

CITY OF GLADSTONE, MISSOURI

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

**TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC HEARING**

May 12th, 2003

City Hall  
Gladstone, Missouri

City Council Members:

Mr. Les Smith, Mayor  
Mr. Wayne Beer, Mayor Pro Tem  
Mr. Bill Cross, Councilman  
Ms. Carol Rudi, Councilman  
Mr. Joe Evans, Councilman

Attendance:

Mr. Kirk Davis, City Manager  
Ms. Cathy Swenson, City Clerk  
Mr. Scott Wingerson, Assistant City Manager  
Mr. Mark Meyerdirk, Integra  
Ms. Christine Bushyhead  
Mr. Dave Ramsay, City Attorney  
Mr. Lynn McClure, Economic Development Administrator

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GLADSTONE CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC HEARING

**MAYOR SMITH:** Madam Clerk, would you please notice that the entire Council is present? Our public meeting tonight is to make a blight determination of Gladstone Plaza. Our public hearing process will work as such, first, I will ask for comments from the City Manager, then the Assistant City Manager. At that time, we will include a presentation by representatives from Integra Realty Resources. I will then ask for any comments from the audience and we would like to remind you, and will again at that time, that the topic at hand this evening is the determination of blight for Gladstone Plaza, not necessarily what the future of Gladstone Plaza might hold, but if it, in its present state, should be declared blighted and then last, but not least, a follow-up summary by the staff. So at this time, the public hearing is open. Mr. Davis?

**MR. DAVIS:** Thanks, Mayor. In 1998, the City Council established a goal that would "encourage owner investment in residential and commercial neighborhoods." In 1999, the Council initiated

another goal to "develop an economic development plan for the city." In 2000, the city initiated a series of economic development summits in which approximately sixty residents and businesses participated. The result of these summits was the creation of an economic development plan. At the same time, the city embarked on a North Oak corridor study. Both of these processes involved significant public input. In October of 2000, the Council established a goal calling for the elimination of blight. At the same time, the Council established an objective to implement the recommendations contained in the North Oak corridor study and implement the goals of the economic summits. Both of these projects highlighted the need for reinvestment along the corridor, identified Gladstone Plaza as an area of focus. In 2001 and 2002, the city began laying the administrative framework to address the issues contained within these two projects, the studies and the Council, through goal setting, reinforced continued progress on the North Oak corridor study recommendation - recommendations actually. Tonight, the City

Council will consider a declaration of blight at Gladstone Plaza. The declaration is a continuation of efforts to establish the framework for the redevelopment objectives of the city and will allow the city to work with the owner or potential investors toward the redevelopment of the plaza and at this time, I would like to turn the microphone over to Assistant City Manager Scott Wingerson.

**MR. WINGERSON:** Thank you, Mr. Davis. Thank you, Mayor Smith and members of the City Council. I would like to start by introducing a project team that's been established for this discussion tonight. The project team is led by City Manager Kirk Davis and composed of City Counselor Dave Ramsay, Lynn McClure, our Economic Development Administrator, folks from Integra Realty Resources and Special Counsel with White, Goss, Bowers, March, Schulte & Weisenfels(ph). Staff's presentation tonight will be organized into four parts. The first is planning and appropriate state law, the second is communication and notice, the third is a discussion of blight, that will be the core of staff's presentation and finally, it will be

followed by a section on support and staff's recommendation to the City Council. Gladstone Plaza was constructed in the 1960's. That was a time in Gladstone before the real growth of Gladstone as we know it today. North Oak was two lanes; it's now five lanes. The center itself is an L-shaped center, generally constructed out of concrete block, flat roofs with square and large retail units. The center itself contains approximately two hundred thousand square feet of general retail and is composed of approximately forty-one acres. The current tenants in Gladstone Plaza consist of secondary retail, service based businesses and not for profits. The remainder of the presentation will seek to provide the City Council with information that exists and has been created for this purpose. The first is what we're labeling as Exhibit One and I would ask you to look at the notebook we provided to you tonight. We will step through each and every one of the some fourteen Exhibits that will be presented over the next few minutes. The first Exhibit is the 1993 comprehensive plan. The goals of the comprehensive plan are

to maintain, promote and enhance the overall quality of life, to implement the location and retention of businesses within Gladstone in a way that goods and services are provided and job opportunities are offered. The '93 comprehensive plan indicates then and reinforced by the 2001 corridor study, that the demographics of that part of the community offer a strong base for retail. Nothing has changed from '93 to today. Overall, provided by the city and state and federal government, business and technical assistance has been and continues to be available for redevelopment and business assistance. Business recruitment has been under way since before 1993 and continues today. Redevelopment tools have been utilized as suggested in the '93 comprehensive plan, specifically at the Home Depot and at Prospect Plaza, so we're familiar with the tools and understand their value in the redevelopment process. There's also marketing materials that existed shortly after 1993 and updated over the last year to eighteen months that exist to promote the community to business partners and our relationships, as a whole, with the

development community are considered to be very, very good. The second Exhibit is a 2001 North Oak corridor study. There's an entire chapter dedicated to Gladstone Plaza and one other catalytic project. Catalytic projects are designed to spur growth and economic development along the entire North Oak corridor. This study is important and it's important in a couple of ways. It's most important because it's witnessed by a significant amount of public input and continued support for the study. It's also important because concurrently with the performance of the 2001 corridor study, were economic development visioning summits. Those processes have been relatively simultaneously. There was some overlap and again, a very important public process including more than a hundred residents of our community. The 2001 North Oak corridor study indicates that we must focus redevelopment efforts on catalytic areas to spur corridor improvement and secure the future of the area. Since the time of the 2001 North Oak corridor study, anchor tenants have left the Plaza. There's no potential quality tenants that we know of that exist today, no

regional drawing capability. The center is mainly made up of discount stores and thrift marts. Overall, the study envisions a strong commercial presence to provide a positive and sustainable presence for the entire corridor. The study envisions medium scale boxes with accessory uses, such as restaurants, banks and pad development and envisions a multifamily development to the east of the existing plaza and maybe most importantly, the market study that was included in the corridor study indicates over a hundred and fifty thousand square feet of retail leakage, meaning that there's an availability of that square footage in that part of the corridor to the benefit of our residents. Overall, the two studies, in combination, indicate that the overall planning efforts, that Gladstone Plaza suffers from an outmoded and outdated design, poor traffic circulation, lack of maintenance and investment.

