



THE RUTH ANN OVERBECK
CAPITOL HILL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with Dan Tangherlini

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TAPE 1/SIDE 1

DEUTSCH: This is Stephanie Deutsch. I'll be interviewing Dan Tangherlini. It's January 26th, 2008 and I'm at my house, 500 East Capitol Street NE. Do you want to just say a few words?

TANGHERLINI: Sure—testing, testing 123

DEUTSCH: Can you talk a little bit louder?

TANGHERLINI: Sure—I can talk louder and I can move this a little closer. How's that?

DEUTSCH: That's much better. OK. Dan.

TANGHERLINI: Yes.

DEUTSCH: Where did you grow up?

TANGHERLINI: I grew up in Auburn, Massachusetts. That's a small town—

DEUTSCH: Outside of Boston?

TANGHERLINI: Just outside of Worcester, Massachusetts. My Dad was a physics professor at the College of the Holy Cross. I was actually born in Copenhagen, Denmark. My father—my mother is from Denmark and my father was doing a stint at the Technical Institute of Copenhagen.

DEUTSCH: OK, so you were born in Copenhagen.

TANGHERLINI: Yes.

DEUTSCH: And then grew up in Massachusetts.

TANGHERLINI: And it was a time when pregnant women weren't allowed to fly so my mother had crossed some imaginary threshold of pregnancy and so, even though my father had gotten a job at Holy Cross, they had to wait until I was born to come to the United States. So I was born in Copenhagen, my name is actually Daniel Mark, it was supposed to be Dan Mark but Dan Mark is not an allowable name in Denmark. They actually have a list of approved names, and so—

DEUTSCH: Yes, I remember reading that.

TANGHERLINI: Yeah, yeah, so, that's kind of a little factoid. I grew up in Auburn, Massachusetts, attended the public schools there until my junior year in high school and I was fortunate enough to win a scholarship to Milton Academy and I finished my high school at Milton Academy just outside of Boston and from there I went to the University of Chicago.

DEUTSCH: Why the University of Chicago?

TANGHERLINI: My dad went to the University of Chicago for his master's degree and I applied to the colleges my Dad went to. University of Chicago is the one I got into, so I went out there. I had never seen it and it had a great reputation. I tell you, that was fascinating. I took a train to get out there and as we pulled into Chicago that first morning and I looked out the window and saw where I was moving to I had to—I was—I was a little shocked. I said, "What have I done? Where am I?"

DEUTSCH: What was it that shocked you about it?

TANGHERLINI: Just the sheer size. You know, you come in through Gary, Indiana so you come in through this industrial kind of, I think you can say wasteland now because most of it's gone and then you come through the far south side of Chicago, which is some pretty serious grinding urban poverty, particularly in the mid-80s.

DEUTSCH: It certainly wasn't what you'd grown up with.

TANGHERLINI: It wasn't what I'd grown up with and I'd begun to fall in love with cities when I was at Milton. I'd take the subway, I'd take the T into Boston every weekend but coming into Chicago I really felt like—I felt like the country mouse coming to the big city. But I really, I just really grew to love that city and I grew to love the notion of cities and the complexity of cities and the challenge of cities and the diversity of cities through my time starting at Milton but really in Chicago.

DEUTSCH: And what did you study?

TANGHERLINI: I studied—it took me awhile to figure it out—but after going through the de rigueur—economics and then on to sociology, I came across a new program that they were just developing called public policy and so I got my bachelor's degree in public policy and then I went on and I did a five-year program and got my master's degree as well.

DEUTSCH: Also in public policy?

TANGHERLINI: Also in public policy, yeah. I was only the second person admitted to that five-year program because it had just been created.

DEUTSCH: Wow. And did you have a clear idea, did you have any idea about what you wanted to do with it at that point?

TANGHERLINI: I didn't. I was really, I'd always thought I wanted to involve myself in business and entrepreneurship and it was really that time I spent in Chicago and my exposure to some of the issues and

some of the problems of cities and some of the things that people deal with in cities that really got me excited about public service. I have to say I'd had some exposure through internships during the summer in the Massachusetts state government. Everything from being a guy picking up trash on the side of the highway to a park ranger to—more interesting—working in the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare on homelessness issues—that I really began to get excited about the possibilities of public service.

DEUTSCH: Let's just go back for a minute. Picking up trash on the highways? That was one of your summer jobs?

TANGHERLINI: Yeah. That was one of my summer jobs. I have had a string of the most, just I don't think there's any word other to describe than crappy jobs. I worked at Burger King, I pumped gas. So my summers, I had to earn money for school and I would work two, three jobs at a time just to kind of fill my time and I have never not liked working. So it was always something interesting. I thought the pumping gas was an interesting experience. It was a study in one-minute interaction. What could you do in a minute when you interact with someone when you're asking—it was a full-service gas station.

DEUTSCH: Oh, I love full-service gas stations. It's sad that there are so few left.

TANGHERLINI: Right. It was right on the Massachusetts Turnpike. A lot of people going to the Cape or coming from the Cape, so it was always an interesting place to me. The Burger King job, well, there's really not much to recommend that other than I could have written the Fast Food Nation book before they had if I'd put pen to paper. I was a telemarketer, calling people and asking them to make donations to a charity I later learned was not entirely on the up-and-up. It was a year later they got raided.

DEUTSCH: Oh dear.

TANGHERLINI: But when you're 15 and you're looking for, you know, I should have know when they paid you at the end of the week in cash that something was up.

DEUTSCH: And did you say something about work in the park service?

TANGHERLINI: I did. I worked as a park ranger for two summers at the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management and I have to say that was my best summer job. I really enjoyed that. It was a little park two towns down from mine and my second year, my younger brother started working with me and that was a lot of fun. I also worked, when I was at the University, the later part of college and the second year of grad school I worked in the Chicago Park District in their Office of Research and Planning and I worked—that office did all their engineering work and all their park design work and all their

community outreach work. And that, for me, was really my first exposure to city government and that kind of direct to the customer connected kind of governance and for me that's when I got really excited about the study and the theory of public policy and public service.

DEUTSCH: So, you're like twenty-three and you have a master's in—

TANGHERLINI: Public policy.

DEUTSCH: Public policy. What happened then?

TANGHERLINI: I won something called a Presidential Management Internship. It's now the Presidential Management Fellowship Program. That was 1991 and I—

DEUTSCH: Presidential Management Internship?

TANGHERLINI: Yeah, the PMI.

