject
 17 property in 2020. The applicant provided a
 18 structural engineer's report that found the
 19 structure to be unsafe and in danger of
 20 collapse. Attempts to rehabilitate the
 21 structure were made by a previous owner via two
 22 different COAs in 2017 and 2018. And despite
 23 being approved for those alterations and
 24 structural improvements, the rehabilitation
 25 plans never materialized. As such, the

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1 property was cited by the Municipal Code
 2 Compliance Division as an unsafe structure in
 3 November of 2023. The case number is
 4 referenced in the staff report, and the
 5 commissioners -- an exhaustive version has been
 6 passed out to you.
 7 I would note, too, that, again, the
 8 Municipal Code Compliance Division cited this
 9 structure as unsafe rather than condemning it
 10 for immediate demolition, so I do want to
 11 emphasize that point.
 12 Demolition, by nature, is the ultimate
 13 removal of historic fabric and thus should be
 14 considered a last resort.
 15 MS. PRYOR: We can't hear you back here.
 16 Could you please speak into the microphone?
 17 MR. WELLS: When addressing a
 18 deteriorated, historic resource, alternatives
 19 should be explored, including relocation,
 20 rehabilitation, mothballing, and reuse by the
 21 current owner of a -- or a prospective buyer.
 22 Staff did conduct a site visit to assess
 23 the condition of the structure on Tuesday,
 24 February 13th. Consistent with Section
 25 307.106(k)(1) through (3), as well as (n)(2)

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1 and (9), the proposed demolition of the
2 contributing structure will not have a
3 significant impact on the surrounding
4 properties due to the structure being one of
5 many frame vernacular structures that could be
6 found within the historic district.

7 Staff also notes that the structure is --
8 has experienced several alterations, is -- over
9 the years, and is somewhat deteriorated.

10 In accordance with Section 307.106(n)(1),
11 the structure was listed as a contributing
12 structure based on its age and style. The
13 architectural design of the property reflects
14 the frame vernacular style.

15 Again, we have noted that several
16 alterations have been imposed on the structure
17 over the years, such as a partial enclosure of
18 the second floor front porch, alterations to
19 the window openings, and alterations to the
20 porch columns and railings.

21 Based on the applicant's request, they did
22 emphasize a desire to construct a new
23 residential structure should this request be
24 approved. As you know, any new construction
25 improvements would require review by the

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1 mothballing, and reuse by the current owner or
2 prospective buyer. And, again, based on our
3 findings and our discussions with the
4 applicant, no other feasible alternatives to
5 demolition are readily apparent. The applicant
6 has also rejected to sell the property.

7 And based on another section of our Code,
8 the staff has not been provided any evidence to
9 support a potential claim of undue economic
10 hardship.

11 MS. PRYOR: We can't hear you.

12 MR. WELLS: And so based on our findings
13 and coupled with, again, the structural
14 engineer's report, we forward to you a
15 recommendation for approval.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Any questions for staff?

17 MS. LOPERA: I have a question. Through
18 the Vice Chair to Mr. Wells, has this property
19 owner received a notice from the City regarding
20 neglect or failure to (inaudible)?

21 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair to OGC, in
22 this instance, no, the applicant has not
23 provided any reference in regards to that
24 section of the --

25 MS. PRYOR: The applicant has what?

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1 Commission. And so in order to address Section
2 307.106, which is (n)(6), the applicant
3 provided an opinion from a certified engineer.
4 The engineering report found that the structure
5 was in immediate danger of collapsing and cost
6 prohibitive.

7 Furthermore, based upon our visual
8 inspection of the subject property and
9 supporting documentation, staff also found the
10 integrity of the structure is compromised and
11 would require a significant amount of
12 rehabilitation in order to bring it back to a
13 habitable [sic] use.

14 So in accordance with 307.106(n)(7),
15 details regarding the economic return were
16 provided by the applicant in the form of a
17 remodeling estimate. According to the quote,
18 it will cost roughly \$420,000 to rehabilitate
19 the structure. And, again, given the series of
20 alterations that -- that have happened over the
21 years, staff finds the cost of -- to
22 rehabilitate the structure significant.

23 In terms of demolitions, we always ask the
24 applicant to consider feasible alternatives to
25 demolition, such as relocation, rehabilitation,

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1 MR. WELLS: -- Code.

2 The applicant has not provided any
3 reference to (inaudible) in the Code,
4 Chapter 518, which references condemnation.

5 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
6 Chair, so it has not been condemned?

7 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair, that's
8 correct.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Any other questions for
10 staff?

11 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

12 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Hearing none,
13 we'll open the public hearing.

14 Is the applicant here?

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Please come forward.
17 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

18 THE CHAIRMAN: State your name and address
19 and be sworn in.

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good afternoon.

21 Michael Tessema, 358 King Street,
22 Jacksonville, Florida.

23 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
24 right hand for me, please.

25 MR. TESSEMA: (Complies.)

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1 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
 2 testimony you are about to give will be the
 3 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
 4 truth?
 5 MR. TESSEMA: I do.
 6 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
 7 THE CHAIRMAN: Would you like to make a
 8 statement?
 9 MR. TESSEMA: Yes. Okay. I was waiting
 10 for you.
 11 I bought this property about three years
 12 ago, as it's conditioned, and I was wanting to
 13 rehabilitate it. But after I spoke with the
 14 construction guys, they told me that it's going
 15 to cost way too much and it's very -- if you
 16 walk inside the house, the structure is very
 17 unsafe. It appears to be collapsing. The
 18 internal floors are weathered out. There's a
 19 lot of termite issues. The roof is gone. All
 20 the windows are gone. The siding is missing.
 21 You can't even walk inside the floor. And it's
 22 leaning towards the -- I believe the back side.
 23 It's -- basically, can fall any day now.
 24 And I'm asking, you know, if -- if you
 25 will allow me to (inaudible) the structure and
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1 assessed the cost of rehabilitation of the
 2 structure, I decided to, you know, ask the
 3 committee if they can allow me to --
 4 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: So you've owned the
 5 property for three years. And when did the
 6 roof collapse?
 7 MR. TESSEMA: Right after -- six months
 8 after I bought it.
 9 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: And have you done
 10 anything to remediate that roof collapse so
 11 that the structure would not be sitting for the
 12 past couple of years --
 13 MR. TESSEMA: No, because right after I
 14 noticed that the piers -- the piers were giving
 15 up on it -- you could see it -- the piers
 16 pushing towards the back. And the whole
 17 structure is about to give out. It could be
 18 any day.
 19 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yeah, I'm just --
 20 I'm -- whenever we get any kind of demolition
 21 request, we, obviously, take it very seriously.
 22 And whenever there is talk about structure, we
 23 like to see pictures that show that the -- the
 24 entire structure, multiple locations.
 25 I see where the sub floor is kind of
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1 build a new one within the historic guidelines.
 2 THE CHAIRMAN: Do we have any questions
 3 for the applicant?
 4 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
 5 Chair, can you explain, since you've owned the
 6 property for three years, what you've done for
 7 any type of keeping water out while you're
 8 working on coming up with a solution for this,
 9 any kind of structural remediation to try and
 10 brace it so that it could be repaired? Can you
 11 explain anything you've done towards that?
 12 MR. TESSEMA: Yes. There was, like --
 13 when we started framing the inside, and then
 14 all the piers collapsed, and they said we got
 15 to stop at this point, it's not worth, you
 16 know, doing this. And we just stopped then.
 17 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: I'm sorry, so -- so
 18 you were doing some framing on the inside?
 19 MR. TESSEMA: Yeah.
 20 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: And then some of
 21 the piers collapsed and you just --
 22 MR. TESSEMA: Yeah.
 23 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: And then --
 24 MR. TESSEMA: The whole roof caved in, and
 25 then it was wide open, and I -- after I
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1 giving way. I see where the roof has given
 2 way. I'm looking at structure, structure of
 3 this. In the picture you're giving me, I don't
 4 see the termite damage that's being described.
 5 I don't see the piers that have fallen apart or
 6 have given way. I don't -- I don't see -- I
 7 don't see the structural story that you're
 8 telling in your writing, and that always --
 9 MR. TESSEMA: You can --
 10 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: When we're looking
 11 at demolishing something, I like to see
 12 pictures that go along with that story.
 13 MR. TESSEMA: I gave the pictures. And if
 14 you stand in front of the house, the three
 15 piers in the front are, like, caving in towards
 16 the back, and it's -- visually, you can tell
 17 that the house is leaning to the back. Any
 18 head wind can push it and it's going to
 19 collapse.
 20 THE CHAIRMAN: Any more questions for
 21 him -- any other questions for the applicant?
 22 MR. TESSEMA: And my engineer is present
 23 also here.
 24 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Vice
 25 Chair, question for the applicant.
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1 You mentioned getting a quote for
2 renovating the home. How many quotes did you
3 get?

4 MR. TESSEMA: I got two, but one in
5 writing.

6 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Okay. And have you
7 considered trying to sell the property as is?

8 MR. TESSEMA: No, because, I mean, there's
9 nothing left to sell.

10 I desire the area. I own a few houses
11 around Springfield, and I would like to build
12 it myself.

13 COMMISSIONER HOFF: One last question.

14 Another commissioner kind of had some
15 questions earlier about at what point you
16 decided to stop trying to preserve the house.
17 So you mentioned that the roof opened up about
18 six months after you purchased it, which was
19 about two-and-a-half years ago?

20 MR. TESSEMA: Correct.

21 COMMISSIONER HOFF: And then shortly after
22 that, you decided that it just wasn't worth --

23 MR. TESSEMA: It's not the roof itself,
24 but the piers and the foundation. It was --

25 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Gotcha.

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1 you've shown us here, that this is beyond
2 repair and the only solution is demolition.

3 That's where I'm kind of finding myself.

4 I've seen a lot of buildings that -- in
5 the pictures that are provided, that have
6 looked similar and have been restored, or
7 worse, and have been restored.

8 If there's other photographic evidence
9 that you have that shows that things are beyond
10 that point, I'm just not seeing it in the
11 packet that I have in front of me.

12 MR. TESSEMA: Mr. Wells went out to --
13 physically saw it on the site. And my engineer
14 went out and assessed the condition. If you
15 would like to hear from them, they're here.

16 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yeah. They can
17 come up and -- I'm just telling you what -- the
18 guidelines we are given when we look at this.

19 MR. TESSEMA: Correct.

20 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yeah.

21 MR. TESSEMA: But when I found out that
22 the foundation was rotted out and then the
23 piers were (inaudible), at that point I made a
24 decision, like, you know, this is beyond safe.

25 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yes, I understand,
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1 MR. TESSEMA: Yeah.

2 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Gotcha.

3 MR. TESSEMA: I mean, if you stand up --
4 physically, if you go there, you can see for
5 yourself.

6 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Okay.

7 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
8 Chair, I understand what you're saying. We can
9 only judge based off what we have in our packet
10 here.

11 MR. TESSEMA: Right.

12 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: And one of the
13 things we're asked to do as commissioners when
14 a demolition is being requested is to observe
15 what the owner has done over the ownership to
16 try and remediate the structure before the
17 demolition is requested. That's why I asked
18 that question, because, typically, our
19 guidelines do not allow us to approve a
20 demolition unless it has shown that the owner
21 has tried to remediate and fix the problems and
22 then the problems just have gone beyond the
23 ability to be fixed.

24 The thing that's hitting me here is,
25 I'm -- I'm not convinced that -- from what

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1 but you've given us a proposal from somebody
2 who can fix the house. So there's a question
3 of beyond repair and --

4 Have you looked at the cost of repairing
5 the house, what it would actually cost to build
6 a house that looks like that --

7 MR. TESSEMA: Yes.

8 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: -- at this point in
9 time?

10 MR. TESSEMA: Yes, he did.

11 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Do you have that
12 comparison?

13 MR. TESSEMA: I was given about 250 per
14 square footage to build a new one versus the --

15 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: And this is about
16 200 per square foot to fix it?

17 MR. TESSEMA: Which one?

18 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: What's this -- I
19 estimated --

20 MR. TESSEMA: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: -- the square
22 footage of the house, so --

23 MR. TESSEMA: But, you know, fixing it
24 versus building a new one, it's -- how it's
25 going to be fixed and how sturdy it's going to

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1 be, it's kind of, you know ...
 2 THE CHAIRMAN: So I have a couple of
 3 questions. But what I'm hearing from the
 4 applicant is it's not a -- it's not a statement
 5 that the house is beyond repair. It's just
 6 beyond what you want to pay for the repair.
 7 And for the money that you would pay, you would
 8 rather build a new house on the property.
 9 That -- is that what I just heard? But I just
 10 want to make sure that's what I heard.
 11 MR. TESSEMA: Not a hundred percent, but,
 12 I mean, it's -- the sturdiness of the house is
 13 beyond fixing is what I'm saying.
 14 THE CHAIRMAN: But the -- Commissioner
 15 Epstein, the figure that we saw for the repair
 16 of the house was --
 17 MS. PRYOR: Microphone.
 18 THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Epstein, the
 19 figures that we saw for the repair of the house
 20 was about \$420,000?
 21 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: I think that's
 22 right.
 23 THE CHAIRMAN: So that's fairly close to
 24 the -- I'm sorry I have to speak so loud. I'm
 25 not angry with you, but I'm just trying to
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1 from other people -- and maybe you can come
 2 back up. In the three years that you've owned
 3 the home, what are the -- you said you did some
 4 interior framing. What are the -- could you --
 5 and I know you're not the -- you're the owner,
 6 not the contractor, but was there structural
 7 work done? Was it cosmetic? Interior plan
 8 work done with the framing? Could you be a
 9 little bit more specific about what you did
 10 over the course of the last three years that
 11 you've owned the home?
 12 MR. TESSEMA: Reinforced the sub floors of
 13 the second floor. We put a new framing to it.
 14 THE CHAIRMAN: So there's new -- there's
 15 new second floor framing --
 16 MR. TESSEMA: Correct.
 17 THE CHAIRMAN: -- that's been put in?
 18 MR. TESSEMA: Partial.
 19 THE CHAIRMAN: Partial. That's one thing.
 20 What else has been -- what else have --
 21 what else has been -- what other work has been
 22 executed at the home?
 23 MR. TESSEMA: That's about it.
 24 THE CHAIRMAN: So that's it.
 25 And then -- when the roof collapsed, there
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1 accommodate people.
 2 MR. TESSEMA: That's all right.
 3 THE CHAIRMAN: So that number is fairly
 4 close to the number that you've been provided
 5 to construct a new house on the same piece of
 6 property. And so, you know, that -- that's
 7 something that, as commissioners, we have to
 8 take into account because this is the Historic
 9 Preservation Commission.
 10 MR. TESSEMA: Right.
 11 THE CHAIRMAN: And these houses that have
 12 historic significance and are part of our urban
 13 fabric are very important. That's why we're
 14 here. People have spent much more than
 15 \$400,000 to restore their homes in these
 16 neighborhoods, and so that -- that's the --
 17 that's sort of the -- that's the backdrop at
 18 which we look at things.
 19 And I don't -- I'm not a wealthy man, so I
 20 understand the position of not being able to
 21 spend an inordinate amount of money on houses
 22 that I -- I live in too. I understand. So I
 23 think that's something for us to discuss as the
 24 commissioners.
 25 The last question for you before we hear
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1 was no -- there was nothing done to sort of
 2 shore that up or close it up or keep it. It's
 3 been -- since the roof caved in, or collapsed
 4 or has been -- left the house open, it's just
 5 been open to the elements?
 6 MR. TESSEMA: Correct. It's been rotted
 7 out before even -- the front porch was the same
 8 way when I bought it.
 9 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.
 10 MR. TESSEMA: Yes.
 11 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, thank you.
 12 We'll hear from other people and maybe --
 13 maybe -- you may be asked to come back up.
 14 MR. TESSEMA: Thank you.
 15 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
 16 MR. TESSEMA: Thank you.
 17 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anyone else here
 18 to speak on this COA?
 19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)
 20 THE CHAIRMAN: Please come forward.
 21 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
 22 THE CHAIRMAN: State your name and address
 23 and be sworn in.
 24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Gloria Devall, 7 Alpine
 25 Street.
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1 I'm -- oh.
 2 (Raises right hand.)
 3 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
 4 testimony you are about to give will be the
 5 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
 6 truth?
 7 MS. DEVAL: I do.
 8 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
 9 MS. DEVAL: I'm a licensed building
 10 contractor. I've worked in Springfield for 24
 11 years. I've worked on hundreds of houses in
 12 Springfield.
 13 I wanted to take a minute to talk about
 14 the pricing. I'm not going to presume to talk
 15 about what the -- how much this is going to
 16 cost, but I want to take a look at some of the
 17 numbers. And I sent you an email with that in
 18 it.
 19 First of all, there's almost \$30,000 in
 20 sales tax. Why is that included in this
 21 number? You don't pay sales tax on labor.
 22 Okay? So we can take that right off the bat.
 23 There's money in there to fix a pool. Why
 24 does that even count?
 25 There's \$11,000 for kitchen appliances.
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1 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: No, we can close it.
 2 THE CHAIRMAN: We need to -- is there
 3 anyone else here to speak on this COA?
 4 (Ms. Pryor approaches the podium.)
 5 MS. PRYOR: Kim Pryor, 245 West 5th
 6 Street.
 7 Do I need to be sworn in again?
 8 THE REPORTER: No.
 9 MS. PRYOR: I'm good. Okay.
 10 First off, save the houses, that's what
 11 this is all about. We're Historic
 12 Preservation, that's what we need to focus on
 13 here.
 14 I heard the owner talk about piers
 15 collapsing, things of that nature, they did
 16 some framing. Well, there's been no permits
 17 pulled, so I don't know what kind of work was
 18 done.
 19 They bought the property for \$63,000 in
 20 August of 2020. There's plenty of room to make
 21 money on this deal, when you buy it right, like
 22 he did.
 23 I want to bring your attention to 1636
 24 Ionia, the poor little house that could. That
 25 house was approved for demolition by this
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1 That -- you know, my kitchen -- I don't have
 2 \$11,000 in kitchen appliances.
 3 MS. PRYOR: Talk into the microphone.
 4 MS. DEVAL: Yes, Kim.
 5 So if you go through, there are [sic] just
 6 an enormous amount of money in there for
 7 finishes, for things that don't really --
 8 aren't going to add up.
 9 So even using this guy's prices, I think
 10 350- would be about max. And I will say that
 11 I've never spent 350- renovating a house in
 12 Springfield, and I've renovated some pretty
 13 rough ones, so --
 14 Do you have any questions?
 15 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
 16 MS. DEVAL: Thank you.
 17 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Through the Vice
 18 Chair, if I may --
 19 MS. LOPERA: If I could just -- are we
 20 still in the public hearing?
 21 THE CHAIRMAN: We're still in the public
 22 hearing.
 23 MS. LOPERA: Okay. If you have a comment,
 24 Commissioner Globber, is that (inaudible) --
 25 (Simultaneous speaking.)
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1 commission years ago. And, by golly, she stood
 2 through Irma and Matthew, and she faced east.
 3 You want to know what finally took her down? A
 4 fire.
 5 So this "imminent danger of collapse" is
 6 just some buzz phrase that everybody uses to
 7 try to scare people when they think that they
 8 want -- when they want a house to come down.
 9 Okay?
 10 These houses, as many of you know, the
 11 quality of the construction as well as the
 12 materials that were used, are far superior to
 13 anything that you can get in today's market. I
 14 have seen porch columns removed with no support
 15 that do not sag at all. This particular house
 16 can be saved. It is not too far gone.
 17 And we do not, in any way, shape or form,
 18 need to reward owners who do nothing to
 19 properties that they purchased in a historic
 20 district and then allow it to continue to
 21 deteriorate, basically doing their own
 22 demolition by neglect, and then coming to this
 23 commission and asking for permission to
 24 demolish. That is unacceptable.
 25 I just want to point out, one of the items
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1 in the cost given was some money for a pool.
 2 There is no pool on the property. So I would
 3 question the estimate provided by this
 4 contractor, as well as -- like Ms. Devall did.
 5 Bottom line here is that there are very
 6 few historic properties that cannot be saved.
 7 This property was purchased right and can be
 8 saved and he can still make money. Mothball
 9 it, donate it to Preservation SOS, we will take
 10 it and we will restore her and she will live on
 11 for years to come. There are options. Make
 12 him sell it.
 13 There are -- our Ordinance Code, Chapter
 14 307, requires things to be done before allowing
 15 demolition.
 16 Thank you for your time.
 17 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
 18 Is there anyone else to speak on this COA?
 19 MR. HASKINS: (Indicating.)
 20 THE CHAIRMAN: Please come forward.
 21 (Mr. Haskins approaches the podium.)
 22 THE CHAIRMAN: State your name and
 23 address -- well, you already did that once.
 24 You're good.
 25 MR. HASKINS: Just in case.

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1 Mike Haskins, 417 West 7th Street.
 2 Do you need to swear me in?
 3 THE REPORTER: No. You're fine.
 4 Thank you.
 5 MR. HASKINS: I'm the executive director
 6 of Springfield Preservation and Revitalization.
 7 The SPAR board of directors has voted to
 8 oppose this demolition. I'm sure you have
 9 received several emails to that effect, and I
 10 am -- I'd like you to know there are quite a
 11 few people that either could not be here today
 12 and wish to be heard and were currently here
 13 and were unable to -- just chose not to speak
 14 for whatever reason.
 15 I think the concern from SPAR is that
 16 there are clear and viable alternatives to
 17 demolition that have not been adequately
 18 considered, and two of those alternatives are
 19 rehabilitation, which is, obviously, viable
 20 because the applicant has a quote for
 21 rehabilitation that is priced comparatively to
 22 building new; and two, attempting to sell the
 23 property. I know there are people within the
 24 Springfield neighborhood who expressed interest
 25 in purchasing the property in the past.

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1 And my understanding is that demolition is
 2 an option of last resort. In this case, it's
 3 not apparent to me that the other strategies
 4 have been pursued fully, and I would certainly
 5 encourage the Historic Preservation Commission
 6 to deny the demolition and to encourage the
 7 applicant to pursue those other remedies fully.
 8 Thank you.
 9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
 10 Is there anyone else here to speak on this
 11 COA?
 12 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)
 13 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm going to close the
 14 public hearing.
 15 I'll entertain a motion.
 16 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: I would like to
 17 motion to deny COA-24-30146.
 18 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Second.
 19 THE CHAIRMAN: Discussion?
 20 COMMISSIONER HOFF: I've got an ex parte
 21 declaration. I was copied on an email with
 22 SPAR's position a few days ago.
 23 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
 24 Chair, as I had stated previously, we are given
 25 guidelines as commissioners to follow beyond

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1 just our expertise in this, and I would say
 2 that the guidelines do say that we can approve
 3 demolition on a structure if during the
 4 ownership remediation for trying to save the
 5 structure has been shown in good faith.
 6 And looking at this, I see there's no
 7 permit pulled on the site for anything to try
 8 and restore it. The applicant said that they
 9 have owned it for three years. The roof caved
 10 in two-and-a-half years ago, nothing's been
 11 done for that. And they have a quote to
 12 restore.
 13 So in my level of expertise here, knowing
 14 the guidelines, it seems like that this is
 15 restorable and that the applicant has had time
 16 to do remediation over the course of their
 17 ownership that has not been done. So I would
 18 not be in favor of demolition.
 19 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Through the Vice
 20 Chair, I agree with my fellow commissioner.
 21 You know, I think a lot of our discussion
 22 around this COA kind of centered around the
 23 economic feasibility. And, obviously, there's
 24 some questions about discrepancy in this
 25 estimate, but our primary concern on this

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1 commission, if I'm not mistaken, is whether
 2 it's -- whether saving this building is
 3 feasible at all with the economic factor being
 4 secondary at best. So for that reason, I
 5 support the demolition -- I mean, sorry, I
 6 oppose the demolition.
 7 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Vice
 8 Chair, if economics are a legitimate concern, I
 9 believe you can talk with the staff about
 10 filing for an economic hardship, which they can
 11 consider, but at this time I would also be in
 12 opposition.
 13 MS. LOPERA: Mr. Vice Chair, can I just
 14 clarify something?
 15 THE CHAIRMAN: Absolutely.
 16 MS. LOPERA: Thank you.
 17 Through the Vice Chair to the Commission,
 18 just a reminder, considering these demolition
 19 requests, there are ten criteria that the Code
 20 asks you to consider, and one of them, Number
 21 10, I will say, is whether it would be an undue
 22 economic hardship to deny the property owner a
 23 right to demolish the building or structure.
 24 There are nine other criteria, which I
 25 won't read all of them to you, but the
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1 significance of the structure, the difficulty
 2 in reintroducing such a structure, and so
 3 forth. And that is in section (n), as in
 4 Nancy, of 307.106.
 5 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
 6 Chair to the staff, would this building be
 7 eligible for the grant money that you
 8 previously sent out to us for -- because it's a
 9 historic building. It's -- you know, it has
 10 considerable restoration that needs to be done
 11 to it. Would this be something that would be
 12 eligible for that grant that you previously
 13 sent out to us a few months ago?
 14 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair to
 15 Commissioner Epstein, unfortunately not.
 16 So that REHAB grant is only eligible --
 17 it's only for nonresidential buildings or
 18 commercial structures.
 19 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Okay. Through the
 20 Vice Chair, I would also say again, just -- if
 21 the owner is trying to prove that this is
 22 beyond repair, I do not see photographic
 23 evidence that shows that the building is
 24 falling down based off of what we have in our
 25 packet. If that's something that they want to
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1 supplement, then they could do that. I'll just
 2 add that too.
 3 THE CHAIRMAN: Question for staff.
 4 There was a comment made by people who
 5 spoke about no permits, and then we've heard
 6 the (inaudible) --
 7 (Reporter clarification.)
 8 THE CHAIRMAN: -- Commissioner Epstein
 9 speak about no known permits. Is that true?
 10 Is that true? There's been --
 11 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: (Inaudible) an
 12 active permit.
 13 THE CHAIRMAN: There are no known permits
 14 in the past three years for this property?
 15 MR. WELLS: Through the Vice Chair to the
 16 Commission, actually, that's correct.
 17 The last permit I could find is from 2018,
 18 and that's for a reroof. And that was not
 19 completed. So that was the last one.
 20 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. So, you know, for my
 21 part of the discussion -- I mean, I think we're
 22 hearing some pretty consistent responses from
 23 the commissioners, and I tend to agree with
 24 them.
 25 And just for the record, to point out
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1 that, you know, the applicant has owned the
 2 building for three years. There's severe
 3 damage that occurred six months after purchase
 4 of the property, but the -- the building has
 5 been in disrepair for longer than three years.
 6 The building has been in need of repair for a
 7 longer period of time than the current
 8 owner's -- the current -- the applicant's
 9 current ownership of the property.
 10 And so, for me, that's a -- that's a sign
 11 that it's not a sort of blind -- it's not a
 12 blind date that we have going on here. It's a
 13 known quantity. There's -- you know, some of
 14 us on this commission own historic homes, very
 15 old homes, and they were in disrepair, and we
 16 went in with our eyes wide open. And sometimes
 17 it has been a struggle, and so I understand
 18 that. I do understand that. But it is the --
 19 it is the goal of this commission to look to
 20 preserve our fabric, and that is -- that is our
 21 task. That is our task.
 22 And so I tend to agree with the
 23 commissioners, my fellow commissioners, that
 24 this -- this is a situation where -- there's a
 25 cost attached to the restoration of this home,
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1 but it -- it's not an impossible task. And it
2 may not be the -- it may -- it's a question
3 of -- in relationship to the criteria that we
4 heard a moment ago, it's not -- it's -- it's a
5 question -- it's a question for the owner to
6 make based on the situation and the condition
7 that the home was purchased at the beginning.