The center is in need of redevelopment. The first Exhibit in your notebook is Chapter 353, urban redevelopment corporations law. I would like to read two definitions from that law; it's the first Exhibit in your notebook. The

definition of area, "That portion of the city which the legislative authority of such city has found or shall find to be blighted so that the clearance, re-planning, rehabilitation or reconstruction thereof is necessary to effectuate the purposes of this law. Any such area may include buildings or improvements not in themselves blighted and any real property, whether improved or unimproved, the inclusion of which is deemed necessary for the effective clearance, re-planning, reconstruction or rehabilitation of the area of which such buildings, improvements or real property form a part." The next definition is blighted area, "That portion of the city within the legislative authority of such city determines that by reason of age, obsolescence, inadequate or outmoded design or physical deterioration have become economic and social liabilities and that such conditions are conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, crime or inability to pay reasonable taxes." Those two definitions are the topic of the discussion tonight. I would like to take just a minute and provide those three Exhibits to our court reporter, who

is here to provide an accurate record. The second part of the presentation focuses on communication with the ownership and tenants of Gladstone Plaza. In July of 2002, staff and members of the project team met with a gentleman by the name of Ray Byers, he's the historical representative of Gladstone Plaza, who expressed an interest in redevelopment. We followed that conversation up with a letter on March 25th and I would like to read just two paragraphs from that letter, March 25th, 2003, a letter to Mr. Byers, Edith Wolfe, a copy to Mr. Byers by registered mail, "The city is highly interested in partnering with you in an effort to redevelop Gladstone Plaza and prompt new investment along the adjacent portion of North Oak Trafficway. The city has commissioned a blight study completed recently for the shopping center and adjacent properties in an effort to provide tech skill support for incentive assistance, such as Chapter 353, Chapter 70 and transportation development districts. We believe that after reviewing our redevelopment plan, the amount of financial support the city would be willing to dedicate to the effort and considering the

increased value of the site after redevelopment, you will find interest in joining hands with us on this project. Please let me know if you would be interested in discussing with me the redevelopment possibilities for Gladstone Plaza within the next ten days." We have yet to hear a response on that letter. During that meeting, staff shared a lot of information, a lot of planning work, a lot of study work, a lot of blight analysis, a lot of possibilities for the redevelopment of Gladstone Plaza. We attempted to contact Mr. Byers on a couple of occasions after the meeting and prior to the letter being sent and those were unsuccessful; it's almost ten months. We also, in preparation for this public hearing, provided an informational letter to the tenants of Gladstone Plaza, Exhibit Five in your notebook. On April 14th, staff provided a letter to the tenants and owner of Gladstone Plaza. One paragraph reads, "Unfortunately, Gladstone Plaza has apparently had difficulty attracting tenants to fill vacant spaces. One impression expressed in the retail marketplace is that the quality of the structure and the leasable space is not competitive. Improving

the quality of the structure and leasable space depends upon obtaining both legal and financial support from the current property owner. A partnership between the city and the owner could be extremely important to the success of any redevelopment opportunities for the plaza. The city has approached the owner on several times to discuss the opportunities to partner regarding redevelopment of the plaza, but to date, the city's efforts have failed to produced any results. In the very near future, the Gladstone City Council will hold a hearing to consider whether a determination of blight should be declared for real property located in and around Gladstone Plaza at 64th and North Oak. As is required by state legislation, public notice of the hearing will be advertised in the local newspaper. As a courtesy, notice will also be sent via mail to the owners of the subject property, those with a secure interest in the subject property and each of the tenants of the subject property, continued response of our attempt to inform and advise tenants and anybody involved with Gladstone Plaza of the public hearing tonight. On April 24th, the city

mailed official notice of the blight hearing as the next Exhibit, Exhibit Six in your packet. Included in that Exhibit, which is a very thick Exhibit in your notebook, is the actual notice, the legal description of the areas that we're discussing tonight, certified mail - or I'm sorry, a list of all the people that were provided notice and certified mail receipts. Exhibit Seven in your notebook is a photocopy of the published legal notice that was provided, published in the Kansas City Star on April 26th, 2003. The core of the presentation tonight will be made by Mark Meyerdirk. He works for Integra Realty Resources. Exhibit Eight in your packet, provided on your Thursday's packet, is a copy of the blight study Mr. Meyerdirk will present. Exhibit Nine is the Power Point presentation which you're about to see. I would like to introduce Mark Meyerdirk from Integra Realty Resources and the staff will summarize with community support for action tonight.

**MR. MEYERDIRK:** Thank you, Mr. Wingerson. My name is Mark - Mr. Mayor and members of the City Council, my name is Mark Meyerdirk. I'm an associate with Integra Realty Resources of

Westwood, Kansas. Integra Realty Resources is the largest real estate valuation and appraisal company in the United States with approximately fifty offices in the major markets throughout the United States. I also serve as General Counsel for our Corporate and Public Finance Division of Integra and in doing so, have a lot of experience working with cities and particularly with blight related matters. I have twenty-seven years of practice in law and primarily in real estate, finance and franchise law and I'm a member of the Kansas Bar. I have written a template, which you have in front of you, which is the Integra blight study, which we use for all of our blight analysis and our company does approximately twenty-five to fifty blight analyses each year. First of all, I'm going to direct your attention to the Exhibit which Mr. Wingerson has provided to you, which is the blight study, and take you briefly through the provision of the different areas. The general information area provides information about the subject matter area and the five parcels in question. The economic analysis, which is the next tab in the blight

study, provides economic background and basis upon which our opinion was based. The next tab provides for a property analysis giving specific information, for example, the zoning of the subject area and the next area is the blight analysis itself, which will be the presentation I will make according to the Power Point presentation that we will have for the rest of the evening. At the end of the report are addenda and addendum which provide additional information and support materials. I would like to draw your attention specifically to the photographs which appear in addendum C and addendum C-1, approximately eighty photographs of the subject area which we believe is significant evidence of blight for the proposed - in the subject area. In determining whether the subject area is a blighted area, we examined the statutory definition of blight and our report utilizes the definition found in two applicable Missouri statutes. The Assistant City Manager has provided you, and I won't read through it again, the definition primary in question here, which is Chapter 353 of the urban redevelopment law and we will focus on our

analysis of what the areas of blight are for the subject matter as it relates to that statute, in particular. The other blight statute which we have called upon to review here is commonly known as the TIF statute for 353, which provides other criteria, but very similar to the 353 statute. There are three categories, primary categories of blight, each with identifiable subcategories, all of which contain quantifiable factors, which if significantly present, either individually or in combination, are indicative of the presence of blight. These primary categories and subcategories are stated shortly hereafter, so I'll go ahead and get into the statutory categories as we see them. The first is health, welfare and social blight. We've broken that category down into two primary subcategories, health, which are areas that effect the conditions which are conducive to ill health, welfare or bad sanitation, menace to public health and transmission of diseases. The second is safety, which provides conditions conducive to crime, safety concerns, fire hazards, social problems or compromising moral or public welfare. The second primary category

is physical blight, conditions which evidence again a subcategory of physical deterioration, physical deterioration because of age or because of deteriorated site improvements and the second subcategory under that area is obsolescence, obsolescence of the area, the platting, the subdivision or outmoded design of the improvements on the subject property. The third primary area or category is economic blight and if we find evidence which suggests that the taxes are not reasonable relative to other taxes paid in the area or B, where there is an economic liability, such as a need for rehabilitation or redevelopment or there's a retardation of the provision for housing accommodations in the particular area. Again, all of those sub-categorizations and the major categorizations come from our review of the blight statute. So in reviewing the area to provide you some empirical analysis relative to the statute, we looked to see whether these - by reason of a majority of some of these statutory factors, there is evidence of blight in the subject area. With regard to the first major area, health, welfare and social blight, we