DEUTSCH: And how is it—

TANGHERLINI: It's for people with a Master's degree or above. It allows you to go through a series of interviews, you know, apply and if you're selected you get to skip to the head of the line in the job filling, the federal job filling exercise. In many ways there have been so many improvements to the federal government's personnel system that the PMI program really mainly offers you an ability to have a kind of endorsement of your skill, your resume or whatever. At the time, though, it was still in the days of the SF-171, the federal government was under some serious constraint. Jobs were getting cut, there was a real chill in the economy. A number of people who won the PMI didn't even get job offers for a year or two after winning so it was really, it was a tough time. But I came to Washington with this PMI in hand and had the opportunity to apply to a number of agencies. I applied to the EPA, who wanted to hire me but didn't want me to be a PMI. They wanted me to get out of the program because the program required rotation and they just wanted me to work for them. I applied to work for a consulting firm that would have paid me more and I applied to the Office of Management and Budget. In the end, I got an offer from the Office of Management and Budget. It paid the least of the three offers and, in what would become kind of a theme in my work here in Washington, I took the lowest-paying, more exciting job and I didn't regret it a minute. I went to work for OMB and it was the end of the first Bush administration, H.W. And I worked for Dick Darman, who I was very sad to see died just yesterday. And he was just a fascinating, incredibly intelligent individual. And he was my first kind of, first leader here in Washington I got to work with and that's just been one of the most amazing parts of my experience here, is just these incredible people I've gotten to work with. Dick Darman was later replaced by Leon Panetta, who I just

can't say enough great things about, who was replaced by Alice Rivlin who everyone knows is wonderful, who was replaced by Frank Raines who was brilliant.

DEUTSCH: Frank Raines? [spells it]

TANGHERLINI: Yes. And then the last director I worked for at OMB was Alan Lew who was just incredibly kind and, again, brilliant individual. I then left OMB after a series of different opportunities there. I started in the budget review branch and went to the natural resources branch, where I worked on Army Corps of Engineers.

DEUTSCH: Budget review and then which branch?

TANGHERLINI: Natural resources division, the water resources branch. So I worked on Army Corps of Engineers projects doing economic analysis and when I would review the cost-benefit of Corps projects we would generally find that there was none. Or there was more cost than benefit. We'd reject a project and Congress would pass it anyway. I also worked on the operations and maintenance account with the Corps of Engineers. And then ten small agencies—everything from the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, Commission of Fine Arts, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council—and it was really there that I got my first taste of Washington, DC-related agency work. The PADC, in particular, was directly working with the city on renewing the Pennsylvania Avenue corridor.

DEUTSCH: Pennsylvania Avenue Development—

TANGHERLINI: Yeah. I learned that, along the way I learned that the budget is really how the executive sets priorities and so on my first day of the job I'd talk to my direct boss and I said, "You know, listen, it would be easier for me to do this job if I knew what the president's priorities are." And he reached over to his bookcase, pulled out a big book, put it in front of me and said, "There you go." I looked at him and I said, "Well that's the budget," and he said "Right, that's the priorities. If it's funded, it's a priority. If it's not, it's not."

DEUTSCH: That seems so simple.

TANGHERLINI: It seems so simple and so straightforward and it's kind of like $e = mc^2$, you know, it's just, sometimes that's how it is.

DEUTSCH: Where your treasure is, there will your heart be.

TANGHERLINI: Exactly right. And so that was—I mean, that was a blast—having everything from what my boss would call small money big politics accounts to, you know, the Corps of Engineer's operating budget at the time was two billion dollars and it was—

DEUTSCH: What would be an example of a small money big politics account?

TANGHERLINI: United States Holocaust Memorial Council. At the end, when we were building the museum, the budget was \$25 million a year and I swear we spent more time talking about that budget with the Director of OMB than we did the operations and maintenance account of the Army Corps of Engineers. It was about that time that the Bush administration transitioned to the Clinton administration and that was an exciting time to be working at OMB, working in the executive. It was my first transition and it had a really powerful effect on me. It was just amazing to see the transformation and what the professional staff went through to carry the torch forward from one administration to the other and then two very different, politically, two very different administrations from a political standpoint. And the ability of the organization to turn on a dime like that was really kind of a powerful lesson to me of the importance and the significance of the professional staff that we have that support our government. And that's kind of an unheralded group of people but that's what makes our American democratic experiment so successful, at one level, is that we do have such a powerful cadre of experienced, talented people who are doing this work. I went from the water resources branch to the transportation branch and I worked on the—started with the Coast Guard account and the Federal Maritime Commission account, so kind of related to my Corps of Engineers work, and then switched over to rail and highway and I did some transit in there and at that point the '95-'94 Republican revolution happened. And Republicans gained control of the House for the first time in 40-some years and they came to OMB and carted off, you know, truckloads of examiners and analysts, in part because they didn't have any farm team or any bench strength for running the committees. So they went to OMB, where they could find the talent.

DEUTSCH: To get staff?

TANGHERLINI: To get staff. And I was offered a position or two on the Hill at the time but I, my politics wouldn't have allowed for it. My personal politics, I didn't necessarily agree with that direction so I stayed at OMB and my reward was that I ended up with a third of the accounts in the office. There just weren't many people left, so while we went through the hiring process, I got swamped and I learned to prioritize. But I had a blast working on projects like, you know, Amtrak and, you know, it was under attack, one of the many times it was talked about to be de-funded and I got to work on a project to dedicate resources for the actual train sets. They call them the Acela train sets that now we all kind of take for granted—I know I certainly later did—when I would go every other weekend up to Philadelphia when

I was working on my MBA. I loved getting on those trains and saying that I had some little piece of buying these things. My last year at OMB I spent as a special assistant to the associate director for general government and finance. OMB is divided into two sides, budget and management. The budget side is then broken up by big category: defense, international, general government, health and human services. So general government included Transportation, General Services, HUD, Justice, Treasury, you know, a few little cats and dogs agencies. And I served as just kind of the flycatcher for the associate director who was in charge of developing the budget for the director for all those agencies. And it was a really exciting opportunity to be a fly on the wall of history. At that time, President Clinton had tapped a new director of OMB, Frank Raines, to come up with some solution to the District of Columbia's continuing financial problems. The control board had just been established. Well, it was established under the Financial Resources Management Recovery Act, which was part of the proposal that came out of the work we did, so we worked very closely with the city. The control board which was in place at the time and came up with the program that took over such things as the long-standing retirement debt of the city took over certain state-like functions, like the courts and the prison system from the city in exchange for the \$600 million stagnant federal payment that the city was getting. And that, for me, was—I was in charge of kind of the numbers side and there was a guy I was working with who was in charge of the legislative side and I'd get deep in the deep end of city politics. And I just became completely fascinated by it. The work hours were pretty punishing at OMB and, during this time, I had met Theresa. I met her really the first year I was here, my wife Theresa.

DEUTSCH: T-H-E-R-E-S-A?

TANGHERLINI: Uh huh. We had gotten engaged in 1994 and—actually, on Valentine's Day—in our house right on Lincoln Park. At the time we were at 115 11th Street SE. We had gone looking for a house together. We put poor Larry Chartienitz through the paces. It was '94, it was a complete buyer's market. Everything was for sale and no one was buying it so we made Larry take us to a hundred different houses and he was very patient and very friendly and very helpful. And we eventually found, in 1994. So we got engaged in '94 and we found in '94 our house on D Street NE.

DEUTSCH: What had brought you to the Hill in the first place?

TANGHERLINI: Good question. We have dogs. At the time, we had a dog. Her name was Lucy and she just passed away not this Christmas but the Christmas before, a big golden retriever and just a wonderful dog. The problem we were having was finding anywhere that would rent to a couple with a dog.

DEUTSCH: That's why I have Betty, because my son was in an apartment.

