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TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING  
January 25, 2011, 7:00 p.m.,  
Legislative Chambers

Re: Application On Behalf of Cellco  
Partnership (Verizon Wireless) and Westfarms  
Mall, LLC, the Owners of the Westfarms Mall  
Seeking an Amendment to Special Development  
District #12 At 1502 New Britain Avenue to  
Permit the Installation of Ten Panel Antennas  
On the Upper Penthouse Facade On the Roof

FEB 07 2011

## 1 A p p e a r a n c e s :

2 Town Council Members Present:

3 MAYOR SCOTT SLIFKA

4 TIMOTHY L. BRENNAN

5 DENISE B. HALL

6 STEVEN I. ADLER

7 SHARI CANTOR

8 LEON DAVIDOFF

9 ROB DURBIN

10

11 Alternate:

12 RICHARD PATRISSI

13

14 RONALD VAN WINKLE

15 Town Manager

16

17 JOSEPH A. O'BRIEN, ESQ.

18 Corporation Counsel

19

20 PATRICK ALAIR, ESQ.

21 Deputy Corporation Counsel

22

23 ESSIE S. LABROT

24 Town Clerk/Council Clerk

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A p p e a r a n c e s (Cont'd.):

For the Applicant:

ROBINSON & COLE, LLP  
280 Trumbull Street  
Hartford, Connecticut 06103  
(860) 275-8345

By: KENNETH C. BALDWIN, ESQ.  
kbaldwin@rc.com

1                   PRESIDENT SLIFKA: We're going  
2 to call the 7:00 o'clock public hearing to  
3 order.

4                   This is an application on  
5 behalf of Cellco Partnership (Verizon  
6 Wireless) and Westfarms Mall, LLC, the owners  
7 of the Westfarms Mall, seeking an amendment  
8 to Special Development District 12, at 1502  
9 New Britain Avenue, to permit the  
10 installation of ten panel antennas on the  
11 upper penthouse facade on the roof of the  
12 building.

13                   Roll call please, Ms. Labrot.

14                   MS. LABROT: Mr. Adler.

15                   COUNCILOR ADLER: Here.

16                   MS. LABROT: Mr. Brennan.

17                   COUNCILOR BRENNAN: Here.

18                   MS. LABROT: Mrs. Cantor.

19                   COUNCILOR CANTOR: Here.

20                   MS. LABROT: Mrs. Caspersen is  
21 absent.

22                   Mr. Davidoff.

23                   COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Here.

24                   MS. LABROT: Mr. Durbin.

25                   COUNCILOR DURBIN: Here.

1 MS. LABROT: Mrs. Hall.

2 COUNCILOR HALL: Here.

3 MS. LABROT: Mr. Slifka.

4 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Here.

5 MS. LABROT: And Mr. Patrissi.

6 MR. PATRISSI: Here.

7 MS. LABROT: In for

8 Mr. Verrengia, who is absent.

9 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you,  
10 Ms. Labrot.

11 To the applicant, we -- we had  
12 a last second absence which has left us with  
13 eight. We regret that. But we're wondering  
14 if you would give consent to proceed or if  
15 you'd like to move this over to another date?

16 MR. BALDWIN: I think we're  
17 happy to proceed. Thank you.

18 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you.  
19 Then we'll begin with the presentation of the  
20 applicant, and just ask that you hit the  
21 button there on the mic. I think it's right  
22 under your -- yeah. Thanks.

23 MR. BALDWIN: Thank you. Good  
24 evening, Mr. Mayor, members of the council.  
25 My name is Ken Baldwin. I'm a lawyer with

1 Robinson & Cole. And I'm here tonight behalf  
2 of the applicant, Cellco Partnership, doing  
3 business as Verizon Wireless, working on this  
4 project together with the folks at Taubman  
5 Companies, for the amendment to SDD Number  
6 12, to allow Verizon wireless to establish a  
7 wireless telecommunications facility on the  
8 rooftop at Westfarms Mall.

9 I have submitted, for the  
10 record, the signed posting affidavit to the  
11 clerk. And I would refer the council to  
12 plans that we filed back on December 7th with  
13 the original package of materials. We did  
14 submit amended plans on January 14th to the  
15 clerk, and I'll discuss those amendments as  
16 we talk about the proposal itself.