8 It wasn't something that happened and then
9 it was deemed irreparable, so that -- that's
10 were I sit. Like, if it had -- if the
11 building -- if the building was in a state of
12 demolition upon purchase, then that should have
13 been the -- that should have been the path to
14 begin with.

15 So is there any other discussion? Any
16 other discussion? Any questions for the
17 applicant? I think we -- we put this to a
18 vote?

19 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
20 Chair, the applicant had mentioned that the
21 engineer was here to speak about the condition
22 of the building. Is that -- are they here to
23 speak about that? They did not speak during
24 the public comment.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Right. And the public
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1 hearing is closed.

2 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: The public
3 hearing --

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Is closed, yeah.

5 So having said all that, we have a motion
6 to deny the demolition. And if there's no more
7 discussion, we put it to the vote.

8 All those in favor?
9 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Sorry, sir. The public
11 hearing is closed.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Oh.

13 MS. LOPERA: Through the Vice Chair, did
14 you fill out a comment card?

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Oh, no.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry.

17 MS. LOPERA: The public hearing for this
18 item has been closed.

19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Oh.

20 MR. TESSEMA: You just asked for the
21 engineer to come up.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: No, she was making
23 reference to the fact that there was a public
24 hearing and it was open, and the engineer had
25 an opportunity to come forward and did not --

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1 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yeah, I --

2 THE CHAIRMAN: -- for the record.

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Okay. Whatever you
4 want.

5 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: I was mentioning
6 that you had said that and that you did not
7 come up during the public hearing.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Okay. Sorry.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: (Inaudible.)

10 MS. LOPERA: (Inaudible.)

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Can we reopen the public
12 hearing?

13 MS. LOPERA: It's at your discretion as
14 the vice chair.

15 (Simultaneous speaking.)

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, he has to -- he has
17 to fill out a card?

18 MS. LOPERA: Yes.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. I'm -- let's
20 hear from the engineer for the record. We'll
21 reopen the public hearing.

22 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

23 THE CHAIRMAN: You'll have to fill out a
24 card.

25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Okay.

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: And we're getting close to
2 the two-hour mark, so prepare yourselves.

3 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: I was just trying
4 to be fair.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for being fair.
6 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

7 MS. LOPERA: Name and address for the
8 record.

9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: What --

10 THE REPORTER: Your name and address,
11 please.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Antonio Olivera, 13170
13 Staffordshire Drive South, Jacksonville, 32225.

14 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

15 If you would raise your right hand for me,
16 please.

17 MR. OLIVERA: (Complies.)

18 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
19 testimony you are about to give will be the
20 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
21 truth?

22 MR. OLIVERA: Yes.

23 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
25 Chair, it was mentioned that you would be able

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1 to speak about the current structure --
 2 MR. OLIVERA: Okay. The current condition
 3 of the house is shown in the pictures. I did a
 4 site visit and took the photographs. And the
 5 conditions of the house are very (inaudible).
 6 (Indecipherable.) More or less, they had a 50
 7 to 25 percent decline to the right.
 8 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
 9 Chair, are you a contractor? Are you a
 10 structural engineer?
 11 MR. OLIVERA: Structural engineer.
 12 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: A structural
 13 engineer?
 14 MR. OLIVERA: Yes. I was -- it was
 15 impossible for me to go out -- to go into the
 16 foundation to see the piers or go into the
 17 house to -- to see the -- the demolition into
 18 the house because it's very -- there are lot
 19 of -- a lot of materials, and we -- I go
 20 outside the house, and that's it.
 21 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Okay. So you
 22 walked around the outside of the house?
 23 MR. OLIVERA: Yes.
 24 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Do you believe that
 25 this house is beyond repair, that it cannot be
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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, yeah. Is there anyone
 2 else who wants to speak about this COA?
 3 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)
 4 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. I'm really closing
 5 it this time. I'll close the public hearing.
 6 So a brief discussion and then a vote.
 7 That did not -- that did not help me very much
 8 because there was not a -- that was, my
 9 opinion, not a thorough inspection, but a
 10 visual sort of walk-around. And I think if
 11 you're really going to -- if you're really
 12 going to determine the structural integrity of
 13 a building, you've got to put your hands on it,
 14 you've got to look at some things, you've got
 15 to do a little more than sort of look in from
 16 the outside or photographs, but I want to hear
 17 from the commissioners about that.
 18 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
 19 Chair, I can't take someone's recommendation
 20 for tearing a building down who just walked
 21 around the outside, speaking -- letting me know
 22 that the structure is beyond repair. It didn't
 23 change my opinion.
 24 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: I agree with the
 25 fellow commissioners and stand by what I said.
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1 repaired?
 2 MR. OLIVERA: It's very difficult to say
 3 yes or no because I can't go inside.
 4 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Okay.
 5 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.
 6 MR. OLIVERA: It's difficult.
 7 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Anybody --
 8 THE CHAIRMAN: And, sir, are you with --
 9 are you with Lucas & Scott Engineering?
 10 MR. OLIVERA: Yes.
 11 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.
 12 All right. Thank you.
 13 MR. OLIVERA: That's it?
 14 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. Unless you have --
 15 unless you have anything else to say --
 16 MR. OLIVERA: No.
 17 THE CHAIRMAN: -- you can be excused.
 18 If we need you, we'll call you back up.
 19 MR. OLIVERA: Thank you.
 20 THE CHAIRMAN: But you do need to fill out
 21 this card.
 22 Okay. So we -- so I'm going to reclose
 23 the public hearing.
 24 MS. LOPERA: I would ask if anyone else
 25 wants to speak.
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1 THE CHAIRMAN: If there's no more
 2 discussion, there is a motion still on the
 3 floor to deny the demolition of this structure,
 4 1422 Liberty Street North, COA-24-30146.
 5 All those in favor of the denial of
 6 demolition of the structure, say aye.
 7 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.
 8 THE CHAIRMAN: All those opposed?
 9 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
 10 THE CHAIRMAN: The ayes have it. The --
 11 COA-24-30146, the proposed demolition --
 12 request for demolition of 1422 Liberty Street
 13 North is denied.
 14 It looks like we're moving on to new
 15 business.
 16 MS. LOPERA: Public comment first, general
 17 public comment.
 18 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, I'm so sorry. General
 19 public comment. Is there anyone here to make a
 20 public comment? If so, please come forward.
 21 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)
 22 THE CHAIRMAN: If not, we can move on to
 23 new business.
 24 MR. WELLS: So this is a request for
 25 demolition. This is based on Section 320.407
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1 of our Ordinance Code.
 2 So the applicant is seeking to demolish
 3 three contributing structures located at 700,
 4 700A and 700B Palmetto Street. All three of
 5 these structures are listed as contributing
 6 properties within the recently designated
 7 Eastside National Register Historic District.
 8 Because these are listed as contributing
 9 properties, the Commission has the authority to
 10 review and determine whether each structure has
 11 historic significance and should be forwarded
 12 for potential landmarking status.
 13 And so in terms of the demolition itself,
 14 the applicant is, once again, looking to
 15 demolish these structures and construct a
 16 mixed-use development with a maximum of 400
 17 multifamily units and 20,000 square feet of
 18 commercial uses.
 19 Based on our preliminary findings, we
 20 found that two of the structures -- so this
 21 would be 700 Palmetto Street, as depicted in
 22 the map below, as well as 700A Palmetto Street,
 23 we found that it only met two of the seven
 24 criteria, whereas 700B Palmetto Street meets
 25 three of the seven criteria.

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1 Again, just based on that part of the
 2 Ordinance Code, the Commission -- when the
 3 owner is in objection to the landmarking
 4 status, we have to find that it meets four of
 5 the seven criteria. So based on all three of
 6 these structures, we don't find that they are
 7 eligible for landmarking status.
 8 But again, for all three of the
 9 structures, they meet the first criteria which
 10 is regarding -- with regards to the significant
 11 reminder of the cultural, historical,
 12 architectural or archaeological heritage of the
 13 city, state or nation. This is in reference to
 14 it being located within the Eastside National
 15 Historic District, and more particularly the
 16 Oakland community.
 17 And then the second criteria relates to it
 18 having the distinguishing characteristics of an
 19 architectural style valuable for the study of a
 20 period, method of construction, or use of
 21 indigenous materials. I should just note, this
 22 only applies to 700B Palmetto Street, which
 23 exhibits that Mid-Century Modern style
 24 building.

And then the third criteria, which is for
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1 all three structures, is the suitability for
 2 preservation or restoration. Just based on our
 3 analysis, the structures appear to be in great
 4 condition. We don't have any evidence of
 5 significant exterior deterioration, as well as
 6 alterations over the years.

7 But again, the threshold here is four out
 8 of seven criteria, and staff has found that
 9 none of those -- of the structures meet that
 10 bar, so we do forward a recommendation to
 11 approve the demolition permits.

12 End of report.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Any questions for staff?

14 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

15 THE CHAIRMAN: No? A question for staff
 16 from me. The Mid-Century Modern building on
 17 Albert and Palmetto, it says -- I don't see an
 18 architect listed for that. Were we not able to
 19 find out who the -- I thought maybe that was a
 20 Taylor Hardwick building, but -- no?

21 MR. WELLS: To the vice chair, we did
 22 find -- or spend a significant amount of time
 23 looking for the architect. It wasn't listed on
 24 the Florida Master Site File. We couldn't find
 25 it in any records -- available records, and so

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1 rather than speculating, it was just in -- our
 2 best option to say we didn't have any --

3 THE CHAIRMAN: And the original use of
 4 that structure was -- was it a Florida Rock
 5 building?

6 MR. WELLS: It was a -- I don't know the
 7 name of the -- it was -- I just know it was an
 8 industrial, commercial --

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Concrete. Okay.

10 All right. If there's no more questions
 11 for staff, is there anyone -- is the applicant
 12 here to speak on the demolition request?

13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Come forward.

15 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

16 THE CHAIRMAN: State your name and address
 17 and be sworn in.

18 MS. LOPERA: Did you open the public
 19 hearing?

20 THE CHAIRMAN: (Gavel.)

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello. Good to see you
 22 all.

23 I'm Ryan Akin, representing Columbia
 24 Ventures, and the address is on file. It's
 25 1454 LaFrance Street Northeast, Suite 200,

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1 Atlanta, Georgia 30307.
 2 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
 3 right hand for me, please.
 4 MR. AKIN: (Complies.)
 5 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
 6 testimony you are about to give will be the
 7 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
 8 truth?
 9 MR. AKIN: I do.
 10 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
 11 MR. AKIN: Thank you so much. Thank you
 12 for the staff -- for preparing the staff
 13 report, and also thank you to you all on the
 14 Commission.
 15 We consider every project to be a
 16 public/private partnership, and this is part of
 17 that process for us. This process began long
 18 before we got here, so I want to make sure that
 19 that's clear throughout what I share today.
 20 In December of 2018, we acquired the
 21 building adjacent to this property, which is
 22 700 East Union Street, the Union Terminal
 23 warehouse building. It's a 300,000-square-foot
 24 industrial warehouse. It was built in 1913.
 25 We have -- we're investing \$73 million to
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1 typical that we tackle projects that have
 2 challenges associated with them, and often that
 3 requires a lot of different sources of capital
 4 and whatnot.
 5 So when we filed for our rezoning, that
 6 was the first time it was brought to our
 7 attention that these buildings were within --
 8 were contributing structures within the
 9 historic Eastside National Register listing.
 10 And at that time, we said, okay, well, we need
 11 to understand more about this because when we
 12 develop in communities, we're building -- we're
 13 trying to weave into the fabric of what's
 14 there, not just come in and put a brand-new
 15 patch in an existing neighborhood. And so we
 16 started to go back to the source.
 17 And, of course, the National Register
 18 listing that you all approved was authored by
 19 Paleo West. It was commissioned by LIFT JAX,
 20 which is an Eastside neighborhood Community
 21 Development Corporation, not a nonprofit, and
 22 so we've built a relationship -- or we've
 23 gotten to know them and we've gotten to know
 24 Historic Eastside CDC. We've gotten to know
 25 our -- Council Member Peluso through our
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1 renovate that property. It's an adaptive reuse
 2 property that will have workforce housing and
 3 commercial space in it.
 4 This is not our first historic adaptive
 5 reuse project. We value history. We value the
 6 cultural significance and the environmental
 7 impact of the embedded carbon within buildings.
 8 Last summer, we began discussions with
 9 Argos, which is the current owner of this site,
 10 and so we're currently under contract. We
 11 don't own this property. We're trying to
 12 determine whether or not we proceed forward
 13 with the acquisition of the property such that
 14 we could pursue a mixed-use development per the
 15 zoning that was approved by City Council
 16 recently.
 17 The property in question is just over six
 18 acres of land. There are -- there's one cell
 19 tower that exists on the property. There's
 20 another cell tower that has been -- has an
 21 option on the property, pursuant to -- to their
 22 pursuit of putting that on the property.
 23 There are several buildings, and this is a
 24 brownfield site, so it will likely have
 25 environmental remediation efforts, so -- it's
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1 development at 700 East Union Street.
 2 And we decided our first step would be to
 3 go and meet with community stakeholders and
 4 understand their position on the buildings that
 5 were on the property, to understand if these
 6 were culturally, historically significant to
 7 them and their community members. One of them
 8 is a fourth generation Eastside resident. We
 9 asked them. And then once we met with them on
 10 the site, they said -- we said, look, if there
 11 is any importance of these buildings to the
 12 neighborhood, we want to know because we're not
 13 in the business of coming in here and trying to
 14 displace people's fond memories or, you know,
 15 the place where their grandfather used to work.
 16 That's not our interest or intent here.
 17 And, additionally, we sought to better
 18 understand the National Register listing, which
 19 was really -- the intent of that was really, as
 20 I understand it, from the local stakeholders,
 21 was to preserve the historically
 22 African-American community and architecture,
 23 especially the commercial buildings along
 24 A. Philip Randolph.
 25 And so we said, if these -- if you don't
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101

1 find these to be immediately important to your
2 community and the economic development that we
3 could execute on this property with the
4 multifamily and mixed-use project that we've
5 proposed, then we'd like you to take it back to
6 your community members and understand from any
7 of them, is this important to them. And then
8 we'd like to touch base with you and
9 understand, you know, if -- any feedback that's
10 come [sic].

11 And they did that, just as they said that
12 they would. They came back to us. They said,
13 a lot of people that we talked to honestly
14 didn't even know that these buildings -- you
15 know, they struggled to recall that these
16 building were there. You know, one of them
17 noticed that -- remembered that there was an
18 office building on the site. That was pretty
19 much the extent of it.

20 And so from there, we reached out to Ennis
21 Davis, who's a local historian that we've
22 gotten to know, and he actually did a decent
23 amount of research, which -- a surprising
24 amount of research, because he really loves
25 this stuff, trying to come up with answers and

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102

1 a conclusion on these buildings. We met with
2 him, and he said, look, I'm not finding
3 anything that's of -- that's beyond the
4 criteria to make this a -- these landmarks
5 [sic] buildings, but, you know, there's a
6 process that you follow, and so we sought to go
7 through that process.

8 So after talking with local community
9 stakeholders, going through this rezoning
10 process and realiz- -- we also did our own
11 analysis against the seven criteria, not
12 wanting to come here and present something that
13 would be immediately dismissed, and we could
14 not find a way to classify these three
15 buildings within the seven criteria, beyond --
16 four or beyond criteria.

17 So with that, we presented to -- we had
18 set up a meeting with Arimus, who was gracious
19 to hear us out, understand it, and then he was
20 tasked to go do more research, figure out if --
21 get to the bottom of this. Is there any
22 additional criteria that these buildings meet
23 that we don't know about.

24 And you've read the staff report, just as
25 we have, after we received it on Friday, which

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103

1 we believe did a thorough analysis, and sought
2 to understand --

3 I'll note, to your point about the -- the
4 Mid-Century Modern office building. The roofs
5 of these buildings are somewhat indicative of
6 their utilitarian use for the concrete
7 ready-mix facility. It was Vulcan and then
8 Florida Rock, then Argos. And, actually, Argos
9 is being acquired by -- right now by another
10 company. They change hands, but you'll see
11 that the -- the roof structure of this is
12 perhaps less architectural style and more the
13 vernacular ready-mix concrete plant in that
14 these are, like, T structures that would be
15 used to help build -- hold up a highway. And
16 that's actually true of the other two buildings
17 that are -- that are out there as well, which
18 we thought was actually quite creative, but not
19 necessarily indicative of a specific
20 Mid-Century Modern architecture.

21 And so if you're aware of any additional
22 criteria, we would rather know now than to
23 continue with the process. But if you're not
24 aware, then we ask for your support of the
25 staff report's recommend- -- or the City of

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104

1 Jacksonville staff's recommendation to note
2 that these buildings do not meet the necessary
3 criteria for a landmark status.

4 And with that, I'd be happy to answer any
5 questions, and thank you for your time.

6 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,
7 I will say that I have a voting conflict here.
8 I'm the project architect on the Union Terminal
9 warehouse, so -- I worked with Columbia
10 Ventures for some years now, so I'm not able to
11 vote or comment on this.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Any questions for the
13 applicant?

14 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

15 THE CHAIRMAN: No? Okay.

16 Thank you. That was very thorough.

17 You know, I would say that structure is,
18 just for your knowledge, the Gene Leedy and the
19 Sarasota School of Architecture in South
20 Florida. These kinds of structures are --
21 they're very definitively Mid-Century Modern.
22 That's why I was asking if we knew who the
23 architect was.

24 Gene Leedy's house was just one of the
25 seminal architectural examples of that -- the

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1 Sarasota School of Architecture uses those same
 2 kind of Ts, similar kind of Ts, so --
 3 MR. AKIN: Oh, interesting.
 4 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.
 5 MR. AKIN: Did they use them from like --
 6 are they railroad -- or, I'm sorry, not
 7 railroad, but are they highway T structures?
 8 THE CHAIRMAN: It's the -- it's the
 9 inspiration, yeah.
 10 MR. AKIN: I see.
 11 Yeah, one of the things that we talked
 12 with Ennis about, which was the
 13 recommendation -- is, you know, how in a
 14 redeveloped property could we incorporate some
 15 of the architectural styles or themes into a --
 16 the redevelopment, which we think would be
 17 useful and also fit into the community, so we
 18 would explore that during our design phase with
 19 input from local stakeholders.
 20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
 21 Is there anyone else here to speak on this
 22 demolition?
 23 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)
 24 THE CHAIRMAN: The crowd is getting thin.
 25 Okay. Then I'll close the public hearing

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1 and hear a motion.
 2 COMMISSIONER HOFF: I will make a motion
 3 to approve.
 4 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there a second?
 5 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Second.
 6 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Some
 7 discussion? Is this a -- is there any
 8 comments?
 9 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: No. Through the
 10 Vice Chair, thank you for the diligence the
 11 applicant went through, as well as the staff.
 12 THE CHAIRMAN: It doesn't seem like
 13 there's any community presence that's in
 14 support of denying the demolition, so there's
 15 no reason for that. And if there's clearly no
 16 architect who's associated with it -- because I
 17 think you said that that building had three of
 18 the criteria, right?
 19 MR. WELLS: Correct.
 20 THE CHAIRMAN: And so if it was -- if it
 21 was, in fact, designed by a significant
 22 architect from Jacksonville, that would be a
 23 fourth.
 24 But other than that, I -- it's an
 25 industrial set of buildings. Other than the

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1 charm of that first building, I can't see a
 2 reason to -- I'll put this to the -- put this
 3 to the vote.
 4 I would also say that, when I visited the
 5 buildings, the other -- the middle building,
 6 which is the next oldest one, I guess, the --
 7 I'm not sure that the roof structure is
 8 original to the brick masonry wall because it
 9 looks like the beams were poured later and then
 10 the Ts were put on top, in the way that the --
 11 it was executed. There's a lot of dribble on
 12 the form, so it looks like it might have been
 13 something that happened later.
 14 If there's no more discussion, we have a
 15 motion on the floor, I say we put it to a vote.
 16 All those in favor?
 17 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.
 18 (Commissioner Epstein abstains from
 19 voting.)
 20 THE CHAIRMAN: All those opposed?
 21 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
 22 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. The demolition
 23 is approved.
 24 MR. WELLS: So the next thing on the
 25 agenda is the updated version of the window

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1 supplement. So, Commissioners, if you recall
 2 from last month, we presented you with a PDF
 3 version. So this is more of a Word-based
 4 version. Since that time, we have modified it
 5 to make it more visually appealing, and also in
 6 preparation for our upcoming 2024 resource
 7 packet, so --
 8 And the information is still there.
 9 Nothing really has changed, just besides the
 10 aesthetics of it. This is something we hope,
 11 with your approval, to start sending out to the
 12 public.
 13 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
 14 Chair to the staff, it looks good, a lot of
 15 information in here.
 16 I think, you know, giving this out to
 17 people, there shouldn't be very many questions
 18 about -- to do their windows correctly, so I
 19 think that's really helpful.
 20 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Vice
 21 Chair, I shared the draft with a few
 22 professionals and they thought that it was very
 23 well done.
 24 MR. WELLS: Thank you.
 25 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, this looks great.

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1 My only question is back to that thing
2 about the plane of the glass on the nonhistoric
3 structures with the windows. Is that -- is the
4 idea of the punched opening on new construction
5 with windows, is that something that's
6 addressed here, and --

7 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair to -- I'm
8 sorry, to the vice chair, yes, that is
9 something that we did add into the previous
10 window supplement that was approved last month.
11 So there is a section on window installation.

12 We have a little paragraph here that talks
13 about installing new windows, whether it's on
14 historic or new construction. It should
15 complement the historic architecture and should
16 be recessed or -- in other words, not have any
17 permanent nailing fins. So that is a standard
18 that we have imposed upon new construction for
19 decades now, so -- continuing in that
20 tradition.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Yeah, the clearer
22 the better.

23 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
24 Chair, I know it's been brought up a few times,
25 what other cities are doing and everything. I

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1 will say, over the holidays I went to visit my
2 sister who lives in historic St. Petersburg,
3 the historic northeast. And I walked around
4 and there a lot of buildings in that
5 neighborhood that are new construction that
6 match the historic, and every single one of
7 those windows is set back.

8 So I think it's safe to say that, you
9 know, there are other -- obviously, other
10 cities in Florida that are -- because that's
11 always a question that comes up to us, because
12 it's not indicative of current design --
13 current construction to -- to not -- you know,
14 current construction, does the -- the nailing
15 fins and doesn't inset the windows. So other
16 cities are also making people do this, so I
17 think it's still something that we should
18 obviously maintain.

19 MR. WELLS: Thank you.

20 So we have to take a vote on this to
21 approve --

22 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: So motion to
23 approve the HPS windows supplement.

24 COMMISSIONER GLOBER: Second.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?

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1 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: All those opposed?

3 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Approved. Well done.

5 There is one more -- it's not on the
6 agenda, but Commissioner Hoff has an item for
7 new business.

8 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Vice
9 Chair, I wanted to inquire about possibly
10 resuming the annual Historic Preservation
11 awards. I just had a brief chat with Mr. Wells
12 via email. He indicated that those ended in
13 2019. And with the importance and the
14 visibility of historic preservation becoming
15 more and more prominent, not only with the
16 neighborhoods which we oversee, but also in
17 places like -- like the Eastside, like
18 Arlington, with the advent of the REHAB
19 program, I think it would be a positive thing
20 to recognize and highlight great projects. So
21 I just wanted to begin that conversation.

22 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
23 Chair, it's my understanding that the Historic
24 Preservation Awards were turned into the Joel
25 McEachin -- non-memorial because he's still

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1 around -- Award, but then that has never been
2 given.

3 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair to
4 Commissioner Epstein, that is correct. So 2019
5 is the last time that ever occurred.

6 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: That the Joel
7 McEachin Award was given or that awards were
8 given?

9 MR. WELLS: That the McEachin Award was
10 given, in 2019.

11 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: So it was given out
12 at one point?

13 MR. WELLS: To the best of my knowledge --
14 it's a little unclear just based on our
15 recordkeeping, but from -- from what I could
16 gather is that one award was given in 2019.

17 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Do we know to
18 which --

19 MR. WELLS: I would have to look at the
20 records to see exactly which -- or if that was
21 an organization or whatnot, but that's all I
22 could find. I know -- previous, we definitely
23 did do awards.

24 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: And that award is
25 given based off of a nomination by the

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1 community? Can we nominate? What's the
 2 standard of that? And was -- to add another
 3 question there, was that -- that was replaced,
 4 those awards, because of -- it was hard to do
 5 many awards or --
 6 MR. WELLS: It was a combination of
 7 different issues. So one of the issues in
 8 particular was just staff resources, limited
 9 staff resources and constraints. So we're a
 10 small but mighty team, and the Preservation
 11 Awards just kept evolving over the -- every
 12 year. We kept running into financial issues in
 13 terms of reserving rooms because we used to --
 14 it basically evolved into a banquet and we had
 15 awards and there was multiple people.
 16 Another issue was that it got to the point
 17 where it used to be self-nomination, and we
 18 stopped receiving nominations, and it wasn't in
 19 our best interest for the Department to start
 20 nominating other properties.
 21 And another issue was just the Commission,
 22 too, so -- there was some commissioners that
 23 were not -- had the time or the resources to
 24 dedicate additional time to reviewing
 25 applications.