TANGHERLINI: Right. And at the time it was, you know, Capitol Hill 1993, it was a pretty tough time for the city and a pretty tough time for Capitol Hill. People who were renting houses—there were now a lot of houses for rent and for sale on the Hill and a lot of houses that were for sale were also for rent—would pretty much let you get away with almost anything if you would rent it. And one of the things the Hill was known for was its kind of acceptance and willingness to allow tenants with dogs. And so we came here really in part because we had this little complication, our golden retriever, but that's what got us here. What got us to stay was just the amazing community we have here. We made friends. Our next-door neighbors, the Illstons became just immediate fast friends. Ted and I started brewing beer together on weekends and we later bought our second dog, Lilly, from Ted when he bred his Springer spaniel and we did that because Lucy just loved Ted's springer, Tenby, so in an off-hand comment once, I said "If you ever breed Tenby, we'll take one." And, sure enough, he went and did it and kind of called my bluff. But in August of '94 we bought our house on D Street and, at the time, there were no less than five or six houses for sale on the block. And I joked that the luckiest thing I ever did was to buy that house on D Street. The smartest thing would have been to buy three more. But Don Denton tells me you can't have a memory in real estate or it will just drive you crazy. So we bought our house and immediately started the process of renovating it, doing a lot of work ourselves and Theresa's dad, my father-in-law, Angelo Picillo did a lot of amazing work, helped out a lot. And we had a handyman, Joe Fort, who was a real fixture up here on the Hill community who also did an amazing amount of work with us as well. And we just set upon that long, slow process that so many people here on the Hill have gone through of trying to transform and preserve these beautiful old houses. So in '95, we got married at St. Joseph's on Capitol Hill. Our reception was at the Sewell-Belmont House, rehearsal dinner at the Monocle, our pictures were taken on the Capitol grounds.

DEUTSCH: Ok, wait a minute. This is great. St. Joseph's was the wedding,

TANGHERLINI: St. Joe's was the wedding, Sewell-Belmont for the reception.

DEUTSCH: Lovely.

TANGHERLINI: The Monocle for our rehearsal dinner.

DEUTSCH: My sister's rehearsal dinner was at the Monocle.

TANGHERLINI: Up in the second floor, all those pictures—

DEUTSCH: Yeah, yeah. And pictures on the—

TANGHERLINI: Pictures on the Capitol grounds. And then we had an after-party after the reception at our house.

DEUTSCH: This is 1995 or '94?

TANGHERLINI: '95. Engaged Valentine's Day in '94, we bought our house, we moved in August 1 of '94 and we were married June 17 of '95. So we had Theresa's family.

DEUTSCH: Where is she from?

TANGHERLINI: She's from Maryland. She was born in D.C. but she grew up in Bowie, Maryland and then in high school her family moved to Anne Arundel. Her father was a federal worker, started at NASA and moved over to the new Department of Transportation when it was created in 1971, or was it '67 I think?

DEUTSCH: '67.

TANGHERLINI: Yeah, '67. Moved to the NASA building when it was built in '71 and he retired from there in '96 or '97. '96 because I actually went to work at the Department of Transportation in '97. I left OMB because in '97, July 1 we had our first child, Cassandra, and the work hours were just ridiculous and I thought that I would go to DOT and kind of slow down a little bit and get a little more depth, a little less across the board, you know, what is it? Mile wide and inch deep. And I thought if I went to DOT I could begin to get some depth in a subject there I was really interested in. I thought I'd got to a policy office, I'd been working on budget so long, I thought I would you know try to shake off this notion of me being just a budget guy. And, as much as I enjoyed the experience and working for Secretary Rodney Slater who was just an amazing individual, the assistant secretary I went to work for—a guy by the name of Frank Kreusi—three weeks after I got there was appointed by Richard Daley to run the Chicago Transit Authority. And so I was Mr. Kreusi's guy and the person I was the guy for had left and that was an interesting lesson in kind of what happens in D.C. a lot. People are associated with other people and when those people move on, you know, your sponsor is gone, it kind of changes the relationship. Frank offered to bring me out to Chicago to work at CTA but Theresa was at work, was at school. She'd gone back to school for her nurse practitioner degree. We had just had Cassandra, we were halfway through the renovation of this house. It just made absolutely no sense, I couldn't do it. During this time I have to point out that Theresa, who when I first met her was a pediatric oncology nurse at Children's Hospital, went on to—she went back and got her Master's degree in health policy. She was doing home care nursing for awhile. She worked on then-First Lady Hillary Clinton's task force, which was something we wondered if you could put on a resume afterwards but now maybe you can again.

DEUTSCH: Maybe.

TANGHERLINI: Yeah. She was right, after all. But she worked for Congressman Pete Stark for awhile and she worked for a brand new program here in the city called Healthcare for Children with Special Needs. But what all that experience did is drive home for her how much she really loves the clinical environment and actually directly serving and helping kids. So she went back to get her pediatric nurse practitioner degree and she now is working as a pediatric nurse practitioner in a practice in Northern Virginia that more than a few parents here in Capitol Hill go out to because of—just really, one of the challenges of being a parent here in the city is that there really aren't many pediatric—

DEUTSCH: Practices.

TANGHERLINI: Practices, yeah. So and she just loves her job. She's been there awhile now and she had this neat little practice she's built with people who ask for her by name and she just enjoys it. But I was at DOT and I was kind of suffering this transition. That was another lesson in transitions.

DEUTSCH: Sounds like you've had a lot of lessons in transitions.

TANGHERLINI: Yeah and I think that's been the exciting part of the work. I mean, I guess you could stay and you could do one thing and you could really get good at it and do it well. I think I'm a little too restless for that.

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 1

TAPE 1/SIDE 2

TANGHERLINI: I was at DOT only about a year and I'll have to say, I just, it really wasn't for me. It was a little too slow and it was a little too non-immediate and I think I had gained an adrenaline addiction from working at OMB or something. I just—and the fact that there was this transition of leadership in the office had kind of left me hanging out there on a number of projects I thought I was going to work on and so it was actually serendipity I ran into a friend of mine, someone, a former OMB co-worker, the guy who was in charge of the legislative part of the District Revitalization Act at a going-away party for an OMB person, Sally Katzen, who ran regulatory affairs. At that party I asked him what he had been doing since he left OMB. He had gone to work for a company called Public Financial Management in Philadelphia, a state and local consulting firm that had been hired by the then-CFO Tony Williams' office to come in and provide immediate staff support as they were taking over the finances of the city and trying to transform the city's financial performance. So he had been the CFO of the police department. And it just sounded really exciting and interesting and he said "You know, I wish I had thought of this sooner. I need

someone to come in on just a temporary detail and learn everything I've learned as being the, you know, hired-gun CFO of the police department and transfer it to the newly-hired permanent CFO of the police department." And it was a three-month assignment and I went back and, to the credit of Secretary Slater, he approved the detail to the District government. And so I went to the District government on a three-month professional rotational detail from the U.S. Department of Transportation. I was the Deputy CFO of the police department and my job was to take everything the hired-gun CFO had learned and hand it over to the new CFO. Well, at that time, another transition happened. Chief Ramsey had been hired by the control board. So he came in from Chicago. I had been working with the new selected CFO when Chief Ramsey decided to make that guy his head of business services and administrative support. So they asked me to stay on for another three months while they looked for a new CFO. So I became the acting CFO and, in that period of time, then-CFO Tony Williams decided to run to be Mayor Williams and that kind of created some transition in the front office of the CFO office. So they said, "We haven't had time to get that new CFO yet. Can you stay for another three months?" And, again, Secretary Slater's office approved each extension but on the last three months, the one that would have taken me up to nine months, they said "That's it, now. You're coming back after that." And it was pretty much in the last week or two of that detail when they said "Oh heck, why don't you just be the CFO of the police department?" And so in November of '98, I was appointed the Chief Financial Officer of the Metropolitan Police Department, right around the time that Tony Williams won the Mayoralty. I had been started worked as the full-time CFO of the police department but I also would go in on evenings and weekends and work on the transition work for the then-new Mayor, Mayor Williams, and I ran something called the short-term action project team.