17 The facility that is being  
18 proposed at Westfarms Mall for Verizon  
19 Wireless consists of 15 panel-type antennas  
20 that will be attached to the upper penthouse  
21 facade of the mall itself. This is a facade  
22 that actually sets back from the -- the  
23 exterior wall of the -- of the mall, in some  
24 places as much as 185 feet on the West  
25 Hartford side.

1                   As shown on the project plans,  
2 this is a partial roof plan of the plans that  
3 have been submitted. Sheet Z2, the West  
4 Hartford town line is shown in the upper  
5 right-hand corner. Ten of those 15 antennas  
6 are located in the town of West Hartford.  
7 The remaining five antennas and Cellco's  
8 equipment shelter is located on the  
9 Farmington side. And we were before the  
10 Farmington Planning and Zoning Commission  
11 last night, and received their approval for  
12 this installation.

13                   One of the changes that I  
14 referred to in the January 14th plans that  
15 were refiled with the town clerk, our  
16 original proposal was to have ten antennas,  
17 in two sets of five each, in what Verizon  
18 wireless calls its "alpha sector antennas,"  
19 located on the easterly facade of the  
20 penthouse wall, and its beta sector antennas  
21 facing, essentially, due South.

22                   This antenna array, the alpha  
23 sector antenna array, is actually over the  
24 Macy's space, which, as I'm sure you know,  
25 is -- is owned in fee by the Macy's company.

1 We didn't think initially they would have  
2 concerns for these antennas that extend about  
3 two and a half feet off the facade of the  
4 building. We learned otherwise. They were  
5 concerned about it. They didn't like the  
6 idea that the antennas were extending over  
7 their space.

8 So in an effort to avoid the  
9 issue and -- and the conflict, we decided to  
10 move that sector of antennas a little bit  
11 further to the north, again, on another  
12 portion of the upper penthouse, further back  
13 from the edge of the -- the mall building  
14 itself. It allows us to provide the same  
15 orientation of the antennas at a different  
16 location on that same upper penthouse.

17 As I mentioned earlier, the --  
18 the 12-by-24 foot equipment shelter located  
19 on the Farmington side of the roof will house  
20 all of Verizon Wireless's equipment, as well  
21 as a natural gas fired backup generator for  
22 its facility. This facility is proposed to  
23 provide wireless services to portions of  
24 Route 84, Route 9 and Route 71, as well as  
25 the commercial and residential areas



1 surrounding Westfarms Mall.

2 We've included, in our  
3 application packages to the council,  
4 propagation coverage maps which show the  
5 areas that we're trying to provide service to  
6 from this facility.

7 The other modification that is  
8 shown on these plans, again, relates back to  
9 our earlier discussions on January 10th in  
10 our first meeting with the planning and  
11 zoning commission in Farmington. Originally,  
12 the proposal called for the flush mounting of  
13 these antennas on the facade and the painting  
14 of all the antennas and the antenna brackets  
15 to have them blend in with the -- with the  
16 facade of the -- of the mall building.

17 The Town of Farmington asked  
18 us to install some additional screening over  
19 top of the antennas, so that the antennas  
20 themselves were not visible. What this  
21 screening amounted to was a fiberglass  
22 material and we'd be constructing,  
23 essentially, a three-sided box. And on sheet  
24 C3 of the project -- of the revised project  
25 plan submitted on January 14th, we give you

1 some details of that three-sided box that  
2 will be installed around the antennas.

3 This -- this screening  
4 material will be painted to match the upper  
5 penthouse facade in color and texture. And  
6 what it simply does is screen the antennas.  
7 The RF transparent materials allows the  
8 antenna signal to continue to be transmitted  
9 through the material.

10 Once we took that information  
11 back to Taubman Company, they liked the idea  
12 and have asked us to install screening on all  
13 antennas, including the -- the two sectors  
14 that are in the town of West Hartford. So  
15 that's the second change in the revised plans  
16 that we submitted on the 14th of January.