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1 So it's a combination of different issues.
 2 We're interested in bringing it back, but,
 3 again, it's just a resource --
 4 THE CHAIRMAN: Maybe that's -- maybe it's
 5 something that we can bring -- maybe not the
 6 next meeting, but the next -- have some
 7 discussion about how that might be done
 8 differently, and maybe it involves some of the
 9 historic preservation groups that we have
 10 that -- like RAP and like SPAR and some other
 11 entities that might be able to contribute to
 12 that so that the burden is shared for it.
 13 And, you know, I think that -- I think
 14 that people and companies do need to be
 15 recognized for doing things that we're trying
 16 to make sure happen here, but I also recognize
 17 the limitations and the overload of staff, so I
 18 think there -- it's a call -- it's a call to
 19 the community. If these things are really
 20 important, then we should be able to step up
 21 and supplement that effort.
 22 But maybe in the next couple of months
 23 there's a -- a report of sorts that gives us
 24 some suggestions how we can help with that.
 25 And then I'll jump in for one last one.

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1 It reminded me that -- I've been thinking about
 2 the Commission and its relationship with staff
 3 and HPC for the City of Jacksonville and Legal
 4 and all the -- you know, the people that are
 5 involved in these monthly meetings, that it
 6 might be good for us to, you know, just meet
 7 over a luncheon or something, some time to talk
 8 about some broader issues with HPC and some
 9 processes with HPC, just in the way that we
 10 function and the way that we're supporting each
 11 other so that things can continue to get
 12 smoother.
 13 I have to say, over the last year I've
 14 really noticed how things have improved a lot
 15 just in terms of process and the way that we're
 16 communicating things, the way these meetings
 17 are run, and so I'd like to -- I'd like to keep
 18 that going if we can.
 19 MR. WELLS: Absolutely.
 20 THE CHAIRMAN: So if there's no other
 21 jumping on in new business, we'll continue with
 22 information.
 23 MR. WELLS: Okay. So a couple of items
 24 here. The first one is the REHAB program. So,
 25 again, that stands for Restore Endangered

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1 Historic Adaptable Buildings, REHAB special
 2 revenue fund. So I briefed you all about this
 3 last year. This is a new reimbursement grant
 4 that was approved by the City Council. This is
 5 in coordination with the Department of Economic
 6 Development with the City as well as the
 7 Downtown Development Authority, so DIA for
 8 short.
 9 So, once again, this is a reimbursement
 10 program. The intent behind the program is to
 11 preserve the building stock mainly for
 12 nonresidential or commercial structures. And
 13 so I wanted to brief you all about your
 14 responsibility in this, or role, per se.
 15 And so if anything -- any eligible
 16 structures, they have to meet a set of
 17 criteria. And so that criteria is outlined on
 18 Page 1. And with your -- the Commission comes
 19 into play is just the last criteria. So this
 20 is your responsibility in terms of declaring
 21 certain buildings as critically endangered.
 22 And so we have a set of criteria that you'll be
 23 able to evaluate applications on.
 24 In terms of the -- our section or
 25 Department itself, we'll be responsible for

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1 being the point of contact, intake, review of
 2 applications, working with DIA, as well as OED,
 3 and then essentially scoring the applications
 4 in terms of where they rank and which
 5 applications should be deemed eligible for
 6 funding.
 7 So in terms of the Commission, you all
 8 will review these applications and the -- our
 9 recommendations. So that will come in the form
 10 of a staff report. And it will be up to your
 11 authority to declare that or say that -- you
 12 know, deny it in this instance.
 13 And also with that, too, applications
 14 should be coming with COAs. So if it's -- if
 15 it requires Commission review, you'll be
 16 reviewing that as a companion application.
 17 And right now the application deadline to
 18 apply for the fiscal year for this new funding
 19 is Sunday, March 31st. I believe you all were
 20 already copied on the email, so feel free to
 21 distribute that to interested folks.
 22 And depending on the application volume
 23 and coordination with our other agencies, you
 24 can expect to start receiving reviews for the
 25 applications in April or May of this year. But

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1 nothing to present.
 2 And then pending legislation. So, again,
 3 this is a recurring place -- item.
 4 So the first item is just the -- Ordinance
 5 2023-0876, so that has been going on. It's
 6 kind of stalling right now, but that's in
 7 regards to the Laura Street Trio project.
 8 They're looking at -- to acquire some funds and
 9 go into a loan with the City. But, again, that
 10 is on a standstill.
 11 Ordinance 2024-0067, this is an appeal
 12 that's been filed by the applicant. The
 13 Commission, you-all recommended denial. An
 14 after-the-fact wholesale window replacement
 15 last year. That application will be going to
 16 the Land Use and Zoning Committee on March 5th.
 17 And then the two new bills we have are
 18 Ordinance 2024-0115 and -0116. These are both
 19 landmarks that will be going to the Land Use
 20 and Zoning Committee on March 19th.
 21 And then we have a third one, which you
 22 all just recommended approval on, that's the
 23 Norman Studios building and site as well. So
 24 that will be -- pending right now, but it's
 25 coming to LUZ at a later date.

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1 just note that there is a process chart, it
 2 kind of goes into more detail about where
 3 things may land, as well as the revenue fund
 4 guidelines that go into detail about the
 5 criteria that you'll use to evaluate the
 6 applications on, as well as the expenditures
 7 and the caps and whatnot.
 8 So that is it for this item.
 9 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Question for you, if
 10 possible. How has the response been?
 11 MR. WELLS: So through the Chair to
 12 Commissioner Hoff, right now we've -- I think
 13 we have three completed applications. We
 14 hosted around six or seven different pre-app
 15 meetings, and so most of those have indicated
 16 interest. We had to turn down one because they
 17 were not eligible using the criteria.
 18 But mainly, in terms of breakdown, too,
 19 we're seeing a lot of nonprofit folks, so
 20 churches mainly, but there is interest. It's
 21 just getting the word out, too.
 22 And then I'll move on to the next item.
 23 So this one is --
 24 MS. LOPERA: (Inaudible.)
 25 MR. WELLS: I'm deferring that. There's

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1 And nothing from Public Works, and that is
 2 it for --
 3 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
 4 Chair, that last ordinance pending for the --
 5 I'm sorry, that was the site for Norman
 6 Studios?
 7 MR. WELLS: Yes.
 8 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Okay.
 9 MS. LOPERA: (Inaudible.)
 10 (Reporter clarification.)
 11 THE CHAIRMAN: It is muffled.
 12 Just a quick question and we'll adjourn.
 13 I think there isn't anything else left on the
 14 agenda, but the after-the-fact wholesale window
 15 replacement appeal, the -- that's going to --
 16 they're going to appear before Land Use and
 17 Zoning. They're going to make -- they're going
 18 to make an appeal so that they can keep the
 19 windows that they've installed after the fact
 20 without a COA.
 21 Outside of Bs and the Ss, like, what -- is
 22 there a -- is there -- what is the -- is this
 23 a -- is that just a community action thing?
 24 Like, if there are people that -- people in the
 25 community who want to stand up to keep them

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1 from getting that appeal, that's the only real
2 recourse, right?

3 MS. LOPERA: To the vice chair, it's a de
4 novo hearing, so (inaudible). They can present
5 new evidence at that hearing before the Land
6 Use and Zoning Committee.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

8 MS. LOPERA: It is a public hearing, so
9 you all are welcome to come speak, (inaudible),
10 and anyone from the public can come and speak
11 on it.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

13 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Vice
14 Chair, they do have our meeting minutes that go
15 along with the de novo --

16 MS. LOPERA: Correct. Meeting minutes are
17 part of the evidence that is supplied to the --
18 that committee. He makes a recommendation, and
19 that appeal ultimately goes to City Council for
20 their determination.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.

22 With that, the meeting is adjourned.

23 (The foregoing proceedings were adjourned
24 at 5:25 p.m.)

25 - - -

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1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2
3 STATE OF FLORIDA)
4)
5 COUNTY OF DUVAL)
6

7 I, Diane M. Tropa, Florida Professional
8 Reporter, certify that I was authorized to and did
9 stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and
10 that the transcript is a true and complete record of my
11 stenographic notes.

12
13
14
15 DATED this 10th day of March 2024.

16
17
18 _____
19 Diane M. Tropa
20 Florida Professional Reporter

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24
25
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\$	112:10, 112:16 2020 [2] - 55:17, 75:20 2023 [1] - 56:3 2023-0876 [1] - 119:5 2024 [4] - 1:6, 2:1, 108:6, 122:15 2024-0067 [1] - 119:11 2024-0115 [1] - 119:18 2111 [1] - 4:14 214 [1] - 1:8 21st [3] - 52:7, 54:9, 54:12 224 [1] - 11:21 2242 [1] - 4:15 24 [1] - 73:10 245 [2] - 32:22, 75:5 24th [1] - 3:8 25 [1] - 89:7 250 [1] - 68:13 26th [1] - 52:6 2768 [1] - 4:7 2799 [1] - 4:9 28 [2] - 1:6, 2:1 28th [1] - 2:4	400 [1] - 93:16 417 [2] - 15:14, 78:1 48 [1] - 12:11	58:17 account [1] - 70:8 acquire [1] - 119:8 acquired [3] - 55:16, 97:20, 103:9 acquisition [1] - 98:13 acres [1] - 98:18 Acting [1] - 1:13 acting [2] - 2:17, 3:4 action [2] - 48:14, 120:23 active [1] - 83:12 adamant [2] - 26:14, 28:20 Adaptable [1] - 116:1 adaptive [2] - 98:1, 98:4 add [4] - 74:8, 83:2, 109:9, 113:2 added [1] - 52:20 addition [2] - 10:15, 12:2 additional [3] - 102:22, 103:21, 113:24 additionally [1] - 100:17 address [16] - 13:6, 15:13, 20:9, 24:11, 24:12, 32:21, 36:6, 50:9, 58:1, 60:18, 72:22, 77:23, 88:7, 88:10, 96:16, 96:24 addressed [2] - 52:12, 109:6 addressing [1] - 56:17 adequately [2] - 10:3, 78:17 adjacent [1] - 97:21 adjourn [1] - 120:12 adjourned [2] - 121:22, 121:23 advance [1] - 21:6 advent [1] - 111:18 adversarial [1] - 42:10 aesthetics [1] - 108:10 affect [1] - 51:7 affirm [7] - 24:19, 33:3, 50:15, 61:1, 73:3, 88:18, 97:5 African [1] - 100:22 African-American [1] - 100:22 after-the-fact [2] - 119:14, 120:14 afternoon [4] - 7:16, 11:20, 13:7, 60:20 afterwards [1] - 16:7 age [1] - 57:12 agencies [1] - 117:23	agenda [17] - 4:13, 4:20, 5:12, 5:18, 6:23, 7:3, 7:4, 7:7, 7:10, 7:21, 7:25, 8:10, 17:2, 17:5, 107:25, 111:6, 120:14 ago [8] - 16:5, 61:12, 65:19, 76:1, 79:22, 80:10, 82:13, 85:4 agree [7] - 5:17, 6:16, 37:10, 80:20, 83:23, 84:22, 91:24 agreeance [1] - 6:2 agreed [1] - 51:3 agreement [1] - 7:1 air [6] - 21:20, 31:18, 38:16, 43:18, 44:6, 44:7 aired [1] - 44:11 Akin [1] - 96:23 AKIN [6] - 97:4, 97:9, 97:11, 105:3, 105:5, 105:10 Albert [1] - 95:17 alive [2] - 12:17, 12:20 alley [1] - 36:7 allow [4] - 61:25, 63:3, 66:19, 76:20 allowed [2] - 22:9, 35:8 allowing [1] - 77:14 almost [1] - 73:19 Alpine [1] - 72:24 ALSO [1] - 1:16 alterations [12] - 10:20, 10:22, 11:2, 11:4, 55:15, 55:23, 57:8, 57:16, 57:18, 57:19, 58:20, 95:6 altering [1] - 54:7 alternatives [7] - 19:16, 19:22, 56:18, 58:24, 59:4, 78:16, 78:18 amendments [1] - 54:5 American [1] - 100:22 amount [8] - 29:17, 29:18, 58:11, 70:21, 74:6, 95:22, 101:23, 101:24 ample [1] - 15:2 analysis [3] - 95:3, 102:11, 103:1 angry [1] - 69:25 annual [1] - 111:10 answer [4] - 23:4, 28:10, 51:13, 104:4 answers [1] - 101:25
0	3	5	6	
0116 [1] - 119:18	3 [4] - 8:11, 8:19, 8:21, 56:25 300,000-square-foot [1] - 97:23 30307 [1] - 97:1 307 [1] - 77:14 307.106 [2] - 58:2, 82:4 307.106(k)(1) [1] - 56:25 307.106(n)(1) [1] - 57:10 307.106(n)(3) [1] - 19:8 307.106(n)(7) [1] - 58:14 315 [1] - 4:11 31st [1] - 117:19 320.407 [1] - 92:25 32206 [2] - 15:15, 50:11 32225 [1] - 88:13 350 [2] - 74:10, 74:11 358 [1] - 60:21 3606 [1] - 4:16 3664 [1] - 4:8 3709 [6] - 4:17, 7:19, 17:4, 17:8, 24:12, 48:15 3:00 [2] - 1:7, 2:1	6	7	
1	3	7	8	
1 [6] - 8:10, 8:19, 8:21, 52:5, 54:7, 116:18 1,500 [1] - 44:14 1,890 [2] - 9:25, 12:10 1-over-1 [1] - 49:5 10 [1] - 81:21 100,000 [1] - 41:14 10th [1] - 122:15 13 [2] - 52:12, 54:13 13170 [1] - 88:12 132 [2] - 48:18, 48:22 1329 [1] - 13:8 1334 [1] - 50:10 1349 [5] - 9:8, 10:5, 11:10, 13:25, 16:23 13th [1] - 56:24 14 [2] - 52:12, 54:13 1422 [4] - 55:5, 55:9, 92:4, 92:12 1454 [1] - 96:25 1636 [1] - 75:23 1900 [1] - 10:14 1913 [1] - 97:24 1930 [1] - 10:14 1940 [1] - 10:1 19th [1] - 119:20	8	7 [1] - 72:24 700 [4] - 93:3, 93:21, 97:22, 100:1 700A [2] - 93:4, 93:22 700B [3] - 93:4, 93:24, 94:22 75 [2] - 47:10, 47:13 7th [2] - 15:15, 78:1	8	8
2	4	8	9	
2 [3] - 52:8, 53:11, 54:10 2-by-2 [1] - 49:7 2-by-4s [1] - 29:12 20,000 [1] - 93:17 200 [2] - 68:16, 96:25 201 [1] - 12:12 2017 [1] - 55:22 2018 [3] - 55:22, 83:17, 97:20 2019 [5] - 17:14, 111:13, 112:4,	9	8	9 [1] - 57:1	
2	4	A	A	
2 [3] - 52:8, 53:11, 54:10 2-by-2 [1] - 49:7 2-by-4s [1] - 29:12 20,000 [1] - 93:17 200 [2] - 68:16, 96:25 201 [1] - 12:12 2017 [1] - 55:22 2018 [3] - 55:22, 83:17, 97:20 2019 [5] - 17:14, 111:13, 112:4,	4	A	A	
	4 [3] - 7:18, 8:21, 17:1	A	A	
		ability [2] - 21:24, 66:23 able [10] - 23:8, 35:11, 52:10, 70:20, 88:25, 95:18, 104:10, 114:11, 114:20, 116:23 absence [1] - 3:5 absolutely [2] - 81:15, 115:19 abstains [1] - 107:18 abundance [1] - 49:14 accessory [9] - 7:19, 17:10, 17:16, 21:18, 25:3, 34:24, 35:7, 36:4, 43:1 accommodate [1] - 70:1 accordance [3] - 49:22, 57:10, 58:14 according [2] - 19:1,		

<p>anticipated [1] - 31:5 Antonio [1] - 88:12 anyway [2] - 27:16, 29:18 apart [4] - 23:12, 23:14, 37:1, 64:5 apartment [1] - 21:20 apartments [1] - 10:13 apologies [1] - 18:1 apologize [2] - 6:5, 21:6 app [1] - 118:14 apparent [2] - 59:5, 79:3 appeal [5] - 119:11, 120:15, 120:18, 121:1, 121:19 appealing [1] - 108:5 appear [3] - 19:25, 95:3, 120:16 appliances [2] - 73:25, 74:2 applicant [52] - 6:25, 7:8, 11:16, 16:4, 17:9, 18:6, 18:12, 18:17, 19:16, 20:3, 21:23, 22:2, 24:3, 32:2, 32:13, 36:12, 37:21, 41:5, 41:6, 46:7, 48:23, 49:19, 50:5, 51:15, 52:10, 55:17, 58:2, 58:16, 58:24, 59:4, 59:5, 59:22, 59:25, 60:2, 60:14, 62:3, 64:21, 64:25, 69:4, 78:20, 79:7, 80:8, 80:15, 84:1, 85:17, 85:20, 93:2, 93:14, 96:11, 104:13, 106:11, 119:12 applicant's [5] - 15:19, 19:20, 21:11, 57:21, 84:8 application [11] - 6:3, 9:13, 10:15, 13:24, 16:23, 35:13, 48:21, 117:16, 117:17, 117:22, 119:15 applications [10] - 113:25, 116:23, 117:2, 117:3, 117:5, 117:8, 117:13, 117:25, 118:6, 118:13 applied [3] - 39:22, 40:5, 40:10 applies [1] - 94:22 apply [1] - 117:18 applying [1] - 31:4</p>	<p>appreciate [3] - 15:18, 37:16, 51:20 approaches [17] - 4:24, 7:15, 11:19, 13:4, 15:11, 24:8, 32:19, 41:7, 50:7, 60:17, 72:21, 75:4, 77:21, 86:9, 87:22, 88:6, 96:15 approaching [1] - 34:5 Approval [1] - 39:13 approval [4] - 20:11, 59:15, 108:11, 119:22 approve [16] - 3:7, 3:16, 7:1, 8:10, 11:10, 14:18, 16:10, 35:22, 47:22, 54:6, 66:19, 80:2, 95:11, 106:3, 110:21, 110:23 approved [22] - 3:24, 8:19, 8:20, 14:16, 14:21, 15:2, 16:23, 29:25, 39:8, 39:14, 39:18, 48:14, 55:2, 55:23, 57:24, 75:25, 98:15, 99:18, 107:23, 109:10, 111:4, 116:4 approving [1] - 39:3 April [1] - 117:25 arbitrarily [1] - 14:19 archaeological [2] - 9:18, 94:12 architect [6] - 95:18, 95:23, 104:8, 104:23, 106:16, 106:22 architectural [12] - 9:17, 9:24, 17:21, 18:4, 18:23, 49:10, 57:13, 94:12, 94:19, 103:12, 104:25, 105:15 architecture [5] - 12:6, 12:15, 100:22, 103:20, 109:15 Architecture [2] - 104:19, 105:1 area [9] - 12:9, 18:25, 28:9, 31:19, 43:24, 43:25, 65:10 areas [1] - 12:7 Argos [3] - 98:9, 103:8 argument [1] - 7:9 Ariail [3] - 32:7, 32:8, 45:13 Arimus [4] - 2:10,</p>	<p>20:12, 50:21, 102:18 ARIMUS [1] - 1:17 Arlington [1] - 111:18 asphalt [1] - 49:4 assess [1] - 56:22 assessed [2] - 63:1, 67:14 associated [2] - 99:2, 106:16 association [1] - 10:4 assume [3] - 22:8, 29:22, 29:23 Assuming [1] - 31:5 Atlanta [1] - 97:1 attached [1] - 84:25 attempting [1] - 78:22 attempts [3] - 19:24, 46:10, 55:20 attention [2] - 75:23, 99:7 attorney [1] - 28:8 attorneys [1] - 28:8 AUDIENCE [36] - 4:21, 4:25, 7:13, 7:16, 8:1, 9:3, 11:17, 11:20, 13:2, 13:7, 15:14, 15:24, 24:5, 24:9, 35:19, 50:10, 51:23, 54:1, 60:15, 60:20, 72:19, 72:24, 79:12, 86:12, 86:15, 86:19, 87:3, 87:8, 87:25, 88:9, 88:12, 91:3, 92:21, 96:13, 96:21, 105:23 audience [1] - 5:11 Audience [13] - 4:24, 7:15, 11:19, 13:4, 15:11, 24:8, 50:7, 60:17, 72:21, 86:9, 87:22, 88:6, 96:15 August [2] - 43:8, 75:20 authored [1] - 99:18 authority [2] - 93:9, 117:11 Authority [1] - 116:7 authorized [1] - 122:8 available [2] - 46:13, 95:25 Avenue [2] - 4:8, 4:17 Award [3] - 112:1, 112:7, 112:9 award [2] - 112:16, 112:24 awards [6] - 111:11, 112:7, 112:23, 113:4, 113:5, 113:15 Awards [2] - 111:24, 113:11</p>	<p>aware [3] - 30:7, 103:21, 103:24 awnings [3] - 5:4, 5:23, 6:18 aye [11] - 3:20, 8:14, 16:19, 47:25, 48:1, 48:2, 54:23, 92:6, 92:7, 107:17, 111:1 ayes [4] - 3:23, 8:17, 48:12, 92:10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">B</p> <p>baby [1] - 25:4 backdrop [1] - 70:17 background [1] - 36:5 backyard [1] - 26:5 bad [5] - 29:18, 44:9, 47:8, 47:14, 47:18 Ball [1] - 1:7 banquet [1] - 113:14 Baptist [1] - 13:10 bar [1] - 95:10 base [1] - 101:8 based [22] - 10:19, 11:7, 19:20, 20:6, 52:3, 57:12, 57:21, 58:7, 59:2, 59:7, 59:12, 66:9, 82:24, 85:6, 92:25, 93:19, 94:1, 94:5, 95:2, 108:3, 112:14, 112:25 basic [1] - 40:2 bat [1] - 73:22 bathroom [1] - 51:7 Beach [1] - 11:22 beams [1] - 107:9 Bean [2] - 9:12, 11:23 beautiful [3] - 35:6, 42:3, 42:6 becomes [1] - 39:10 becoming [1] - 111:14 began [2] - 97:17, 98:8 begin [2] - 85:14, 111:21 beginning [1] - 85:7 behalf [5] - 9:1, 11:15, 24:3, 24:4, 50:5 behind [2] - 17:13, 116:10 below [1] - 93:22 best [7] - 21:24, 22:12, 23:25, 81:4, 96:2, 112:13, 113:19 better [4] - 44:8, 44:11, 100:17, 109:22 beyond [15] - 66:22,</p>	<p>67:1, 67:9, 67:24, 68:3, 69:5, 69:6, 69:13, 79:25, 82:22, 89:25, 91:22, 102:3, 102:15, 102:16 big [2] - 38:22 biggest [2] - 28:12, 36:17 Bill [1] - 2:18 bills [1] - 119:17 biohazard [2] - 31:19, 31:23 bit [9] - 21:7, 30:18, 30:23, 33:20, 33:22, 37:8, 47:18, 52:20, 71:9 blind [2] - 84:11, 84:12 block [4] - 17:19, 18:2, 49:7, 49:15 board [3] - 14:22, 37:12, 78:7 Bob [1] - 5:2 book [1] - 21:2 Boom [2] - 12:5, 12:15 Boone [1] - 4:16 bottom [2] - 77:5, 102:21 bought [4] - 61:11, 63:8, 72:8, 75:19 Bowles [1] - 11:22 brace [1] - 62:10 brand [1] - 99:14 brand-new [1] - 99:14 break [1] - 2:24 breakdown [1] - 118:18 brick [4] - 10:9, 11:5, 18:5, 107:8 brief [4] - 13:11, 91:6, 111:11, 116:13 briefed [1] - 116:2 bring [5] - 4:2, 51:5, 58:12, 75:23, 114:5 bringing [1] - 114:2 Brittany [2] - 2:8, 12:10 BRITTANY [1] - 1:17 broader [1] - 115:8 brought [3] - 43:16, 99:6, 109:24 brownfield [1] - 98:24 Bs [1] - 120:21 bucks [1] - 44:14 build [8] - 20:4, 31:13, 62:1, 65:11, 68:5, 68:14, 69:8, 103:15 Building [2] - 1:7, 39:8 building [51] - 5:7, 11:3, 11:5, 12:17,</p>
---	--	---	---	--