believe there are several instances in the subject area exhibiting unsanitary conditions which meet the health subcategory definition of blight, as well as unsafe conditions, which meet the safety subcategory of blight. The photographs, only a portion of which will be shown in this presentation, provide evidence of this fact. The vacant and unimproved areas around the property, around the shopping center area, in particular, are evidence to us of the health, welfare and social blight subcategory reference in the statute. Refuse often collects in the unimproved acreage behind and to the east of the existing deteriorating shopping center and to the south of the shopping center. Overgrown bushes, scrub trees on the north, east and south sides of the property are unsightly and conducive to animals and rodents. The subject property has been the scene of construction dumping and other littering. The site was littered with broken glass, trash, car tires, pallets, dimensional lumber, construction debris throughout and dumping, which is unsanitary, continues to be a problem. The large undeveloped tracts of property harbor

insects and vermin which, in an urban setting such as the subject area, are also considered as unsanitary and unhealthy. The photographs on the following pages, as well as the ones in the addendum, which give even more evidence of this, show significant trash, litter and general unsanitary condition which we believe meets the health subcategory in the primary test of blight. You will see in this photograph some trash and overgrowth. You will see in the next photograph brush and undergrowth throughout the property. The next photograph again shows evidence of dumping and litter. The next photograph also shows dumping and litter. The large vacant areas and those covered by brush and scrub trees make maintenance difficult and the photographs which we showed previously and the ones following show that the brush and tree area which is present along the east side of the subject property. Now, we will move to the actual shopping center itself. This is a photograph showing the property to the northeast from the back of the buildings. This is the subject showing to the east of the property and the proximity of unlighted vacant heavy

forestation and rodent infestation on the property near residential and shopping areas does, in our opinion, create an opportunity for nefarious behavior and attracts nuisance. Photographs of the unlighted remote forested areas evidences the safety hazard and nuisance hazard that exists on the subject property which again, in our opinion, are evidence of blight. Then, we will move next to the area near the shopping center. Safety is also a concern in the vicinity surrounding the existing shopping center. The area around and near the shopping center is not maintained and is littered with broken glass and construction debris. These areas attract nuisance and are a danger to the children in the neighborhood, residential neighborhood to the north of the site who may be enticed to play nearby. This photograph shows glass and trash, piling up of pallets and the alligatoring parking areas. This one shows trash outside the area. Again, these are just a few photographs illustrative of more blight. I encourage you to look at the other eighty or so photographs which evidence the same information. The second page or category of blight in our

review is physical blight. The photographs in section one above were also evidence of physical deterioration on the site, in particular the site improvements. The following photographs evidence the physical deterioration of the parking lot and the shopping center structure. They also show obsolescence of the shopping center, which is further evidenced by the vacancy and tenant mix that the center suffers from. Finally, the entire shopping center is constructed in an outdated and obsolete and outmoded design that further establishes the physical blight of the property. The parking lots on the site are all in disrepair and in need of replacement. They are covered with potholes, alligator surfacing and curb degeneration. The parking design is one large poorly lighted expanse of broken asphalt. The parking locations are generally unmarked. There are no traffic barriers or curbing to assure traffic flow and safety in the lot and the entire parking lot design is obsolete and fails to conform to current parking design models. If you go into any current or newer shopping center, you will see the things that I'm making

reference to. The photographs are evidence of this particular type of physical blight. The second review of physical blight has to do with the shopping center structure itself. The shopping center is in need of physical repair, including painting, weatherstripping and reconstruction. Additionally, the location of the center is well off the main thoroughfare of North Oak Trafficway, which makes it unattractive and difficult for consumers to locate. Additionally, there's no turn signal to the southbound traffic on North Oak, further disadvantaging the design of the improvements of the shopping center as a whole. The center is inhabited with what we see a class C or lower tenants and much of the center is vacant. The exterior of the center lacks proper signage and the signage that does exist is not architecturally consistent. The next major category of blight in our analysis has to do with economic blight. Other blighting factors or criteria observed are economic in nature. Does this site contain retardation of the provisions for housing in the area? Does the site present economic liability? Is the site

unable to generate reasonable taxes? The site's economic underutilization is designed in the next three points. It's not necessary that the property be located in what is generally known as a slum to meet the blight standard. The concept of when redevelopment is appropriate has gone far beyond slum clearance and the concept of economic underutilization has become a valid finding in the meeting of the legal definition of blight. The term blighted, for purposes of this analysis, includes inadequate planning, excessive land coverage, lack of proper light, air or open space, defective design or arrangement of buildings, lack of proper sanitation facilities, the existence of buildings which by means or by reason of age, physical deterioration or obsolescence or of an inadequate or outmoded design and have impaired the economic value of the larger area effecting them with blight and such areas are characterized by depreciating values, impaired investment, reduced or negligible income and tax references. One of the factors referenced was inability to pay reasonable taxes, inability to generate real estate taxes at comparable amounts

for similar properties of comparable use mix, the subject site economically underutilized and unable to pay reasonable taxes. The site's tax value and vital statistics are as follows, the three retail blighted properties are parcel one, two and three showing a tax per square foot with the last number on the page there. I'll summarize this at the end. This is what the tax is currently at. Let's go on to the next one. Comparable areas at Seaport Plaza on Highway 169 in Liberty Corners, on 291 Highway show a higher per square footage tax rate. The same thing applies to the multifamily zone blighted property of parcels four and five, with the taxes shown per square foot there. Parcel four is a vacant parcel east of the shopping center zoned for multifamily and parcel five is a single family house which could be acquired for access to the north parcel. Parcel five is not included in the comparable analysis in our report. These are comparable multifamily properties with tax per square footages of substantially higher than those of the ones in question. In summary, relative to retail uses, the City of Gladstone loses approximately two

cents per square foot on a worst case scenario or twenty-five thousand dollars per year in taxes. Relative to multifamily use, the City of Gladstone loses ten cents per square foot, worst case scenario or eighty-three thousand plus dollars per year in taxes. The real estate taxes generated are commensurately lower for the subject site than similarly located retail sites and multifamily sites. Thus, under its current zoning and the potential real estate taxes are adversely effected by these blighted conditions.

Economic underutilization is a term used to describe a property that is not producing maximum economic benefit to the community. There are many forms of economic underutilization ranging from allowing a property to remain vacant and unimproved, to operating a property in a manner that is no longer competitive or complementary to properties in the marketplace. Development has occurred almost everywhere in the neighborhood with the exception of the subject property. One would expect, given its location adjacent to North Oak Trafficway, one of the most heavily trafficked areas in the greater Kansas City

metropolitan area, that the subject property would have been one of the first tracts to develop during the economic expansion in the 1980's into 2001, that the subject property was continually passed over for development and redeveloped is due to blighting factors discussed in the previous sections and evidence that it is underutilized for its current - because of its current physical characteristics.

