

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES

----- X

October 2, 2013  
Start: 10:17 a.m.  
Recess: 5:35 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E: Mark S. Weprin  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Leroy G. Comrie, Jr.  
Daniel R. Garodnick  
Robert Jackson  
Jessica S. Lappin  
Rosie Mendez  
James S. Oddo  
Domenic Recchia, Jr.  
Diana Reyna  
Joel Rivera  
Debbie Rose  
Albert Vann  
Vincent M. Ignizio  
Ruben Wills  
James Van Bramer

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Christopher Gonzales  
Associate Commissioner at the Department of  
Housing Preservation and Development

Thehbia Walters  
Director of HPD Manhattan Planning Office

Kirk Goodrich  
Monadnock Development

Tim Sullivan  
Chief of Staff to Deputy Mayor for Economic  
Development Robert K. Steel

Penny King  
Policy Officer at Robert K. Steel

Jerilyn Perine  
Executive Director of Citizens Housing and  
Planning Council

Jessica Walker  
Vice President with the Partnership for New York  
City

Michael Slattery  
Senior Vice President at Real Estate Board of  
New York

Eric Bunge  
Founder of nArchitects

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Rick Bell

Executive Director of the American Institute of  
Architects New York Chapter

Graham Hill

Designer/Owner of LifeEdited

Eugene Lee

Senior Policy Advisor to Deputy Mayor for  
Economic Development Robert Steel

Tom McKnight

Executive Vice President for New York City  
Economic Development Corporation

Nick Molinari

Chief of Planning and Park Lands for the New  
York City Department of Parks and Recreation.

Jesse Masyr

Land Use Council

Chip Place

New York State Parks

Michael Sillerman

Kramer Levin Counsel

David Wolkoff

G&M Realty

H. Thomas O'Hara

Architect

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Jerry Wolkoff  
G&M Realty

Marie Cecile Flageul  
Long Island City Resident

Rebecca Kennedy

Paul Joyce

Andrew Gutterson  
5 Pointz Volunteer

Aditi Sen  
SEIU 32bj

Paul Fernandez  
Chief of staff of the Building and Construction  
Trade Council of Greater New York

Nicolai Conn  
5 Poitnz Artist

Martalicia Matarrita  
5 Pointz Artist

Andreas Varrarutsos  
Queens Resident

Adam Milroy

Christine Whitaker  
Artist

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Andy Sydor  
Tour Guide

Lois Stavsky

Stephanie Caballero

Andrew Faria

Samuel Sellers  
Co-founder Hip Hop Re:Education Project

Cynthia King

Anthony Sherika  
Artist

Ben Velzaquez  
Artist

Jerry Rotondi

Hans Van Ritturn

Euegene Lee  
Senior Policy Advisor to Deputy Mayor for  
Economic Development Robert K. Steel

Kyle Kimball  
President of the New York City Economic  
Development Corporation

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Tom McKnight  
Vice President of the New York City Economic  
Development Corporation.

Don Capoccia  
Principal in BFC Partners

Shelly Friedman  
Friedman & Gotbaum LLP

Shirley Aldebol  
Vice President of SEIU Local 32bj

Paul Fernandez  
Chief of Staff of the Building and Construction  
Trades Council of Greater New York/Build Up NYC

Stan Hellman  
Staten Islanders for Responsible Development of  
New York Wheel

Josh Gold  
Representing Hotel Workers

Annette Kraljev  
Owner of ATO Contracting

Reverend Demetrius Carolina  
Executive Director of Community Development  
Corporation

Theo Dorian  
President of St. George Civic Association

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Michael Arvanites  
Representing State Senator Diane Savino

David Goldfarb  
Land Use Chair of the Civic Association of St.  
George

Susan Bradley  
Staten Island Resident

Linda Winkler  
Staten Island Resident

Edward Josey  
NAACP

Michael Harwood  
Member of St. George Civic Association

Priscilla Marco  
President of Van Duzer Street Civic Association

Lynn Kelly  
CEO and President of Snug Harbor Cultural Center  
and Botanical Garden

Steve Margarella  
For James Prendamono

Joe Carter  
Security Officer

Epifanio Ortiz  
Build Up NYC

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Ronaldo Torres  
Build Up New York

Bob Bradley  
Resident

Phillip Harris

Bobby Digi  
President of North Shore Business Association

Al Peters  
CEO of Men Who Build

Reverend Janice Harris

Curt Ward  
Waterfront Chair

Juana Velez  
New York Trade Council

Jeannette Harjo-Cobb  
Member of New York City Council of Carpenters  
Local 20 Staten Island/Build Up NYC

Alex Simpson  
Member of Local 7 Tile, Marble, & Terrazo/Build  
up NYC

Karina Bednarek  
Local 79, Representing Dan Finley



## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Isetta Brown  
New York Trade Council Member

Lenore Friedlaender  
Assistant to President for Local 32bj

William Cuffe  
Staten Island Resident

Michael Brown  
United Work Force

Mike Lombardi  
Staten Island Harley Davidson

Arjo Phillips  
Staten Island Resident

Etorie Mazzei  
North Shore Business Association

Mark Macron  
City Council 49<sup>th</sup> District Candidate

Martin Green  
Staten Island Resident

Frank Rizzo  
Director for the Staten Island Board of Realtors

Peter Gioello  
Contractor

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Michael Kramer  
Electrical Contractor

Linda Collier  
On behalf of Reverend Doctor Kathlyn Barret-  
Layne President of United Ministerial Alliance  
of Staten Island

Joel Bergstein  
President of Lincoln Equities Group

Robert Schenkel  
Head of Development with Lincoln Equities Group

Ken Fisher  
Land Council

Bishop Mitchell Taylor  
President and Founder of East River Development  
Alliance and Pastor of Center of Hope  
International