DEUTSCH: Had you gotten to know Tony Williams before? I mean, you knew him when?

TANGHERLINI: Well, I knew him, I had met him through the District Revitalization Act work. And I'd been very impressed with him. Very impressed by how knowledgeable he was, how focused he was. And then I had been introduced to the whole CFO team by this friend of mine, Scott, the guy who said "Why don't you come over and work and do this transitioning thing?" Actually, Tony Williams' then-chief of staff, a guy by the name of Norman Dong who went on to be his first city administrator, had actually had another idea for me. He wanted me to be the budget director of the department of corrections. And actually a friend of mine who was Frank Raines' special assistant told Frank, who was still at OMB at the time, that I was thinking about going over to DC on a rotation and he said "Well I want to talk to him." And so she got me half an hour with Frank Raines. He asked me what I was thinking, why would I want to do that? I told him and he said "Well, that sounds noble. What are they going to have you do?" I said they wanted to give me the budget director of corrections and he advised strongly against my doing that.

He said “You should do something that can make a big difference, that people will notice, that will have an impact.” And he explained to me why corrections was always going to be un-funded, was never going to be funded at an appropriate level. It just wasn’t people’s first funded priority and, as smart as I may think I am, I’m not going to be smarter than that reality.

DEUTSCH: Yeah.

TANGHERLINI: And then he said, “What are the other options?” And I said, “Police,” and he said, “Do that.” So I went back to Norman and I said it’s police or nothing. And he said “OK, you can go police.” So that’s how I was getting to know that whole team, by getting kind of involved in it. So Norman could have said nothing and I would have still been at the Department of Transportation as far as I know. And so I worked with the Mayor’s transition office, I ran that short-term action team, I helped them set up the city administrator’s office and then, in ’99, I was beginning to say well this has been a good exercise. I’ll do it for a little more, a little longer, but I really want to get on with my original life plan of working in business and entrepreneurship. This has been a lot of fun but now it’s time to do that next career move. And so I applied for and was admitted to the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School. I won something called a Gruss Fellowship, which was a—

DEUTSCH: Which kind of fellowship?

TANGHERLINI: A Gruss [spells it] which was for people who were in public service to have an opportunity to gain access to business school to learn business school, to learn kind of the managerial side so that they could bring it back to government.

DEUTSCH: Sounds like you already knew quite a bit about managerial science.

TANGHERLINI: Yeah, well, so a lot of it was kind of learned on the fly and a lot of it was instincts and what was really powerful and important and valuable about business school was that it kind of placed the theory behind the things I thought I knew were true. And that was just a blast. I really loved it. It was an insane time in my life because I was the CFO of the police department when I went in; I was the director of the new department of transportation when I went out and in the middle we had had our second child, Francesca. So every other weekend I was taking—

DEUTSCH: Wait a minute, CFO of police department when you went in, director of transportation when you came out, having had your second child—

TANGHERLINI: Francesca in the middle. And when people say “Well, how did you do it?” the real question should be “How did Theresa do it?”

DEUTSCH: Right, because you were gone a lot.

TANGHERLINI: And how did I escape with still having Theresa and the girls around by putting them through all that? But it was really—

DEUTSCH: You'd go up on weekends?

TANGHERLINI: Every other weekend, Friday and Saturday I'd go up to Philadelphia. I had a huge amount of homework. The program, they pride themselves on the fact that it's the same program, it's the same amount of work.

DEUTSCH: As full-time students?

TANGHERLINI: Yeah. There was no summer vacation. You come in in May and you just go all the way through for two years and you graduate. So it was May of '99 I started and May of 2001 I graduated. And I've made some permanent, lasting, lifetime friends and that I think was the most valuable part of it. But also just some amazing tools, some amazing principles, some amazing concepts that I've been able to apply. I would come back and torture my poor staff at the police department by applying, you know, this week's principle in my office. But the things that kind of were prescient, given the position I am in now, we took down all the walls in the CFO's office and kind of made it into a bullpen because the business process, analyzing the business process, we realized that what we had done through these walls—just the physical placement of people—was created a overly hierarchical and bureaucratic system that added unnecessary time to the processing of the work. I became a big fan of decentralization so I moved some of my budget office out into the program areas and actually gave each assistant chief their own budget officer and I said “this is your mini-CFO” and I told the mini-CFO, I told that budget officer, you know, every call to the central office is because you weren't able to give the answer and you'll be measured by how many calls I get. We did things just tracking the basic service requests which in the CFO's office were requests for money. We had a budget for stuff—non-personal services we call it—of about \$24 million at the time. We would get requests at the beginning of the year that totaled \$40 million and we had no real budget for allocating that and there was a guy, our budget officer, his name was Keith Caesar which I thought was like a perfect name because he was the most powerful person in the office. He'd get to sit and do thumbs-up or thumbs-down on any request and he would, you know, basically wait until the Chief called and yelled really loud on the phone and then he would fund it and that's how we would manage our resources. We went through an exercise where we looked at the last three years of spending patterns and we went down to the latest screw and widget and the last budget I got to work on for the police department was really kind of the paragon on that effort. It was very detailed, responsibility-centered budget that really broke down all the expenses and had a really highly-developed spending plan.

I learned a pretty tough lesson in that, though, that someone in the budget office looked at all the lines for furnitures and fixtures and just zeroed them out. And so it was a pretty interesting exercise that sometimes maybe you can say too much. But it was still a great effort and I think we really, in many ways, did a lot to contribute to Chief Ramsey's early ability to really gain control of that department and transform it. I think back to what the police department was like in 1998 when we had rotary phones and we had police cars. I remember Sharon Ambrose "We've got cars that can't even go into reverse." It was just a completely dysfunctional operation and now we have a highly professional one. Certainly one that needs a lot more work but that transformation is, I think we forget about it sometimes, what this city was like in the mid to late '90s and how much we've improved it and how much we take for granted now. So that was exciting and then in '98-'99 we had the telecommunications boom and the telco companies were sweeping through the city and cutting up the streets and the city at the time was maybe paving a block a year and the telcos would come, they'd wait 'til the block was paved and then they'd fight over who got to cut it first. And Mayor Williams was getting creamed on that and he asked me because of my transportation background if I could help on nights and weekends again on the transportation side. I agreed to do it for awhile but with business school, with the kids, I just decided I can't do it—I have to do one or the other. So early Sunday, I got a call Saturday night from Norm, who was the city administrator and he said "The Mayor wants to see you tomorrow morning at seven."