17 I would also point out -- and  
18 my last comment is we did receive positive  
19 referrals from the planning and zoning  
20 commission and the design and review  
21 committee twice. The first time without  
22 the -- the panel screening -- the panel  
23 antenna screening and the second time with  
24 the -- the screening panels.

25 With that, Mr. Mayor, I have

1 nothing further. We're happy to answer any  
2 questions you might have.

3 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you.  
4 Are there any questions for  
5 the applicant at this time?

6 Mr. Patrissi.

7 MR. PATRISSI: I drove by the  
8 mall today to try to peek up in that area  
9 that you describe as the penthouse. And  
10 because of the volume of snow along the road  
11 I really couldn't get a good look. And I  
12 have, actually, two questions.

13 The penthouse, I really don't  
14 know what that means. Can you just help me  
15 out with that? And the color of the wall  
16 that you're going to put the antennae  
17 against, you're matching that color. Is that  
18 what you're trying to do?

19 MR. BALDWIN: That's correct.  
20 We would be matching the color and -- and  
21 appearance. I think that the penthouse wall  
22 is -- is currently a metal panel that has  
23 some vertical lines as a part of the texture.  
24 We wouldn't necessarily be matching the  
25 vertical lines itself, but those would be

1 painted into the screening panel so that it  
2 would appear as one consistent panel.

3           Perhaps what I can direct you  
4 to, in our application material behind Tab 3,  
5 we did some photo simulations, and those are  
6 a part of the application materials. And  
7 what we found was that on the -- on the West  
8 Hartford side, in order to get to the point  
9 on the property where you can actually see  
10 the penthouse wall where these antennas will  
11 be located, you have to go all the way out to  
12 New Britain Avenue because you can't get far  
13 enough away from the building and still have  
14 a view of that penthouse wall. But there are  
15 some shots.

16           I would direct you to View 2  
17 and View 3. That shows the locations out  
18 along New Britain Avenue, along the easterly  
19 side of the mall, beyond the parking lot or  
20 at the edge of the parking lot, where you can  
21 just see the top of the penthouse wall. And  
22 on that side of the mall, the penthouse, it's  
23 a -- it's a light kind of galvanized  
24 gray-type color. And that's shown in  
25 those -- in those photographs.

1                   On the Farmington side of the  
2 mall, it's -- it's a darker brown. So,  
3 again, not that -- that you are concerned  
4 about the Farmington side, but on this side,  
5 the shelter and the screening panel in front  
6 of the antennas will be painted to match the  
7 darker color. And on the West Hartford side,  
8 because it is a lighter gray material, will  
9 be painted to match the existing facade on  
10 that side.

11                   MR. PATRISSI: Okay. So  
12 you're saying that I probably would have a  
13 very difficult time seeing these from New  
14 Britain Avenue?

15                   MR. BALDWIN: I -- I think  
16 what you -- you might see, if you're looking  
17 at it at the right angle, you might see the  
18 box, the screening box, as it extends off the  
19 roof a bit. You might see that dimension,  
20 but that's about all you're going to see.

21                   MR. PATRISSI: Okay. How long  
22 do these antennae last? What's the  
23 projection for life expectancy before  
24 somebody has to go up and replace them?

25                   MR. BALDWIN: Well, the -- the

1 lease term is for a period of 25 years. We  
2 -- depending upon the make and model of  
3 antenna and the advancement in technology,  
4 I've seen antennas changed out as quickly as  
5 a year after they're put up or sooner. And  
6 I've seen other antennas -- we worked on a  
7 site in Derby just last week, and those  
8 antennas have been up there for 16 years.

9 MR. PATRISSI: Okay. Which is  
10 leading me to the mesh that you're going to  
11 put on at the front corner, you know, how  
12 long would -- that would last, and how you  
13 plan to inspect that to make sure that  
14 it's -- it's -- it does do its job.

15 MR. BALDWIN: The -- the cell  
16 sites in Verizon's system are monitored,  
17 generally, remotely. So if these antennas  
18 start to fail for some reason, some  
19 technological reason, that we know about  
20 fairly soon, and then we send technicians out  
21 to come to the site; otherwise, they are  
22 inspected, generally, on a monthly basis when  
23 technicians will visit the site.