<p>13:16, 14:10, 14:14, 14:17, 14:20, 15:18, 18:23, 19:5, 19:11, 22:9, 23:8, 42:1, 43:1, 46:21, 49:2, 55:14, 68:24, 73:9, 78:22, 81:2, 81:23, 82:6, 82:9, 82:23, 84:2, 84:4, 84:6, 85:11, 85:22, 91:13, 91:20, 94:24, 95:16, 95:20, 96:5, 97:21, 97:23, 99:12, 101:16, 101:18, 103:4, 106:17, 107:1, 107:5, 116:11, 119:23</p> <p>Buildings [1] - 116:1</p> <p>buildings [24] - 9:23, 10:13, 10:14, 12:10, 67:4, 82:17, 98:7, 98:23, 99:7, 100:4, 100:11, 100:23, 101:14, 102:1, 102:5, 102:15, 102:22, 103:5, 103:16, 104:2, 106:25, 107:5, 110:4, 116:21</p> <p>built [6] - 10:1, 10:14, 12:7, 49:1, 97:24, 99:22</p> <p>burden [1] - 114:12</p> <p>bursts [1] - 26:2</p> <p>business [6] - 14:24, 92:15, 92:23, 100:13, 111:7, 115:21</p> <p>buy [1] - 75:21</p> <p>buyer [3] - 19:19, 56:21, 59:2</p> <p>buzz [1] - 76:6</p>	<p>79:2</p> <p>cat [1] - 33:14</p> <p>caused [1] - 34:18</p> <p>causing [1] - 23:1</p> <p>caved [3] - 62:24, 72:3, 80:9</p> <p>caving [1] - 64:15</p> <p>CDC [1] - 99:24</p> <p>cell [3] - 2:25, 98:18, 98:20</p> <p>cement [1] - 49:6</p> <p>center [1] - 4:3</p> <p>centered [1] - 80:22</p> <p>Century [5] - 94:23, 95:16, 103:4, 103:20, 104:21</p> <p>certain [2] - 37:25, 116:21</p> <p>certainly [2] - 12:23, 79:4</p> <p>CERTIFICATE [1] - 122:1</p> <p>certified [1] - 58:3</p> <p>certify [1] - 122:8</p> <p>Chair [62] - 5:10, 5:24, 13:22, 14:14, 14:21, 16:3, 20:15, 20:23, 21:22, 21:23, 22:11, 22:20, 23:2, 23:18, 23:21, 27:21, 32:2, 36:17, 37:10, 37:19, 39:20, 40:2, 40:22, 47:6, 48:5, 51:25, 52:23, 53:10, 59:18, 59:21, 60:6, 60:7, 62:5, 64:25, 66:8, 74:18, 79:24, 80:20, 81:8, 81:13, 81:17, 82:6, 82:14, 82:20, 83:15, 85:20, 86:13, 88:25, 89:9, 91:19, 104:6, 106:10, 108:14, 108:21, 109:7, 109:24, 111:9, 111:23, 112:3, 118:11, 120:4, 121:14</p> <p>chair [4] - 87:14, 95:21, 109:8, 121:3</p> <p>chairman [3] - 2:17, 3:5</p> <p>Chairman [2] - 1:13, 3:11</p> <p>CHAIRMAN [183] - 2:3, 2:16, 2:22, 3:12, 3:19, 3:21, 3:23, 4:22, 5:9, 5:16, 6:13, 6:19, 6:22, 7:14, 7:22, 8:2, 8:6, 8:13, 8:15, 8:17, 8:20, 9:4,</p>	<p>11:13, 11:18, 12:24, 13:1, 13:3, 13:5, 14:9, 15:5, 15:9, 15:12, 15:22, 15:25, 16:8, 16:12, 16:16, 16:18, 16:20, 16:22, 20:12, 21:14, 21:17, 22:3, 22:18, 24:2, 24:6, 24:11, 24:14, 29:22, 31:3, 32:12, 32:15, 32:20, 35:17, 35:20, 35:25, 36:2, 38:8, 40:18, 41:4, 41:8, 42:9, 42:17, 46:3, 46:6, 46:20, 47:19, 48:2, 48:8, 48:12, 50:1, 50:3, 50:8, 51:14, 51:17, 51:21, 51:24, 53:5, 53:8, 53:13, 53:18, 53:24, 54:2, 54:16, 54:19, 54:22, 54:24, 55:1, 55:4, 59:16, 60:9, 60:12, 60:16, 60:18, 61:7, 62:2, 64:20, 69:2, 69:14, 69:18, 69:23, 70:3, 70:11, 71:14, 71:17, 71:19, 71:24, 72:9, 72:11, 72:15, 72:17, 72:20, 72:22, 74:21, 75:2, 77:17, 77:20, 77:22, 79:9, 79:13, 79:19, 81:15, 83:3, 83:8, 83:13, 83:20, 85:25, 86:4, 86:10, 86:16, 86:22, 87:2, 87:9, 87:11, 87:16, 87:19, 87:23, 88:1, 88:5, 90:5, 90:8, 90:11, 90:14, 90:17, 90:20, 91:1, 91:4, 92:1, 92:8, 92:10, 92:18, 92:22, 95:13, 95:15, 96:3, 96:9, 96:14, 96:16, 96:20, 104:12, 104:15, 105:4, 105:8, 105:20, 105:24, 106:4, 106:6, 106:12, 106:20, 107:20, 107:22, 108:25, 109:21, 110:25, 111:2, 111:4, 114:4, 115:20, 120:11, 121:7, 121:12, 121:21</p> <p>chairman's [1] - 3:5</p> <p>challenges [1] - 99:2</p> <p>chance [1] - 27:15</p>	<p>change [2] - 91:23, 103:10</p> <p>changed [1] - 108:9</p> <p>Chapter [2] - 60:4, 77:13</p> <p>character [2] - 10:2, 10:21</p> <p>character-defining [1] - 10:21</p> <p>characteristics [1] - 94:18</p> <p>characterized [2] - 10:8, 55:13</p> <p>charm [1] - 107:1</p> <p>chart [1] - 118:1</p> <p>chat [1] - 111:11</p> <p>chemical [1] - 23:13</p> <p>chose [1] - 78:13</p> <p>Christine [1] - 24:10</p> <p>Christmastime [1] - 28:18</p> <p>Church [1] - 13:10</p> <p>churches [1] - 118:20</p> <p>circles [1] - 12:13</p> <p>cited [62] - 56:1, 56:8</p> <p>cities [3] - 109:25, 110:10, 110:16</p> <p>citizen [1] - 36:13</p> <p>City [11] - 9:9, 11:11, 14:4, 59:19, 98:15, 103:25, 115:3, 116:4, 116:6, 119:9, 121:19</p> <p>CITY [1] - 1:1</p> <p>city [3] - 9:18, 9:21, 94:13</p> <p>claim [1] - 59:9</p> <p>clarification [2] - 83:7, 120:10</p> <p>clarify [4] - 5:11, 6:22, 23:22, 81:14</p> <p>classify [1] - 102:14</p> <p>clean [3] - 33:22, 34:9, 36:24</p> <p>cleaning [1] - 33:16</p> <p>clear [3] - 14:7, 78:16, 97:19</p> <p>clearer [1] - 109:21</p> <p>clearly [1] - 106:15</p> <p>close [15] - 8:4, 8:8, 15:25, 35:20, 54:2, 54:19, 69:23, 70:4, 72:2, 75:1, 79:13, 88:1, 91:5, 105:25</p> <p>closed [4] - 86:1, 86:4, 86:11, 86:18</p> <p>closing [1] - 91:4</p> <p>COA [15] - 8:23, 17:2, 48:17, 50:6, 51:22, 53:14, 53:25, 55:4,</p>	<p>72:18, 75:3, 77:18, 79:11, 80:22, 91:2, 120:20</p> <p>COA-22-27451 [1] - 4:7</p> <p>COA-23-28339 [1] - 4:8</p> <p>COA-23-29186 [1] - 4:9</p> <p>COA-23-29719 [1] - 4:14</p> <p>COA-23-29932 [1] - 4:15</p> <p>COA-23-30108 [1] - 4:16</p> <p>COA-23-30123 [7] - 4:17, 7:18, 17:4, 17:8, 20:11, 35:23, 48:16</p> <p>COA-23-30131 [4] - 48:18, 48:22, 54:7, 55:1</p> <p>COA-24-30146 [5] - 55:5, 55:8, 79:17, 92:4, 92:11</p> <p>COAs [4] - 8:22, 16:25, 55:22, 117:14</p> <p>code [1] - 29:10</p> <p>Code [11] - 19:7, 49:11, 56:1, 56:8, 59:7, 60:1, 60:3, 77:13, 81:19, 93:1, 94:2</p> <p>collapse [9] - 18:14, 26:24, 27:2, 33:18, 55:20, 63:6, 63:10, 64:19, 76:5</p> <p>collapsed [4] - 62:14, 62:21, 71:25, 72:3</p> <p>collapsing [3] - 58:5, 61:17, 75:15</p> <p>collection [1] - 9:22</p> <p>Columbia [2] - 96:23, 104:9</p> <p>columns [2] - 57:20, 76:14</p> <p>combination [2] - 113:6, 114:1</p> <p>coming [7] - 5:6, 28:5, 62:8, 76:22, 100:13, 117:14, 119:25</p> <p>commencing [1] - 1:7</p> <p>comment [11] - 3:25, 52:14, 74:23, 83:4, 85:24, 86:14, 92:16, 92:17, 92:19, 92:20, 104:11</p> <p>comments [3] - 37:11, 50:25, 106:8</p> <p>commercial [10] -</p>
C				
<p>cancer [2] - 18:10, 46:4</p> <p>cannot [3] - 26:10, 77:6, 89:25</p> <p>capital [1] - 99:3</p> <p>caps [1] - 118:7</p> <p>carbon [1] - 98:7</p> <p>carcinogens [1] - 20:9</p> <p>card [4] - 86:14, 87:17, 87:24, 90:21</p> <p>Cardinal [1] - 45:13</p> <p>CARLA [1] - 1:18</p> <p>Carla [1] - 2:12</p> <p>Carmel [1] - 13:9</p> <p>case [3] - 56:3, 77:25,</p>	<p>87:2</p> <p>cat [1] - 33:14</p> <p>caused [1] - 34:18</p> <p>causing [1] - 23:1</p> <p>caved [3] - 62:24, 72:3, 80:9</p> <p>caving [1] - 64:15</p> <p>CDC [1] - 99:24</p> <p>cell [3] - 2:25, 98:18, 98:20</p> <p>cement [1] - 49:6</p> <p>center [1] - 4:3</p> <p>centered [1] - 80:22</p> <p>Century [5] - 94:23, 95:16, 103:4, 103:20, 104:21</p> <p>certain [2] - 37:25, 116:21</p> <p>certainly [2] - 12:23, 79:4</p> <p>CERTIFICATE [1] - 122:1</p> <p>certified [1] - 58:3</p> <p>certify [1] - 122:8</p> <p>Chair [62] - 5:10, 5:24, 13:22, 14:14, 14:21, 16:3, 20:15, 20:23, 21:22, 21:23, 22:11, 22:20, 23:2, 23:18, 23:21, 27:21, 32:2, 36:17, 37:10, 37:19, 39:20, 40:2, 40:22, 47:6, 48:5, 51:25, 52:23, 53:10, 59:18, 59:21, 60:6, 60:7, 62:5, 64:25, 66:8, 74:18, 79:24, 80:20, 81:8, 81:13, 81:17, 82:6, 82:14, 82:20, 83:15, 85:20, 86:13, 88:25, 89:9, 91:19, 104:6, 106:10, 108:14, 108:21, 109:7, 109:24, 111:9, 111:23, 112:3, 118:11, 120:4, 121:14</p> <p>chair [4] - 87:14, 95:21, 109:8, 121:3</p> <p>chairman [3] - 2:17, 3:5</p> <p>Chairman [2] - 1:13, 3:11</p> <p>CHAIRMAN [183] - 2:3, 2:16, 2:22, 3:12, 3:19, 3:21, 3:23, 4:22, 5:9, 5:16, 6:13, 6:19, 6:22, 7:14, 7:22, 8:2, 8:6, 8:13, 8:15, 8:17, 8:20, 9:4,</p>	<p>11:13, 11:18, 12:24, 13:1, 13:3, 13:5, 14:9, 15:5, 15:9, 15:12, 15:22, 15:25, 16:8, 16:12, 16:16, 16:18, 16:20, 16:22, 20:12, 21:14, 21:17, 22:3, 22:18, 24:2, 24:6, 24:11, 24:14, 29:22, 31:3, 32:12, 32:15, 32:20, 35:17, 35:20, 35:25, 36:2, 38:8, 40:18, 41:4, 41:8, 42:9, 42:17, 46:3, 46:6, 46:20, 47:19, 48:2, 48:8, 48:12, 50:1, 50:3, 50:8, 51:14, 51:17, 51:21, 51:24, 53:5, 53:8, 53:13, 53:18, 53:24, 54:2, 54:16, 54:19, 54:22, 54:24, 55:1, 55:4, 59:16, 60:9, 60:12, 60:16, 60:18, 61:7, 62:2, 64:20, 69:2, 69:14, 69:18, 69:23, 70:3, 70:11, 71:14, 71:17, 71:19, 71:24, 72:9, 72:11, 72:15, 72:17, 72:20, 72:22, 74:21, 75:2, 77:17, 77:20, 77:22, 79:9, 79:13, 79:19, 81:15, 83:3, 83:8, 83:13, 83:20, 85:25, 86:4, 86:10, 86:16, 86:22, 87:2, 87:9, 87:11, 87:16, 87:19, 87:23, 88:1, 88:5, 90:5, 90:8, 90:11, 90:14, 90:17, 90:20, 91:1, 91:4, 92:1, 92:8, 92:10, 92:18, 92:22, 95:13, 95:15, 96:3, 96:9, 96:14, 96:16, 96:20, 104:12, 104:15, 105:4, 105:8, 105:20, 105:24, 106:4, 106:6, 106:12, 106:20, 107:20, 107:22, 108:25, 109:21, 110:25, 111:2, 111:4, 114:4, 115:20, 120:11, 121:7, 121:12, 121:21</p> <p>chairman's [1] - 3:5</p> <p>challenges [1] - 99:2</p> <p>chance [1] - 27:15</p>	<p>change [2] - 91:23, 103:10</p> <p>changed [1] - 108:9</p> <p>Chapter [2] - 60:4, 77:13</p> <p>character [2] - 10:2, 10:21</p> <p>character-defining [1] - 10:21</p> <p>characteristics [1] - 94:18</p> <p>characterized [2] - 10:8, 55:13</p> <p>charm [1] - 107:1</p> <p>chart [1] - 118:1</p> <p>chat [1] - 111:11</p> <p>chemical [1] - 23:13</p> <p>chose [1] - 78:13</p> <p>Christine [1] - 24:10</p> <p>Christmastime [1] - 28:18</p> <p>Church [1] - 13:10</p> <p>churches [1] - 118:20</p> <p>circles [1] - 12:13</p> <p>cited [62] - 56:1, 56:8</p> <p>cities [3] - 109:25, 110:10, 110:16</p> <p>citizen [1] - 36:13</p> <p>City [11] - 9:9, 11:11, 14:4, 59:19, 98:15, 103:25, 115:3, 116:4, 116:6, 119:9, 121:19</p> <p>CITY [1] - 1:1</p> <p>city [3] - 9:18, 9:21, 94:13</p> <p>claim [1] - 59:9</p> <p>clarification [2] - 83:7, 120:10</p> <p>clarify [4] - 5:11, 6:22, 23:22, 81:14</p> <p>classify [1] - 102:14</p> <p>clean [3] - 33:22, 34:9, 36:24</p> <p>cleaning [1] - 33:16</p> <p>clear [3] - 14:7, 78:16, 97:19</p> <p>clearer [1] - 109:21</p> <p>clearly [1] - 106:15</p> <p>close [15] - 8:4, 8:8, 15:25, 35:20, 54:2, 54:19, 69:23, 70:4, 72:2, 75:1, 79:13, 88:1, 91:5, 105:25</p> <p>closed [4] - 86:1, 86:4, 86:11, 86:18</p> <p>closing [1] - 91:4</p> <p>COA [15] - 8:23, 17:2, 48:17, 50:6, 51:22, 53:14, 53:25, 55:4,</p>	<p>72:18, 75:3, 77:18, 79:11, 80:22, 91:2, 120:20</p> <p>COA-22-27451 [1] - 4:7</p> <p>COA-23-28339 [1] - 4:8</p> <p>COA-23-29186 [1] - 4:9</p> <p>COA-23-29719 [1] - 4:14</p> <p>COA-23-29932 [1] - 4:15</p> <p>COA-23-30108 [1] - 4:16</p> <p>COA-23-30123 [7] - 4:17, 7:18, 17:4, 17:8, 20:11, 35:23, 48:16</p> <p>COA-23-30131 [4] - 48:18, 48:22, 54:7, 55:1</p> <p>COA-24-30146 [5] - 55:5, 55:8, 79:17, 92:4, 92:11</p> <p>COAs [4] - 8:22, 16:25, 55:22, 117:14</p> <p>code [1] - 29:10</p> <p>Code [11] - 19:7, 49:11, 56:1, 56:8, 59:7, 60:1, 60:3, 77:13, 81:19, 93:1, 94:2</p> <p>collapse [9] - 18:14, 26:24, 27:2, 33:18, 55:20, 63:6, 63:10, 64:19, 76:5</p> <p>collapsed [4] - 62:14, 62:21, 71:25, 72:3</p> <p>collapsing [3] - 58:5, 61:17, 75:15</p> <p>collection [1] - 9:22</p> <p>Columbia [2] - 96:23, 104:9</p> <p>columns [2] - 57:20, 76:14</p> <p>combination [2] - 113:6, 114:1</p> <p>coming [7] - 5:6, 28:5, 62:8, 76:22, 100:13, 117:14, 119:25</p> <p>commencing [1] - 1:7</p> <p>comment [11] - 3:25, 52:14, 74:23, 83:4, 85:24, 86:14, 92:16, 92:17, 92:19, 92:20, 104:11</p> <p>comments [3] - 37:11, 50:25, 106:8</p> <p>commercial [10] -</p>

<p>10:7, 10:13, 12:11, 12:15, 82:18, 93:18, 96:8, 98:3, 100:23, 116:12</p> <p>COMMISSIONER [2] - 48:1, 54:15</p> <p>commission [6] - 35:13, 76:1, 76:23, 81:1, 84:14, 84:19</p> <p>COMMISSION [26] - 1:3, 3:20, 3:22, 8:14, 8:16, 16:17, 16:19, 16:21, 21:16, 32:14, 36:1, 50:2, 51:16, 54:21, 54:23, 54:25, 60:11, 74:15, 92:7, 92:9, 95:14, 104:14, 107:17, 107:21, 111:1, 111:3</p> <p>Commission [22] - 1:14, 1:14, 2:5, 4:3, 8:20, 11:10, 14:15, 52:1, 58:1, 70:9, 79:5, 81:17, 83:16, 93:9, 94:2, 97:14, 113:21, 115:2, 116:18, 117:7, 117:15, 119:13</p> <p>commissioned [1] - 99:19</p> <p>COMMISSIONER [107] - 2:14, 2:18, 2:20, 3:9, 3:15, 3:18, 8:9, 8:12, 14:13, 14:23, 15:4, 16:2, 16:10, 16:14, 20:14, 22:19, 23:11, 23:16, 23:17, 27:20, 27:25, 32:1, 35:22, 35:24, 36:16, 37:9, 37:18, 40:1, 40:22, 47:6, 47:16, 47:17, 47:25, 48:4, 52:23, 54:6, 60:5, 62:4, 62:17, 62:20, 62:23, 63:4, 63:9, 63:19, 64:10, 64:24, 65:6, 65:13, 65:21, 65:25, 66:2, 66:6, 66:7, 66:12, 67:16, 67:20, 67:25, 68:8, 68:11, 68:15, 68:18, 68:21, 69:21, 74:17, 75:1, 79:16, 79:18, 79:20, 79:23, 80:19, 81:7, 82:5, 82:19, 83:11, 85:19, 86:2, 87:1, 87:5, 88:3, 88:24, 89:8, 89:12, 89:21, 89:24, 90:4, 90:7, 91:18, 91:24,</p>	<p>104:6, 106:2, 106:5, 106:9, 108:13, 108:20, 109:23, 110:22, 110:24, 111:8, 111:22, 112:6, 112:11, 112:17, 112:24, 118:9, 120:3, 120:8, 121:13</p> <p>Commissioner [15] - 20:24, 23:3, 23:22, 38:20, 39:2, 42:18, 69:14, 69:18, 74:24, 82:15, 83:8, 107:18, 111:6, 112:4, 118:12</p> <p>commissioner [7] - 2:15, 2:19, 2:21, 37:11, 38:23, 65:14, 80:20</p> <p>commissioner's [1] - 37:11</p> <p>Commissioners [1] - 108:1</p> <p>commissioners [11] - 56:5, 66:13, 70:7, 70:24, 79:25, 83:23, 84:23, 91:17, 91:25, 113:22</p> <p>committee [2] - 63:3, 121:18</p> <p>Committee [3] - 119:16, 119:20, 121:6</p> <p>communicating [1] - 115:16</p> <p>communities [1] - 99:12</p> <p>community [15] - 18:22, 36:10, 94:16, 100:3, 100:7, 100:22, 101:2, 101:6, 102:8, 105:17, 106:13, 113:1, 114:19, 120:23, 120:25</p> <p>Community [1] - 99:20</p> <p>companies [1] - 114:14</p> <p>companion [1] - 117:16</p> <p>company [3] - 34:11, 35:15, 103:10</p> <p>comparatively [1] - 78:21</p> <p>comparison [1] - 68:12</p> <p>complement [1] - 109:15</p> <p>complete [1] - 122:10</p>	<p>completed [2] - 83:19, 118:13</p> <p>Compliance [2] - 56:2, 56:8</p> <p>Complies [6] - 24:18, 33:1, 50:14, 60:25, 88:17, 97:4</p> <p>compromised [1] - 58:10</p> <p>concern [3] - 78:15, 80:25, 81:8</p> <p>concerns [1] - 34:22</p> <p>conclusion [2] - 25:10, 102:1</p> <p>concrete [5] - 49:7, 52:16, 96:9, 103:6, 103:13</p> <p>condemnation [1] - 60:4</p> <p>condemned [1] - 60:6</p> <p>condemning [1] - 56:9</p> <p>condition [11] - 7:7, 7:10, 49:16, 49:22, 54:9, 56:23, 67:14, 85:6, 85:21, 89:2, 95:4</p> <p>Condition [3] - 52:5, 53:11, 54:7</p> <p>conditioned [1] - 61:12</p> <p>conditioning [1] - 21:20</p> <p>Conditions [1] - 52:12</p> <p>conditions [11] - 5:17, 5:22, 5:23, 6:1, 6:9, 7:2, 51:11, 52:1, 54:13, 55:2, 89:5</p> <p>conduct [1] - 56:22</p> <p>confirm [2] - 22:1, 48:6</p> <p>conflict [1] - 104:7</p> <p>conscience [2] - 26:6, 45:24</p> <p>consent [14] - 4:13, 4:20, 5:12, 5:17, 6:4, 6:23, 7:3, 7:4, 7:7, 7:10, 7:20, 7:25, 8:10, 17:5</p> <p>consider [5] - 19:16, 58:24, 81:11, 81:20, 97:15</p> <p>considerable [1] - 82:10</p> <p>considered [5] - 17:18, 20:2, 56:14, 65:7, 78:18</p> <p>considering [1] - 81:18</p> <p>consist [1] - 49:2</p> <p>consistent [5] - 19:6,</p>	<p>19:8, 49:11, 56:24, 83:22</p> <p>consists [1] - 10:6</p> <p>constraints [1] - 113:9</p> <p>construct [4] - 48:24, 57:22, 70:5, 93:15</p> <p>constructed [1] - 17:14</p> <p>construction [13] - 17:16, 22:9, 39:19, 57:24, 61:14, 76:11, 94:20, 109:4, 109:14, 109:18, 110:5, 110:13, 110:14</p> <p>contact [2] - 14:4, 117:1</p> <p>contacted [1] - 44:13</p> <p>contacting [1] - 45:12</p> <p>contain [3] - 38:13, 38:19, 45:4</p> <p>contains [2] - 9:22, 9:25</p> <p>context [1] - 47:16</p> <p>continue [5] - 34:14, 76:20, 103:23, 115:11, 115:21</p> <p>continuing [1] - 109:19</p> <p>contract [1] - 98:10</p> <p>contractor [15] - 25:5, 25:11, 27:10, 27:21, 28:20, 30:17, 37:24, 41:15, 43:6, 44:4, 45:2, 71:6, 73:10, 77:4, 89:9</p> <p>contractors [5] - 26:12, 26:18, 30:2, 32:4, 37:22</p> <p>contribute [1] - 114:11</p> <p>contributing [11] - 17:10, 17:16, 29:16, 55:10, 55:11, 57:2, 57:11, 93:3, 93:5, 93:8, 99:8</p> <p>conversation [1] - 111:21</p> <p>conversations [2] - 3:1, 6:25</p> <p>convert [1] - 47:12</p> <p>conveyed [1] - 29:3</p> <p>convinced [1] - 66:25</p> <p>coordination [2] - 116:5, 117:23</p> <p>copied [2] - 79:21, 117:20</p> <p>corner [1] - 17:11</p> <p>Corporation [1] - 99:21</p>	<p>correct [18] - 6:18, 14:9, 14:22, 15:3, 16:6, 23:3, 23:15, 40:10, 53:2, 60:8, 65:20, 67:19, 71:16, 72:6, 83:16, 106:19, 112:4, 121:16</p> <p>corrections [1] - 51:12</p> <p>correctly [3] - 40:5, 108:18</p> <p>correspondence [1] - 13:13</p> <p>cosmetic [1] - 71:7</p> <p>cost [10] - 58:5, 58:18, 58:21, 61:15, 63:1, 68:4, 68:5, 73:16, 77:1, 84:25</p> <p>costly [1] - 10:22</p> <p>Council [4] - 98:15, 99:25, 116:4, 121:19</p> <p>Counsel [2] - 1:18, 2:13</p> <p>count [1] - 73:24</p> <p>COUNTY [1] - 122:4</p> <p>couple [8] - 12:3, 16:5, 28:7, 43:13, 63:12, 69:2, 114:22, 115:23</p> <p>coupled [2] - 20:6, 59:13</p> <p>course [5] - 4:1, 18:15, 71:10, 80:16, 99:17</p> <p>coverage [1] - 28:5</p> <p>covering [1] - 34:12</p> <p>crazy [1] - 46:2</p> <p>creative [1] - 103:18</p> <p>criteria [26] - 9:14, 81:19, 81:24, 85:3, 93:24, 93:25, 94:5, 94:9, 94:17, 94:25, 95:8, 102:4, 102:11, 102:15, 102:16, 102:22, 103:22, 104:3, 106:18, 116:17, 116:19, 116:22, 118:5, 118:17</p> <p>critically [1] - 116:21</p> <p>crowd [1] - 105:24</p> <p>cultural [3] - 9:17, 94:11, 98:6</p> <p>culturally [1] - 100:6</p> <p>cure [4] - 29:7, 34:18, 40:12</p> <p>current [14] - 18:8, 19:19, 55:16, 56:21, 59:1, 84:7, 84:8, 84:9, 89:1, 89:2, 98:9, 110:12,</p>
--	--	--	---	--