DEUTSCH: Seven o'clock Sunday morning?

TANGHERLINI: Seven o'clock Sunday morning I went in to see Mayor Williams and he said "Do you think you can do this transportation thing?" And I said "I can try." And with a handshake, he sent me over to the then Department of Public Works where I went through a pretty tough summer. At my first meeting with the then-Director of the Department of Public Works I was sent in to take transportation out of public works. He was not happy with how it had been run there. The first meeting I had with her, she said, "You know, we really don't need you here." I said "Well, the Mayor thinks differently." And after a pretty tough summer, the department was well on its way to being established as again a standalone department as it had been in '86 and that director of public works was out the door and Leslie Hoteling came in as the new one. And that then began a project that I spent six years on—2000 to 2006—and that was starting building and running the Department of Transportation, DDOT. And that was a blast. That was a—I like to say—a combination of a start-up and a workout.

DEUTSCH: Wait a minute, I want to be sure to get that. Combination of a start-up

TANGHERLINI: Uh huh. And a workout. In the sense that we're starting an entirely new agency but, at the same time, we had an existing agency that needed to be reformed.

DEUTSCH: And what was the main focus?

TANGHERLINI: The main focus just had to be customer service and legitimacy. Just, you know, the whole street cut thing was just this allegory for our inability to control and manage our assets. And the largest, most valuable asset the city has is its public space. I mean, it's the first thing people see when they walk out the door and the last thing before they walk in. Mayor Williams used to say, you know, you can tell a good neighborhood because it looks like a good neighborhood. And one of the things you do to make a neighborhood look good is you pave the street, fix the sidewalks, make sure the lights work, keep the trees trimmed.

DEUTSCH: It's actually not that complicated.

TANGHERLINI: It's not that complicated. It's fantastically—well, it's not complicated—the great thing is it's so concrete, if you will, you can actually see it and it's very tangible, really appeals to a need in me to actually see the work, you know, see the outcome. But we have 66,000 street lights, 4,000 lane miles of roads, we have a 100,000 trees, you know, a traffic signal—just a single signal, which we have 1600 signalized intersections—is \$250,000. Your average light is \$12,000—\$15,000 a piece. A tree is \$250 to buy. The costs were outlandish and the needs were everywhere. So the first thing we had to do was just get control of the street cut issue, gain some upper hand, and so the first thing we did—and people questioned the legality of it—was we declared a moratorium on cutting the streets, period. Everyone takes a week off while we figure out what we're going to do about regulating—

DEUTSCH: All this cutting was for the fiber optic?

TANGHERLINI: For the fiber optics. What was interesting to me—I've always been fascinated by history and business history, in particular—I remember meeting with a guy from Level Three Communications and he was saying “Listen, you can't—this moratorium is killing me. I have no value in my asset until one end is connected to the other.” And it dawned on me that that was exactly the thinking behind the transcontinental railroad and not so much the original transcontinental railroad, but the subsequent ones that fueled a rail boom in the late 1800's that then fueled this huge rail crash. And it dawned on me, I said, “You guys are the railroads.” And I wish I had played that hunch in the stock market, because sure enough 2000 to 2001 we had the telco bubble burst and then later on the tech bubble. When I was at Wharton it was funny, there was this whole group of people who would leave after their first year in the ordinary program was what we'd call it because really getting admitted to Wharton was what they needed to do in order to then go and work for these start-ups, the internet start-ups. And anyone who stayed at Wharton more than a year was considered a chump because look at all the money you were—

DEUTSCH: Passing up.

TANGHERLINI: Giving up, right. I just remember the finance classes and the professors saying “We don’t get it.” You know, the P-E ratio, you need E, you need earnings, you know? And there would be kids in the class who were from, you know, from the tech side who’d say “No, it’s a transformation, it’s a whole new world. The economy has changed.” And it was interesting to see by the time I left business school that actually it was proof that gravity did, in fact, exist and that reality had returned. But we were very fortunate in the Department of Transportation. We were sitting on \$600 million of unspent federal obligations. The largest pool of unspent obligations in the nation.

DEUTSCH: Why was it unspent?

TANGHERLINI: Just the incapacity of the organization to get it out the door. When it was in the Department of Public Works the priority was on getting the trash, picking up the trash. There’s an old saying in municipal governance that a Mayor runs for election every day because someone’s garbage needs to be picked up. And so they really focused on that. In ’95, ’96 when the city was in complete financial collapse there had been an across-the-board 12% reduction, everyone took it, in pay. And what that meant was that anyone who could market their services elsewhere, did. And some of the most marketable individuals are traffic engineers and transportation engineers, construction engineers, inspectors, people who could go anywhere else and earn a competitive salary. Not 88% of a competitive salary. And so we just didn’t have the people there to do it. One of the things I needed to do was get people beyond the notion that, if it was going to be done, we did it. And so we started handing off work to anyone who wanted to take it for us as long as we could get the work out the door. One of the things I did was convince the staff to allow the Navy to take over the resurfacing and rebuilding of M Street SE. And they didn’t want to do it and I said, “You know what, let them do it.” And that’s how I got to know John Imparado and the whole Navy Yard crew and what was great was for my folks was that the Navy folks had never really dealt with the horizontal construction market in the District of Columbia so they had a lot of learning to do. And my folks were actually able to provide some of the teaching and that wasn’t a role they had been in before. They’d never been consulted before, they had always been insulted. And so it was a great opportunity for them to gain a sense of legitimate, legitimizing, well just some outside legitimization. And they built a relationship that was, you know, one that we’ve been able to use over and over with the folks at the Navy Yard who’ve done an amazing job of transforming what had been just, you know, emptiness into—

DEUTSCH: So you were at Department of Transportation for?

TANGHERLINI: Six years.

DEUTSCH: Six years.

TANGHERLINI: Yeah, so my—the notion that I can't hold a job, I guess, is kind of—

DEUTSCH: Dispelling the notion that you can't hold a job.

TANGHERLINI: But I have to tell you, when I first got there, there were a lot of people who said, “Oh, you know, let's see how long you stay” or “We've seen people like you come and go.” And so for me one of the lessons was if you really want to make meaningful, long-standing change, that that's going to take time. That was something I picked up in one of my org theory classes at business school, too, is that it really takes a minimum of four years to change culture. And I'd have to say that I would believe that. I think you can make progress against culture. You can change morale pretty quickly, but to make it sustaining? That takes time and that takes effort and that takes, you know, really digging in at all levels of the organization. One of the things we did at DOT was create a sustaining revenue source that allowed us then also to do the improvements we needed to do in the local infrastructure—pave the streets and make the federal match. The unspent federal funds was in part because we didn't have the matching money to spend it and we didn't have the plans and designs. We didn't have a vision, we didn't know where we were going. So we actually took the problem, which was the street cuts and the telcos and we turned it into an opportunity by charging our rights-of-way rental fee, applying my University of Chicago economics, you know, Econ 101. People will consume more of something if it's free than they actually need and started putting a value on the use and occupancy of our public space. And that rental fee generating \$30 million a year through a series of legislative efforts were dedicated entirely to the District Department of Transportation and formed the basis of a local road maintenance fund. Allowed us to come up with \$7.5 million a year to take care of the trees, more than tripling the budget for trees.