When comparing the subject property to many available multifamily sites in Clay County, a higher development cost will result from lack of sufficient access to the property. Obtaining adequate and comparable access will result in additional costs which will not result in higher market rental or lower expenses for the potential apartment development. Without some means to defray these additional development costs, development of apartment units on this property will result in an investor lower yield than a similarly located Clay County site would without physical constraints for the subject. Topography is also a problem for retail portion of the subject property. Another issue effecting the property is the very lengthy

holding period until the economics improve to the point when the development is feasible, absent development incentives. The site has been continually declining with retail vacancies and the multifamily property has remained undeveloped for a significant period of time. Our conclusion therefore is that the definition of blight encompassed by all of these three major points and their subcategories, as listed above and in our preceding analysis, described areas in which the subject should be considered blighted. My findings are summarized hereafter.

Number one, the site is conducive to ill health, sanitation and public health. The vacant parcels, in particular, are presently and historically used for illegal dumping and refuse. Litter, trash and vermin are evidenced throughout the area. Number two, the site is unsafe. The wooded areas with brush and densely foliated are attractive nuisances for children and promote nefarious activities. The broken glass and trash near the shopping center are a danger to children who live in the residential neighborhood to the north of the site. Physical blight, number one, the physical parking lot of

the retail center is significantly damaged with potholes, alligator surfaces, broken curbs and insufficient drainage; the parking design is also obsolete. Number two, the shopping center itself, the structure is in need of significant repair, refurbishing and the building layout and signage are obsolete in their current design and finally, with regard to economic blight, number one, the subject parcels are under taxed compared to comparable properties in the area and number two, with regard to economic liability, the site is underutilized and is an economic burden to the community. The retail center is declining in value as vacancies are increasing, while the quality of tenants is decreasing. The vacant multifamily parcels have been underdeveloped for a significant period and have no effective commercial use. Based on this information as set forth, it is our opinion that the subject property does meet the statutory definition of blight and should be considered for redevelopment under Chapter 353 of the Missouri Revised Statutes and for tax increment financing, should that be considered, under Chapter 99 of the Missouri Revised Statutes. I

appreciate your attention this evening. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have, otherwise I'll turn it back over to Mr. Wingerson.

**MR. WINGERSON:** Mr. Meyerdirk, thank you very much. Exhibit Nine was Mr. Meyerdirk's Power Point presentation, which will be entered into the record. So we move into the final phase of the staff's presentation, which is community support and recommendation. I would like to again thank everybody for their involvement. Exhibit Ten is a resolution from the Village of Oakview, who supports efforts to redevelop Gladstone Plaza. Exhibit Eleven, a resolution from the Gladstone Area Chamber of Commerce, again indicating support for the redevelopment of Gladstone Plaza. Exhibit Number Twelve is a resolution from the Gladstone Economic Betterment Council providing support for redevelopment of Gladstone Plaza. Exhibit Thirteen is the letter from the Clay County Economic Development Council Executive Board indicating support. I believe you will hear some evidence of support from Northland Redevelopment Partners and finally, Exhibit

Fourteen is a letter from Mr. Mike Guidry, former tenant of Pizza Street, owner of Pizza Street that will be provided. There will be additional presentation of each of those, I think all of those resolutions during the public comments section of your public hearing tonight.

Mayor Smith, I would like to ask that the Exhibit list, items One through Fourteen, be accepted as presented.

**MAYOR SMITH:** We would note that Exhibits One through Fourteen have been presented and accepted.

**MR. WINGERSON:** Thank you. It's our recommendation of the staff that the Council declare Gladstone Plaza, an area described in the legal notice as published, as a blighted area. I would be glad to answer any questions that you have at this time.

**MR. SMITH:** Any questions of Mr. Wingerson? Thank you, Mr. Wingerson. At this point, the staff has made recommendation that the subject property be declared as blighted, declared blighted. Is there anyone in the audience who would like to make any comments in opposition to this recommendation? If so, please step

forward. Give us your name and address for the record.

**MR. HOLBROOK:** Mayor Smith and members of the Council, good evening. My name is Reed Holbrook. I am a lawyer and I represent Clay County Realty and Edith Wolfe, it's my privilege to do tonight. My address is 757 Armstrong Avenue, Kansas City, Kansas, 66101.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Thank you.

**MR. HOLBROOK:** Edith Wolfe is eighty-six years old. In 1965, her husband came to this town, bought the ground and built what we now know as Gladstone Plaza Shopping Center. It has been operated very successfully since then. It has been, very frankly, he built it on what was about plowed ground, two lane road, as previously indicated. Since 1965, which is thirty-seven or -eight years ago, Gladstone Plaza has paid, on an annual basis, all of its real property taxes. Currently, they pay just about seventy-nine thousand dollars a year in the aggregate real property taxes. They've never been behind, they've never been delinquent and I would submit, if you were interested and you want to go fifteen hundred feet either north

or south on North Oak Trafficway, you would probably find more than one retail or owner along there that is, in some way, delinquent or is behind or has been in times past. I'm interested in the findings of Mr. Meyerdirk for a couple reasons. He mentions that there is some kind of an obsolescence about it and I would submit that when you look at the major shopping centers that have been built in the last five or ten years, these would be shopping centers or not covered malls, but open strip type shopping centers, they're all the same. They're either rectangular or square. They have parking out front. They have substantial parking. They have good view from the roadway and that's been the case here. I would respectfully submit that there's not anything obsolete about it at all. There's been mention made that, in some way, it's been allowed to deteriorate and become dilapidated and we would respectfully submit that that's not the view of the eye of the local Chamber of Commerce. What Mr. Byers is going to present you is an award that was received by Gladstone Plaza from the local chamber commenting and complimenting them

for having a fine and a wonderful shopping center. That was about six and a half years ago, but I hope most of you are very well acquainted with what that shopping center looks like. Some of you may have patronized some of the businesses in that particular store, but I find it interesting that this store, in the space of six and a half years, has gone from being the object of an award from the local Chamber of Commerce to a blight study by this company that's been hired. I am interested and find it most interesting that Mr. Meyerdirk would mention that, in some form or another, this shopping center is a menace to the public health. If that were the case and it was, in fact, a menace to the public health, certainly the Clay County Prosecuting Attorney would have been in here and filed some sort of an action to close it down or stop it or prevent it from continuing to be a menace to the public health.

The State of Missouri has something known as the Division of Health and one of their responsibilities under Missouri statute is to be sure that unhealthy, unsanitary and conditions that might become a menace to the public health

are prevented from occurring or cleaned up if indeed, in fact, they are. I haven't seen any evidence like that at all in this presentation.

Now, there are a lot of conclusions, very conclusory statements and there's reading of this Missouri statute and because there's trash that's sitting in a trash bin, if you noted carefully and if you looked at one of the photographs about the so-called refuse and debris, it's in trash bins. Now, I drove by the rear end of that shopping center an hour and a half ago. There wasn't any debris out there at all. I don't know when Mr. Meyerdirk or the photographer was out there, but I would think that, among other things, for you to treat this eighty-six year old woman fairly and properly like you maybe hoped she would treat you if your positions were reversed, you would want to see some real honest to God hardcore facts that somehow this is a menace to public health. I would respectfully submit to you that that has to be present for you to even consider declaring this a blighted area. I've talked about the real estate taxes and there's something mentioned in the Missouri statute about -

there's something about immoral or amoral conduct or anything like that. Well, never since 1965 has there ever been any sort of X-rated bookstore or any other similar bookstore.