24 If there are concerns with the  
25 screening panels, we are working with the

1 folks at Taubman and -- and their rooftop  
2 manager, American Tower Corporation. They --  
3 they require us to maintain our facilities.  
4 And I think our monthly visits would probably  
5 identify any potential problems that we're  
6 having with the screening material.

7 MR. PATRISSI: Thank you.

8 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you,  
9 Mr. Patrissi.

10 Are there questions for  
11 Mr. Baldwin?

12 Mr. Adler.

13 COUNCILOR ADLER: Thank you,  
14 Mr. Mayor.

15 Through you, to Mr. -- to  
16 Attorney Baldwin. Just a -- a first  
17 question -- I have three questions. Just a  
18 first question, maybe an overview of the  
19 general purpose of this antenna, and -- for  
20 commercial, residential, I would imagine  
21 through some sort of cell phone uses  
22 associated with this, so ...

23 MR. BALDWIN: All of the  
24 above. I -- I think that the site -- the  
25 site is a -- is a typical, what the company

1 calls a "macro cell installation." It is the  
2 site that is designed to have a covered  
3 footprint of a certain diameter from the  
4 facility. It is a site not unlike you might  
5 see on a tower -- in fact, the tower is not  
6 far from here, on -- on top of the roof of  
7 the building up the street -- having a  
8 certain designed, covered footprint from this  
9 facility. The benefit we have of having  
10 ability -- a building the size of Westfarms  
11 Mall is we can put them on the building  
12 rather than having to build a new tower in  
13 the area.

14 The site, if -- if you look at  
15 the coverage maps that we provided in the  
16 application, you will see, at the different  
17 frequencies in which Verizon Wireless  
18 operates, there are certain coverage gaps  
19 that exist today in this area. They include  
20 portions of the highways and roadways around  
21 the mall. They include portions of the mall  
22 property, itself, and they include portions  
23 of the residential areas to the south and to  
24 the southeast. Those are all of the areas  
25 that we're attempting to cover from this



1 installation.

2 We're also attempting to  
3 provide additional capacity to our network in  
4 this area. Obviously, it's a very congested  
5 area. It's a very popular area, especially  
6 during the holiday season. So when we have  
7 that many customers in an area where there  
8 are a number of cell sites providing service,  
9 the system can get congested.

10 So in addition to providing  
11 additional coverage from this site, this site  
12 provides us with additional capacity relief  
13 from the sites that surround this area.

14 COUNCILOR ADLER: Thank you,  
15 Attorney Baldwin.

16 Just a couple of other  
17 questions. In terms of measuring RF, I would  
18 imagine with commercial use antenna, there  
19 are certain limitations or, you know, levels  
20 of performance for RF. And I'd like to know  
21 how that was measured and was it a person or  
22 was it an organization, I would imagine, that  
23 it was certified in that engineering  
24 capability. And while I'm on that technical  
25 question, there's just one more technical:

1 The grounding associated with it. Is there a  
2 direct ground to the building, or is it a  
3 direct feed down to the -- to the ground  
4 itself? So, kind of, two -- two technical  
5 questions.

6 MR. BALDWIN: I'm going to  
7 answer the RF question, and then we're going  
8 to have our engineer, Carlo Centore, come up  
9 and deal with the grounding question.

10 PRESIDENT SLIFKA:

11 Mr. Baldwin, can you just hit  
12 the button on the mic again. Sometimes it  
13 times out.

14 MR. BALDWIN: Okay. Thank  
15 you.

16 We have taken a look at the RF  
17 emissions from this facility, as we do with  
18 all our facilities, and have -- have  
19 prepared, as, again, we always do, an RF, a  
20 radio-frequency emissions report. It's not  
21 included in your package. I'm happy to leave  
22 you with a copy of that report today. We did  
23 bring extra copies.

24 This was submitted as a part  
25 of the Farmington filing, and we submitted it

1 to them and actually updated it because the  
2 Town of Farmington asked -- well, now we know  
3 what Verizon Wireless is emitting from the  
4 site, but what about the other carriers that  
5 are up there or approved to be up there?