DEUTSCH: All that from charging?

TANGHERLINI: Yeah. So it was really, you know, again, it was really an amazing experience. I got to meet some incredibly dedicated and hard-working public servants and that was never more evidenced than in the snow-removal activities. Really transforming that effort—

DEUTSCH: And you had some big snow during your time.

TANGHERLINI: Yeah, we did.

DEUTSCH: You had the big blizzard. Were you there then?

TANGHERLINI: Well I didn't have the giant blizzard, the one that was in what?

DEUTSCH: '96

TANGHERLINI: '95 or '96?

DEUTSCH: Yeah.

TANGHERLINI: I came in, I had one in I think '01—a President's Day storm, does that sound right?

DEUTSCH: Uh huh. I think I remember that.

TANGHERLINI: Something like 17 inches, not the 26 or whatever. But yeah, working on transforming that and finding opportunities like the full-enclosure paver paving of New York Avenue where I get out there and say we're going to close this on Friday and we're going to open it up for rush hour on Monday. And I swear everyone was out there recording me making this promise so that when we failed—and I think that was the expectation—you know, I could go down in a giant ball of flames. And halfway through when we had finished one side and we were just a little bit behind our schedule, people were there and all the crews were there and then as we started working our way through the second side and we began to catch up, by the time we opened it, there wasn't a single crew out there. There wasn't a single news crew out there. And I later used that as a great example for the folks that, you know, if you're in this for the thanks, if you're in this for the glory, you're in the wrong business. Because in our business, if we do our job well, it's not news. And so you have to find a motivation beyond that for this work.

DEUTSCH: That's so true. So that kind of brings us up to Mayor Fenty.

TANGHERLINI: Kind of. It was the end of the Williams administration, I was on the Board of Metro, I'd been the transportation director for six years and Metro was going through some really tough times. A series of very critical articles about the management of Metro, some safety issues, the collision in the Red Line station, Woodley Park, and there was just this sense that there needed to be a change in leadership. The Board asked me to serve in an interim capacity and said, "Listen, we want you to also apply for the job." And I, you know, it was a very quick turnaround thing. It was within two weeks that they came up with that idea that I was installed as the interim general manager of Metro, the 13th person to hold the title General Manager of Metro and should have been prescient. But 13's my oldest daughter's lucky number so she said, "Dad, this is going to be great." And at the end of the day she was right. But that was a fascinating nine months. I love Metro, I love what it does, I love what it represents, I love the people there. I really enjoy, you know, making some meaningful progress around a focus on customer service and putting customers first. There's some, you know, really exciting opportunities there. I'm really disheartened to hear today that less thoughtful and creative people have found a way to at least slow down if not kill the Dulles project.

DEUTSCH: Oh, I hadn't read that.

TANGHERLINI: Yeah, which is really disappointing. Because Metro is really the glue that brings this region together. And I know from being at the, you know, at the end of the point, if you will, of the regional political arrow, that there's plenty of centrifugal forces that are pulling this region apart. There's a lot of zero-sumism, there's a lot of competition, there's a lot of one-upsmanship. It's the whole crab bucket mentality. We'd rather everyone be down at the bottom than anyone having any chance to get up. And I'm afraid that the Metro Board, particularly when I was serving as General Manager, was kind of like the one arena where that could play out, where there was actual resources at stake. And sapping my—

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 2

TAPE 2/SIDE 1

DEUTSCH: Two, yes. Tape two, Dan Tangherlini.

TANGHERLINI: Great.

DEUTSCH: Where were we?

TANGHERLINI: We were just talking about Metro and it was interesting that, at the end of the day I think I had worked my way around to convincing the Board that my focus was going to be on the organization but they were taking so much time that Mayor Fenty had a chance to run for and win the election, at least the nomination on the day after the primary, he won the primary, actually my birthday, he was quoted in the paper saying, "Well, if Metro doesn't want Dan to be their General Manger, I'll take him as City Administrator."

DEUTSCH: This was before he got elected—right after he won the primary?

TANGHERLINI: Right after he won the primary. And I had called him the night before to congratulate him on his winning the primary. He called me back that day and I asked him was he serious about that? And he said he was and he'd love to talk to me about it and I said, "Well, let's see what you have to say." And I had always enjoyed working with Mayor Fenty when he was a councilman. I had always really admired him and respected him. I really shared his perspective. He used to drive me crazy as the transportation director, just the level of demands and the expectation but I really enjoyed that perspective, what he brought in the way of vigor and energy and interest. And I really was excited about the prospect of what his administration could be and when he offered me this incredible opportunity to be his chief operating officer, the second guy in line, it seemed like an opportunity I couldn't turn down. To work for one guy who really wanted me to work for him, rather than 12 folks who couldn't quite make up their

mind. And though it paid less and the prospect of having any additional time with my family was de minimis, it just seemed to be the kind of thing I would just really love to do. And so, much to the consternation of the Board and a number of members there, I told them that I would be withdrawing from consideration for the General Manager's position—

DEUTSCH: This is of Metro?

TANGHERLINI: Yeah, and joining Mayor Fenty. I joined as the leader of his transition team. I was the co-chair of the transition and the City Administrator designee and that was just an amazing few months. Converting the campaign activities into the outlines of a new administration, converting those outlines into cabinet appointments and, at the same time, working to develop enough information about agencies that we could actually develop a budget. We had a month to develop the Mayor's first budget. So we had to put together a plan. We called it 100 days and beyond. We had to do that through putting together a transition and a transition team. We had the first, the nation's first e-transition in which we invited every citizen to participate. We had e-town halls, transition town halls, we made them working town halls. We asked people questions and we asked them to give us answers. We took those answers and we drove them into actual policies and programs and took those policies and programs and tried to, you know, in a month's time make a budget that actually reflected them.

DEUTSCH: So, it sounds like customer service had been one of your big theme songs but it was when Mayor Fenty came in, that was kind of his—

TANGHERLINI: Yeah.

DEUTSCH: So it was a meeting of the minds.

TANGHERLINI: Absolutely. I think there was a very consistent view about what government does, what it can do, what it should do, and who we work for. So working for Mayor Fenty was, you know, it just made a lot of sense for me.

DEUTSCH: So then you were all set to have the Eastern Market come along?

TANGHERLINI: Yeah. Never was I at all upset that—

DEUTSCH: Just about calms down from the transition.

TANGHERLINI: Right, right. Well, so there we were. I mean, we're now kind of officially in charge and operating. We got our budget through the council and we're deep into the process of school governance reform.

DEUTSCH: Oh right.