1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Could we  
3 have everyone's attention please and a little  
4 quiet? Thank you very much. My name is Mark  
5 Weprin. I am Chair of the Zoning and Franchises  
6 Subcommittee, and I am joined this morning by  
7 the following members of the Subcommittee,  
8 Council Member Diana Reyna, Council Member  
9 Leroy Comrie, Council Member Dan Garodnick,  
10 Council Member Ruben Wills, and Council Member  
11 Vincent Ignizio. We also have a few other  
12 guests of the Committee here today, Council  
13 Member Debbie Rose, Council Member James Otto,  
14 Council Member Rosie Mendez, and I don't think  
15 I missed anybody else, who have items on the  
16 agenda that they are very involved in. We have  
17 a very long day ahead of us. So I just want to  
18 warn you these things are hard to predict on  
19 time. They take a long time. We do want to,  
20 you know, we have important business to do  
21 here. We want to hear from every member of the  
22 public as well as the applicant. The  
23 applicants take a while because we have  
24 questions for the applicants. So I just want  
25 to warn you it's going to be a fairly long day

1 today. So we, we're going to try to take it as  
2 quickly as possible. Just so you know what's  
3 going to happen, just how it's going to work,  
4 the applicants will have presentations and  
5 they'll answer questions. Following the  
6 applicant's presentation we will turn to  
7 members of the public to testify. Those  
8 members of public will have two minutes each to  
9 testify only. So if you have testimony that's  
10 a lot longer than that, you can submit it and  
11 we'll take it for the record, but if you have  
12 testimony that's longer than two minutes, try  
13 to take a pen right now and start summarizing  
14 it to get your highlights in. You're also  
15 going to notice that some other people may say  
16 the same thing that you want to say. You might  
17 want to pull that out of your testimony or just  
18 acknowledge what was mentioned before. It's  
19 hard to get into that two minutes. We're going  
20 to try to enforce that rule as much as possible  
21 just 'cause everyone--this is going to be a  
22 very long day. We have five items on the  
23 agenda and each one has people to testify. So  
24 this is an unusual day for us here at the  
25

1 Zoning Committee. So just for a couple of  
2 housekeeping items, there were a number of  
3 items that we heard hearing--had hearings  
4 already which have been closed, but we haven't  
5 voted on yet because there's still issues being  
6 negotiated. We are not voting on these items  
7 today. This is being laid over 'til another  
8 meeting. That would Willets Point Land Use 876  
9 to 881, MSK CUNY Memorial Sloan-Kettering CUNY  
10 Land Use 885 to 890, Land Use 902 The 92<sup>nd</sup>  
11 Street project on the Upper East Side, and  
12 Waterfront Resiliency, which we heard at our  
13 last meeting, Land Use 922. Each one has  
14 issues that we're negotiating. These will not  
15 be on the agenda today. We are scheduling and  
16 agenda for tomorrow, although we don't know  
17 what's on that agenda, but a meeting for  
18 tomorrow morning before the Land Use at 9:45  
19 tomorrow. That's going to be across the street  
20 at 250. So that is scheduled now. We don't  
21 exactly know what's on that depending on  
22 whether we get agreements on some of these  
23 things. So, with that in mind, we're going to  
24 start with Adapt New York City 937 and 936 in  
25

1 Council Member Mendez's District. I'd like to  
2 call up the following people from the City,  
3 representing the City, Chris Gonzales, Thebia  
4 Walters and Kirk Goodrich from the developer  
5 team. You guys ready? I saw Chris. Oh, there  
6 he is. So, and those who are presenting, as  
7 short as you can make your testimony also helps  
8 us a little bit along the way here, you know.  
9 I promised my wife I'd be home by Thanksgiving,  
10 so let's hope we can arrange that. That was a  
11 joke about Thanksgiving, okay? I saw some guy  
12 over there panic like, "What?" Okay, guys  
13 whenever you're ready. Remember, when you are  
14 testifying you should state your name when you  
15 first start speaking 'cause we are going to  
16 transcribe the record as well, and if there's a  
17 question later on, and there's a number of you  
18 on the panel, please again state your name as  
19 you answer the question so we can keep the  
20 record straight. That's a hard thing for  
21 people to get used to, but it is how we like to  
22 run it around here. So Mr. Gonzales, whenever  
23 you're ready.

1  
2 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: Good morning,  
3 Chair Weprin, members of the Subcommittee. I  
4 am Christopher Gonzales, Associate Commissioner  
5 at the Department of Housing Preservation and  
6 Development. I am joined by Thehbia Walters,  
7 Director of HPD's Manhattan Planning Office,  
8 and Kirk Goodrich from Monadnock Development.  
9 We appear before the City Council to offer  
10 testimony in support of Land Use items 936 and  
11 937, also known as My Micro-Units. As you know  
12 the Adapt NYC initiative was conceived as a  
13 pilot project to develop a new housing model  
14 for New York City's growing small household  
15 population. Developing housing that meets the  
16 needs of today's New Yorker is critical to the  
17 City's future economic success. Today we have  
18 1.8 million one and two person households, but  
19 only one million studios and one bedrooms.  
20 According to the 2010 census, the small  
21 household population is growing at a faster  
22 rate in households with three or more people.  
23 In Manhattan's Community Board Six, which is  
24 home to the My Micro-Unit site, over 75 percent  
25 of households have one or two people, making it



1 essential that we explore new housing models to  
2 meet the needs of this community as well as  
3 City-wide. In July of 2012 Mayor Bloomberg  
4 joined the then Commissioner Matthew Wambua to  
5 issue the Adapt NYC Request for Proposals,  
6 which sought an experienced and innovative  
7 development team to design, construct and  
8 operate a Micro-Unit rental building on a  
9 transit oriented city on site. The development  
10 team selected by HPD, Monadnock Development,  
11 will construct the building composed entirely  
12 of Micro-Units containing approximately 55  
13 dwelling units and 678 square feet of  
14 commercial space. All residential units in the  
15 proposed building will be entered into rent  
16 stabilization and the design meets all  
17 department of buildings, New York State and  
18 federal regulations including all accessibility  
19 standards. The design calls for nine to 10 foot  
20 ceilings and floor to ceiling windows that will  
21 provide the units with maximum amount of light  
22 and air. The building will be constructed  
23 using modular units which will require less  
24 construction time, and will minimize  
25