110:13, 110:14	42:12, 47:22, 48:15, 56:10, 56:12, 57:1, 58:25, 59:5, 63:20, 66:14, 66:17, 66:20, 67:2, 75:25, 76:22, 77:15, 78:8, 78:17, 79:1, 79:6, 80:3, 80:18, 81:5, 81:6, 81:18, 85:12, 86:6, 89:17, 92:3, 92:6, 92:11, 92:12, 92:25, 93:13, 95:11, 96:12, 105:22, 106:14, 107:22	98:12	District's [1] - 12:4	72:5
D		Devall [2] - 72:24, 77:4	Division [2] - 56:2, 56:8	elevation [5] - 49:20, 49:21, 49:23, 52:3, 54:8
damage [2] - 64:4, 84:3	66:14, 66:17, 66:20, 67:2, 75:25, 76:22, 77:15, 78:8, 78:17, 79:1, 79:6, 80:3, 80:18, 81:5, 81:6, 81:18, 85:12, 86:6, 89:17, 92:3, 92:6, 92:11, 92:12, 92:25, 93:13, 95:11, 96:12, 105:22, 106:14, 107:22	DEVALL [4] - 73:7, 73:9, 74:4, 74:16	docket [1] - 55:5	elevations [5] - 49:17, 51:2, 51:4, 51:9, 52:6
danger [3] - 55:19, 58:5, 76:5	demolitions [2] - 19:15, 58:23	develop [1] - 99:12	document [1] - 6:10	eligible [7] - 82:7, 82:12, 82:16, 94:7, 116:15, 117:5, 118:17
dangerous [3] - 35:12, 37:7	denial [3] - 28:13, 92:5, 119:13	development [4] - 93:16, 98:14, 100:1, 101:2	documentation [1] - 58:9	eliminating [1] - 46:16
date [4] - 21:1, 54:8, 84:12, 119:25	denied [1] - 92:13	Development [9] - 1:17, 1:17, 1:18, 9:7, 10:18, 11:8, 99:21, 116:6, 116:7	donate [1] - 77:9	Ellis [1] - 4:10
dated [1] - 52:6	deny [7] - 35:13, 79:6, 79:17, 81:22, 86:6, 92:3, 117:12	DIA [2] - 116:7, 117:2	done [21] - 22:23, 26:23, 29:24, 34:4, 46:8, 47:2, 62:6, 62:11, 63:9, 66:15, 71:7, 71:8, 72:1, 75:18, 77:14, 80:11, 80:17, 82:10, 108:23, 111:4, 114:7	email [5] - 16:4, 73:17, 79:21, 111:12, 117:20
DATED [1] - 122:15	denying [2] - 28:5, 106:14	Diane [3] - 1:9, 122:7, 122:19	door [2] - 11:6, 13:9	emails [1] - 78:9
daughter [1] - 26:9	Department [8] - 9:7, 10:18, 11:8, 14:5, 39:9, 113:19, 116:5, 116:25	different [8] - 14:18, 39:5, 44:14, 55:22, 99:3, 113:7, 114:1, 118:14	doors [1] - 18:24	embedded [1] - 98:7
David [1] - 50:10	Department's [1] - 14:3	differently [1] - 114:8	down [7] - 27:6, 40:25, 76:3, 76:8, 82:24, 91:20, 118:16	embody [1] - 10:2
Davis [1] - 101:21	depicted [1] - 93:21	difficult [1] - 82:1	down [7] - 27:6, 40:25, 76:3, 76:8, 82:24, 91:20, 118:16	emitting [1] - 26:17
days [1] - 79:22	Dept [2] - 1:17, 1:18	difficultly [1] - 82:1	Downtown [1] - 116:7	emphasize [2] - 56:11, 57:22
de [2] - 121:3, 121:15	described [1] - 64:4	diligence [1] - 106:10	draft [1] - 108:21	enclosure [1] - 57:17
deadline [1] - 117:17	description [1] - 13:11	direct [1] - 22:24	drawings [5] - 49:20, 49:21, 49:23, 54:8, 54:12	encourage [2] - 79:5, 79:6
deal [1] - 75:21	design [5] - 19:10, 49:11, 57:13, 105:18, 110:12	director [2] - 15:16, 78:5	dribble [1] - 107:11	end [1] - 95:12
dealing [1] - 27:9	Design [1] - 49:12	directors [1] - 78:7	drilled [1] - 30:10	Endangered [1] - 115:25
decades [1] - 109:19	designate [1] - 12:18	disaster [1] - 26:8	Drive [1] - 88:13	endangered [1] - 116:21
December [1] - 97:20	designation [6] - 8:24, 9:8, 9:10, 11:10, 11:15, 14:17	discovered [1] - 44:25	drive [1] - 36:8	ended [2] - 43:20, 111:12
decent [1] - 101:22	designed [1] - 106:21	discovery [1] - 46:9	due [4] - 17:15, 18:9, 23:20, 57:4	engineer [14] - 20:17, 42:22, 45:12, 45:18, 58:3, 64:22, 67:13, 85:21, 86:21, 86:24, 87:20, 89:10, 89:11, 89:13
decided [4] - 63:2, 65:16, 65:22, 100:2	desire [2] - 57:22, 65:10	discrepancy [1] - 80:24	during [5] - 4:1, 80:3, 85:23, 87:7, 105:18	engineer's [4] - 19:1, 31:1, 55:18, 59:14
decision [1] - 67:24	despite [1] - 55:22	discorrection [1] - 87:13	DUVAL [1] - 122:4	engineering [5] - 18:16, 19:21, 20:7, 26:21, 58:4
declaration [1] - 79:21	destroying [1] - 42:25	discuss [1] - 70:23	E	Engineering [1] - 90:9
declare [2] - 16:3, 117:11	detail [3] - 31:2, 118:2, 118:4	discussion [20] - 7:21, 16:15, 16:16, 35:25, 40:20, 47:4, 47:20, 54:18, 54:20, 79:19, 80:21, 83:21, 85:15, 85:16, 86:7, 91:6, 92:2, 106:7, 107:14, 114:7	east [1] - 76:2	enlarged [1] - 53:1
declaring [1] - 116:20	details [1] - 58:15	discussions [2] - 59:3, 98:8	East [4] - 48:19, 48:23, 97:22, 100:1	Ennis [2] - 101:20, 105:12
decline [1] - 89:7	deteriorate [1] - 76:21	dismissed [1] - 102:13	Eastside [7] - 93:7, 94:14, 99:9, 99:20, 99:24, 100:8, 111:17	enormous [1] - 74:6
dedicate [1] - 113:24	deteriorated [2] - 56:18, 57:9	displace [1] - 100:14	Economic [1] - 116:5	entails [2] - 13:12, 14:2
dedeemed [3] - 23:24, 85:9, 117:5	deterioration [2] - 10:25, 95:5	displayed [1] - 13:18	economic [7] - 58:15, 59:9, 80:23, 81:3, 81:10, 81:22, 101:2	entertain [9] - 3:14, 3:15, 8:3, 16:1, 16:9, 35:21, 47:4, 54:3, 79:15
defer [1] - 21:23	determination [1] - 121:20	disposed [1] - 31:21	economical [1] - 42:24	entire [3] - 30:19, 33:20, 63:24
deferred [2] - 4:6, 4:12	determine [5] - 20:25, 22:16, 91:12, 93:10,	disrepair [2] - 84:5, 84:15	economics [1] - 81:8	entities [1] - 114:11
deferring [1] - 118:25		distinguish [1] - 94:18	Ed [1] - 1:7	environmental [20] - 18:7, 20:8, 25:11, 25:13, 25:14, 25:21,
defining [1] - 10:21		distribute [1] - 117:21	effect [1] - 78:9	
definitely [3] - 45:8, 53:4, 112:22		district [4] - 12:5, 39:4, 57:6, 76:20	effort [1] - 114:21	
definitively [1] - 104:21		District [2] - 93:7, 94:15	efforts [2] - 18:12, 98:25	
dehumidifiers [1] - 43:18			either [3] - 26:19, 42:23, 78:11	
demolish [8] - 17:10, 27:11, 35:11, 55:10, 76:24, 81:23, 93:2, 93:15			elaborate [1] - 38:8	
demolished [4] - 20:4, 22:17, 31:22, 38:19			elements [2] - 19:10,	
demolishing [1] - 64:11				
demolition [55] - 7:19, 19:17, 19:22, 22:15, 24:3, 31:4, 31:5, 31:7, 32:18, 34:23, 35:4, 35:23, 37:14, 38:18, 39:3, 41:1,				

<p>26:14, 28:24, 28:25, 30:12, 30:14, 31:6, 31:25, 34:21, 44:14, 44:18, 44:19, 45:18, 98:6, 98:25 environmentalist [1] - 42:23 Epstein [10] - 2:14, 20:24, 23:3, 38:20, 69:15, 69:18, 82:15, 83:8, 107:18, 112:4 EPSTEIN [74] - 1:13, 2:14, 3:9, 3:15, 8:9, 14:13, 14:23, 15:4, 16:10, 20:14, 22:19, 23:11, 23:16, 27:20, 27:25, 35:22, 36:16, 40:1, 40:22, 47:6, 47:17, 47:25, 52:23, 54:6, 60:5, 62:4, 62:17, 62:20, 62:23, 63:4, 63:9, 63:19, 64:10, 66:7, 66:12, 67:16, 67:20, 67:25, 68:8, 68:11, 68:15, 68:18, 68:21, 69:21, 79:16, 79:23, 82:5, 82:19, 83:11, 85:19, 86:2, 87:1, 87:5, 88:3, 88:24, 89:8, 89:12, 89:21, 89:24, 90:4, 90:7, 91:18, 104:6, 108:13, 109:23, 110:22, 111:22, 112:6, 112:11, 112:17, 112:24, 120:3, 120:8, 121:13 equipment [4] - 23:20, 25:22, 25:24, 29:2 errors [1] - 3:6 especially [2] - 34:25, 100:23 essentially [1] - 117:3 estimate [3] - 58:17, 77:3, 80:25 estimated [1] - 68:19 evaluate [3] - 10:18, 116:23, 118:5 eventually [1] - 28:22 evidence [11] - 10:19, 10:24, 18:7, 20:18, 20:20, 59:8, 67:8, 82:23, 95:4, 121:5, 121:17 evolved [1] - 113:14 evolving [1] - 113:11 ex [2] - 16:3, 79:20 exactly [2] - 31:20, 112:20</p>	<p>example [1] - 12:16 examples [1] - 104:25 exclusion [1] - 28:4 excused [1] - 90:17 execute [1] - 101:3 executed [2] - 71:22, 107:11 executive [2] - 15:16, 78:5 exhaustive [1] - 56:5 exhibits [1] - 94:23 existing [5] - 19:2, 43:1, 49:1, 52:16, 99:15 exists [1] - 98:19 expect [1] - 117:24 expenditures [1] - 118:6 experienced [1] - 57:8 expert [5] - 25:11, 26:14, 31:25, 45:17, 45:19 expertise [3] - 28:10, 80:1, 80:13 explain [2] - 62:5, 62:11 explore [1] - 105:18 explored [2] - 43:4, 56:19 expressed [2] - 20:3, 78:24 expressing [1] - 36:13 extent [1] - 101:19 exterior [15] - 10:9, 10:20, 10:25, 11:4, 18:13, 18:18, 22:25, 23:9, 24:1, 26:13, 27:3, 30:25, 33:15, 38:10, 95:5 extra [1] - 44:23 extremist [1] - 46:12 eyes [1] - 84:16</p>	<p>59:20 fair [2] - 88:4, 88:5 fairly [2] - 69:23, 70:3 faith [1] - 80:5 fall [3] - 23:14, 37:23, 61:23 fallen [1] - 64:5 falling [2] - 23:12, 82:24 family [2] - 17:13, 48:24 fans [1] - 43:16 far [3] - 24:25, 76:12, 76:16 fault [1] - 45:5 favor [12] - 3:19, 8:13, 16:12, 16:18, 47:24, 54:16, 54:22, 80:18, 86:8, 92:5, 107:16, 110:25 feasibility [1] - 80:23 feasible [5] - 19:16, 19:21, 58:24, 59:4, 81:3 features [3] - 10:21, 18:23, 49:10 February [7] - 1:6, 2:1, 2:4, 52:7, 54:9, 54:12, 56:24 feedback [1] - 101:9 feet [1] - 93:17 fellow [4] - 37:10, 80:20, 84:23, 91:25 few [8] - 12:8, 65:10, 77:6, 78:11, 79:22, 82:13, 108:21, 109:24 fiber [1] - 49:6 fight [1] - 34:14 Figueroa [2] - 2:8, 6:10 FIGUEROA [3] - 1:17, 2:8, 9:6 figure [4] - 27:9, 41:14, 69:15, 102:20 figures [1] - 69:19 File [1] - 95:24 file [3] - 11:2, 11:4, 96:24 filed [2] - 99:5, 119:12 filing [1] - 81:10 fill [4] - 86:14, 87:17, 87:23, 90:20 filling [1] - 6:6 final [1] - 53:14 finally [1] - 76:3 financial [1] - 113:12 findings [5] - 11:7, 20:6, 59:3, 59:12, 93:19</p>	<p>fine [1] - 78:3 finish [1] - 49:8 finishes [1] - 74:7 fins [2] - 109:17, 110:15 Fire [1] - 12:6 fire [1] - 76:4 first [14] - 3:4, 33:8, 43:5, 45:2, 73:19, 75:10, 92:16, 94:9, 98:4, 99:6, 100:2, 107:1, 115:24, 119:4 fiscal [1] - 117:18 fit [1] - 105:17 fix [6] - 26:5, 41:11, 66:21, 68:2, 68:16, 73:23 fixed [3] - 52:22, 66:23, 68:25 fixing [3] - 28:13, 68:23, 69:13 flat [1] - 10:10 floor [10] - 5:6, 40:19, 47:22, 57:18, 61:21, 63:25, 71:13, 71:15, 92:3, 107:15 floors [2] - 61:18, 71:12 Florida [12] - 1:8, 1:10, 15:15, 39:13, 60:22, 95:24, 96:4, 103:8, 104:20, 110:10, 122:7, 122:19 FLORIDA [1] - 122:3 fluid [1] - 46:23 foam [19] - 22:22, 22:24, 23:10, 27:22, 29:12, 29:15, 29:23, 30:10, 33:11, 34:16, 34:17, 34:18, 35:10, 39:22, 40:3, 42:21, 42:25, 46:21 focus [1] - 75:12 folks [2] - 117:21, 118:19 follow [3] - 23:4, 79:25, 102:6 follow-up [1] - 23:4 following [1] - 9:15 fond [1] - 100:14 foot [1] - 68:16 footage [2] - 68:14, 68:22 foregoing [2] - 121:23, 122:9 forgive [1] - 3:6 form [4] - 58:16, 76:17, 107:12, 117:9 formaldehyde [13] -</p>	<p>18:9, 25:14, 25:16, 29:21, 41:13, 42:8, 44:21, 44:24, 44:25, 45:4, 45:7, 47:7, 47:11 former [1] - 16:5 Forsyth [1] - 4:11 forth [2] - 34:23, 82:3 forward [17] - 4:2, 7:9, 7:14, 7:24, 9:5, 11:18, 13:3, 15:10, 59:14, 60:16, 72:20, 77:20, 86:25, 92:20, 95:10, 96:14, 98:12 forwarded [2] - 16:6, 93:11 forwards [1] - 20:10 foundation [6] - 49:1, 49:8, 52:16, 65:24, 67:22, 89:16 four [5] - 51:3, 52:1, 94:4, 95:7, 102:16 fourth [2] - 100:8, 106:23 FPR [1] - 1:9 frame [3] - 55:13, 57:5, 57:14 framing [8] - 29:10, 62:13, 62:18, 71:4, 71:8, 71:13, 71:15, 75:16 free [1] - 117:20 freezing [1] - 26:3 friable [1] - 38:16 Friday [3] - 5:25, 6:1, 102:25 front [9] - 5:5, 51:10, 52:21, 52:25, 57:18, 64:14, 64:15, 67:11, 72:7 full [2] - 49:14, 49:17 full-width [2] - 49:14, 49:17 fully [3] - 43:4, 79:4, 79:7 fumes [4] - 25:6, 25:16, 30:6, 46:9 function [1] - 115:10 functioning [1] - 21:19 fund [2] - 116:2, 118:3 funding [2] - 117:6, 117:18 funds [1] - 119:8 furniture [1] - 28:16 furthermore [1] - 58:7</p>
F				
G				

<p>gas [2] - 29:17, 30:6 gases [1] - 31:9 gassing [5] - 25:16, 28:23, 29:6, 31:9, 31:12 gather [1] - 112:16 Gavel [1] - 96:20 Gene [2] - 104:18, 104:24 general [2] - 92:16, 92:18 General [2] - 1:18, 2:13 generation [1] - 100:8 Georgia [1] - 97:1 Georgian [1] - 12:14 given [19] - 34:25, 47:12, 49:10, 49:14, 58:19, 64:1, 64:6, 67:18, 68:1, 68:13, 77:1, 79:24, 112:2, 112:7, 112:8, 112:10, 112:11, 112:16, 112:25 glass [3] - 10:10, 11:5, 109:2 Glober [3] - 2:20, 39:2, 74:24 GLOBER [16] - 1:14, 2:20, 16:14, 35:24, 37:9, 47:16, 48:1, 54:15, 74:17, 75:1, 79:18, 80:19, 91:24, 106:5, 106:9, 110:24 Gloria [1] - 72:24 goal [1] - 84:19 golly [1] - 76:1 gotcha [2] - 65:25, 66:2 gracious [1] - 102:18 grandfather [1] - 100:15 grant [4] - 82:7, 82:12, 82:16, 116:3 Great [1] - 12:6 great [6] - 12:16, 40:16, 45:3, 95:3, 108:25, 111:20 groups [1] - 114:9 guess [4] - 38:3, 41:9, 43:14, 107:6 guest [1] - 42:13 Guidelines [1] - 49:12 guidelines [7] - 62:1, 66:19, 67:18, 79:25, 80:2, 80:14, 118:4 guinea [2] - 45:22, 45:23 guy [3] - 25:21, 28:24, 44:18</p>	<p>guys [2] - 20:21, 61:14</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">H</p> <hr/> <p>habitable [2] - 21:21, 23:13 half [2] - 65:19, 80:10 hallway [1] - 3:2 hand [8] - 24:17, 32:25, 38:2, 50:13, 60:24, 73:2, 88:15, 97:3 handled [1] - 31:10 handling [1] - 27:23 hands [2] - 91:13, 103:10 happy [3] - 12:23, 42:4, 104:4 hard [3] - 15:19, 36:15, 113:4 hardship [3] - 59:10, 81:10, 81:22 Hardwick [1] - 95:20 HASKINS [3] - 77:19, 77:25, 78:5 Haskins [3] - 15:14, 77:21, 78:1 hazard [1] - 22:24 hazardous [3] - 31:9, 38:13, 46:9 head [2] - 48:8, 64:18 headache [1] - 25:8 health [6] - 18:20, 37:4, 38:21, 41:20, 47:1 hear [15] - 5:21, 6:14, 9:4, 21:4, 27:14, 41:4, 56:15, 59:11, 67:15, 70:25, 72:12, 87:20, 91:16, 102:19, 106:1 heard [11] - 29:20, 33:14, 34:10, 36:12, 46:7, 69:9, 69:10, 75:14, 78:12, 83:5, 85:4 hearing [37] - 4:23, 8:5, 8:8, 11:14, 13:23, 16:1, 16:22, 24:7, 35:21, 47:20, 50:3, 50:4, 51:24, 54:3, 55:1, 60:12, 60:13, 69:3, 74:20, 74:22, 79:14, 83:22, 86:1, 86:3, 86:11, 86:17, 86:24, 87:7, 87:12, 87:21, 90:23, 91:5, 96:19, 105:25, 121:4, 121:5, 121:8 heat [1] - 27:8</p>	<p>Hedrick [7] - 4:17, 7:20, 17:4, 17:9, 24:12, 36:7, 48:15 height [1] - 19:11 held [1] - 1:6 hello [2] - 11:20, 96:21 help [3] - 91:7, 103:15, 114:24 helpful [1] - 108:19 hence [1] - 22:14 heritage [2] - 9:18, 94:12 hi [1] - 7:16 high [3] - 18:9, 20:9, 47:9 highlight [1] - 111:20 highly [1] - 42:19 highway [2] - 103:15, 105:7 hip [1] - 49:3 hire [3] - 25:10, 26:5, 27:21 hired [2] - 44:17, 44:18 historian [1] - 101:21 Historic [14] - 2:4, 2:8, 2:10, 11:9, 12:4, 70:8, 75:11, 79:5, 93:7, 94:15, 99:24, 111:10, 111:23, 116:1 historic [35] - 8:24, 9:23, 10:4, 12:4, 14:10, 15:20, 19:4, 19:5, 22:6, 22:8, 34:24, 36:10, 37:6, 38:5, 38:24, 39:4, 56:13, 56:18, 57:6, 62:1, 70:12, 76:19, 77:6, 82:9, 84:14, 93:11, 98:4, 99:9, 109:14, 109:15, 110:2, 110:3, 110:6, 111:14, 114:9 HISTORIC [1] - 1:2 historical [3] - 9:17, 41:19, 94:11 historically [2] - 100:6, 100:21 history [4] - 22:4, 22:6, 22:10, 98:5 hitting [1] - 66:24 HOFF [22] - 1:14, 2:18, 3:18, 8:12, 16:2, 23:17, 32:1, 37:18, 48:4, 64:24, 65:6, 65:13, 65:21, 65:25, 66:2, 66:6, 79:20, 81:7, 106:2, 108:20, 111:8, 118:9</p>	<p>Hoff [6] - 2:18, 23:22, 42:18, 48:6, 111:6, 118:12 Hogan [1] - 1:8 hold [1] - 103:15 holes [2] - 30:10, 30:12 holidays [1] - 110:1 home [9] - 17:13, 38:15, 48:24, 65:2, 71:3, 71:11, 71:22, 84:25, 85:7 homeowner [2] - 33:10, 34:10 homes [6] - 17:20, 18:3, 18:5, 70:15, 84:14, 84:15 honestly [1] - 101:13 hope [1] - 108:10 hosted [1] - 118:14 hour [1] - 88:2 hours [1] - 2:24 House [2] - 9:12, 11:23 house [39] - 27:11, 30:19, 31:13, 34:25, 35:11, 37:5, 42:13, 45:5, 51:12, 52:17, 52:22, 61:16, 64:14, 64:17, 65:16, 68:2, 68:5, 68:6, 68:22, 69:5, 69:8, 69:12, 69:16, 69:19, 70:5, 72:4, 74:11, 75:24, 75:25, 76:8, 76:15, 89:3, 89:5, 89:17, 89:18, 89:20, 89:22, 89:25, 104:24 houses [7] - 35:6, 65:10, 70:11, 70:21, 73:11, 75:10, 76:10 housing [1] - 98:2 HPC [4] - 51:1, 115:3, 115:8, 115:9 HPS [1] - 110:23 humidity [1] - 40:8 hundred [1] - 69:11 hundreds [1] - 73:11 hypothetical [2] - 42:19, 42:20 hypothetically [2] - 37:24, 38:4 hypotheticals [1] - 37:20</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">I</p> <hr/> <p>idea [5] - 38:9, 39:2, 46:16, 46:20, 109:4 immediate [2] - 56:10,</p>	<p>58:5 immediately [2] - 101:1, 102:13 imminent [2] - 33:18, 76:5 impact [2] - 57:3, 98:7 impacted [1] - 10:21 importance [2] - 100:11, 111:13 important [10] - 30:13, 30:14, 30:22, 35:2, 37:8, 39:1, 70:13, 101:1, 101:7, 114:20 imposed [2] - 57:16, 109:18 impossible [6] - 10:23, 19:13, 26:20, 46:11, 85:1, 89:15 impregnated [1] - 36:23 impregnates [1] - 46:24 impregnating [1] - 46:15 improved [1] - 115:14 improvements [3] - 18:19, 55:24, 57:25 inaudible [9] - 59:20, 60:3, 61:25, 67:23, 74:24, 83:6, 83:11, 118:24, 121:9 Inaudible [3] - 87:9, 87:10, 120:9 inaudible [2] - 89:5, 121:4 include [6] - 9:15, 11:5, 18:24, 44:20, 49:4, 49:17 included [2] - 22:12, 73:20 including [1] - 56:19 incorporate [1] - 105:14 incorrect [1] - 22:21 incorrectly [1] - 22:23 indecipherable [1] - 10:10 Indecipherable [1] - 89:6 indefinitely [1] - 42:2 indicated [2] - 111:12, 118:15 indicating [8] - 7:13, 9:3, 13:2, 24:5, 60:15, 72:19, 77:19, 96:13 indicative [3] - 103:5, 103:19, 110:12 indigenous [1] - 94:21 industrial [4] - 43:16,</p>
--	---	--	---	--