There isn't there now and believe me, if you knew Mrs. Wolfe like I do, there will never be one in that facility as long as she is alive, but if there is something that's amoral about that shopping center or it is creating or contributing to some kind of an amoral atmosphere, where are the complaints from the police department describing that, "We've had twenty-three arrests for this or that or the other", or "We've had incidents." Where's the chief of police in here testifying in front of you saying, "This is a place that's contributing to an amoral atmosphere." I submit to you that in order for you to make this finding, you have to have hard evidence, not conclusory statements, some little blither read off of the Missouri statute. There is some mention in the statute about disease and this might be a place that could, in fact, create or establish a disease spreading. I have not read anything in the newspapers about any outbreaks of disease in

Gladstone, Missouri or Clay County, Missouri, if indeed that is the case. Again, this gets back to the public health issue and where are the representatives of the Division of Health of the State of Missouri or Clay County's Public Health Department that will come in here and offer you honest to God facts and say, "We've been in here. This situation, for whatever reason that might exist, is indeed creating a problem. It is creating a condition or a situation that breeds disease." There's been a total absence of that. I don't know how you can think about or even consider for a moment making a finding that this is a blighted area unless that kind of evidence is present and it's not here. You have a lawyer who lives in Mission Hills, Kansas stand up here and tell you that this place is diseased, it's blighted, it's out of this, it's out of that and it would respectfully submit it's all conclusory, any statements and photographs. Well, if the place is as blighted as Mr. Meyerdirk seems to suggest to you that it is, the folks that own and operate Bank Midwest must be the biggest fools on the planet because they, very recently, came in here and built a

very nice building at the very front end of that facility. My guess is, most bankers are pretty bright folks and if they can't have access to their bank facility from North Oak Trafficway that was reasonable so they could serve their customers, they wouldn't build something there.

I think that kind of runs in the face and counter to what is being suggested to you tonight. Our request is that you open your eyes and think about that. There was another fairly new facility called Advance Auto Parts that's sitting there, access. That's a retail operation. They depend on people walking in, buying the goods that are offered for sale in that particular store and leaving and walking out. It's quick in and quick out because most of the goods in that store are not terribly high priced, so they have to have a high volume. Most retailers like that do a pretty careful job of determining traffic flows and what the twenty-four hour traffic counts are up and down North Oak Trafficway and what the access is in and out of. Something is not right here. We would respectfully suggest they haven't come close to meeting their burden that this is a

blighted area and on behalf of a lovely eighty-six year old woman who owns Clay County Realty and that owns this center and the adjacent parcels, we ask that you say no to their request. Thank you very much.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Mr. Holbrook, can I ask you just a couple things. First of all, Mr. Byers, if we could, I would like to get a photocopy, if you would walk back with our clerk or something, so that we may enter that plaque as an Exhibit on your behalf.

**MR. HOLBROOK:** Thank you, Mayor. We will be happy to do that.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Sure, and secondly, Mr. Holbrook, you--

**MR. BYERS:** This award was presented at the - a banquet and I'm very proud of it.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Thank you. This will become Exhibit Number Fifteen. Thank you. You addressed some of the issues and I appreciate your diligence in that, but could you take a stab at the issue of economic blight? You mentioned Bank Midwest and Advance Auto Parts, but the total tract consists of about forty or forty-one acres. What would be your opinion of

that as compared to other retail areas, for example, and other forty acre tracts that might be doing a little bit more business than they are.

**MR. HOLBROOK:** The total real estate parcel is large, I agree. I think less than half of the real estate acreage, I think about twenty acres, is it twenty-eight that's undeveloped? Twenty-eight is undeveloped, so that would leave about twenty-three that's either under asphalt or concrete or underneath some kind of a store. I can't tell you what the wisdom of Al Wolfe was in 1965 or acquiring that real estate, whether he intended to expand the center or make it available for either single or multifamily housing. It's there. It's available for development, but because it is there, that per se doesn't mean that it's somehow created an economic obsolescence in a portion of the City of Gladstone, Missouri; that's as good as I can do.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Does the Council have any questions of Mr. Holbrook? Thank you, sir.

**MR. HOLBROOK:** Okay. Thank you very much.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Is there anyone else who would like to offer any comments in opposition to the staff recommendation that this property be declared blighted? I'm seeing none. I would like to ask anyone in the audience who would like to make any comments in support of the staff recommendation to step forward please. Step to the podium and give us your name and address please.

**MR. NORRIS:** My name is Roger Norris and I live at 6805 North Walnut. It's been a long time since I've been in this chamber and I notice you've upgraded your chairs and microphones. So I didn't have to come up twice, I would like to extend to the staff my continued pride in the way they've conducted themselves. Mr. Davis, one of the nicest most compassionate men I've ever known. I couldn't have dreamed for a better person to lead the ship during this crisis that we've been under. Thank you so much and your staff. On this blight, as most of you know, I'm not a big TIF supporter and I kind of fall into the school of other things, but there are times when things are needed. If you would listen to the presentation given by the staff

and their representative, you could add the statement and has for years to everything he said and be accurate. We have an obligation, as citizens, to support our businesses. We have an obligation to cities to protect our businesses and give them an environment in which they can grow. We're not so interested in property tax value as we are in sales tax value, when it comes to sales. I used to go and get my hair cut at Clyde's. Clyde McIntyre was my barber and he would complaint, fifteen to twenty years ago, about the inability for himself or the management company to do upgrades on his facility and he was just a little barber. If we look at the bank and the auto parts store out front, maybe even Rod's Hallmark, they generate quite a bit of traffic, but it's hard to not notice the big vacant building on the back side that used to be a grocery store that served those of us that live across the street in Hamilton Heights and the surrounding area. There's always been a trash heap behind that place and as far back as when I was a kid and we were over there on our minibikes and our motorcycles, there's always been tires and wood,

people's trash. That's not going to change and hasn't changed. While I didn't drive behind that center today, I did drive behind that center last weekend and it is a trash dump. It's not painted. It's not kept up and never has been. I would also like to address the giving of the presentation. I remember the discussion around that presentation, I think I was either Mayor Pro Tem or Mayor of this city at the time, and we had hoped that Mrs. Wolfe had finally gotten to the point where she was going to start to upgrade the facility to generate more tax dollars. One of the differences we had between Gladstone Plaza Shopping Center and the Prospect Plaza Shopping Center is we had a developer willing to work with the city. I think we would all agree that's been a successful venture. Home Depot has certainly been a successful venture and I hope that even taking these steps, that this will be a successful venture also. Those of us on the west side of town certainly deserve someplace decent to shop close to home, certainly would like to see something along the lines of a restaurant, a grocery store that's

close. It's an elderly community in Hamilton Heights over there. Many of my neighbors are old and don't like to venture out very far and they find themselves down at Vivion or up at Barry or going all the way through town to get over to the grocery stores on Antioch Road. I certainly encourage anything that the City Council and the city staff wants to do to that property because I know they have the interests of the citizens of Gladstone and those of myself included in their thought processes. Also, for the record, Mayor, I would like to note that former Mayor Nodler is ill tonight and could not be here, but he certainly echos all of my words and we appreciate your guidance. Thank you very much.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Very good. Thank you. Anyone else?