1 neighborhood disruptions. The modular units  
2 will be constructed at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.  
3 To proceed with this vision of a new housing  
4 model, we appear before you to seek approval of  
5 Land Use items 936 and 937. These items  
6 consist of the designation of property located  
7 at 335 East 27<sup>th</sup> Street as an Urban Development  
8 Action area, as well as the approval of  
9 disposition of such property. The projects all-  
10 -project also seeks to amend the zoning map,  
11 which will establish within an existing RA  
12 district, a C25 district in order to facilitate  
13 the construction of a mix use residential  
14 building. The project area consists of  
15 underutilized city-owned vacant property  
16 located adjacent to a 26-story, 225 unit NYCHA  
17 apartment building in Kips Bay neighborhood of  
18 Manhattan. Forty percent of the units will be  
19 affordable at a variety of AMI's. We hope to  
20 finalize the balance of affordability after  
21 further conversation with Council Member  
22 Mendez. Thank you for this opportunity to  
23 testify before the Subcommittee on this  
24

1 important effort, and we'll take any questions  
2 you have.  
3

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.  
5 Gonzales. Is someone else going to add any  
6 testimony for now, or? Make sure to go--put  
7 the mic as close to your mouth as you can.

8 KIRK GOODRICH: Sure. So my name is  
9 Kirk Goodrich. I'm Development Director at  
10 Monadnock Development. It's affiliated with  
11 Monadnock Construction, which is a 38 year old  
12 general contracting firm, and we're the  
13 developer of the project. You know, Chris has  
14 sort of given an overview of the project. I  
15 just wanted to give you an appreciation for why  
16 we thought it was and think it is an important  
17 project. I think in pursuing it, we felt that  
18 the Micro-Units really would serve to begin to  
19 fill a nitch [phonetic] that, you know, was  
20 left vacant by the loss of SRO housing over the  
21 last 50 years. You know, in the 1950's there  
22 were 250,000 SRO units. Now there's probably  
23 less than 50,000 in the city, and what that's  
24 really practically meant is that New Yorkers,  
25 you know, really don't have the ability to rent

1 the piece of the city that they can afford, and  
2 a lot of times and particularly in the outer  
3 boroughs and really all over the City, people  
4 are renting illegal apartments because--and  
5 rooms because there are really few  
6 alternatives. And I think when Citizen's  
7 Housing and Planning Council and former  
8 Commissioner Jerilyn Perine who is Executive  
9 director there, really spearheaded the idea  
10 with the administration. The thought was to  
11 really fill that nitch and as a developer we  
12 saw that both as an opportunity, you know, a  
13 business opportunity, but to fill a need that  
14 was really important. And so our focus at the  
15 moment is to execute the project and to really  
16 focus on some of the concerns that were raised  
17 throughout this public process by the Council  
18 Member and the Community Board, and  
19 affordability is a concern, and the length of  
20 affordability is a concern, and those are  
21 ongoing discussions that we're having and will  
22 continue to have over the next week or two.  
23 But our focus as a company and my focus  
24 individually in my career has been affordable  
25

1 housing and we're going to do the best we can  
2 to satisfy the concerns that have been raised  
3 and to get the project closed and under  
4 construction by year end.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

6 KIRK GOODRICK: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Let me cut you  
8 off there. I want to call on Rosie Mendez,  
9 whose district this is located in, 'cause I  
10 know she has some comments and statements that  
11 may help clarify some of the concerns or some  
12 of the things we're working on. So, Council  
13 Member Mendez.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you,  
15 Mr. Chair. This project as conceived would be  
16 the first building completely comprised of  
17 Micro-Units, and I have concerns about having  
18 teeny tiny apartments, and the Community Board,  
19 Community Board Six voted this project down as  
20 proposed, originally proposed. We are in  
21 discussions, 'cause important to me is not just  
22 affordability, but permanent affordability and  
23 trying to get deeper pockets of affordability,  
24 deeper breadth bands where more individuals  
25

1 from my community could qualify for this, and  
2 HPD, the administration and I have been meeting  
3 in the last few weeks, and I'm hopeful that we  
4 can get to a place that my community can agree  
5 upon, and that I can agree upon that would best  
6 suit my district and Community Board Six.

7 Just--you didn't mention the size of the units--

8 -

9  
10 KIRK GOODRICH: [interposing] Sure.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: though this  
12 was in a previous hearing. The smallest unit  
13 would be 200 square feet?

14 KIRK GOODRICH: It's like 260 square  
15 feet or so, and then the largest unit is around  
16 350 square feet. And Council Member, just to  
17 give you a sense, so doing a building with Micro-  
18 Untis is novel in terms of new construction  
19 projects that are available to the general  
20 market, but HPD is actually utilized studio  
21 apartments of this size, often in their  
22 supportive housing program for homeless  
23 populations is a different population, but what  
24 it means that as a product, we're familiar with  
25 it, and the industry on the affordable side is

1 familiar with it. And really, what we're trying  
2 to do is perfect it, make it available to the  
3 public and make it more livable. So these  
4 apartments have nine foot ten floor to ceilings.  
5 They have large windows. They have amenity  
6 spaces on the ground floor. We have a small  
7 fitness space. We have common spaces on the  
8 first floor, eighth floor, a terrace space that--  
9 and so what we're trying to do, Council Member,  
10 is really respond to the concern that you raised  
11 and the Community Board raised about making these  
12 spaces as livable as possible and trying to apply  
13 what we've learned doing the units for the  
14 Supportive Housing Program through the years.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you.  
16 While if--for those of us who've been to the  
17 site, it's a really tiny site. It's not a good  
18 site for many reasons, but it is good for other  
19 reasons which would be that we can get light and  
20 air into every apartment and the public areas,  
21 but for the longest many of us including the  
22 public housing development that's right next door  
23 thought that that little slot was part of the  
24 NYCHA land. And I think we also need to be  
25

1 mindful of the impact that that building will  
2 have in such close proximity--

4 KIRK GOODRICH: [interposing] Right.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: on such a  
6 small space that we all originally thought was  
7 part of the NYCHA land, and I think NYCHA even  
8 thought it was part of their own land. I want to  
9 acknowledge that tenant President of that  
10 development is here today. Maria Trinida is in  
11 the balcony to listen and to participate and to  
12 be mindful of the impact it will have on that  
13 building.