<p>96:8, 97:24, 106:25 influences [2] - 17:21, 18:4 information [8] - 2:23, 14:5, 36:5, 39:17, 47:15, 108:8, 108:15, 115:22 ingesting [1] - 31:17 inject [3] - 29:12, 30:10, 35:10 injected [1] - 22:22 injection [2] - 23:10, 39:22 inordinate [1] - 70:21 input [1] - 105:19 inquire [1] - 111:9 inserted [1] - 40:10 inset [1] - 110:15 inside [15] - 23:9, 23:20, 23:23, 27:4, 31:8, 34:5, 34:9, 38:12, 42:7, 42:8, 61:16, 61:21, 62:13, 62:18, 90:3 inspect [2] - 23:8, 23:23 inspection [2] - 58:8, 91:9 inspiration [1] - 105:9 install [1] - 30:3 installation [1] - 109:11 installed [5] - 29:24, 34:17, 34:20, 43:6, 120:19 installing [1] - 109:13 instance [2] - 59:22, 117:12 insulation [10] - 27:7, 30:4, 30:5, 33:11, 34:11, 35:14, 38:11, 40:3, 43:5, 45:8 Insulation [2] - 30:3, 34:11 insurance [2] - 28:3, 34:12 intake [1] - 117:1 integrity [4] - 20:1, 34:7, 58:10, 91:12 intent [3] - 100:16, 100:19, 116:10 intention [1] - 42:12 interest [6] - 13:15, 78:24, 100:16, 113:19, 118:16, 118:20 interested [2] - 114:2, 117:21 interesting [1] - 105:3 interior [6] - 33:25,</p>	<p>34:1, 36:24, 55:12, 71:4, 71:7 internal [1] - 61:18 introductions [1] - 2:6 investigation [1] - 46:8 investing [1] - 97:25 involved [1] - 115:5 involves [1] - 114:8 lonia [1] - 75:24 Irma [1] - 76:2 irreparable [1] - 85:9 issue [16] - 5:5, 7:8, 23:14, 23:20, 33:11, 34:12, 34:13, 37:25, 39:12, 39:23, 41:11, 41:20, 47:1, 49:13, 113:16, 113:21 issued [1] - 53:14 issues [7] - 23:1, 61:19, 113:7, 113:12, 114:1, 115:8 Item [2] - 7:18, 8:21 item [8] - 8:24, 9:2, 86:18, 111:6, 118:8, 118:22, 119:3, 119:4 items [7] - 4:7, 4:12, 4:20, 5:12, 7:25, 76:25, 115:23 Items [4] - 8:10, 8:19, 8:21, 54:13 itself [7] - 19:10, 21:3, 22:12, 39:24, 65:23, 93:13, 116:25</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">K</p> <p>keep [7] - 12:17, 12:20, 53:24, 72:2, 115:17, 120:18, 120:25 keeping [1] - 62:7 Kelvin [1] - 13:8 kept [4] - 28:21, 43:10, 113:11, 113:12 key [1] - 18:23 kids [3] - 25:1, 26:9, 45:25 Kim [4] - 7:17, 32:22, 74:4, 75:5 kind [19] - 12:12, 13:14, 28:4, 36:18, 38:7, 39:5, 47:9, 62:9, 63:20, 63:25, 65:14, 67:3, 69:1, 75:17, 80:22, 105:2, 118:2, 119:6 kinds [1] - 104:20 King [3] - 24:9, 41:7, 60:21 KING [13] - 24:12, 24:18, 24:23, 24:25, 27:24, 28:1, 30:2, 31:11, 32:7, 41:9, 42:15, 43:3, 46:4 kitchen [3] - 73:25, 74:1, 74:2 knowing [2] - 26:3, 80:13 knowledge [5] - 21:24, 22:13, 46:14, 104:18, 112:13 known [3] - 83:9, 83:13, 84:13</p>	<p>large [2] - 9:22, 29:18 Large [1] - 1:10 last [28] - 6:1, 21:19, 21:25, 24:25, 25:3, 27:16, 30:17, 30:21, 30:23, 31:3, 56:14, 65:13, 70:25, 71:10, 79:2, 83:17, 83:19, 98:8, 108:2, 109:10, 112:5, 114:25, 115:13, 116:3, 116:19, 119:15, 120:4 latest [1] - 28:3 lath [5] - 34:1, 34:2, 34:8, 36:23, 38:13 latitude [1] - 13:20 Laura [1] - 119:7 lead [1] - 18:14 Leaf [2] - 9:12, 11:23 lean [1] - 21:7 leaning [2] - 61:22, 64:17 least [1] - 33:23 leave [1] - 44:7 leaving [1] - 46:17 Leedy [1] - 104:18 Leedy's [1] - 104:24 left [6] - 32:9, 38:6, 41:18, 65:9, 72:4, 120:13 Legal [2] - 48:9, 115:3 legislation [1] - 119:2 legitimate [1] - 81:8 less [2] - 89:6, 103:12 letter [6] - 18:16, 19:2, 20:17, 26:22, 31:1, 32:5 letting [2] - 38:15, 91:21 level [2] - 47:9, 80:13 levels [3] - 18:9, 20:9, 41:12 Lewis [1] - 13:8 LEWIS [5] - 14:7, 14:11, 14:19, 14:25, 15:7 Liberty [7] - 4:14, 5:1, 5:3, 55:5, 55:9, 92:4, 92:12 licensed [1] - 73:9 Lienu [2] - 5:2, 6:11 LIENAU [6] - 5:15, 5:20, 6:5, 6:12, 6:16, 6:20 LIFT [1] - 99:19 likely [1] - 98:24 limitations [1] - 114:17 limited [2] - 37:21,</p>	<p>113:8 line [1] - 77:5 list [1] - 8:23 listed [6] - 35:4, 57:11, 93:5, 93:8, 95:18, 95:23 listing [3] - 99:9, 99:18, 100:18 live [3] - 11:21, 70:22, 77:10 lives [1] - 110:2 LLC [2] - 9:12, 11:23 LM-24-01 [4] - 8:25, 9:8, 11:11, 16:11 LM-24-02 [1] - 4:11 loan [1] - 119:9 local [4] - 100:20, 101:21, 102:8, 105:19 located [12] - 9:20, 10:5, 17:8, 17:11, 17:13, 17:19, 18:2, 48:22, 55:9, 55:12, 93:3, 94:14 location [1] - 52:21 locations [1] - 63:24 look [15] - 20:18, 20:25, 30:4, 37:8, 42:5, 51:2, 67:18, 70:18, 73:16, 84:19, 91:14, 91:15, 100:10, 102:2, 112:19 looked [2] - 67:6, 68:4 looking [7] - 52:24, 64:2, 64:10, 80:6, 93:14, 95:23, 119:8 looks [7] - 47:9, 68:6, 92:14, 107:9, 107:12, 108:14, 108:25 LOPERA [32] - 1:18, 2:12, 3:10, 3:14, 5:10, 8:4, 8:18, 13:22, 16:13, 16:15, 48:5, 48:11, 54:17, 59:17, 74:19, 74:23, 81:13, 81:16, 86:13, 86:17, 87:10, 87:13, 87:18, 88:7, 90:24, 92:16, 96:18, 118:24, 120:9, 121:3, 121:8, 121:16 Lopera [1] - 2:12 loud [2] - 38:7, 69:24 louder [2] - 17:25, 21:7 loves [1] - 101:24 low [1] - 17:25 LS-23-01 [1] - 4:10</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">J</p> <p>JACKSONVILLE [1] - 1:1 Jacksonville [12] - 1:8, 9:9, 9:22, 11:9, 11:12, 15:15, 50:11, 60:22, 88:13, 104:1, 106:22, 115:3 Jacksonville's [1] - 14:4 January [2] - 3:8, 52:6 JAX [1] - 99:19 Joanna [1] - 4:5 JOANNA [1] - 1:18 job [2] - 32:4, 47:2 Joel [2] - 111:24, 112:6 Jonathan [1] - 11:21 judge [1] - 66:9 JULIA [1] - 1:13 Julia [1] - 2:14 jump [1] - 114:25 jumping [1] - 115:21</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">L</p> <p>labor [1] - 73:21 LaFrance [1] - 96:25 Land [4] - 119:16, 119:19, 120:16, 121:5 land [2] - 98:18, 118:3 landmark [12] - 9:9, 9:10, 11:12, 11:15, 12:18, 13:11, 13:19, 13:24, 14:8, 16:23, 104:3 landmarking [7] - 14:1, 14:9, 15:18, 16:11, 93:12, 94:3, 94:7 landmarks [3] - 10:19, 102:4, 119:19 lap [1] - 49:6</p>		

<p>Lucas [1] - 90:9 luncheon [1] - 115:7 LUZ [1] - 119:25</p>	<p>104:2, 115:6, 116:16 meeting [12] - 2:4, 2:23, 3:8, 3:16, 3:17, 3:24, 4:1, 102:18, 114:6, 121:14, 121:16, 121:22</p>	<p>103:4, 103:20, 104:21</p>	<p>35:21, 35:22, 40:18, 47:21, 54:3, 54:6, 79:15, 79:17, 86:5, 92:2, 106:1, 106:2, 107:15, 110:22</p>	<p>118:25, 120:7 MS [51] - 2:8, 2:12, 3:10, 3:14, 5:10, 8:4, 8:18, 9:6, 13:22, 16:13, 16:15, 17:22, 21:4, 32:22, 33:1, 33:6, 33:8, 46:18, 48:5, 48:11, 54:17, 56:15, 59:11, 59:17, 59:25, 69:17, 73:7, 73:9, 74:3, 74:4, 74:16, 74:19, 74:23, 75:5, 75:9, 81:13, 81:16, 86:13, 86:17, 87:10, 87:13, 87:18, 88:7, 90:24, 92:16, 96:18, 118:24, 120:9, 121:3, 121:8, 121:16</p>
M				
<p>machine [2] - 43:21, 43:22 main [2] - 13:16, 34:25 maintain [2] - 3:3, 110:18 maintained [1] - 11:1 major [1] - 11:2 man [1] - 70:19 manner [1] - 40:10 map [1] - 93:22 March [4] - 117:19, 119:16, 119:20, 122:15 mark [1] - 88:2 market [1] - 76:13 Market [6] - 9:8, 10:6, 11:11, 13:8, 13:25, 16:24 masonry [4] - 10:7, 10:12, 12:12, 107:8 massing [1] - 19:11 Master [1] - 95:24 master [1] - 51:7 match [1] - 110:6 material [4] - 26:17, 38:14, 39:8, 46:23 materialized [1] - 55:25 materials [13] - 19:4, 19:12, 31:8, 38:16, 40:14, 46:9, 46:14, 46:15, 46:24, 49:4, 76:12, 89:19, 94:21 Matthew [1] - 76:2 Max [1] - 2:20 MAX [1] - 1:14 max [1] - 74:10 maximum [1] - 93:16 McDowell [3] - 32:7, 45:13 McEachin [3] - 111:25, 112:7, 112:9 mean [15] - 6:12, 27:6, 27:8, 28:11, 29:25, 41:16, 42:3, 42:6, 46:1, 46:5, 65:8, 66:3, 69:12, 81:5, 83:21 means [2] - 6:17, 8:18 meant [1] - 42:10 Mediterranean [2] - 17:21, 18:4 meet [7] - 94:9, 95:9, 100:3, 102:22,</p>	<p>meetings [3] - 115:5, 115:16, 118:15 meets [4] - 9:13, 10:15, 93:24, 94:4 Member [3] - 1:14, 1:14, 99:25 member [13] - 4:24, 7:15, 11:19, 13:4, 15:11, 24:8, 50:7, 60:17, 72:21, 86:9, 87:22, 88:6, 96:15 MEMBER [26] - 4:25, 7:13, 7:16, 9:3, 11:17, 11:20, 13:2, 13:7, 15:14, 24:5, 24:9, 50:10, 60:15, 60:20, 72:19, 72:24, 86:12, 86:15, 86:19, 87:3, 87:8, 87:25, 88:9, 88:12, 96:13, 96:21 MEMBERS [35] - 3:20, 3:22, 4:21, 8:1, 8:14, 8:16, 15:24, 16:17, 16:19, 16:21, 21:16, 32:14, 35:19, 36:1, 50:2, 51:16, 51:23, 54:1, 54:21, 54:23, 54:25, 60:11, 74:15, 79:12, 91:3, 92:7, 92:9, 92:21, 95:14, 104:14, 105:23, 107:17, 107:21, 111:1, 111:3 members [2] - 100:7, 101:6 memorial [1] - 111:25 memories [1] - 100:14 mentioned [6] - 12:11, 32:3, 65:1, 65:17, 85:20, 88:25 mentioning [1] - 87:5 messages [1] - 32:9 met [3] - 93:23, 100:9, 102:1 method [1] - 94:20 mic [1] - 21:5 Michael [2] - 2:16, 60:21 MICHAEL [1] - 1:13 microphone [5] - 17:23, 46:18, 56:16, 69:17, 74:3 Mid [5] - 94:23, 95:16,</p>	<p>middle [1] - 107:5 might [6] - 21:3, 21:10, 107:12, 114:7, 114:11, 115:6 mighty [1] - 113:10 Mike [4] - 5:3, 6:6, 15:14, 78:1 million [3] - 47:10, 47:13, 97:25 minute [1] - 73:13 minutes [5] - 3:8, 3:16, 3:24, 121:14, 121:16 missing [1] - 61:20 mistake [1] - 8:6 mistaken [1] - 81:1 mix [2] - 103:7, 103:13 mixed [5] - 21:10, 40:5, 93:16, 98:14, 101:4 mixed-use [3] - 93:16, 98:14, 101:4 Modern [5] - 94:23, 95:16, 103:4, 103:20, 104:21 modified [3] - 52:2, 53:11, 108:4 modify [1] - 49:16 modifying [1] - 54:9 moment [1] - 85:4 money [8] - 69:7, 70:21, 73:23, 74:6, 75:21, 77:1, 77:8, 82:7 month [2] - 108:2, 109:10 monthly [1] - 115:5 months [8] - 16:5, 25:9, 41:17, 63:7, 65:18, 82:13, 84:3, 114:22 MONTOYA [1] - 1:13 Montoya [1] - 2:16 monument [2] - 13:14, 14:8 moreover [1] - 19:24 most [3] - 10:12, 12:5, 118:15 mothball [1] - 77:8 mothballing [3] - 19:18, 56:20, 59:1 motion [25] - 3:7, 3:10, 3:13, 3:14, 3:15, 3:16, 8:3, 8:10, 16:1, 16:9, 16:10,</p>	<p>Mount [1] - 13:9 move [5] - 8:21, 16:25, 48:17, 92:22, 118:22 moveable [1] - 52:18 moved [1] - 17:1 moving [1] - 92:14 MR [142] - 2:10, 5:15, 5:20, 5:24, 6:5, 6:12, 6:16, 6:20, 12:25, 14:7, 14:11, 14:19, 14:25, 15:7, 17:7, 17:24, 20:23, 21:5, 21:22, 22:11, 23:2, 23:15, 23:21, 24:12, 24:18, 24:23, 24:25, 27:24, 28:1, 30:2, 31:11, 32:7, 39:20, 41:9, 42:15, 43:3, 46:4, 48:21, 50:14, 50:19, 50:21, 50:23, 50:25, 51:20, 51:25, 52:14, 53:2, 53:3, 53:6, 53:10, 53:16, 53:19, 53:20, 53:21, 55:3, 55:8, 56:17, 59:12, 59:21, 60:1, 60:7, 60:25, 61:5, 61:9, 62:12, 62:19, 62:22, 62:24, 63:7, 63:13, 64:9, 64:13, 64:22, 65:4, 65:8, 65:20, 65:23, 66:1, 66:3, 66:11, 67:12, 67:19, 67:21, 68:7, 68:10, 68:13, 68:17, 68:20, 68:23, 69:11, 70:2, 70:10, 71:12, 71:16, 71:18, 71:23, 72:6, 72:10, 72:14, 72:16, 77:19, 77:25, 78:5, 82:14, 83:15, 86:20, 88:17, 88:22, 89:2, 89:11, 89:14, 89:23, 90:2, 90:6, 90:10, 90:13, 90:16, 90:19, 92:24, 95:21, 96:6, 97:4, 97:9, 97:11, 105:3, 105:5, 105:10, 106:19, 107:24, 108:24, 109:7, 110:19, 112:3, 112:9, 112:13, 112:19, 113:6, 115:19, 115:23, 118:11,</p>	<p>MS [51] - 2:8, 2:12, 3:10, 3:14, 5:10, 8:4, 8:18, 9:6, 13:22, 16:13, 16:15, 17:22, 21:4, 32:22, 33:1, 33:6, 33:8, 46:18, 48:5, 48:11, 54:17, 56:15, 59:11, 59:17, 59:25, 69:17, 73:7, 73:9, 74:3, 74:4, 74:16, 74:19, 74:23, 75:5, 75:9, 81:13, 81:16, 86:13, 86:17, 87:10, 87:13, 87:18, 88:7, 90:24, 92:16, 96:18, 118:24, 120:9, 121:3, 121:8, 121:16 muffled [1] - 120:11 multifamily [2] - 93:17, 101:4 multiple [4] - 26:18, 32:3, 63:24, 113:15 Mumford [1] - 5:3 Municipal [2] - 56:1, 56:8 Myra [1] - 4:15</p>
N				
<p>n(2) [1] - 56:25 n(6) [1] - 58:2 nailing [2] - 109:17, 110:14 name [20] - 7:17, 11:21, 13:5, 13:17, 13:18, 14:15, 14:16, 14:20, 14:24, 15:12, 32:20, 32:22, 50:8, 60:18, 72:22, 77:22, 88:7, 88:10, 96:7, 96:16 named [2] - 13:17, 15:1 names [1] - 45:14 naming [1] - 14:17 Nancy [1] - 82:4 nation [2] - 9:19, 94:13 National [5] - 93:7, 94:14, 99:9, 99:17, 100:18 nature [6] - 17:18, 23:7, 34:20, 46:23, 56:12, 75:15 nay [3] - 48:4, 48:6, 48:7 necessarily [4] - 7:5, 23:12, 34:6, 103:19</p>				

<p>necessary [1] - 104:2 need [30] - 4:2, 7:5, 14:12, 15:7, 16:3, 16:13, 20:8, 20:25, 23:19, 31:23, 34:14, 39:25, 40:20, 47:5, 47:21, 48:9, 49:21, 51:18, 52:1, 75:2, 75:7, 75:12, 76:18, 78:2, 84:6, 90:18, 90:20, 99:10, 114:14 needs [7] - 26:22, 31:20, 35:7, 52:7, 52:11, 53:11, 82:10 negatively [1] - 10:20 neglect [2] - 59:20, 76:22 neighbor [1] - 13:9 neighborhood [7] - 12:17, 36:9, 78:24, 99:15, 99:20, 100:12, 110:5 neighborhoods [3] - 12:20, 70:16, 111:16 Neptune [1] - 11:22 nested [1] - 49:3 never [7] - 29:4, 29:5, 29:20, 49:1, 55:25, 74:11, 112:1 new [29] - 17:15, 22:9, 49:23, 51:9, 57:22, 57:24, 62:1, 68:14, 68:24, 69:8, 70:5, 71:13, 71:14, 71:15, 78:22, 92:14, 92:23, 99:14, 109:4, 109:13, 109:14, 109:18, 110:5, 111:7, 115:21, 116:3, 117:18, 119:17, 121:5 news [1] - 45:3 next [11] - 5:13, 13:9, 25:8, 48:17, 55:4, 107:6, 107:24, 114:6, 114:22, 118:22 next-door [1] - 13:9 nice [1] - 5:6 night [2] - 25:7, 27:17 nightmare [2] - 26:8, 28:12 nine [1] - 81:24 nominate [1] - 113:1 nominating [1] - 113:20 nomination [2] - 112:25, 113:17 nominations [1] - 113:18</p>	<p>non [1] - 111:25 non-memorial [1] - 111:25 noncontributing [1] - 22:14 none [6] - 16:22, 50:3, 51:24, 55:1, 60:12, 95:9 nonhistoric [1] - 109:2 nonprofit [2] - 99:21, 118:19 nonresidential [2] - 82:17, 116:12 nontoxic [4] - 25:25, 27:18, 28:22, 43:16 normally [1] - 29:11 Norman [2] - 119:23, 120:5 North [12] - 1:8, 4:15, 9:9, 10:6, 11:11, 13:8, 13:25, 16:24, 55:6, 55:9, 92:4, 92:13 Northeast [1] - 96:25 northeast [1] - 110:3 Notary [1] - 1:9 note [5] - 56:7, 94:21, 103:3, 104:1, 118:1 noted [1] - 57:15 notes [2] - 57:7, 122:11 nothing [14] - 24:21, 33:5, 46:12, 50:17, 61:3, 65:9, 72:1, 73:5, 76:18, 88:20, 97:7, 108:9, 119:1, 120:1 nothing's [1] - 80:10 notice [1] - 59:19 noticed [3] - 63:14, 101:17, 115:14 notification [1] - 15:3 November [1] - 56:3 ново [2] - 121:4, 121:15 Number [8] - 7:18, 17:1, 39:13, 52:8, 54:7, 54:10, 54:13, 81:20 number [7] - 8:7, 37:12, 37:21, 56:3, 70:3, 70:4, 73:21 numbers [1] - 73:17</p>	<p>observe [1] - 66:14 obviously [5] - 63:21, 78:19, 80:23, 110:9, 110:18 occupant [1] - 25:1 occupied [2] - 21:19, 21:25 occurred [4] - 11:3, 33:10, 84:3, 112:5 October [1] - 25:5 OED [1] - 117:2 OF [4] - 1:1, 122:1, 122:3, 122:4 off-gas [1] - 30:6 off-gassing [5] - 25:16, 28:23, 29:6, 31:9, 31:12 office [2] - 101:18, 103:4 Office [2] - 1:18, 2:12 often [1] - 99:2 OGC [1] - 59:21 old [2] - 52:18, 84:15 oldest [2] - 9:21, 107:6 Olivera [1] - 88:12 OLIVERA [12] - 88:17, 88:22, 89:2, 89:11, 89:14, 89:23, 90:2, 90:6, 90:10, 90:13, 90:16, 90:19 once [6] - 19:20, 42:3, 77:23, 93:14, 100:9, 116:9 one [53] - 3:25, 7:24, 9:21, 10:6, 17:6, 24:13, 26:6, 26:24, 27:1, 27:17, 31:16, 32:5, 33:13, 33:21, 35:7, 36:3, 38:11, 41:2, 41:5, 41:21, 42:21, 48:6, 51:5, 52:10, 57:4, 62:1, 65:4, 65:13, 66:12, 68:14, 68:17, 68:24, 71:19, 76:25, 81:20, 83:19, 98:18, 100:7, 101:16, 104:24, 105:11, 107:6, 110:6, 111:5, 112:12, 112:16, 113:7, 114:25, 115:24, 118:16, 118:23, 119:21 one-story [1] - 10:6 ones [1] - 74:13 online [1] - 14:3 open [14] - 4:22, 11:13, 24:6, 31:18, 43:2, 44:8, 50:3,</p>	<p>60:13, 62:25, 72:4, 72:5, 84:16, 86:24, 96:18 opened [1] - 65:17 opening [1] - 109:4 openings [1] - 57:19 operating [1] - 38:14 opinion [4] - 19:9, 58:3, 91:9, 91:23 opportunity [2] - 51:6, 86:25 oppose [2] - 78:8, 81:6 opposed [8] - 3:21, 8:15, 16:20, 48:3, 54:24, 92:8, 107:20, 111:2 opposition [2] - 48:10, 81:12 option [4] - 19:14, 79:2, 96:2, 98:21 options [1] - 77:11 order [4] - 3:3, 44:23, 58:1, 58:12 Ordinance [6] - 49:11, 77:13, 93:1, 94:2, 119:4, 119:18 ordinance [2] - 119:11, 120:4 organization [1] - 112:21 original [5] - 10:2, 11:3, 52:3, 96:3, 107:8 OSHA [2] - 47:9, 47:13 out-of-pocket [1] - 28:6 outdated [1] - 52:19 outlined [1] - 116:17 outlining [1] - 6:1 outside [6] - 12:7, 89:20, 89:22, 91:16, 91:21, 120:21 overall [1] - 49:9 overlapping [1] - 12:12 overload [1] - 114:17 oversee [1] - 111:16 own [10] - 24:10, 37:5, 44:21, 44:24, 46:13, 65:10, 76:21, 84:14, 98:11, 102:10 owned [6] - 62:5, 63:4, 71:2, 71:11, 80:9, 84:1 owner [20] - 9:11, 11:23, 13:20, 19:19, 54:10, 55:16, 55:21, 56:21, 59:1, 59:19, 66:15, 66:20, 71:5,</p>	<p>75:14, 81:22, 82:21, 85:5, 94:3, 98:9 owner's [1] - 84:8 owners [1] - 76:18 ownership [4] - 66:15, 80:4, 80:17, 84:9 oxidizer [1] - 43:21 ozone [3] - 43:21, 43:22</p>
P				
<p>p.m [3] - 1:7, 2:1, 121:24 package [1] - 21:2 packet [4] - 66:9, 67:11, 82:25, 108:7 Page [1] - 116:18 paid [2] - 25:12, 30:3 Paleo [1] - 99:19 Palmetto [6] - 93:4, 93:21, 93:22, 93:24, 94:22, 95:17 paragraph [1] - 109:12 parapet [1] - 10:11 parcel [1] - 24:13 parents [5] - 25:1, 25:7, 27:12, 27:17, 45:25 Park [1] - 4:17 part [10] - 11:22, 29:14, 30:9, 30:24, 36:9, 70:12, 83:21, 94:1, 97:16, 121:17 parte [2] - 16:3, 79:20 partial [3] - 57:17, 71:18, 71:19 particular [4] - 35:1, 52:15, 76:15, 113:8 particularly [2] - 28:2, 94:15 partnership [1] - 97:16 parts [2] - 47:10, 47:12 passed [1] - 56:6 past [4] - 22:10, 63:12, 78:25, 83:14 patch [1] - 99:15 path [2] - 35:12, 85:13 pay [4] - 34:15, 69:6, 69:7, 73:21 PDF [1] - 108:2 Peluso [1] - 99:25 pending [3] - 119:2, 119:24, 120:4 people [22] - 16:6, 32:8, 37:5, 42:5, 44:14, 45:14, 70:1, 70:14, 71:1, 72:12,</p>				