**MS. ALEXANDER:** Ann Alexander, 6767 North Askew Circle. I was privileged to serve on the group that looked at preservation in Gladstone and what had been obvious to me before became very obvious that we're landlocked. We can only go so far. That shopping center needs help and when I heard that that might be coming, I was

enthused. I live close to Prospect Plaza. That's a charming place compared to what it was and to have that would provide more jobs, more business, all of which would benefit Gladstone. I'm in favor of it.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Thank you.

**MR. HALL:** Good evening, Mayor, City Council Members. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this evening. My name is Pete Hall and I live at 5621 North Clinton Place in Gladstone.

Even though it's not entirely on the subject, I too would like to commend the city staff and the volunteers and the Council for serving the Public Safety Department for what they did during this tragedy on May 4th. Be very proud.

The residents of this city owe everybody a big thank you. I was not effected directly by that tragedy, but my thanks goes out to Public Safety, city staff and certainly the Council. I'm here on behalf of Northland Redevelopment Partners, public, private partnership. It's made up of the North Kansas City School District, municipalities, North Kansas City, Kansas City, Missouri, Gladstone, both Clay and Platte County, residents, the neighborhoods in

the older part of Clay and Platte County. In fact, Northland Redevelopment Partners focuses its efforts on redevelopment to enhance the quality of life, not just new development and Greenfields. These are much easier to do and we see a lot of it. We're very fortunate in the Northland to see a lot of Greenfield developments, both commercial and residential. It's much more difficult to do redevelopment and this process this evening is a good example of how difficult it really can be. However, the majority of the population in our area in Clay County, certainly in Gladstone, are in areas that have to be redeveloped. We don't have the Greenfields to develop, so we do have to go through uncomfortable situations. Certainly, they're not directed personally at Mrs. Wolfe or any other individual; it's a process. It's a process to allow redevelopment for Mrs. Wolfe or anyone who happens to own that shopping center or that property. Many of you are familiar with Chouteau Crossing. Last year, Northland Redevelopment Partners focused on Chouteau. We were able to get approximately five million dollars through refinancing TIFs and through

applying with the federal government to widen Chouteau Trafficway to a four lane trafficway, as well as get about a million dollars for the neighborhoods that surrounded that new development. We're very proud of that fact and this year, we're focusing on North Oak Trafficway, North Oak, starting in North Kansas City at Burlington, going all the way to the improvements at Kansas City, Missouri to the north side of Gladstone. Gladstone is a portion of that. Gladstone Plaza is a very big portion and it would go a long way towards our efforts to help the redevelopment along North Oak; it's in dire need. We believe that a diamond could be made out of a cold and deteriorated commercial. It's our hope that this Council will look at this blight study and it certainly is our recommendation that you accept the blight study for what it is and begin the process, the exciting process of redevelopment for Gladstone Plaza. Thank you.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Thank you, sir. Is there anyone else who would like to—

**MR. DAVIS:** Mr. Mayor, members of the Council, I'm Dick Davis, 3612 North Brooktree Circle and

today, I'm representing the Gladstone Economic Betterment Council. Several members of that Council are with us tonight. Last week, our Council unanimously endorsed a resolution supporting the designation of blight. I think that our Council was unanimous in support of this. We think the timing is excellent. We think we can't afford the delay. We think that the only reason it's on the agenda today is because you have not received responses from your previous efforts to resolve this without this particular action. We also think that further delay may, in fact, accelerate the problems that you have there, so it's critical that you move ahead and we would recommend your approval.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Thank you.

**MS. POPE:** Mayor Smith and Council people, I'm Monica Pope at 8717 Northeast Lathrop Drive. I'm Chair Elect of the Gladstone Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the Board of Directors has unanimously adopted the resolution supporting the redevelopment of Gladstone Plaza due to its current condition and the deterioration over the past several years.

Thank you.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Thank you.

**MS. Musfeldt:** My name is Cindy Musfeldt. I live at 6000 North Main on the west side of Gladstone not far from Gladstone Plaza. I'm here basically just to represent those of us that need a place to put our dollars in Gladstone. Gladstone Plaza has basically become a place to drive by in recent years. There's been no reason to stop, save for an occasional trip to the license bureau and now that's going to be once every two years instead of once every year.

It may have received an award six and a half years ago. I remember many years ago when it was an excellent place to shop. I think it was anchored originally by maybe a TG&Y and a Sears Surplus and many places in between. I don't want Gladstone to become a place to drive through to get somewhere else and, Mr. Smith, in your words, when you were talking about the tornado relief, I think it applies to this when tonight you said, "We do good things here and we do them right." I'm in support of the redevelopment. Thank you.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Thank you.

**MR. HAMPTON:** Good evening, Council, staff members. I'm Jim Hampton, Clay County Economic Development Council. I think you have a very difficult decision before you tonight. I think anytime that you're talking about an area and considering the definition of blight, it's certainly something that shouldn't be taken lightly and I certainly can tell from the paperwork and talking with staff, this has been something that's been under consideration for a great amount of time. As Roger said, for some time, it's an area that's needed work. When we look at the county and the different areas, we certainly want to represent all the county. I would like to tell you and I would like to read a paragraph here from our letter, "We, in Clay County, need to be ever vigilant in our efforts to keep our existing commercial and business areas as competitive as possible. Only by doing so, can we provide for our residents quality products and services in a safe and convenient area close to the neighborhoods they choose to live in. Neglect of these areas leads to the loss of tax revenues that leads to reduction in service that, in turn, begins a downward cycle

that is detrimental to all residents. The Clay County Economic Development Council supports the efforts of the City of Gladstone designed to work with existing property owners and/or others to revitalize and improve the quality of life for all our residents." Thank you.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Thank you, Mr. Hampton. Anyone else?

**MS. SMITH:** My name is Shirley Smith. I live at 103 Northeast 67th Street. You all know that I'm an immediate past Council member and I've been involved in this project for a long time. This is a major piece of the puzzle that, when finished, is going to be a beautiful new Gladstone. Councils of the past have taken steps to promote projects that have benefitted this city and we're still thanking them and appreciate their foresight. This Council now has the opportunity to take a step which will benefit the city for years to come. You have an outstanding staff that has supplied you with all the information you need to make wise decisions. The future of Gladstone Plaza, good or bad, whatever it may be, rests on your determination tonight and your decision and I can't speak for

anyone else but myself, but I will tell you, as a citizen, that I will be overjoyed to see this long awaited and needed project finally underway. Thank you.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Thank you.

