

MTA

BUCKS ARENA & 'ENTERTAINMENT CENTER' TESTIMONY 9.15.2015

I am very concerned about the process here. I am very concerned that We the People, who will pay for this Arena and entertainment Center, were never asked or even warned about it. I am concerned that there is no democratic process going on here. You can listen to us politely, and you may even DO that, but, in the end, who will you serve?

First of all, no good, permanent non-minimum wage jobs will be created for Milwaukeeans. It was ADMITTED at the hearing on August 31st that there are no provisions whatsoever for hiring Milwaukee laborers. Any temporary construction jobs will not be given to anyone, necessarily, from Milwaukee. It seems people have completely forgotten about the MORE Ordinance, which mandates that any City construction have "40% of the worker hours required for construction of the project be performed by unemployed or underemployed (City of Milwaukee) residents". Why is this requirement being ignored, again?

No one in Milwaukee asked for this entertainment center, so why are we supposed to pay anything for it, especially after City Council member Joe Davis asked if there were any provisions for hiring people in Milwaukee at the last hearing? You DO remember the answer was a Clear "no", and that is on tape.

We don't want it, we don't need it, and we certainly aren't going to give away our assets, besides. But we have not even been asked. So here we are, ASKING you as City of Milwaukee legislators to PLEASE represent our interests.

What will happen is a lot of suburbanites will come in to town, stay within the new 'entertainment district' consisting of Bucks -only profits. There is no mention of local businesses being involved, never mind no temporary jobs for Milwaukeeans to build it.

If this is so great, why won't the people who will be coming to these games have the arena and entertainment district in THEIR neighborhood?

Because they do not want to PAY for it! Make us in Milwaukee pay for it with our taxes, when half the population, at least, can't afford a ticket to the games!

The law that provides state funding for the Milwaukee Bucks arena also gives the team owners the right to build arena "public plazas," which would be used to generate revenue exclusively for the team. How is that public?

Indeed, these new businesses will likely destroy the current Water Street district that has been thriving for local owners.

It all comes down to my favorite subject: money in politics. The state, county and city are already GIVING 30 now-public acres to the hedge-fund moguls who own the Bucks. Thus far, no government entity has mandated the creation of anything to benefit the City of Milwaukee taxpayers in return — nor has public input been sought.

This law was passed at the state level, near midnight, before a holiday, and slipped in to the State Budget Bill. Can you imagine anything MORE underhanded, and LESS democratic? This is a disgrace to our former democratic process, in a city once revered for clean government. Do you really want to be part of that? Is it worth it to you?

We will soon know.

Thank you for listening.