14 KIRK GOODRICK: Right. Council Member,  
15 we at your request and at the request of the  
16 members of the Tenant Association who attended  
17 the Community Board meetings, we've met with the  
18 leadership of the Tenant Association. Then we  
19 had a general meeting with the entire Tennant  
20 Association where we really shared with them what  
21 the proposal would be. They raised concerns with  
22 respect to a few matters, most importantly some  
23 of the--there were some trees in the vicinity,  
24 and we discussed how we would address that and  
25 came to some agreement on that, and there were



1  
2 concerns raised about whether the playground  
3 which is on First Avenue near the 27<sup>th</sup> Street  
4 Plaza would be affected and we, we informed them  
5 that it wouldn't be. And so I thought we were  
6 well received by the Tenant Association and since  
7 we've met with them, I think we've as a group  
8 have really actively focused on ways to make the  
9 project responsive to those concerns and to be  
10 good neighbors beginning now, even before the  
11 building goes up.

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Great. Does  
13 anyone on the panel have any questions for these  
14 people? Yes, Council Member Reyna?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I just wanted  
16 to understand, as far as the smallest unit you  
17 mentioned 250 square feet?

18 KIRK GOODRICH: Right, it's like 250,  
19 260. I think actually it's around 260, but it's  
20 in that range.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And the largest  
22 unit?

23 KIRK GOODRICH: It's around 350 square  
24 feet.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And there is no  
3 bedroom. It's more of a--

4 KIRK GOODRICH: [interposing] It's a  
5 studio apartment.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: All of them?

7 KIRK GOODRICH: Yeah, all of them.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: No matter what  
9 size?

10 KIRK GOODRICH: Right, all 55 units  
11 are studio apartments.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And as far as  
13 the cost of this project, can you just tell me  
14 what is the cost per unit?

15 KIRK GOODRICH: Yeah, the--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: [interposing]  
17 Or cost per square footage.

18 KIRK GOODRICH: The overall--right.  
19 The overall cost right now is in the neighborhood  
20 of 10 million dollars hard cost. The overall  
21 project cost is around 14 to 15 million. We're  
22 in the process of finalizing plans, etcetera. So  
23 the overall project cost will be probably 14 to  
24 15 million dollars.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And the land  
3 is?

4 KIRK GOODRICH: The land price at this  
5 point will be zero.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Land price is  
7 zero?

8 KIRK GOODRICH: Yes.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And the cost of  
10 the build-out is 10 million.

11 KIRK GOODRICH: Yeah, it's in the  
12 neighborhood of 10 million dollars.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And the subsidy  
14 to build?

15 KIRK GOODRICH: So we actually don't  
16 have subsidy from HPD. We're negotiating a--with  
17 HPD on what would be a loan from them that would  
18 pay--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: [interposing] A  
20 PLP loan, or?

21 KIRK GOODRICH: It would be--

22 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: [interposing]  
23 If I could--If I could just jump in actually. SO  
24 the terms of HPD's subsidy are still under  
25 negotiation. When this project was originally

1  
2 conceived there was to be no HPD subsidy in it,  
3 but as we've proceeded with discussion with the  
4 Council Member and, you know, talked about  
5 different levels of affordability we are in the  
6 process of considering putting in some subsidy to  
7 reach the affordability levels that have been--

8 KIRK GOODRICH: Right, but nothing is--  
9 -at this point, there's nothing that's been  
10 agreed to.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: So the  
12 financial report as far as this particular land  
13 application is not yet determined.

14 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: Correct.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And the actual--  
16 -the actual affordability, when we talk about  
17 affordability what are we referring to?

18 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: So we--so as I  
19 said in my testimony we anticipate that around 40  
20 percent of the units will be affordable at  
21 different tiers. Right now we're still  
22 determining in conversations with the Council  
23 Member exactly what those tiers will be, but you  
24 know, the idea is hit a different levels of

1  
2 income so that we're addressing different, you  
3 know, incomes within the community.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: So it seems  
5 like there's a lot to be determined as far as  
6 this project is concerned regarding the  
7 financing, which then would jeopardize what would  
8 be closing dates on this project.

9 KIRK GOODRICH: So, Council Member, so  
10 those conversations are being had like in real  
11 time now, and they have started and have been  
12 ongoing for a few weeks, and we expect to  
13 conclude them in a time frame that will allow us  
14 to close by the end of the year, and it's not  
15 unusual to have a situation where you're a few  
16 months out from closing and you're financing is  
17 still in flux, but we're confident that if we get  
18 the support of the Council on the ULURP, that  
19 we'll be in a position to close at the end of the  
20 year.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Well I just  
22 want to share for the record I have seen this  
23 type of situation in my own district where  
24 there's a vote for land disposition, financial  
25 statements and packaging is left for after the

1  
2 vote, and four years later we're still waiting  
3 for development because the financial package has  
4 not been closed out with HPD, and therefore, no  
5 new units have been constructed and the land  
6 disposition vote, which is the only leverage as  
7 far as accountability has been given away, and so  
8 I'm trying to understand how real is this--

9 KIRK GOODRICH: [interposing] Right.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: application.

11 And if financials are not ready, then why would a  
12 vote be merited?

13 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: Right. As we  
14 said in our testimony, we hope to conclude  
15 discussions with the Council Member on the  
16 different levels of affordability which will  
17 indicate the level of financing that will go into  
18 the project before a vote takes place.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I'd imagine  
20 that there's already a subsidy with the land  
21 price being zero.

22 KIRK GOODRICH: Yes. That--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: [interposing]

24 And the land value of this particular site would  
25 contribute what value?

2 KIRK GOODRICH: It'S hard to say,  
3 'cause we--it's going to be transferred with  
4 restrictions and with subject to a LDA, so that  
5 depressed the value of it. But it's hard to  
6 answer that question until we know what the  
7 affordability restrictions are going to be.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And the  
9 restrictions are going to be for how long?