<p>76:7, 78:11, 78:23, 83:4, 101:13, 108:17, 110:16, 113:15, 114:14, 115:4, 120:24</p> <p>people's [1] - 100:14</p> <p>per [6] - 47:10, 47:13, 68:13, 68:16, 98:14, 116:14</p> <p>percent [2] - 69:11, 89:7</p> <p>perhaps [1] - 103:12</p> <p>period [3] - 10:14, 84:7, 94:20</p> <p>permanent [1] - 109:17</p> <p>permeated [4] - 25:17, 27:4, 29:5, 41:16</p> <p>permeates [1] - 46:24</p> <p>permission [1] - 76:23</p> <p>permit [7] - 29:24, 39:10, 39:14, 39:25, 80:7, 83:12, 83:17</p> <p>permits [6] - 39:21, 75:16, 83:5, 83:9, 83:13, 95:11</p> <p>person [7] - 15:1, 25:13, 27:16, 28:25, 30:13, 30:14, 44:19</p> <p>personal [2] - 25:23, 29:1</p> <p>pertains [1] - 52:5</p> <p>Petersburg [1] - 110:2</p> <p>phase [1] - 105:18</p> <p>phenol [3] - 25:17, 29:19, 42:8</p> <p>Philip [1] - 100:24</p> <p>phones [1] - 2:25</p> <p>photographic [4] - 20:18, 20:20, 67:8, 82:22</p> <p>photographs [2] - 89:4, 91:16</p> <p>photos [1] - 21:11</p> <p>phrase [1] - 76:6</p> <p>physical [1] - 10:2</p> <p>physically [2] - 66:4, 67:13</p> <p>picking [1] - 31:17</p> <p>picks [1] - 30:17</p> <p>picture [1] - 64:3</p> <p>pictures [10] - 21:1, 21:10, 23:5, 23:6, 23:25, 63:23, 64:12, 64:13, 67:5, 89:3</p> <p>piece [1] - 70:5</p> <p>piers [1] - 62:14, 62:21, 63:14, 63:15, 64:5, 64:15, 65:24, 67:23, 75:14, 89:16</p>	<p>pig [2] - 45:22, 45:23</p> <p>pipe [1] - 26:2</p> <p>piqued [1] - 13:14</p> <p>place [5] - 10:3, 20:5, 46:17, 100:15, 119:3</p> <p>placed [2] - 6:4, 52:17</p> <p>placement [1] - 17:15</p> <p>places [1] - 111:17</p> <p>plan [10] - 38:17, 49:24, 52:9, 52:15, 52:19, 52:25, 53:13, 53:19, 54:11, 71:7</p> <p>plane [1] - 109:2</p> <p>Planning [8] - 1:17, 1:17, 1:18, 9:7, 10:17, 11:8, 14:3, 14:5</p> <p>plans [3] - 42:14, 52:4, 55:25</p> <p>plant [1] - 103:13</p> <p>plaster [5] - 34:1, 34:3, 34:8, 36:23</p> <p>play [1] - 116:19</p> <p>pleasure [1] - 37:15</p> <p>plenty [1] - 75:20</p> <p>pocket [1] - 28:6</p> <p>podium [17] - 4:24, 7:15, 11:19, 13:4, 15:11, 24:8, 32:19, 41:7, 50:7, 60:17, 72:21, 75:4, 77:21, 86:9, 87:22, 88:6, 96:15</p> <p>point [19] - 12:2, 25:17, 28:2, 28:6, 41:9, 41:18, 44:13, 56:11, 62:15, 65:15, 67:10, 67:23, 68:8, 76:25, 83:25, 103:3, 112:12, 113:16, 117:1</p> <p>pollution [1] - 28:4</p> <p>pool [3] - 73:23, 77:1, 77:2</p> <p>poor [1] - 75:24</p> <p>porch [8] - 49:17, 51:10, 52:16, 52:25, 57:18, 57:20, 72:7, 76:14</p> <p>porches [1] - 49:14</p> <p>poses [2] - 18:9, 18:20</p> <p>position [4] - 46:12, 70:20, 79:22, 100:4</p> <p>positive [1] - 111:19</p> <p>possibilities [1] - 13:21</p> <p>possible [2] - 37:7, 118:10</p> <p>possibly [1] - 111:9</p> <p>potential [2] - 59:9,</p>	<p>93:12</p> <p>poured [1] - 107:9</p> <p>practice [1] - 10:17</p> <p>pre [1] - 118:14</p> <p>pre-app [1] - 118:14</p> <p>precedent [1] - 35:9</p> <p>predicament [1] - 36:15</p> <p>pregnant [1] - 43:9</p> <p>preliminary [2] - 39:21, 93:19</p> <p>preparation [1] - 108:6</p> <p>prepare [1] - 88:2</p> <p>prepared [1] - 12:1</p> <p>preparing [1] - 97:12</p> <p>presence [1] - 106:13</p> <p>present [5] - 11:24, 64:22, 102:12, 119:1, 121:4</p> <p>PRESENT [2] - 1:12, 1:16</p> <p>presented [2] - 102:17, 108:2</p> <p>preservation [5] - 10:16, 38:24, 95:2, 111:14, 114:9</p> <p>PRESERVATION [1] - 1:2</p> <p>Preservation [13] - 2:5, 2:9, 2:11, 11:9, 35:5, 70:9, 75:12, 77:9, 78:6, 79:5, 111:10, 111:24, 113:10</p> <p>preserve [4] - 65:16, 84:20, 100:21, 116:11</p> <p>presume [1] - 73:14</p> <p>pretty [6] - 38:22, 52:22, 74:12, 83:22, 101:18</p> <p>previous [4] - 3:17, 55:21, 109:9, 112:22</p> <p>previously [3] - 79:24, 82:8, 82:12</p> <p>priced [1] - 78:21</p> <p>prices [1] - 74:9</p> <p>pricing [1] - 73:14</p> <p>primarily [2] - 17:20, 18:3</p> <p>primary [6] - 22:5, 22:7, 36:6, 38:2, 49:3, 80:25</p> <p>private [1] - 3:1</p> <p>problem [7] - 28:14, 29:14, 29:16, 30:9, 34:19, 53:3, 53:21</p> <p>problems [2] - 66:21, 66:22</p>	<p>proceed [2] - 6:17, 98:12</p> <p>proceedings [2] - 121:23, 122:9</p> <p>Proceedings [1] - 1:6</p> <p>process [13] - 14:1, 15:5, 23:12, 25:19, 39:15, 97:17, 102:6, 102:7, 102:10, 103:23, 115:15, 118:1</p> <p>processes [1] - 115:9</p> <p>product [5] - 29:19, 29:25, 30:1, 39:18, 45:3</p> <p>Product [1] - 39:13</p> <p>production [1] - 19:11</p> <p>Professional [2] - 122:7, 122:19</p> <p>professionals [1] - 108:22</p> <p>program [4] - 111:19, 115:24, 116:10</p> <p>prohibitive [1] - 58:6</p> <p>project [7] - 5:3, 7:2, 97:15, 98:5, 101:4, 104:8, 119:7</p> <p>projects [2] - 99:1, 111:20</p> <p>prominent [1] - 111:15</p> <p>properly [2] - 34:19, 41:15</p> <p>properties [6] - 57:4, 76:19, 77:6, 93:6, 93:9, 113:20</p> <p>property [48] - 9:11, 9:19, 10:5, 14:10, 17:8, 22:7, 22:10, 24:10, 36:7, 42:13, 42:14, 48:22, 48:25, 55:9, 55:17, 56:1, 57:13, 58:8, 59:6, 59:18, 61:11, 62:6, 63:5, 65:7, 69:8, 70:6, 75:19, 77:2, 77:7, 78:23, 78:25, 81:22, 83:14, 84:4, 84:9, 97:21, 98:1, 98:2, 98:11, 98:13, 98:17, 98:19, 98:21, 98:22, 100:5, 101:3, 105:14</p> <p>proposal [1] - 68:1</p> <p>propose [1] - 42:21</p> <p>proposed [6] - 10:18, 49:2, 49:9, 57:1, 92:11, 101:5</p> <p>prospective [3] - 19:19, 56:21, 59:2</p>	<p>protective [4] - 23:19, 25:22, 25:23, 29:2</p> <p>prove [1] - 82:21</p> <p>provide [4] - 34:3, 34:7, 52:11, 54:10</p> <p>provided [13] - 18:16, 49:19, 53:5, 53:14, 55:17, 58:3, 58:16, 59:8, 59:23, 60:2, 67:5, 70:4, 77:3</p> <p>PRYOR [14] - 17:22, 21:4, 32:22, 33:1, 33:6, 33:8, 46:18, 56:15, 59:11, 59:25, 69:17, 74:3, 75:5, 75:9</p> <p>Pryor [5] - 7:17, 32:19, 32:22, 75:4, 75:5</p> <p>public [34] - 4:22, 8:4, 8:8, 11:14, 13:23, 16:1, 24:6, 35:20, 50:4, 54:2, 60:13, 74:20, 74:21, 79:14, 85:24, 85:25, 86:2, 86:10, 86:17, 86:23, 87:7, 87:11, 87:21, 90:23, 91:5, 92:16, 92:17, 92:19, 92:20, 96:18, 105:25, 108:12, 121:8, 121:10</p> <p>Public [2] - 1:9, 120:1</p> <p>public/private [1] - 97:16</p> <p>publishing [1] - 49:18</p> <p>pull [1] - 21:12</p> <p>pulled [2] - 75:17, 80:7</p> <p>pulling [1] - 50:23</p> <p>punched [1] - 109:4</p> <p>purchase [2] - 84:3, 85:12</p> <p>purchased [4] - 65:18, 76:19, 77:7, 85:7</p> <p>purchasing [1] - 78:25</p> <p>purifiers [1] - 43:19</p> <p>pursuant [1] - 98:21</p> <p>pursue [3] - 19:14, 79:7, 98:14</p> <p>pursued [1] - 79:4</p> <p>pursuit [1] - 98:22</p> <p>push [1] - 64:18</p> <p>pushing [1] - 63:16</p> <p>put [16] - 5:4, 12:8, 14:20, 27:6, 33:23, 47:5, 71:13, 71:17, 85:17, 86:7, 91:13, 99:14, 107:2, 107:10, 107:15</p> <p>putting [1] - 98:22</p>
---	--	--	--	---

Q				
<p>quality [1] - 76:11 quantify [1] - 36:21 quantity [1] - 84:13 questions [29] - 12:22, 14:1, 20:13, 21:14, 21:15, 32:12, 39:7, 40:21, 41:5, 42:11, 50:1, 51:13, 51:14, 53:23, 59:16, 60:9, 62:2, 64:20, 64:21, 65:15, 69:3, 74:14, 80:24, 85:16, 95:13, 96:10, 104:5, 104:12, 108:17 quick [1] - 120:12 quite [4] - 12:13, 47:14, 78:10, 103:18 quote [4] - 58:17, 65:1, 78:20, 80:11 quotes [1] - 65:2</p>	<p>74:7, 91:4, 91:11, 100:19, 101:24, 108:9, 108:19, 114:19, 115:14 rear [1] - 17:11 reason [8] - 30:24, 38:25, 41:2, 48:10, 78:14, 81:4, 106:15, 107:2 reasonable [1] - 42:24 rebuild [2] - 42:12, 42:15 receive [2] - 20:16, 49:23 received [6] - 5:25, 13:13, 52:8, 59:19, 78:9, 102:25 receives [1] - 14:14 receiving [2] - 113:18, 117:24 recently [2] - 93:6, 98:16 recessed [1] - 109:16 reclose [1] - 90:22 recognize [3] - 12:14, 111:20, 114:16 recognized [1] - 114:15 recommend [4] - 14:2, 37:14, 41:1, 103:25 recommendation [7] - 20:10, 59:15, 91:19, 95:10, 104:1, 105:13, 121:18 recommendations [5] - 40:6, 40:7, 40:8, 54:4, 117:9 recommended [2] - 119:13, 119:22 recommends [1] - 11:8 record [6] - 13:6, 83:25, 87:2, 87:20, 88:8, 122:10 recordkeeping [1] - 112:15 records [5] - 11:2, 20:25, 95:25, 112:20 recourse [1] - 121:2 rectangular [1] - 10:9 recurring [1] - 119:3 redesign [1] - 51:6 redesigned [1] - 52:19 redeveloped [1] - 105:14 redevelopment [1] - 105:16 reference [4] - 59:23, 60:3, 86:23, 94:13 referenced [1] - 56:4</p>	<p>references [1] - 60:4 reflects [1] - 57:13 regarding [3] - 58:15, 59:19, 94:10 regards [3] - 59:23, 94:10, 119:7 Register [4] - 93:7, 99:9, 99:17, 100:18 regular [1] - 44:20 REHAB [4] - 82:16, 111:18, 115:24, 116:1 rehabilitate [5] - 15:19, 55:20, 58:18, 58:22, 61:13 rehabilitation [9] - 19:18, 19:24, 55:24, 56:20, 58:12, 58:25, 63:1, 78:19, 78:21 rehabitable [1] - 58:13 reimbursement [2] - 116:3, 116:9 reinforced [1] - 71:12 reintroducing [1] - 82:2 rejected [1] - 59:6 related [1] - 39:22 relates [1] - 94:17 relationship [4] - 18:25, 85:3, 99:22, 115:2 relevant [1] - 28:2 relocation [4] - 19:17, 20:1, 56:19, 58:25 remedial [1] - 30:22 remediate [6] - 25:19, 45:10, 45:11, 63:10, 66:16, 66:21 remediation [7] - 26:16, 36:19, 46:10, 62:9, 80:4, 80:16, 98:25 remedied [1] - 38:6 remedies [1] - 79:7 remedy [1] - 37:25 remember [3] - 12:19, 32:11, 45:14 remembered [1] - 101:17 reminded [1] - 115:1 reminder [3] - 9:16, 81:18, 94:11 remodeling [1] - 58:17 removal [4] - 18:13, 18:18, 19:3, 56:13 remove [9] - 22:24, 22:25, 23:13, 26:23, 33:22, 38:11, 41:15, 42:20, 42:25 removed [8] - 7:20,</p>	<p>26:15, 26:17, 30:25, 44:1, 52:2, 54:14, 76:14 removing [5] - 26:13, 27:3, 38:10, 38:12, 46:20 renovate [1] - 98:1 renovated [1] - 74:12 renovating [2] - 65:2, 74:11 rent [1] - 45:24 rented [1] - 43:20 reopen [3] - 30:11, 87:11, 87:21 repair [11] - 11:5, 67:2, 68:3, 69:5, 69:6, 69:15, 69:19, 82:22, 84:6, 89:25, 91:22 repaired [2] - 62:10, 90:1 repairing [1] - 68:4 replace [1] - 46:25 replaced [1] - 113:3 replacement [2] - 119:14, 120:15 report [34] - 5:25, 6:2, 9:5, 9:6, 11:7, 11:25, 12:4, 17:6, 18:7, 18:11, 19:21, 20:8, 22:12, 22:20, 25:15, 29:3, 34:1, 37:16, 47:3, 48:20, 49:16, 49:19, 49:25, 55:7, 55:18, 56:4, 58:4, 59:14, 95:12, 97:13, 102:24, 114:23, 117:10, 122:9 report's [1] - 103:25 Reporter [4] - 83:7, 120:10, 122:8, 122:19 REPORTER [24] - 24:16, 24:19, 24:24, 32:24, 33:2, 33:7, 50:12, 50:15, 50:20, 60:23, 61:1, 61:6, 73:3, 73:8, 75:8, 78:3, 88:10, 88:14, 88:18, 88:23, 97:2, 97:5, 97:10, 122:1 reports [1] - 20:7 represent [1] - 10:22 representative [1] - 54:11 representing [2] - 5:2, 96:23 reproduction [1] - 19:12 request [7] - 7:18, 57:21, 57:23, 63:21,</p>	<p>92:12, 92:24, 96:12 requested [2] - 66:14, 66:17 requests [1] - 81:19 require [4] - 18:13, 19:3, 57:25, 58:11 requires [4] - 18:18, 77:14, 99:3, 117:15 reroof [1] - 83:18 research [4] - 22:16, 101:23, 101:24, 102:20 reserving [1] - 113:13 resident [1] - 100:8 residential [2] - 9:23, 57:23 residents [1] - 18:21 resort [2] - 56:14, 79:2 resource [3] - 56:18, 108:6, 114:3 resources [3] - 113:8, 113:9, 113:23 respond [1] - 27:15 response [30] - 3:22, 4:21, 8:1, 8:16, 15:24, 16:17, 16:21, 21:16, 32:14, 35:19, 36:1, 50:2, 51:16, 51:23, 53:9, 54:1, 54:21, 54:25, 60:11, 74:15, 79:12, 91:3, 92:9, 92:21, 95:14, 104:14, 105:23, 107:21, 111:3, 118:10 responses [1] - 83:22 responsibility [2] - 116:14, 116:20 responsible [1] - 116:25 restorable [1] - 80:15 restoration [6] - 10:16, 18:12, 19:2, 82:10, 84:25, 95:2 restore [4] - 70:15, 77:10, 80:8, 80:12 Restore [1] - 115:25 restored [2] - 67:6, 67:7 resuming [1] - 111:10 retain [1] - 10:1 return [1] - 58:15 reuse [5] - 19:18, 56:20, 59:1, 98:1, 98:5 revenue [2] - 116:2, 118:3 reverse [1] - 10:23 review [5] - 57:25, 93:10, 117:1, 117:8,</p>
R				
<p>radioactive [1] - 31:14 railing [1] - 49:6 railings [1] - 57:20 railroad [2] - 105:6, 105:7 rain [1] - 5:5 raise [6] - 24:16, 32:24, 50:12, 60:23, 88:15, 97:2 Raises [1] - 73:2 Raiti [1] - 11:21 RAITI [1] - 12:25 ramifications [1] - 31:7 ranch [1] - 18:5 ranch-style [1] - 18:5 Randolph [1] - 100:24 rank [1] - 117:4 RAP [1] - 114:10 rather [6] - 22:1, 38:15, 56:9, 69:8, 96:1, 103:22 reached [1] - 101:20 read [5] - 6:14, 33:25, 54:10, 81:25, 102:24 readily [3] - 19:22, 38:3, 59:5 reading [1] - 22:20 ready [3] - 40:19, 103:7, 103:13 ready-mix [2] - 103:7, 103:13 real [2] - 5:21, 121:1 realiz [1] - 102:10 really [13] - 36:3, 47:2,</p>				

<p>117:15 reviewed [1] - 6:24 reviewing [2] - 113:24, 117:16 reviews [1] - 117:24 revise [1] - 54:8 revised [1] - 52:6 revisit [1] - 31:24 Revitalization [1] - 78:6 Revival [1] - 18:5 reward [1] - 76:18 rezoning [2] - 99:5, 102:9 Richmond [1] - 4:8 ridiculous [1] - 43:19 rip [1] - 43:24 risk [5] - 18:10, 18:21, 27:1, 37:23, 38:21 Riverside [1] - 4:7 Riverside/Avondale [2] - 17:12, 48:18 Road [1] - 4:10 Rock [2] - 96:4, 103:8 role [2] - 16:5, 116:14 roof [16] - 10:11, 18:24, 49:3, 49:5, 61:19, 62:24, 63:6, 63:10, 64:1, 65:17, 65:23, 71:25, 72:3, 80:9, 103:11, 107:7 roofs [1] - 103:4 room [2] - 4:4, 75:20 Room [1] - 1:8 rooms [1] - 113:13 rotted [2] - 67:22, 72:6 rough [1] - 74:13 roughly [1] - 58:18 rule [1] - 3:4 run [1] - 115:17 running [3] - 43:17, 43:18, 113:12 Ryan [1] - 96:23</p>	<p>75:10, 80:4 saved [4] - 35:8, 76:16, 77:6, 77:8 saving [1] - 81:2 saw [4] - 20:21, 67:13, 69:15, 69:19 scare [2] - 45:19, 76:7 scenarios [1] - 38:9 School [2] - 104:19, 105:1 scoring [1] - 117:3 Scott [1] - 90:9 scraping [1] - 40:15 screen [2] - 21:12, 23:6 se [1] - 116:14 search [1] - 39:21 second [15] - 3:9, 3:18, 8:12, 16:13, 16:14, 35:24, 54:15, 57:18, 71:13, 71:15, 79:18, 94:17, 106:4, 106:5, 110:24 secondary [2] - 17:18, 81:4 seconded [1] - 40:19 Secretary [1] - 1:13 Section [5] - 19:8, 56:24, 57:10, 58:1, 92:25 section [7] - 2:9, 2:11, 59:7, 59:24, 82:3, 109:11, 116:24 sections [1] - 19:6 see [26] - 20:19, 23:9, 36:14, 39:21, 39:23, 45:15, 63:15, 63:23, 63:25, 64:1, 64:4, 64:5, 64:6, 64:7, 64:11, 66:4, 80:6, 82:22, 89:16, 89:17, 95:17, 96:21, 103:10, 105:10, 107:1, 112:20 seeing [2] - 67:10, 118:19 seeking [1] - 93:2 seeks [3] - 17:9, 48:23, 55:10 seem [1] - 106:12 self [1] - 113:17 self-nomination [1] - 113:17 sell [5] - 59:6, 65:7, 65:9, 77:12, 78:22 Selma [1] - 4:9 seminal [1] - 104:25 sending [1] - 108:11 sense [1] - 10:3 sent [5] - 16:4, 45:6,</p>	<p>73:17, 82:8, 82:13 separately [1] - 27:23 September [1] - 25:4 series [1] - 58:19 seriously [1] - 63:21 set [8] - 12:13, 29:12, 35:9, 102:18, 106:25, 110:7, 116:16, 116:22 settled [1] - 51:4 seven [8] - 9:14, 93:23, 93:25, 94:5, 95:8, 102:11, 102:15, 118:14 several [7] - 18:19, 19:6, 44:2, 57:8, 57:15, 78:9, 98:23 severe [2] - 47:15, 84:2 Shacter [1] - 50:10 SHACTER [11] - 50:14, 50:19, 50:21, 50:25, 51:20, 52:14, 53:3, 53:6, 53:19, 53:21, 55:3 shape [3] - 10:9, 18:24, 76:17 share [1] - 97:19 shared [2] - 108:21, 114:12 shingles [1] - 49:5 shoes [1] - 53:24 shore [1] - 72:2 short [2] - 21:6, 116:8 shortly [1] - 65:21 show [2] - 52:25, 63:23 shown [4] - 66:20, 67:1, 80:5, 89:3 shows [2] - 67:9, 82:23 sic [3] - 58:13, 74:5, 102:5 sic [2] - 49:25, 101:10 sick [1] - 27:18 side [2] - 4:5, 61:22 sides [1] - 51:12 siding [7] - 27:3, 33:16, 33:20, 34:2, 34:6, 49:6, 61:20 sign [1] - 84:10 significance [5] - 13:19, 70:12, 82:1, 93:11, 98:6 significant [13] - 9:16, 9:19, 10:19, 10:24, 55:14, 57:3, 58:11, 58:22, 94:10, 95:5, 95:22, 100:6, 106:21 silence [1] - 2:25</p>	<p>similar [5] - 10:3, 20:5, 42:16, 67:6, 105:2 Simultaneous [2] - 74:25, 87:15 sincere [1] - 36:13 single [3] - 17:13, 48:24, 110:6 single-family [2] - 17:13, 48:24 sister [1] - 110:2 sit [1] - 85:10 Site [1] - 95:24 site [20] - 20:24, 21:9, 49:24, 52:8, 52:15, 52:25, 53:13, 53:19, 54:11, 56:22, 67:13, 80:7, 89:4, 98:9, 98:24, 100:10, 101:18, 119:23, 120:5 sitting [4] - 28:16, 28:17, 42:1, 63:11 situation [6] - 31:14, 37:7, 39:6, 40:16, 84:24, 85:6 six [5] - 63:7, 65:18, 84:3, 98:17, 118:14 skin [4] - 33:13, 38:10, 39:11, 39:12 slab [1] - 52:16 slick [1] - 5:6 small [4] - 10:13, 12:13, 29:16, 113:10 smarter [1] - 29:1 smell [5] - 25:6, 28:21, 43:14, 44:8, 44:9 smelled [1] - 44:22 smelling [2] - 43:7, 44:10 smells [1] - 44:16 smoother [1] - 115:12 SNYDER [1] - 1:18 sold [1] - 34:17 solution [2] - 62:8, 67:2 someone [3] - 3:10, 26:5, 41:22 sometimes [2] - 25:2, 84:16 somewhat [2] - 57:9, 103:5 sorry [14] - 3:12, 5:21, 33:9, 40:4, 62:17, 69:24, 81:5, 86:10, 86:16, 87:8, 92:18, 105:6, 109:8, 120:5 sort [5] - 70:17, 72:1, 84:11, 91:10, 91:15 sorts [2] - 40:8,</p>	<p>114:23 SOS [2] - 35:5, 77:9 sought [3] - 100:17, 102:6, 103:1 source [1] - 99:16 sources [1] - 99:3 South [3] - 4:10, 88:13, 104:19 space [3] - 29:9, 29:10, 98:3 SPAR [5] - 15:16, 51:1, 78:7, 78:15, 114:10 SPAR's [1] - 79:22 speaker [1] - 13:23 speaking [3] - 74:25, 87:15, 91:21 special [1] - 116:1 specific [3] - 32:11, 71:9, 103:19 speculating [1] - 96:1 spend [4] - 41:10, 41:13, 70:21, 95:22 spent [3] - 25:7, 70:14, 74:11 spindles [1] - 49:7 spoken [1] - 38:9 sponsored [1] - 9:10 spots [1] - 23:10 spray [3] - 33:11, 35:10, 40:3 Springfield [13] - 9:20, 9:25, 10:12, 12:3, 12:7, 12:8, 49:12, 65:11, 73:10, 73:12, 74:12, 78:6, 78:24 square [4] - 68:14, 68:16, 68:21, 93:17 SRG [2] - 52:16, 52:18 Ss [1] - 120:21 St [1] - 110:2 staff [57] - 5:25, 6:2, 6:24, 9:4, 9:13, 11:25, 17:6, 17:18, 19:9, 20:10, 20:13, 21:15, 22:4, 23:18, 37:13, 37:16, 39:17, 40:25, 47:2, 48:20, 49:16, 49:18, 49:25, 50:1, 51:1, 52:24, 53:9, 54:4, 55:7, 56:4, 56:22, 57:7, 58:9, 58:21, 59:8, 59:16, 60:10, 81:9, 82:6, 83:3, 95:8, 95:13, 95:15, 96:11, 97:12, 102:24, 103:25, 106:11, 108:14, 113:8, 113:9, 114:17,</p>
S				
<p>safe [3] - 37:1, 67:24, 110:8 safety [7] - 5:5, 5:8, 18:21, 37:4, 38:21, 41:20, 47:1 sag [1] - 76:15 sales [2] - 73:20, 73:21 sample [2] - 45:6, 45:7 Sarasota [2] - 104:19, 105:1 satisfaction [1] - 40:24 save [4] - 35:5, 36:19,</p>	<p>75:10, 80:4 saved [4] - 35:8, 76:16, 77:6, 77:8 saving [1] - 81:2 saw [4] - 20:21, 67:13, 69:15, 69:19 scare [2] - 45:19, 76:7 scenarios [1] - 38:9 School [2] - 104:19, 105:1 scoring [1] - 117:3 Scott [1] - 90:9 scraping [1] - 40:15 screen [2] - 21:12, 23:6 se [1] - 116:14 search [1] - 39:21 second [15] - 3:9, 3:18, 8:12, 16:13, 16:14, 35:24, 54:15, 57:18, 71:13, 71:15, 79:18, 94:17, 106:4, 106:5, 110:24 secondary [2] - 17:18, 81:4 seconded [1] - 40:19 Secretary [1] - 1:13 Section [5] - 19:8, 56:24, 57:10, 58:1, 92:25 section [7] - 2:9, 2:11, 59:7, 59:24, 82:3, 109:11, 116:24 sections [1] - 19:6 see [26] - 20:19, 23:9, 36:14, 39:21, 39:23, 45:15, 63:15, 63:23, 63:25, 64:1, 64:4, 64:5, 64:6, 64:7, 64:11, 66:4, 80:6, 82:22, 89:16, 89:17, 95:17, 96:21, 103:10, 105:10, 107:1, 112:20 seeing [2] - 67:10, 118:19 seeking [1] - 93:2 seeks [3] - 17:9, 48:23, 55:10 seem [1] - 106:12 self [1] - 113:17 self-nomination [1] - 113:17 sell [5] - 59:6, 65:7, 65:9, 77:12, 78:22 Selma [1] - 4:9 seminal [1] - 104:25 sending [1] - 108:11 sense [1] - 10:3 sent [5] - 16:4, 45:6,</p>	<p>73:17, 82:8, 82:13 separately [1] - 27:23 September [1] - 25:4 series [1] - 58:19 seriously [1] - 63:21 set [8] - 12:13, 29:12, 35:9, 102:18, 106:25, 110:7, 116:16, 116:22 settled [1] - 51:4 seven [8] - 9:14, 93:23, 93:25, 94:5, 95:8, 102:11, 102:15, 118:14 several [7] - 18:19, 19:6, 44:2, 57:8, 57:15, 78:9, 98:23 severe [2] - 47:15, 84:2 Shacter [1] - 50:10 SHACTER [11] - 50:14, 50:19, 50:21, 50:25, 51:20, 52:14, 53:3, 53:6, 53:19, 53:21, 55:3 shape [3] - 10:9, 18:24, 76:17 share [1] - 97:19 shared [2] - 108:21, 114:12 shingles [1] - 49:5 shoes [1] - 53:24 shore [1] - 72:2 short [2] - 21:6, 116:8 shortly [1] - 65:21 show [2] - 52:25, 63:23 shown [4] - 66:20, 67:1, 80:5, 89:3 shows [2] - 67:9, 82:23 sic [3] - 58:13, 74:5, 102:5 sic [2] - 49:25, 101:10 sick [1] - 27:18 side [2] - 4:5, 61:22 sides [1] - 51:12 siding [7] - 27:3, 33:16, 33:20, 34:2, 34:6, 49:6, 61:20 sign [1] - 84:10 significance [5] - 13:19, 70:12, 82:1, 93:11, 98:6 significant [13] - 9:16, 9:19, 10:19, 10:24, 55:14, 57:3, 58:11, 58:22, 94:10, 95:5, 95:22, 100:6, 106:21 silence [1] - 2:25</p>	<p>similar [5] - 10:3, 20:5, 42:16, 67:6, 105:2 Simultaneous [2] - 74:25, 87:15 sincere [1] - 36:13 single [3] - 17:13, 48:24, 110:6 single-family [2] - 17:13, 48:24 sister [1] - 110:2 sit [1] - 85:10 Site [1] - 95:24 site [20] - 20:24, 21:9, 49:24, 52:8, 52:15, 52:25, 53:13, 53:19, 54:11, 56:22, 67:13, 80:7, 89:4, 98:9, 98:24, 100:10, 101:18, 119:23, 120:5 sitting [4] - 28:16, 28:17, 42:1, 63:11 situation [6] - 31:14, 37:7, 39:6, 40:16, 84:24, 85:6 six [5] - 63:7, 65:18, 84:3, 98:17, 118:14 skin [4] - 33:13, 38:10, 39:11, 39:12 slab [1] - 52:16 slick [1] - 5:6 small [4] - 10:13, 12:13, 29:16, 113:10 smarter [1] - 29:1 smell [5] - 25:6, 28:21, 43:14, 44:8, 44:9 smelled [1] - 44:22 smelling [2] - 43:7, 44:10 smells [1] - 44:16 smoother [1] - 115:12 SNYDER [1] - 1:18 sold [1] - 34:17 solution [2] - 62:8, 67:2 someone [3] - 3:10, 26:5, 41:22 sometimes [2] - 25:2, 84:16 somewhat [2] - 57:9, 103:5 sorry [14] - 3:12, 5:21, 33:9, 40:4, 62:17, 69:24, 81:5, 86:10, 86:16, 87:8, 92:18, 105:6, 109:8, 120:5 sort [5] - 70:17, 72:1, 84:11, 91:10, 91:15 sorts [2] - 40:8,</p>	<p>114:23 SOS [2] - 35:5, 77:9 sought [3] - 100:17, 102:6, 103:1 source [1] - 99:16 sources [1] - 99:3 South [3] - 4:10, 88:13, 104:19 space [3] - 29:9, 29:10, 98:3 SPAR [5] - 15:16, 51:1, 78:7, 78:15, 114:10 SPAR's [1] - 79:22 speaker [1] - 13:23 speaking [3] - 74:25, 87:15, 91:21 special [1] - 116:1 specific [3] - 32:11, 71:9, 103:19 speculating [1] - 96:1 spend [4] - 41:10, 41:13, 70:21, 95:22 spent [3] - 25:7, 70:14, 74:11 spindles [1] - 49:7 spoken [1] - 38:9 sponsored [1] - 9:10 spots [1] - 23:10 spray [3] - 33:11, 35:10, 40:3 Springfield [13] - 9:20, 9:25, 10:12, 12:3, 12:7, 12:8, 49:12, 65:11, 73:10, 73:12, 74:12, 78:6, 78:24 square [4] - 68:14, 68:16, 68:21, 93:17 SRG [2] - 52:16, 52:18 Ss [1] - 120:21 St [1] - 110:2 staff [57] - 5:25, 6:2, 6:24, 9:4, 9:13, 11:25, 17:6, 17:18, 19:9, 20:10, 20:13, 21:15, 22:4, 23:18, 37:13, 37:16, 39:17, 40:25, 47:2, 48:20, 49:16, 49:18, 49:25, 50:1, 51:1, 52:24, 53:9, 54:4, 55:7, 56:4, 56:22, 57:7, 58:9, 58:21, 59:8, 59:16, 60:10, 81:9, 82:6, 83:3, 95:8, 95:13, 95:15, 96:11, 97:12, 102:24, 103:25, 106:11, 108:14, 113:8, 113:9, 114:17,</p>