6 So we -- we gave them a -- an  
7 updated report which takes into consideration  
8 all of the other carriers that are currently  
9 approved to be located on the roof of  
10 Westfarms Mall.

11 As I'm -- as you may be aware,  
12 the -- the Federal Communications Commission  
13 has preemptive authority over radio frequency  
14 emissions. And as long as we satisfy their  
15 standard for emissions, the facility is  
16 deemed to be in compliance. That's the  
17 standard that we look at every time we do an  
18 analysis of RF emissions from a particular  
19 facility.

20 And because there are so many  
21 carriers operating at so many different  
22 frequencies, we -- we calculate that  
23 compliance of emissions based on a percentage  
24 of the FCC standards. So we can emit up to  
25 100 percent -- but not over -- but up to a

1 hundred percent of the FCC standard.

2           And the calculations that were  
3 provided to us by our consultant, called  
4 C Squared Systems, is they -- they took all  
5 of the antennas on the roof, and they took  
6 some worst-case scenarios that all the  
7 antennas per sector were pointed at the same  
8 location; they're not. They're -- they're at  
9 different locations on the roof. But for  
10 these purposes, they're all pointed at the  
11 same location. They're all transmitting at  
12 full power on all channels. That almost  
13 never happens because the nature of the  
14 technology is that people are moving from  
15 channel to channel and cell site to cell  
16 site. But -- but we take that all out of the  
17 picture when we do these calculations.

18           So even in those worst-case --  
19 all of those worst-case conditions, the  
20 calculation that they came up with was that  
21 this facility -- our -- Verizon Wireless's  
22 facility and AT&T's installation, which is an  
23 in-building system, and T-Mobile's  
24 installation on the roof, and a company  
25 called Clearwire, that has also been approved

1 on the roof, we are at -- we are still under  
2 13 percent of the standard, so orders of  
3 magnitude below what the FCC has established  
4 as a safety standard. And that's for all  
5 carriers that are approved to be on the roof  
6 of the building, collectively.

7 COUNCILOR ADLER: Collectively.

8 MR. BALDWIN: A cumulative  
9 effect. And, again, in a worst-case  
10 scenario, what we find on a regular basis --  
11 because oftentimes we'll go back and  
12 companies, like C Squared, will go back for  
13 us and check to make sure that their  
14 calculations -- and this is based on formulas  
15 and -- and antenna patterns and information,  
16 hard data, that they have available to  
17 them -- we'll go back and check and -- and  
18 actual take -- actually take readings from  
19 particular cell sites.

20 And what they find out  
21 routinely is that the actual levels from  
22 those same facilities are -- are orders of  
23 magnitude below even these worst-case  
24 scenarios. So we are operating each of our  
25 facilities well below those safety standards

1 that the FCC has adopted.

2 COUNCILOR ADLER: Okay. Thank  
3 you.

4 MR. BALDWIN: Carl, you want  
5 to touch on the -- the grounding issues? I  
6 wouldn't dare.

7 CARLO F. CENTORE: Actually an  
8 easy -- it's an easy question. So Carlo  
9 Centore, Centek Engineering. And the  
10 question is to grounding.

11 We typically ground to the  
12 primary water source that comes into the  
13 building to provide sufficient ground. And  
14 there's a -- there's a ground lead that  
15 comes -- what's called the main ground bar  
16 located at the shelter. All the antenna is  
17 ground to that level, and we get to the water  
18 source.

19 In some instances, it's not  
20 practical to get to that source depending on  
21 the length of run and routing. And so what's  
22 done is, kind of, it's run down to grade and  
23 the ground ring is installed ground -- to  
24 ground that below. And the grounding  
25 requirements are actually more stringent than

1 would be for typical lightning protection  
2 because we're also protecting some very  
3 expensive radio equipment that Verizon has.  
4 And the equipment manufacturers have some  
5 high standards in terms of the amount of  
6 grounding that's required for their systems.  
7 So they're very well protected in terms of  
8 lightning and the grounding.

9 COUNCILOR ADLER: Okay. Thank  
10 you.

11 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Thank you,  
12 Mr. Adler.