10 KIRK GOODRICH: The restrictions are  
11 going to be--

12 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: [interposing]  
13 Well we're actually still in discussions with the  
14 Council Member on that, but she has indicated  
15 that she would like to see long term or permanent  
16 affordability here and that's part of what we're  
17 negotiating.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And my last  
19 question, I just wanted to understand, as far as  
20 the seniors, senior population is concerned, this  
21 design ingenious, right, but it's more for what  
22 would be considered not suitable for the impaired  
23 or a senior population; is this in fact true?

24 KIRK GOODRICH: I don't--I actually  
25 personally don't believe that's the case. I

1 think it can be suitable for seniors and a  
2 variety of populations.  
3

4 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: Right, and each  
5 unit is in compliance with all accessibility.

6 KIRK GOODRICH: Right.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: But the height  
8 for storage capacity--I'm looking at the  
9 presentation.

10 KIRK GOODRICH: Uh-hm.

11 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: The height  
12 could be adjusted.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: The height can  
14 be adjusted you said?

15 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: Do you want to  
16 take that?

17 THEHBIA WALTERS: Yeah, of the--of the  
18 cabinets, I think. That goes along with some of  
19 the accessibility regulations.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Please speak into  
21 the mic when you speak and also identify  
22 yourself.

23 THEHBIA WALTERS: I'm Thehbia Walters,  
24 Director of Manhattan Planning at HPD. And so  
25 all of the units are going to meet all



1  
2 accessibility laws and regulations, and so I  
3 think with that--I don't know if you're speaking  
4 about the height of--in the kitchen, the kitchen  
5 cabinets? There's an ability to kind of adjust  
6 the cabinets to allow for someone who may be in a  
7 wheelchair or impaired.

8 KIRK GOODRICH: So, Council Member,  
9 you're probably looking at the images, which were  
10 probably part of the original images we did for  
11 the project, and there's been a variety of  
12 changes to the apartments since those images were  
13 done.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: For the sake fo  
15 review of this particular committee, is it  
16 possible to get the most recent--

17 KIRK GOODRICH: [interposing] Sure.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: of designs that  
19 can accommodate these questions.

20 KIRK GOODRICH: Sure.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: So that at  
22 least we're not looking at what would be  
23 outdated--

24 KIRK GOODRICH: [interposing] Sure.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: desing.

2 KIRK GOODRICH: Sure.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you, Mr.  
4 Chair.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Ms.  
6 Reyna. For quick questions, Ruben Wills. I just  
7 want to acknowledge we've been joined by Council  
8 Members Lappin and Council Member Jackson who are  
9 both members of the Subcommittee.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Thank you, Mr.  
11 Chair. Good morning panel. I just have a couple  
12 of brief questions. You said that the difference  
13 in the square footage, the minimum to maximum  
14 would be 250 to 350?

15 KIRK GOODRICH: Yeah, in that range,  
16 yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: So where would  
18 the extra square footage go if it's just going to  
19 be a studio apartment? Would the living room  
20 area, would that be made bigger or?

21 KIRK GOODRICH: The shapes, the units  
22 are not all shaped exactly the same.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Okay.  
24  
25

1 KIRK GOODRICH: So if you--I don't  
2 know if you have actual floor plan in your  
3 package. If you don't--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: No.

5 KIRK GOODRICH: I will share it when  
6 we give you the other information, but the units  
7 have different shapes. So floors two through  
8 seven are common floors, and they have a common  
9 floor plate, and the units on those floors are  
10 not all the exact same dimensions and so some  
11 units are larger than others, but they're all  
12 studio apartments. We--I'm happy to share it  
13 with you and you guys could take a look at it.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: You have 678  
15 square feet for retail space, is that cumulative  
16 or is that--

17 KIRK GOODRICH: [interposing] That's--  
18 -yes. One space on the ground floor.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: So it's only--

20 KIRK GOODRICH: [interposing] off the  
21 pedestrian--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: [interposing]  
23 one space total?  
24

1 KIRK GOODRICH: Yeah, one space in  
2 total on the pedestrian plaza.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: And could that  
4 space be subdivided if necessary or?

5 KIRK GOODRICH: We didn't anticipate  
6 it being subdivided 'cause it's a fairly modest  
7 sized space.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Okay, and these  
9 are all rentals?

10 KIRK GOODRICH: Yes, yep, all rental.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: How is the  
12 rental, how is that being handled? Is it going  
13 to be through one particular leasing agent or is  
14 it going to be different real estate agents?

15 KIRK GOODRICH: Sure. So the  
16 affordable units are subject to a lottery, which  
17 HPD will oversee, and then the market rate units  
18 will be--we have a broker who will be in charge  
19 of the leasing of those units.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: The broker's  
21 already been identified?

22 KIRK GOODRICH: Yes.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: And who is the  
24 broker?  
25

2 KIRK GOODRICH: Corcoran Sunshine.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Who?

4 KIRK GOODRICH: Corcoran Sunshine.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Corcoran and  
6 Sunshine?

7 KIRK GOODRICH: Corcoran Sunshine.  
8 It's a real estate broker.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: And you can  
10 forward that over to us?

11 KIRK GOODRICH: Sure.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: That's it.  
13 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.  
15 Wills. I'm going to call on Mr. Comrie. I also  
16 want to let people know we do have a number of  
17 people who are actually testifying in favor of  
18 this project after this panel. So we'll be a  
19 little while on this one. Council Member Comrie?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thank you, Mr.  
21 Chair. The units as comprised, you said that  
22 they're not--are they all looking rail road type  
23 units or is it--

24 KIRK GOODRICH: It's--there's--Council  
25 Member, they're all studio apartments.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Right.

3 KIRK GOODRICH: So--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: I mean, just  
5 from this picture, seems like it's the railroad  
6 flat type to where it's just all--

7 KIRK GOODRICH: Usually--so usually  
8 when you describe a railroad flat, I think of a  
9 multi-bedroom apartment where you walk--where  
10 there's no hallway and you walk through--you have  
11 to walk through all the bedrooms to get from end  
12 to end.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay.