TANGHERLINI: And I just remember the call, late at night from the emergency management agency. And I get calls late at night from the emergency management agency—that's the un—I didn't realize that was part of the job of City Administrator until, or right after the inaugural I started getting these calls about homicides and about fires and it seemed like anything untoward that happened to anyone in the city I was going to get called about it. And I was told that Eastern Market was on fire and I said, you know, I just couldn't believe it. I asked to be patched through to someone on the scene. They patched me through, they convinced me it was really bad and I called the Mayor. It had to be about one o'clock in the morning, he picked up on the second ring. And I told him Eastern Market was on fire and that I had spoken to someone on the scene and it was a big fire and he, you know, immediately understood the ramifications. He—I can't remember exactly what he said—but it was an expression of, you know, just concern. Deep concern.

DEUTSCH: This is big, yeah.

TANGHERLINI: This is big. And we actually had a quick conversation about exactly what it meant for Eastern Market to be on fire. What did it mean for the city? What does that symbolize. And really, we were talking about it—it's like Dupont Circle being on fire, except frankly more so because, in many ways, Eastern Market represents community. It represents neighborhood, it represents people from all over the city coming together.

DEUTSCH: Isn't that interesting? Because we who live on the Hill are so focused to what it means to us. We don't think that it may represent the same thing to someone who lives in Cleveland Park.

TANGHERLINI: Well that was interesting for me, too, because I have a very Hill-centric view of the world, having just lived here pretty much my entire time here. And, for me, to hear the Mayor immediately get it—you know, Ward four resident, Ward four representative—now someone who knows the city inside and out more than I ever will, you know, ever will. He grew up here. But it was still meaningful and powerful for me to know right away that the symbolism, the importance, the significance of Eastern Market is not simply a Hill, is not just a Hill phenomenon. We learned that, I think, as a community the next day.

DEUTSCH: So did you get up and go in the night?

TANGHERLINI: I didn't. He, uh—

DEUTSCH: You went the next morning?

TANGHERLINI: He did. But he told me that I was going to have a busy day the next day so I needed—

DEUTSCH: He was probably right about that!

TANGHERLINI: And he was right about that. He said, “Your job is going to be to figure out how to fix it” and he’ll go out and he’ll deal with, you know, the current condition issues. And that, in many ways, is kind of the divide and conquer approach we take to this enterprise. An exciting opportunity this job represents. I mean, what more powerful and exciting and important opportunity for a Hill resident than to actually say alright, we’ve been dealt a blow. We have a huge tragedy here, let’s try to turn it into something, you know, significant and important. Let’s try to use it as an example that, you know, your government can serve you and let’s show people what the Fenty administration, the whole notion of moving forward faster really means. And I have to tell you, there was an email that went out from a good friend of mine, a long-standing Hill person who said we had a tragedy last night. Eastern Market burnt down and we’re not going to compound it by letting the city have anything to do with fixing it. And, for me, that I saw as a call to arms and say if we’re going to really win back the trust and support and faith in our people to fix the schools, we’re going to have to fix Eastern Market.

DEUTSCH: Uh huh. So you immediately saw that this had huge possibilities.

TANGHERLINI: It had huge possibilities in every direction. You know, plus and minus. And we’re going to take it and use it for the plus. We’re going to—and, trust me, I wasn’t going to be allowed back in the house if I didn’t have a way to do something about it. I mean, I joked about it later on. I grew up in a part of Massachusetts where people had two pictures on their way—the Pope and John F. Kennedy—you know a little shrine in every Catholic household. And Capitol Hill, we have that same thing with the Eastern Market shrine phenomenon. I made that joke in a community meeting and I saw all these people kind of blush and snicker a little.

DEUTSCH: Well, it’s true.

TANGHERLINI: Who doesn’t have, you know, in the Hill, at least one or two pictures? We have a little place right next to our—on the way into our kitchen—we have three Eastern Market pictures. You know, it’s our little Eastern Market shrine.

DEUTSCH: Right. On my refrigerator I’ve got the poster.

TANGHERLINI: Sure you do. Of course you do. And then those, you know, Fix Eastern Market t-shirts became de rigueur, I mean, you couldn’t call yourself a Hill resident if you weren’t wearing one around.

It was a really rallying cry. And I've known from my experience early on in my time on the Hill I—Brad Braden, I don't know if you remember Brad?

DEUTSCH: I remember the name.

TANGHERLINI: Wonderful guy. He was the President of the Capitol Hill Restoration Society.

DEUTSCH: Right.

TANGHERLINI: He, he died unexpectedly and unfortunately at a very young age. He had brought me onto the Restoration Society Board as the transportation and environment coordinator. This was while I was still at OMB and in that role I had gained some experience with the whole Eastern Market issue. It was the mid to late '90's Eastern Market wars and I had just told myself if I could do anything to avoid getting involved in the politics of Eastern Market I was going to try to do it and then, sure enough, there I was ground zero.

DEUTSCH: Right in the middle.

TANGHERLINI: Right in the middle. And I just said that one of the things we were going to have to do in doing this was we're going to have to fix Eastern Market in a way that avoided the politics of Eastern Market. I was quoted in the paper as saying that you know, the politics of Eastern Market is akin to that of the Middle East. Someone came to me later on and say, you know, that's not really fair. No one had ever died in the 140 years of the politics of Eastern Market. And I thought maybe that was more of a testament to our gun laws than anything else. I mean, there is some—it's deep there.

DEUTSCH: It is.

TANGHERLINI: But, we were able to overcome it. We were able to overcome it by really coalescing around a very fast-paced effort. A four-month effort to re-build—

DEUTSCH: To get that temporary structure up.

TANGHERLINI: To get the temporary structure up. And a lot of credit goes to another Hill resident, Kathleen Penney, the now Chief Engineer of DOT.

DEUTSCH: Penney, P-E-

TANGHERLINI: P-E-N-N-E-Y.

DEUTSCH: And she's now what?

TANGHERLINI: She's the Chief Engineer of DOT, DDOT. She was the kind of lead construction manager for that temporary structure. And at the end, when it was all done I asked Kathleen, you know, well what do you think? How do you feel you did? Now here is a chance for her to do an end zone dance and she said, "I think I could have done it a month faster." And that, to me, was the best possible answer anyone could give. I just thought that was the right kind of spirit. I have to say, though, when it was going up it was all kinds of, you know, are we going to get the equipment. There was questions about whether the vendors would sign leases and the vendors, though, did finally coalesce. There were a couple of hold-outs and in the end it was through vendor peer pressure, frankly, that they said, "No, you're going to sign that lease and we're going to be a family again."

DEUTSCH: Make it all happen.

TANGHERLINI: Yeah, make it all work. I remember when it was just finishing up and I walked in and it was that bright white structure, the sun streaming through, there was all that glistening new stainless steel. And they had signs for each one of the stalls that were exactly the same. I said, "Oh my god, they're going to hate this." [laughing] But once all of the goods were moved in and the flowers and you know, and people were so happy to have it back.

DEUTSCH: It was incredible, wasn't it?

TANGHERLINI: It really was, it really was. And I think in many ways it shows what we can do when we set our mind to it and when we come together as a community and we work together and there's still—even today there's some of that atomization still happening. One group's fighting with another group. But, I think, collectively as a group of citizens, the kind of collective quiet group who rely on that place to be great, we need to stay focused in the way we were immediately following the aftermath of the fire.

DEUTSCH: What's your guess on when the new, the old structure will be back?