13 Anyone else at this time?

14 Okay. Mr. Baldwin, you --  
15 your case rests?

16 MR. BALDWIN: It does. Again,  
17 if -- if you'd like, I can submit copies of  
18 the -- the RF emissions report. I do have  
19 them here tonight for the record. But if --  
20 if there's nothing further, I'll stand.

21 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Okay.

22 MR. BALDWIN: I'll stand --  
23 seated.

24 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Okay.

25 Mr. Alair, is that the sign-up sheet we have?

1 MR. ALAIR: It is. But the  
2 only person who signed up is Mr. Baldwin.

3 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Okay. Is  
4 there anyone who did not sign up who wishes  
5 to speak to the subject matter of this  
6 application?

7 Okay. Mr. O'Brien, I had just  
8 a technical question. Really less about the  
9 application, more -- or get it in a second.

10 Tab 6, on Mr. Baldwin's  
11 application, is required, I guess, by the  
12 application. It's an ordinance amending an  
13 ordinance establishing zoning regulations of  
14 the Town of West Hartford. And I -- I  
15 believe, if I understand its function,  
16 it's -- it would sort of put on the record  
17 what -- what, if this is approved, what was  
18 approved.

19 But I just -- I don't -- I  
20 think I've seen this before, but it's not --  
21 it's not ringing a bell. And I wanted to  
22 know if simply by voting on the application  
23 tonight later in the meeting, if it's  
24 accepted that that -- that serves to adopt  
25 the ordinance, or is that something that



1 needs to be done separately?

2 MR. O'BRIEN: No. That would  
3 be done by the single vote.

4 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Okay. All  
5 right. Thank you. There's nothing further.

6 Mr. Baldwin, you're still --  
7 you're okay?

8 MR. BALDWIN: I am. Thank  
9 you.

10 PRESIDENT SLIFKA: Okay.  
11 Okay. With that then, we'll close the public  
12 hearing.

13 (Whereupon, the above  
14 proceedings were adjourned at 7:25 p.m.)

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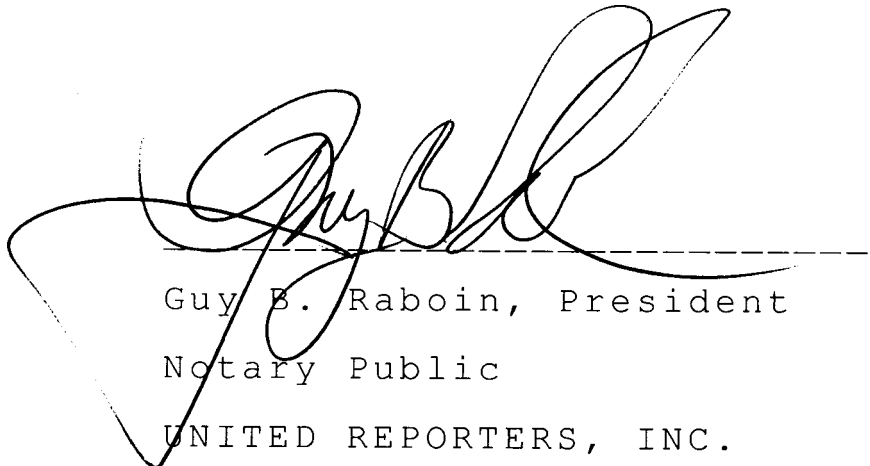
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 25 pages are a complete and accurate transcription of a digital sound recording taken of the Public Hearing in Re: APPLICATION ON BEHALF OF CELLCO PARTNERSHIP (VERIZON WIRELESS) AND WESTFARMS MALL, LLC, THE OWNERS OF THE WESTFARMS MALL SEEKING AN AMENDMENT TO SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT #12 AT 1502 NEW BRITAIN AVENUE TO PERMIT THE INSTALLATION OF TEN PANEL ANTENNAS ON THE UPPER PENTHOUSE FACADE ON THE ROOF, held before the West Hartford Town Council, which was held at Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Room 314, West Hartford, Connecticut, on January 25, 2011.

I further certify that the digital sound recording was transcribed by the word processing department employees of United Reporters, Inc., under my direction.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Guy B. Raboin, President  
Notary Public

UNITED REPORTERS, INC.

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