14 KIRK GOODRICH: So, in that sense, I  
15 really wouldn't describe it that way.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: So--

17 KIRK GOODRICH: It's a studio, you  
18 know.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Right. And but  
20 you're saying you've updated these designs that  
21 we're looking at here, so these are really not--

22 KIRK GOODRICH: Those, you're probably  
23 looking at images.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Right.

1 KIRK GOODRICH: To give a sense of  
2 the, you know, the type of amenity in the  
3 project. We will give you the most recent floor  
4 plans on this.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And will the--  
6 there'll be various types or will all of them  
7 look similar at the end--

8 KIRK GOODRICH: [interposing] No,  
9 they're--there are several different types of  
10 units. That's why the size, there's a range of  
11 size.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And what's  
13 the--what's the area median income in that area  
14 now? Does anyone know?

15 KIRK GOODRICH: You guys might know.

16 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: For that  
17 specific census track it looks like the average  
18 income is around \$74,000. Surrounding census  
19 tracks are at around \$105,000, \$91,000, \$109,000.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: You said 105,  
21 91, and 109?

22 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: Yes.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: So what--so  
24 when you're talking about rates of affordability,  
25

1  
2 are you going to stay within those census tracks  
3 or you're going to include the entire district to  
4 try to make it actually affordable. 'Cause if  
5 you're talking affordable housing, that rate,  
6 those specific census tracks, that eliminates a  
7 lot of the Council Members--

8 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: [interposing]

9 So--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: or

11 constituents. Definitely any NYCHA constituents.

12 KIRK GOODRICH: So when we, when we  
13 talk about affordability at a--on this project or  
14 any project, the affordability is governed by  
15 what's published for the--for New York City,  
16 which takes into account the entire city. So  
17 when we determine what the Council, what Council  
18 Member Mendez ultimately what affordability will  
19 be satisfactory and, you know and acceptable.  
20 That AMI is based on what the HUD published AMI's  
21 would be, not based on what the average AMI is in  
22 that particular neighborhood.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay. And you  
24 said this site is being build modular, is it--

25 KIRK GOODRICH: [interposing] Correct.



2 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Has there been  
3 agreements worked out? I'm sorry?

4 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: Correct, it is  
5 modular.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: They're  
7 modular units that are being prefabricated at the  
8 Brooklyn Navy Yard.

9 KIRK GOODRICH: Correct.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: You have a  
11 contract labor agreement?

12 KIRK GOODRICH: So the employees at  
13 the Capsis [phonetic] factory in the Navy Yard  
14 are unionized and--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: What about the  
16 workers on site?

17 KIRK GOODRICH: The--there will be  
18 elements of the workers on site. There will be.  
19 So for example--and I'm not our construction guy.  
20 Nick Lembo, who's the founder of Monandnock, is  
21 in the gallery here, but my recollection is that  
22 the crane, the company that will assemble it  
23 onsite, so the crane company, the carpenters who  
24 will assemble it on site will be unionized, and  
25 that's the plan at this point.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And you have a  
3 project labor agreement with--

4 KIRK GOODRICH: We don't have a  
5 project labor agreement on this.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And did  
7 community--and so you haven't set up since you  
8 don't have the rates of affordability, have you  
9 set up community preference on this, 'cause I  
10 noticed the Community Board turned this project  
11 down.

12 KIRK GOODRICH: There will be a  
13 community preference. I think it'll be--

14 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: It's--so all  
15 HPD projects, the affordable units will have a 50  
16 percent community preference.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Pardon me?

18 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: So the  
19 affordable units in HPD projects have a 50  
20 percent community preference.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: What about the  
22 rest of the units?

23 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: The market rate  
24 units--the rest of the 50 percent, is that what  
25 you're asking?

2 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Uh-hm.

3 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: Those will be  
4 open to city-wide applicants.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And you said  
6 you've done the research on this, and what type  
7 of--you're looking for people that are just  
8 coming out college, or what's the age? You're  
9 saying that seniors may go there. I mean, what  
10 is the projected New Yorker that's going to want  
11 to try to get this apartment, 'cause it seems  
12 like there's 10 steps from the front door to the  
13 window. So I'm just trying to figure out who  
14 wants that type of space.

15 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: Well, the  
16 lottery process for the affordable units and the  
17 market rate units will be open to whatever  
18 applicants on--that do apply. On the affordable  
19 units it'll be conducted through our normal  
20 lottery system, and then once the applicants are  
21 selected, they'll have to income qualify for the  
22 units. On the market rate units it'll just be a  
23 normal lease app process.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And you figure  
25 you have a vibrant market? Has this been done

1 successfully in other cities in the United States  
2 to your knowledge?

3 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: I--yes, it's  
4 been done.

5 KIRK GOODRICH: And abroad.

6 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: In Boston,  
7 London, I believe Seattle does a version of micro  
8 units as well.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And they have  
10 seniors, or is this all--

11 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: [interposing]  
12 It's a variety.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: under 30  
14 people?

15 CHRISTOPHER GONZALES: It's a variety.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: A variety.  
17 Alright, well we'll see. I, you know, I just  
18 want to hope that you work with the Council  
19 Member. I know that the community had a lot of  
20 concerns. Coming from Queens, I've been blessed  
21 that I've never lived in--other than my college  
22 days, something that small. So I don't envision  
23 it on a--as a rental apartment. So I just--I  
24 would hope that it--the Council Member can work  
25

1  
2 it out. I know that the Community Board had some  
3 reservations, and you know, we'll see where we  
4 are over the next few days. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,  
6 Council Member Comrie. I think we have a lot of  
7 people to testify here. So we're going to excuse  
8 this panel and we have--