<p>115:2, 117:10 staff's [1] - 104:1 Staffordshire [1] - 88:13 stakeholders [4] - 100:3, 100:20, 102:9, 105:19 stalling [1] - 119:6 stand [4] - 64:14, 66:3, 91:25, 120:25 standard [4] - 37:1, 47:10, 109:17, 113:2 stands [1] - 115:25 standstill [1] - 119:10 start [10] - 2:6, 4:6, 17:1, 17:3, 26:16, 36:2, 108:11, 113:19, 117:24 started [8] - 25:18, 25:20, 26:12, 26:18, 43:23, 45:11, 62:13, 99:16 starts [1] - 37:24 State [1] - 1:10 STATE [1] - 122:3 state [13] - 6:6, 9:18, 13:5, 15:12, 15:17, 32:20, 50:8, 60:18, 72:22, 77:22, 85:11, 94:13, 96:16 statement [3] - 48:10, 61:8, 69:4 states [2] - 18:12, 18:17 statistics [1] - 12:3 status [4] - 93:12, 94:4, 94:7, 104:3 stay [6] - 25:2, 27:12, 41:21, 42:5, 45:21, 45:25 stayed [1] - 27:16 staying [2] - 25:8, 27:19 stays [1] - 41:22 stenographic [1] - 122:11 stenographically [1] - 122:9 step [7] - 5:7, 44:3, 100:2, 114:20 steps [5] - 26:16, 30:23, 44:2, 45:9, 45:11 sticky [2] - 40:13, 46:15 still [8] - 34:17, 74:20, 74:21, 77:8, 92:2, 108:8, 110:17, 111:25 stock [1] - 116:11</p>	<p>stood [1] - 76:1 stop [8] - 5:8, 28:22, 29:4, 29:6, 43:7, 43:12, 62:15, 65:16 stopped [2] - 62:16, 113:18 storefront [1] - 10:10 story [8] - 10:6, 17:13, 17:20, 18:3, 48:24, 55:11, 64:7, 64:12 strategies [1] - 79:3 Street [43] - 1:8, 4:9, 4:10, 4:11, 4:14, 4:16, 4:18, 5:1, 5:3, 7:20, 9:8, 10:6, 11:11, 11:22, 13:8, 13:25, 15:15, 16:24, 17:4, 17:9, 24:13, 32:23, 48:15, 48:19, 48:23, 50:11, 55:5, 55:9, 60:21, 72:25, 75:6, 78:1, 92:4, 92:12, 93:4, 93:21, 93:22, 93:24, 94:22, 96:25, 97:22, 100:1, 119:7 street [3] - 17:17, 36:6, 38:4 stressing [2] - 20:8, 43:12 stricken [1] - 52:13 strip [1] - 36:25 stripping [2] - 19:4, 19:5 structural [23] - 18:11, 18:15, 18:19, 19:1, 19:20, 20:1, 20:7, 20:17, 23:1, 26:21, 34:7, 45:12, 45:18, 55:18, 55:24, 59:13, 62:9, 64:7, 71:6, 89:10, 89:11, 89:12, 91:12 structure [99] - 7:19, 10:8, 10:25, 13:24, 15:20, 17:10, 17:12, 17:17, 18:8, 18:18, 19:2, 19:9, 19:25, 20:4, 20:15, 20:19, 21:18, 21:21, 22:5, 22:6, 22:8, 22:13, 22:14, 25:18, 26:24, 29:5, 31:8, 33:21, 34:24, 34:25, 35:1, 35:7, 36:4, 36:6, 36:11, 36:14, 37:22, 38:3, 38:6, 38:10, 38:15, 38:18, 39:3, 39:9, 41:18, 43:1, 43:2, 43:23, 46:16,</p>	<p>46:17, 46:22, 46:25, 47:23, 49:4, 49:10, 55:10, 55:11, 55:12, 55:19, 55:21, 56:2, 56:9, 56:23, 57:2, 57:4, 57:7, 57:11, 57:12, 57:16, 57:23, 58:4, 58:10, 58:19, 58:22, 61:16, 61:25, 63:2, 63:11, 63:17, 63:22, 63:24, 64:2, 66:16, 80:3, 80:5, 81:23, 82:1, 82:2, 89:1, 91:22, 92:3, 92:6, 93:10, 96:4, 103:11, 104:17, 107:7 structure's [1] - 19:3 structures [21] - 9:25, 38:25, 39:1, 57:5, 82:18, 93:3, 93:5, 93:15, 93:20, 94:6, 94:9, 95:1, 95:3, 95:9, 99:8, 103:14, 104:20, 105:7, 109:3, 116:12, 116:16 struggle [1] - 84:17 struggled [1] - 101:15 struggling [1] - 37:19 stucco [1] - 49:8 stuck [2] - 41:25, 42:1 studied [1] - 51:3 studies [1] - 51:4 Studios [2] - 119:23, 120:6 study [1] - 94:19 stuff [1] - 101:25 sturdiness [1] - 69:12 sturdy [1] - 68:25 style [11] - 10:7, 12:14, 12:15, 18:5, 20:5, 55:14, 57:12, 57:14, 94:19, 94:23, 103:12 Style [2] - 12:5, 12:15 styles [2] - 9:24, 105:15 sub [2] - 63:25, 71:12 subdivisions [1] - 9:21 subject [4] - 9:19, 10:5, 55:16, 58:8 submitted [2] - 25:15, 54:12 sue [1] - 27:10 sufficient [2] - 53:8, 53:15 suggestions [1] - 114:24</p>	<p>suitability [2] - 10:16, 95:1 Suite [1] - 96:25 summer [1] - 98:8 Sunday [1] - 117:19 superior [1] - 76:12 supplement [5] - 83:1, 108:1, 109:10, 110:23, 114:21 supplied [3] - 18:6, 18:11, 121:17 support [10] - 15:17, 34:3, 37:17, 49:20, 49:25, 59:9, 76:14, 81:5, 103:24, 106:14 supporting [2] - 58:9, 115:10 suppose [1] - 30:24 supposed [2] - 30:6, 30:16 surprising [1] - 101:23 surrounding [5] - 18:22, 18:25, 30:18, 31:19, 57:3 swear [1] - 78:2 sworn [7] - 24:14, 32:21, 50:9, 60:19, 72:23, 75:7, 96:17</p> <p style="text-align: center;">T</p> <p>table [1] - 21:7 tackle [1] - 99:1 talks [2] - 33:15, 109:12 task [3] - 84:21, 85:1 tasked [1] - 102:20 tax [2] - 73:20, 73:21 Taylor [2] - 24:9, 95:20 team [1] - 113:10 tear [1] - 27:5 tearing [1] - 91:20 temperatures [1] - 40:7 ten [2] - 46:4, 81:19 tend [3] - 20:17, 83:23, 84:22 tenders [1] - 6:10 Terminal [2] - 97:22, 104:8 termite [2] - 61:19, 64:4 terms [10] - 19:15, 58:23, 93:13, 113:13, 115:15, 116:20, 116:24, 117:4, 117:7, 118:18 terrazzo [1] - 5:6</p>	<p>Tessema [1] - 60:21 TESSEMA [40] - 60:25, 61:5, 61:9, 62:12, 62:19, 62:22, 62:24, 63:7, 63:13, 64:9, 64:13, 64:22, 65:4, 65:8, 65:20, 65:23, 66:1, 66:3, 66:11, 67:12, 67:19, 67:21, 68:7, 68:10, 68:13, 68:17, 68:20, 68:23, 69:11, 70:2, 70:10, 71:12, 71:16, 71:18, 71:23, 72:6, 72:10, 72:14, 72:16, 86:20 test [5] - 25:13, 25:14, 41:11, 44:20, 44:24 testimony [7] - 24:20, 33:3, 50:16, 61:2, 73:4, 88:19, 97:6 testing [1] - 45:7 THE [206] - 2:3, 2:16, 2:22, 3:12, 3:19, 3:21, 3:23, 4:22, 5:9, 5:16, 6:13, 6:19, 6:22, 7:14, 7:22, 8:2, 8:6, 8:13, 8:15, 8:17, 8:20, 9:4, 11:13, 11:18, 12:24, 13:1, 13:3, 13:5, 14:9, 15:5, 15:9, 15:12, 15:22, 15:25, 16:8, 16:12, 16:16, 16:18, 16:20, 16:22, 20:12, 21:14, 21:17, 22:3, 22:18, 24:2, 24:6, 24:11, 24:14, 24:16, 24:19, 24:24, 29:22, 31:3, 32:12, 32:15, 32:20, 32:24, 33:2, 33:7, 35:17, 35:20, 35:25, 36:2, 38:8, 40:18, 41:4, 41:8, 42:9, 42:17, 46:3, 46:6, 46:20, 47:19, 48:2, 48:8, 48:12, 50:1, 50:3, 50:8, 50:12, 50:15, 50:20, 51:14, 51:17, 51:21, 51:24, 53:5, 53:8, 53:13, 53:18, 53:24, 54:2, 54:16, 54:19, 54:22, 54:24, 55:1, 55:4, 59:16, 60:9, 60:12, 60:16, 60:18, 60:23, 61:1, 61:6, 61:7, 62:2, 64:20, 69:2, 69:14, 69:18, 69:23, 70:3, 70:11,</p>
--	--	---	--	--

<p>71:14, 71:17, 71:19, 71:24, 72:9, 72:11, 72:15, 72:17, 72:20, 72:22, 73:3, 73:8, 74:21, 75:2, 75:8, 77:17, 77:20, 77:22, 78:3, 79:9, 79:13, 79:19, 81:15, 83:3, 83:8, 83:13, 83:20, 85:25, 86:4, 86:10, 86:16, 86:22, 87:2, 87:9, 87:11, 87:16, 87:19, 87:23, 88:1, 88:5, 88:10, 88:14, 88:18, 88:23, 90:5, 90:8, 90:11, 90:14, 90:17, 90:20, 91:1, 91:4, 92:1, 92:8, 92:10, 92:18, 92:22, 95:13, 95:15, 96:3, 96:9, 96:14, 96:16, 96:20, 97:2, 97:5, 97:10, 104:12, 104:15, 105:4, 105:8, 105:20, 105:24, 106:4, 106:6, 106:12, 106:20, 107:20, 107:22, 108:25, 109:21, 110:25, 111:2, 111:4, 114:4, 115:20, 120:11, 121:7, 121:12, 121:21</p> <p>themes [1] - 105:15 thereby [1] - 19:4 they've [2] - 6:25, 120:19 thickest [1] - 43:25 thin [1] - 105:24 thinking [3] - 38:7, 45:19, 115:1 third [2] - 94:25, 119:21 thorough [3] - 91:9, 103:1, 104:16 three [19] - 61:11, 62:6, 63:5, 64:14, 71:2, 71:10, 80:9, 83:14, 84:2, 84:5, 93:3, 93:4, 93:25, 94:5, 94:8, 95:1, 102:14, 106:17, 118:13 threshold [1] - 95:7 throughout [1] - 97:19 to-code [1] - 29:10 today [6] - 2:17, 13:10, 34:18, 36:4, 78:11, 97:19</p>	<p>today's [2] - 4:1, 76:13 together [1] - 11:24 tomorrow [1] - 53:7 took [10] - 21:9, 23:25, 25:9, 45:6, 51:2, 51:6, 51:9, 76:3, 89:4 top [2] - 37:5, 107:10 total [2] - 18:14, 26:8 totally [1] - 52:19 touch [3] - 26:19, 27:1, 101:8 tough [5] - 36:3, 40:23, 41:2, 41:3 towards [5] - 7:24, 61:22, 62:11, 63:16, 64:15 tower [2] - 98:19, 98:20 town [1] - 25:2 toxic [9] - 25:7, 25:16, 26:17, 29:17, 30:6, 39:10, 42:8, 44:15, 45:1 toxic-emitting [1] - 26:17 tradition [1] - 109:20 tragedy [1] - 33:10 transcript [1] - 122:10 tricky [1] - 37:3 tried [1] - 66:21 Trio [1] - 119:7 Tropia [3] - 1:9, 122:7, 122:19 true [5] - 6:16, 83:9, 83:10, 103:16, 122:10 truth [21] - 24:21, 24:22, 33:4, 33:5, 50:17, 50:18, 61:3, 61:4, 73:5, 73:6, 88:20, 88:21, 97:7, 97:8 try [9] - 3:3, 17:25, 21:12, 36:19, 43:24, 62:9, 66:16, 76:7, 80:7 trying [18] - 5:4, 5:7, 27:7, 27:9, 30:1, 41:10, 41:14, 65:7, 65:16, 69:25, 80:4, 82:21, 88:3, 98:11, 99:13, 100:13, 101:25, 114:15 Ts [3] - 105:2, 107:10 Tuesday [1] - 56:23 turn [1] - 118:16 turned [1] - 111:24 two [24] - 2:24, 8:7, 9:14, 17:13, 17:20,</p>	<p>18:3, 20:7, 25:1, 26:9, 43:8, 48:24, 55:11, 55:21, 65:4, 65:19, 78:18, 78:22, 80:10, 88:2, 93:20, 93:23, 103:16, 119:17</p> <p>two-and-a-half [2] - 65:19, 80:10 two-hour [1] - 88:2 two-story [5] - 17:13, 17:20, 18:3, 48:24, 55:11 type [3] - 23:19, 34:16, 62:7 typical [1] - 99:1 typically [3] - 14:14, 20:16, 66:18</p>	<p>66:3, 67:17, 71:2, 72:2, 72:13, 74:8, 86:21, 87:7, 90:18, 101:25, 102:18, 103:15, 109:24, 110:11, 114:20, 117:10, 120:25</p> <p>upcoming [1] - 108:6 update [1] - 49:22 updated [9] - 49:19, 49:24, 50:22, 52:7, 52:8, 52:25, 53:19, 54:11, 107:25 urban [1] - 70:12 urge [1] - 35:13 USA [2] - 30:2, 34:11 useful [1] - 105:17 uses [3] - 76:6, 93:18, 105:1 utilitarian [1] - 103:6</p>	<p>89:8, 91:18, 106:10, 108:13, 108:20, 109:23, 111:8, 111:22, 120:3, 121:13</p> <p>vinyl [1] - 49:5 visibility [1] - 111:14 visible [3] - 17:17, 36:5, 36:8 visit [6] - 20:15, 20:24, 21:9, 56:22, 89:4, 110:1 visited [1] - 107:4 visual [2] - 58:7, 91:10 visually [2] - 64:16, 108:5 vital [1] - 12:21 VOC [3] - 25:13, 41:11, 44:20 volume [1] - 117:22 volunteer [1] - 16:5 vote [11] - 6:19, 40:20, 47:5, 47:21, 85:18, 86:7, 91:6, 104:11, 107:3, 107:15, 110:20 voted [2] - 5:13, 78:7 voting [2] - 104:7, 107:19 Vulcan [1] - 103:7</p>
		U		
		<p>ultimate [1] - 56:12 ultimately [1] - 121:19 unable [1] - 78:13 unacceptable [1] - 76:24 unclear [1] - 112:14 under [3] - 43:23, 54:13, 98:10 undue [2] - 59:9, 81:21 unfortunately [2] - 28:1, 82:15 uninhabitable [3] - 18:8, 18:17, 23:24 Union [4] - 97:22, 100:1, 104:8 unit [1] - 25:3 units [1] - 93:17 unknowns [2] - 38:1, 41:24 unless [6] - 14:23, 31:16, 41:1, 66:20, 90:14, 90:15 unlikely [2] - 46:17, 46:22 unlivable [2] - 42:2, 42:7 unsafe [5] - 28:14, 55:19, 56:2, 56:9, 61:17 unsatisfactory [1] - 41:12 unusual [1] - 29:11 up [36] - 6:15, 7:5, 7:12, 21:12, 23:4, 30:11, 31:13, 31:17, 32:16, 43:20, 50:23, 51:5, 51:19, 51:22, 62:8, 63:15, 65:17,</p>	V	<p>vacant [1] - 48:25 valuable [1] - 94:19 value [5] - 9:16, 19:5, 36:13, 98:5 Van [1] - 36:8 variety [3] - 9:24, 17:20, 18:3 Ventures [2] - 96:24, 104:10 verbiage [1] - 53:12 verbiage-wise [1] - 53:12 vernacular [6] - 10:7, 10:12, 55:14, 57:5, 57:14, 103:13 version [4] - 56:5, 107:25, 108:3, 108:4 versus [2] - 68:14, 68:24 via [2] - 55:21, 111:12 viable [2] - 78:16, 78:19 vice [6] - 2:16, 81:13, 87:14, 95:21, 109:8, 121:3 Vice [45] - 3:11, 5:10, 13:22, 14:13, 16:2, 20:14, 21:23, 22:11, 22:19, 23:17, 27:20, 32:1, 36:17, 37:10, 37:18, 39:20, 40:1, 48:5, 53:10, 59:18, 60:5, 62:4, 64:24, 66:7, 74:17, 79:23, 80:19, 81:7, 81:17, 82:5, 82:20, 83:15, 85:19, 86:13, 88:24,</p>
				W
				<p>waiting [1] - 61:9 walk [3] - 61:16, 61:21, 91:10 walk-around [1] - 91:10 walked [3] - 89:22, 91:20, 110:3 wall [2] - 49:8, 107:8 walls [8] - 18:14, 18:19, 18:24, 22:22, 22:25, 26:13, 30:25, 35:10 Walnut [1] - 50:11 wants [5] - 7:23, 11:14, 45:22, 90:25, 91:2 warehouse [3] - 97:23, 97:24, 104:9 watch [1] - 30:16 watching [1] - 40:24 water [3] - 5:8, 62:7 wealthy [1] - 70:19 wear [1] - 23:19 wears [2] - 25:22, 29:1 weathered [1] - 61:18 weave [1] - 99:13 website [3] - 14:3,</p>

<p>14:4, 30:5 Wednesday [1] - 1:6 week [3] - 6:7, 43:7, 44:6 weeks [1] - 43:13 welcome [3] - 2:3, 2:22, 121:9 welfare [1] - 37:4 WELL [1] - 53:16 well-maintained [1] - 11:1 wells [3] - 59:18, 67:12, 111:11 WELLS [45] - 1:17, 2:10, 5:24, 17:7, 17:24, 20:23, 21:5, 21:22, 22:11, 23:2, 23:15, 23:21, 39:20, 48:21, 50:23, 51:25, 53:2, 53:10, 53:20, 55:8, 56:17, 59:12, 59:21, 60:1, 60:7, 82:14, 83:15, 92:24, 95:21, 96:6, 106:19, 107:24, 108:24, 109:7, 110:19, 112:3, 112:9, 112:13, 112:19, 113:6, 115:19, 115:23, 118:11, 118:25, 120:7 Wells [1] - 2:10 Wert [1] - 36:8 West [6] - 4:11, 15:14, 32:22, 75:5, 78:1, 99:19 whatnot [3] - 99:4, 112:21, 118:7 whereas [1] - 93:24 whole [10] - 24:21, 33:4, 36:25, 50:17, 61:3, 62:24, 63:16, 73:5, 88:20, 97:7 wholesale [2] - 119:14, 120:14 wide [3] - 9:23, 62:25, 84:16 width [2] - 49:14, 49:17 wife [4] - 11:24, 24:10, 41:21, 43:9 WILLIAM [1] - 1:14 willingness [1] - 20:3 wind [1] - 64:18 window [7] - 11:5, 57:19, 107:25, 109:10, 109:11, 119:14, 120:14 windows [15] - 18:24, 44:6, 44:7, 49:5,</p>	<p>51:8, 51:11, 61:20, 108:18, 109:3, 109:5, 109:13, 110:7, 110:15, 110:23, 120:19 wires [1] - 4:4 wise [1] - 53:12 wish [3] - 25:25, 28:10, 78:12 wonderful [1] - 12:19 wondering [1] - 39:15 wood [3] - 41:16, 46:25, 49:6 Word [1] - 108:3 word [2] - 42:18, 118:21 Word-based [1] - 108:3 words [1] - 109:16 workforce [1] - 98:2 works [1] - 40:3 Works [1] - 120:1 worried [2] - 26:2, 33:18 worry [1] - 43:10 worse [1] - 67:7 worth [2] - 62:15, 65:22 writing [2] - 64:8, 65:5</p>
Y	
	<p>year [7] - 21:25, 113:12, 115:13, 116:3, 117:18, 117:25, 119:15 years [24] - 11:1, 37:13, 46:5, 55:15, 57:9, 57:17, 58:21, 61:11, 62:6, 63:5, 63:12, 65:19, 71:2, 71:10, 73:11, 76:1, 77:11, 80:9, 80:10, 83:14, 84:2, 84:5, 95:6, 104:10 you-all [1] - 119:13 young [2] - 25:1, 26:9 yourself [1] - 66:5 yourselves [1] - 88:2</p>
Z	
	<p>Zoning [4] - 119:16, 119:20, 120:17, 121:6 zoning [1] - 98:15</p>