**MR. McCLURE:** Lynn McClure, Economic Development Administrator, reading for you tonight Exhibit Number Fourteen, which was a letter from Mike Guidry, the Pizza Street owner, who's now located in Creekwood Commons. This is written to the Gladstone City Council, "Dear Sirs and Madam, as a former tenant of Gladstone Plaza Shopping Center located at 64th Street and North Oak Trafficway, I would like to share with you some of the conditions I experienced while conducting business at that location. Operating a business at this shopping center was very challenging for a number of reasons. First, the relationship the owner of the plaza maintained with the tenants was never satisfactory. Second, the location was less than desirable, despite its potential for success. Third, attracting and maintaining a customer base was further diminished due to concerns about security. After operating Pizza Street

Restaurant at Gladstone Plaza Shopping Center for five years, I was saddened by the fact that I was forced to leave the area in order to sustain my business. Edith Wolfe of Clay County Realty Company was the owner, but contracted with Ray Byers as a consultant. Although Mr. Byers was a local representative and responsible party for the shopping center, he never behaved as such. The lack of cooperation and concern for the viability of the shopping center by the ownership became increasingly evident. The tenants were left without assistance with day to day maintenance of everything at the plaza from the parking lot to the pylon sign. Because of the condition of the plaza, it attracted vandals and the dumping of trash, but the owner showed little concern. Trying to contact the owner was a major chore on its own. Achieving resolve for the problems was nearly impossible. The second problem with operations at Gladstone Plaza was the poor level of business generated at the location. A number of conditions existed into a serious detriment to the existing business. Some of these conditions were a lack of traffic generating shops in the plaza, lack of

maintenance to the building and property, poor lighting conditions, lack of snow removal in winter, lack of updating to the aging shopping center and poor visibility from the roadway. These conditions continued to compound and drive tenants, as well as customers, away from the plaza, further adding to the problem. It was evident that Mrs. Wolfe was unwilling to leave the past behind and transition into the modern world. Her emotional attachment to the shopping center as it was constructed by her late husband prevented her from remodeling the facility in any way. The viability of the entire shopping center has now been compromised as a result. Security was the third difficulty for my business at Gladstone Plaza. As one of the most affordable restaurant options for large groups, Pizza Street attracted a lot of families, sporting teams after games and parties. I was approached and informed by several of the soccer mom patrons that concerns about safety at Gladstone Plaza made them feel uneasy. When a mother tells you she's afraid to drop off her child for a birthday at your restaurant, it's a genuine cause for alarm. Not only was the lack

of sense of security caused by graffiti and poor lighting mentioned above, it was a whole part of the image of Gladstone Plaza Shopping Center. The image conveyed by Mrs. Wolfe - Mrs. Wolfe's property was that this was a bad neighborhood and my primary customers, I had to take the complaints of my family oriented customers seriously. In summary, Gladstone Plaza Shopping Center is not a successful venture for the City of Gladstone, nor will it be successful under current circumstances. Although I enjoyed being a part of the community in Gladstone and had loyalty to stay, I had no choice but to pursue a better location for my business. I have since experienced that operating a business in a shopping center does not have to be such a challenge. My new location for Pizza Street is Creekwood Commons at Englewood and North Oak and has been a tremendous success. The property is very well maintained and kept up to date. The tenant base attracts a wide range of clientele.

At Gladstone Plaza where my average client was low to moderate income, the patrons at my Creekwood restaurant range from families to shirt and tie clad professionals on their lunch

break. My gross receipts have more than tripled since the relocation. This success has allowed me to spend less money on marketing, less than one percent versus five or ten percent at the old location, and more money on expansion. My business has blossomed from two modest Pizza Street locations to seven located metro-wide. Two additional locations are planned for a total of nine restaurants. The experience of operating at a failed shopping center like Gladstone Plaza and a successful shopping center like Creekwood Commons has opened my eyes to the possibilities. I hope that by sharing my story, it will open the eyes of the City Council, as well, so that Gladstone can grow and thrive as a community. If you have any questions or wish to discuss further any of this information, please don't hesitate to contact me. Sincerely,  
Michael Guidry, owner of Pizza Street Restaurant."

**MAYOR SMITH:** Thank you, Mr. McClure. Is there anyone else who would like to address the Council in support of the recommendation to declare this property blighted? Final comments and a summary by the staff please.

**MR. WINGERSON:** Mr. Smith, I would like to thank everybody who's in attendance tonight and provided information for the City Council's decision making process. We would like to close with two things. Number one, Mr. Meyerdirk was very modest in his qualifications. Not only is he a lawyer with impeccable qualifications, three-quarters of a page worth in the blight study, he's also a real estate expert. From 1990 to 1995, Mr. Meyerdirk served as Chief Operating Officer and general counsel for Re/Max regions where he had direct responsibility and management of a seven state master franchise operation with three hundred reporting real estate offices and twenty-five hundred sales associates. From '83 to '90, Mr. Meyerdirk was president and owner of Meyerdirk Title Company, a startup title insurance company sold in 1990 to Stewart Title Guaranty Company, Houston, Texas. Meyerdirk Title was the largest commercial and residential title insurance operation in the greater Kansas City area and specialized in complex commercial real estate transactions, reinsurance structuring and servicing of large residential real estate

franchise operations. Mr. Meyerdirk is certainly qualified. The next page of professional qualifications, Mr. Meyerdirk indicated the firms that Integra Real Estate has assisted, their current clients, a full page in very small type. Mayor Smith and members of the City Council, we recommend that the City Council exercise its legislative discretion and authority and declare the legally published areas generally known as Gladstone Plaza as blighted. Thank you.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Thank you. With that, we will close the public hearing. I would like to thank everyone who came forward this evening with their testimony.

**(End of Public Hearing)**

Item ten on the agenda, the first reading of **bill 3-11**, "Finding that a certain area is blighted as defined in Chapter 353 RSMO 2001 and finding that the redevelopment of such area is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the citizens of the City of Gladstone."

**MAYOR PRO TEM BEER:** Mayor Smith?

**MAYOR SMITH:** Mayor Pro Tem Beer?

**MAYOR PRO TEM BEER:** I would like to move to place bill number 3-11 on its first reading.

**COUNCILMAN RUDI:** Second.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Thank you. I have a motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor, indicate by saying aye.

(All said aye)

**MAYOR SMITH:** Opposed, the same sign.

(No response)

**MAYOR SMITH:** Madam Clerk, would you read the bill please?

**MS. SWENSON:** First reading bill 03-11, "Finding that a certain area is blighted as defined in Chapter 353 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri and find that the redevelopment of such area is necessary and in the interest of public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the citizens of the City of Gladstone."

**MAYOR PRO TEM BEER:** Mayor Smith?

**MAYOR SMITH:** Mayor Pro Tem Beer?

**MAYOR PRO TEM BEER:** I move to accept the first reading of bill number 03-11, to waive the rule and place the bill on its second and final reading.

**COUNCILMAN RUDI:** Second.

**MAYOR SMITH:** A motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor say aye please. (All said aye)

**MAYOR SMITH:** Opposed, same sign.

(No response)

**MAYOR SMITH:** Madam Clerk?

**MS. SWENSON:** Second reading, bill 03-11, "Finding that a certain area is blighted as defined in Chapter 353 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri and find that the redevelopment of such area is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the citizens of the City of Gladstone."