9 KIRK GOODRICH: [interposing] Thank  
10 you.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: a number of  
12 people who are here to testify in favor of this  
13 project. I also want to let people know that we  
14 have a lot of people outside who weren't able to  
15 come in 'cause we're at capacity. So after you  
16 testify, if you have no other reason to stay; I'm  
17 not encouraging you to leave, but if you can open  
18 up the seats we'd appreciate it. You may want to  
19 get one of those green drinks that Diana Reyna  
20 and Leroy Comrie drink. They seem to be good in  
21 inspiring questions, whatever that is, you know.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: We brought  
23 many donuts for you folks that don't want to.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Anyway, I'd like  
25 to call up the following four people. I got four

1  
2 actually. Tim Sullivan? And they're not exactly  
3 in that order. Jessica Walker? Jerilyn Perine,  
4 is she--and is that today? She's here again.  
5 And Michael Slater [phonetic]. What's your name?  
6 You didn't fill out a slip, okay. Alright, if you  
7 can give up a seat, though. Somehow we could put  
8 a paper--take one of the folding chairs behind  
9 Mr. Sullivan, move it over there, just so  
10 everyone who testifies--yeah. Let's have the  
11 testifier at the table. Okay. Mr. Sullivan, you  
12 can decide who goes first. Alright, and you're  
13 welcome. Again, state your name when you speak.

14 TIM SULLIVAN: Good morning Chairman  
15 Weprin, Chairwoman Mendez, Members of the Zoning  
16 Subcommittee. My name is Tim Sullivan, and I'm  
17 the Chief of Staff to Deputy Mayor for Economic  
18 Development, Robert K. Steel. Joining me this  
19 morning from the Mayor's office is Penny King,  
20 policy advisor in our office. On behalf of the  
21 Bloomberg administration and Deputy Mayor Steel,  
22 thank you for the opportunity to testify this  
23 morning in support of the Adapt NYC ULURP  
24 Application. I would also, on behalf of the  
25 administration, like to thank Chairwoman Mendez

1  
2 for her continuing leadership in helping us shape  
3 this proposal and approve it over time, and we're  
4 optimistic that--as she mentioned, we can improve  
5 the project and meet some of the concerns that  
6 the Community Board articulated and that the  
7 Council Members articulated. The Bloomberg  
8 Administration believes that this pilot project,  
9 which has drawn praise and attention from around  
10 the world has the potential to create a new  
11 housing model in New York City. A key principle  
12 of Mayor Bloomberg's economic development  
13 strategy is to promote investment in the City's  
14 housing stock and infrastructure to ensure that  
15 we remain competitive in attracting and retaining  
16 people in New York City. Indeed, under the  
17 Mayor's new housing marketplace plan, the City  
18 has built or preserved more than 155,000 units of  
19 affordable housing in all five boroughs, enough  
20 housing to accommodate the entire population of  
21 Minneapolis. Today there are more units of  
22 housing in New York City than at any other time  
23 in our History. In order to keep pace with New  
24 York's growing population, particularly the  
25 growing number of smaller households. We need to

1  
2 add new tools to the City's tool kit to expand  
3 housing options in New York. Adapt is a critical  
4 element of a strategy to diversify the City's  
5 housing stock while maintaining the  
6 administration's commitment to affordable  
7 housing. Developing housing that meets the needs  
8 of New Yorkers and our growing small household  
9 population is critical to the City's future  
10 economic success. The number of smaller  
11 households comprised of one or two people is  
12 growing far faster than larger households. While  
13 there are 1.8 million one and two person  
14 households in New York City, there are only one  
15 million studios and one bedroom apartments. The  
16 result is a housing mismatch that can sometimes  
17 have unsafe consequences, including the  
18 temptation to illegally subdivide existing  
19 apartments. Other cities like Boston, London,  
20 and Seattle have begun to address the mismatch  
21 between their housing--the existing housing stock  
22 and changing demographics. Here in New York in  
23 2011 the Mayor's Office convened an interagency  
24 working group with representatives at the  
25 Department of Buildings, the Department of City



1 Planning, the Department of Housing,  
2 Preservation, and Development to study the city  
3 housing laws, building code and zoning  
4 regulations to explore new models for housing.  
5 The building code actually allows the  
6 construction of micro-units, which measure  
7 approximately 250 to 350 square feet and have a  
8 kitchen and a bathroom. However, the zoning  
9 regulations prevent the development of a new  
10 building composed entirely of micro-units. So to  
11 explore whether such a model is feasible, the  
12 City has designed a pilot project to test the  
13 concept of micro-unit building. The Adapt NYC  
14 competition challenged teams to propose a micro-  
15 unit building with innovative exterior and  
16 interior design and livable and affordable  
17 apartments. The RFP attracted attention from all  
18 over the world and around the country. The RFP  
19 site was accessed more than 1,600 times in  
20 hundreds of cities domestically and abroad. In  
21 January of this year at the opening of a major  
22 exhibit on new housing models at the Museum of  
23 the City of New York in partnership with the  
24 Citizen's Housing Planning Council, the mayor  
25

1  
2 announced a selection of Monadnock Development to  
3 build and operate a micro-unit building on East  
4 27<sup>th</sup> Street between First Avenue and Mount Carmel  
5 Place in Manhattan. As New York City's  
6 population evolves, so must our housing stock.  
7 With its exceptional design and affordable rents,  
8 we're excited to explore whether this pilot  
9 project could be a replicable model for New York  
10 City housing in the future. Thank you for the  
11 opportunity to testify today. I'd be glad to  
12 answer any questions.

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. We  
14 probably should have put you on the first panel,  
15 Mr. Sullivan, so we didn't run the--we didn't run  
16 the clock on you, but from now on, by the way, I  
17 just want to remind you, we're going to try to  
18 keep people to two minutes. Sorry, Commissioner  
19 and others, we're going try to do that. So  
20 whenever--whoever wants to go next? Commissioner  
21 Perine?

