



City of Philadelphia

Philadelphia, PA 19107

BILL NO. 041078

Introduced December 16, 2004

Councilmember Cohen

**Referred to the
Committee on Streets and Services**

AN ORDINANCE

Repealing Bill No. 040560 entitled "Regulating the direction of movement of traffic on Twentieth Street, from Belfield Avenue to Olney Avenue, northbound" and repealing Bill No. 040561 entitled "Authorizing the revision of lines and grades of an area of City Plan No. 178 bounded by Olney Avenue, Belfield Avenue, Ogontz Avenue and Wister Street."

WHEREAS, Additional information produced since passage of Bill No. 040560 and Bill No. 040561 shows that the change in traffic patterns for fire, police and other emergency rescue vehicles, necessitated by the change in direction and narrowing of Twentieth Street, will place residents of Germantown and Olney in grave danger by increasing emergency response times by at least one minute, and in some cases significantly longer. Every minute that fire companies are delayed in responding to emergencies corresponds to a four-fold increase in the size and scope of the fire. Likewise, the inability of emergency rescue crews to quickly respond to persons suffering from strokes or heart attacks can prove fatal, where studies have demonstrated that about 90 percent of those treated for heart attacks within two minutes survive, while only about 10 percent survive if treated after 6 minutes; and

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WHEREAS, The narrowing of Twentieth Street between Belfield and Olney Avenue to 10 feet will make it impossible for fire and rescue vehicles to travel on that block, according to Fire Department Directive No. 26-4.11.7, which requires streets 14-feet wide for fire and rescue vehicles; and

WHEREAS, Earlier this session, all seventeen members of Council voted unanimously to override the Mayor's veto of Bill No. 040779, in order to insure that the Fire Department will maintain a full complement of firefighters and equipment to respond to all emergencies in the shortest possible time; and

WHEREAS, Traffic has been diverted past two elementary schools, Logan and Pennell, where children have been struck by cars en route to school; and

WHEREAS, Narrowing of Twentieth Street will result in increased fire insurance rates, lowering of property values, and decreased taxes to the City; and

WHEREAS, The design of this block of Twentieth Street is likely to cause accidents by creating a twisting cartway with a curb-line that juts in and out; and

WHEREAS, The surrounding community is facing increased traffic congestion and has lost a primary means of access to Center City, further lowering property values; and

WHEREAS, no benefit to public health, safety or welfare has resulted from the changes imposed by these ordinances as the Streets Department has reported no reduction in traffic accidents at the intersection of Twentieth and Olney Street; now, therefore,

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

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SECTION 1. Bill No. 040560 and Bill No. 040561, both signed by the Mayor on July 1, 2004, adversely affect the health, safety and welfare of the community and are hereby repealed.

SECTION 2. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately.

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