TANGHERLINI: We said 18-24 months and I think we're proceeding apace. We've done a lot of that roof work, the trusses are coming in. But I think that really with the success of the temporary structure I really think we need to make sure we don't rush ourselves in any way, that we get the Eastern Market back that's the one that we want and need and not some half-measure. If there's any silver lining to the cloud of the fire it's that it was going to be a ridiculous project trying to renovate that building while it was still operating and some of the plans that had been proposed, you know, this construction mezzanine. They were going to build a scaffolding and people were going to work on the roof, you know, above the people selling. It would have been a nightmare and it would have chased customers out and I don't know

if they ever would have come back. So, at the end of the day, I think we'll get a better Eastern Market, we'll preserve the customer base but, boy, it didn't feel like that the day after. Someone at some point that day had suggested the idea of painting the windows when we boarded them up, getting some artists to paint the windows. And it was exciting to be able to work with—first with the Shakespeare theatre. I just called Sue Brown who used to work there. She put me in touch with the executive director and I said I'd love you guys to get a set painter to go out and paint a window. And they did that, I don't know, one of the first weekends right after the fire.

DEUTSCH: Did they paint the windows themselves or did they put? There was—

TANGHERLINI: Well, what they did, the Shakespeare folks actually came out and painted the window on-site, which was fun. It was a little bit of street theater, if you will. Chief Rubin, our new Fire Chief, showed how brilliant he was when he put the altar—we called it the altar—he opened the doors and let people walk in and see.

DEUTSCH: Ah, yes—that was brilliant.

TANGHERLINI: In many ways that was important for people to gain some sense of closure, if you will.

DEUTSCH: Yeah, oh it was very important.

TANGHERLINI: See how bad it was, see how dramatic it was. And really motivate them and their interests to preserve it and make it new again. Tommy Wells was fantastic. He led the effort through the City Council to get the additional resources we needed to commit the money right away to fixing Eastern Market. Of course we had the Georgetown library fire—

DEUTSCH: The same day.

TANGHERLINI: Yeah, the day after.

DEUTSCH: That was incredible.

TANGHERLINI: Yeah, and again the Fire Department did an amazing job doing what they had to do and then saving the Peabody Collection which could have been, in many ways, maybe even a more serious loss in the sense that you can't rebuild the Peabody Collection.

DEUTSCH: What is the Peabody Collection?

TANGHERLINI: It's a collection of materials related to Georgetown when it was its own city. It's just the history of Georgetown, really. And in that is the history of Washington, D.C. You know, kind of the

early history. So it was, you know, it was really amazing to see this long path of all this stuff coming right back to, you know, my neighborhood and really challenging me and all the experience I'd gained, all the work I'd done to, you know, to put it to work. And it was a very visible way. I mean, I used to just go to Eastern Market and I could go shopping and that would be it. But, you know, those weeks after that it was a rolling community meeting and the level of expectation was very high.

DEUTSCH: You've always been so busy. You've had an incredibly intense career. Do you ever, does it ever feel like too much? I mean, do you ever feel kind of—

TANGHERLINI: I think, you know, sometimes it feels like an awful lot. When I first took over Metro I was overwhelmed by what I had done, you know, gone from an organization of 600 people that I knew intimately. You know, for six years I'd been working on this project and just digging successive layers deeper and deeper and then, next thing I know I woke up and I'm in charge of 11,000 people and more than a billion dollars spread out over 2100 square miles and I was thinking to myself oh my gosh, you know, what have I done? And I think that that's kind of a fun feeling for me. I like skiing, I like sailing, I like hiking. I like going places I haven't been before. And so, in a way, it's part of the excitement and the challenge and I like that kind of challenge. It's fun. It's scary, but it's also fun.

DEUTSCH: Do you go back to Denmark a lot? Do you speak Danish?

TANGHERLINI: Jeg kann ikke talle Dansk—I do not speak Danish. I actually understood it pretty well. My two older brothers are fluent. My older brother is a professor at UCLA in the Scandinavian studies department. But my younger brother, Niels, and I were entirely Americanized. We did go back to Denmark every year when I was growing up but after college that stopped. I've been back once with my wife, Theresa, and Cassandra when she was a baby. But we haven't been since. We are going to Italy this summer, which is exciting.

DEUTSCH: Oh. You won't have people stopping you in the street and asking you about the Market when you're over there.

TANGHERLINI: I hope not, but you know, that would be fine.

DEUTSCH: Although Capitol Hill folks travel a lot, actually, you'll probably run into someone.

TANGHERLINI: Exactly right, exactly right. And I don't mind people stopping me in the street and asking me about the Market now. I think it's great, I think it's fun. And I mean, that's one of the things I love about this community. It was really, it was the giant blizzard of '95 when we had all that snow—'95 or '96, whenever it was—it dawned on me then that what—how much like a Norwegian fishing village

Capitol Hill really is, you know? Everyone was waving at each other and people were helping each other shovel each other out and, you know, at its heart, there's a real deep sense of community here. And sometimes people get busy and occupied but over and over and over again with events like the Eastern Market fire—

DEUTSCH: And I think that's why we all love those, you know, we didn't love the Eastern Market, but the snow storm for example—we love being reminded of that.

TANGHERLINI: Right, well and look at what's happened with the Literary Feast. You know, what a great project and Karen Reed and the other folks who really, you know, worked on that, they've given us this huge gift. Because now, I mean, hundreds of Capitol Hill families come together now. And the Capitol Hill Classic—it just gets bigger and bigger and it's just this big street party. Eastern Market Day. I just think it's—

DEUTSCH: Well, the fourth of July parade.

TANGHERLINI: The fourth of July parade. Beautiful, it's a blast.

DEUTSCH: Really fun.

TANGHERLINI: Cassie, Francesca and I had the great honor of pulling up the rear this year in my 1967 MG which I've had since college and Mayor Fenty had given us green beads to throw out to everyone and they had their Fenty hats on and they were throwing the beads to everyone. It was a blast. The great thing about that parade is that I'm convinced that the front of the parade, when it finishes, lines up on the side so they can watch the back of the parade.

DEUTSCH: It is fun. It is great fun.

TANGHERLINI: Tommy Wells was wearing the fire hat that Chief Rubin had given him. It was just great. But, you know, it's interesting that that sense of community—how privileged we are here—can sometimes get driven home in other ways. We had this tremendous tragedy with the Jacks family girls, Banita Jacks, the four girls were found dead at their house and the question was well where were the neighbors? How did these four girls just disappear? And I take tremendous comfort in knowing that that could never happen here. And I wonder what we can do to bottle our sense of community, our sense of connection and cohesiveness and ship it to other parts of the city so that they can benefit from it, too. That's the wonder of this city, I mean, I'm just really impressed by the sense of—the almost family-like nature of it—but it's also one of the most disheartening parts of the city is that sometimes there are huge divides between some neighborhoods and others and that, for me, is the big project, the big exciting

project I want to work with Mayor Fenty on—and it's something I know he's committed to—is trying to bring the city together and make everyone benefit from the great parts of it.

DEUTSCH: I think that's a really nice place to stop.

END OF INTERVIEW