**MAYOR PRO TEM BEER:** Mayor Smith?

**MAYOR SMITH:** Mayor Pro Tem Beer?

**MAYOR PRO TEM BEER:** I move to accept the second and final reading of bill number 03-11 and to enact the bill as ordinance number 3.865.

**COUNCILMAN RUDI:** Second.

**MAYOR SMITH:** A motion and a second. Any discussion? Councilman Rudi?

**COUNCILMAN RUDI:** I just have one comment. For the past year and a half to almost two years,

when other people have asked me what we can do about the situation at Gladstone Plaza. I'm very pleased with what happened at Prospect Plaza and would like to see the same kind of thing take place here and for those people, I am going to be in favor of this finding.

**MAYOR SMITH:** Thank you. Anyone else? I would just like to add for the edification of the audience, that establishing this area and declaring it as blighted allows the city, for all intents and purposes, to enter into an offer, if you will, with a developer for private purposes and you've heard some reference to the Prospect Plaza, which is the Hen House/Hobby Lobby Center and to Home Depot and although they were done by a different instrument, both of those projects received some incentives, if you will, some help, some partnering up from the City of Gladstone and have proven to be very fruitful for the community. Now, I guess I understand that something can look blighted to one person and not another, but that's not what it's about. It's not about opinion. It's about the cold hard facts and the cold hard facts are that the Gladstone Plaza is underperforming as a

retail area and that is kind of the economic engine that drives the entire west side of our city and that eight cylinder engine, if you will, is operating on about one and a half cylinders. It is time to do something. We need to do that for the well-being of our community.

We need to do that to protect those who have made investments, including the ones mentioned by the owners and the representatives and to protect those investments for those people who've made substantial investments on Oak Street and more importantly, to provide services for our residents on the west side of the community. With that, I will be voting in this, as well. Madam Clerk, would you call the role, please?

**MS. SWENSON:** Certainly. Councilman Joe Evans?

**COUNCILMAN EVANS:** Aye.

**MS. SWENSON:** Councilman Carol Rudi?

**COUNCILMAN RUDI:** Aye.

**MS. SWENSON:** Councilman Bill Cross?

**COUNCILMAN CROSS:** Aye.

**MS. SWENSON:** Mayor Pro Tem Wayne Beer?

**MAYOR PRO TEM BEER:** Aye.

**MS. SWENSON:** Mayor Les Smith?

**MAYOR SMITH:** Aye. Bill 03-11 has been enacted as ordinance number 3.865.

**Item 10-A** is first reading of **bill 03-12**, "Establishing the procedure for the redevelopment of the Gladstone Plaza redevelopment area, providing for financial reporting by an urban redevelopment corporation for the City of Gladstone and establishing the duties of the executive branch of the city relative thereto, incorporating the urban redevelopment corporations law found at Chapter 353, Revised Statutes of Missouri, 2001 and containing the severability clause."

**COUNCILMAN CROSS:** Mayor Smith?

**MAYOR SMITH:** Councilman Cross?

**COUNCILMAN CROSS:** I move to place bill 03-12 on the first reading.

**MAYOR PRO TEM BEER:** Second.

**MAYOR SMITH:** A motion and a second. Any discussion? All in favor, indicate by saying aye.

(All said aye)

**MAYOR SMITH:** Opposed, same sign.

(No response)

**MAYOR SMITH:** Madam Clerk, would you read the

bill please?

**MS. SWENSON:** First reading bill 03-12,  
"Establishing the procedure for the  
redevelopment of the Gladstone Plaza  
redevelopment area, providing for financial  
reporting by an urban redevelopment corporation  
for the City of Gladstone, establishing the  
duties of the executive branch of the city  
relative thereto, incorporating the urban  
redevelopment corporations law found at Chapter  
353, Revised Statutes of Missouri, 2001 and  
containing a severability clause."

**COUNCILMAN CROSS:** Mayor Smith?

**MAYOR SMITH:** Councilman Cross.

**COUNCILMAN CROSS:** I move to accept the first  
reading of bill number 03-12, waive the rule and  
place the bill on the second and final reading.

**MAYOR PRO TEM:** Second.

**MAYOR SMITH:** I have a motion and a second. Any  
discussion? All in favor, indicate by saying  
aye.

(All said aye)

**MAYOR SMITH:** Opposed, same sign.

(No response)

**MAYOR SMITH:** Madam Clerk?

**MS. SWENSON:** Second reading, bill 03-12,  
"Establishing the procedure for the  
redevelopment of the Gladstone Plaza  
redevelopment area, providing for financial  
reporting by an urban redevelopment corporation  
to the City of Gladstone and establishing the  
duties of the executive branch of the city  
relative thereto, incorporating the urban  
redevelopment corporations law found at Chapter  
353, the Revised Statutes of Missouri, 2001 and  
containing a severability clause."

**COUNCILMAN CROSS:** Mayor Smith?

**MAYOR SMITH:** Councilman Cross?

**COUNCILMAN CROSS:** I move to accept the second  
final reading of bill 03-12 and enact the bill  
as ordinance number 3.866.

**MAYOR PRO TEM:** Second.

**MAYOR SMITH:** A motion and a second. Any  
discussion? Call the role please.

**MS. SWENSON:** Councilman Joe Evans?

**COUNCILMAN EVANS:** Aye.

**MS. SWENSON:** Councilman Carol Rudi?

**COUNCILMAN RUDI:** Aye.

**MS. SWENSON:** Councilman Bill Cross?

**COUNCILMAN CROSS:** Aye.

**MS. SWENSON:** Mayor Pro Tem Wayne Beer?

**MAYOR PRO TEM BEER:** Yes.

**MS. SWENSON:** Mayor Les Smith?

**MAYOR SMITH:** Aye. Bill 03-12 has been enacted as ordinance number 3.866.

**Item number eleven** is resolution number 03-36, authorizing execution of a contract with the City of Kansas City, Missouri for emergency storm debris removal in the aftermath of the tornado of May 4th, 2003.

**COUNCILMAN CROSS:** Mayor Smith?

**MAYOR SMITH:** Councilman Cross?

**COUNCILMAN CROSS:** I move to adopt resolution 03-36.

**MAYOR PRO TEM BEER:** Second.

**MAYOR SMITH:** A motion and a second. Is there any discussion? All in favor, indicate by saying aye.

(All said aye)

**MAYOR SMITH:** Opposed, same sign.

(No response)

**MAYOR SMITH:** Resolution 03-36 has been adopted.

Item number twelve is other business.

REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, JANET H. WIMER, Certified Court Reporter, Certified Shorthand Reporter, Certified Verbatim Reporter, do hereby certify that I personally appeared at the taking of the proceeding as set forth in the caption sheet hereof; that I then and there took down by use of the Stenomask closed microphone, the proceedings had at said time and that the foregoing is a full, true and correct transcript of such proceeding.

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