22 JERILYN PERINE: Sure.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. So you're  
24 a regular here now, huh?

2 JERILYN PERINE: I know, twice in one  
3 week.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

5 JERILYN PERINE: My name is Jerilyn  
6 Perine, and I'm the Executive Director of the  
7 Citizen's Housing and Planning Council and the  
8 former Commissioner of HPD. Our work on this  
9 issue really wasn't starting about small  
10 apartments, it was really about looking at the  
11 question of how a growing population will fit  
12 into our existing housing stock. One third of  
13 our housing units city-wide are occupied by  
14 single person living alone. In Manhattan the  
15 number is 46 percent. In Community Board Six,  
16 it's 59 percent. You only need to look on  
17 Craigslist to see the results of this population  
18 shift which reveals the informal housing market  
19 that most new movers in the marketplace must turn  
20 to. We have been--our work has become the basis  
21 for the Making Room Exhibition at the Museum of  
22 the City of New York, which just closed, which  
23 attracted over 120,000 visitors to wide acclaim.  
24 What was clear from the submissions to this RFP  
25 is that single adults like everyone else are

1 seeking not just a place to live, but to become  
2 part of a community that is shared. This trend  
3 is evidence in the recent work of NYU Sociologist  
4 Eric Klinenberg which reaffirms that this trend  
5 is national, growing, and reveals a population  
6 seeking civic engagement and community  
7 connection, not a diminished public life. We  
8 believe that regulatory relief to encourage  
9 smaller units, denser buildings, units that can  
10 also be, and other models, legally shared by  
11 single adults, and also ones that would permit  
12 accessory dwelling units in small homes, will  
13 help to eradicate the informal housing market and  
14 provide more housing choice for New Yorkers.

15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

17 Sorry. Next please.

18 JESSICA WALKER: Sure. I'm Jessica  
19 Walker, Vice President with the Partnership for  
20 New York City, and the Partnership for New York  
21 City represents the City's business leadership in  
22 its largest private sector employers. We  
23 strongly support the Adapt NYC Model as a means  
24 to develop apartments that accommodate New York  
25

1 City's changing demographics with more affordable  
2 housing options. The partnership recently  
3 published the New York City jobs blueprint in  
4 which employers, both large and small identify  
5 rising housing costs as a major obstacle to job  
6 creation in the City, and as the biggest threat  
7 to the goal of maintaining a healthy middle  
8 class. Housing demands, which have been alluded  
9 to earlier, in the city are changing. New York  
10 City currently has approximately one million  
11 studios and one bedroom units to accommodate some  
12 1.8 million one and two person households, a  
13 clear mismatch that Tim mentioned of supply and  
14 demand in the housing market. According to the  
15 2010 census, the growth rates of the one and two  
16 person household populations exceed the growth  
17 rate of households with three or more people, a  
18 trend that will continue in the future. Only 16  
19 percent of households are made up of traditional  
20 family units while 33 percent are single person  
21 households. New York City is also the most  
22 expensive city in the country with a cost of  
23 living 87 percent higher than the national  
24 average. This is largely due to high rents which  
25

1  
2 make up 50 percent of the City's cost of living.  
3 The City's growing population will worsen, this  
4 lack of affordability, as an increasing number of  
5 people bid on a limited supply of housing units.  
6 High rents reflect the shortage of housing  
7 options in New York City. Almost half of the  
8 middle class cannot afford the median rent,  
9 causing many to relocate out of the city. Micro-  
10 units are an obvious and important housing option  
11 that would enable many more people to live in the  
12 city at an affordable rate. We urge your  
13 approval of the Adapt NYC Project. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very  
15 much. Alright.

16 MICHAEL SLATTERY: Good morning.  
17 Michael Slattery, Senior Vice President of Real  
18 Estate Board of New York, and we're here today to  
19 support the City's pilot program to develop a new  
20 model of housing, micro-units, to adapt to both  
21 the City's changing demographics and to provide  
22 another approach to the address the City's  
23 chronic housing problems. The City's vacancy  
24 rate has been under five percent for decades. As  
25 our population continues to grow and average

1 household size decline, it's projected that  
2 400,000 housing units are going to be needed by  
3 2030 to meet these demands. At the same time, we  
4 have one million renter households, whose median  
5 incomes can afford rents of approximately 1,000  
6 dollars a month. According to the 2011 Housing  
7 and Vacancy Survey, there are roughly only 6,642  
8 rental units that rent for this amount or less.  
9 The need to find creative ways to chip away at  
10 these problems, given the limited amount, the  
11 public funds, and the high cost of newly built  
12 housing for units to residential conversion is  
13 evident. The pilot program here seeks to address  
14 this need through the use of modular construction  
15 and smaller units. This will lower housing costs  
16 by providing more units within the same amount of  
17 floor area. Also, the program identifies a  
18 growing population segment that would be served  
19 by this housing tide. This adds to the need and  
20 the timeliness of this program. We think that  
21 this program and the integration of these micro-  
22 units into more traditional multi-family projects  
23 would provide the city with yet another tool to  
24 address our acute housing problem. Given the  
25

1  
2 ongoing problems the City has to provide enough  
3 housing and enough affordable housing for all New  
4 Yorkers, we commend the city for continuing to  
5 try new approaches that seek to alleviate some of  
6 the strain on a housing stock. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.  
8 Slattery. Anybody have any questions for this  
9 panel? Mr. Comrie, I'm going to cut off from  
10 that green drink. I don't know what it is.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Sorry, I just  
12 want to get an idea of what--does the panel have  
13 an idea of what the cost of these apartments will  
14 be, and will they be maintained since they're  
15 rentals? Will the price go up that every time  
16 that someone is a new tenant that moves in? I  
17 heard a 1,000 dollar a month figure. Is that  
18 achievable in this project?

19 MICHAEL SLATTERY: Yeah, the rents  
20 will be--the market rate units will be driven by  
21 what the market demand is for the apartments.  
22 The affordable units and we're, again, continuing  
23 to discuss with Council Member Mendez what the  
24 right levels of affordability are. Those will be



1 governed like traditional affordable housing  
2 units where there be--

3  
4 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: [interposing]

5 So the market rate units won't be kept at a  
6 certain level either. They just go whatever the  
7 market drives it.

8 MICHAEL SLATTERY: Again, I think  
9 there's strong demand for the apartment. There  
10 will be strong demand for these, and market rates  
11 will go up over time.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: So but you  
13 don't think that any of those apartments will be  
14 at a thousand dollars a month to start with?

15 MICHAEL SLATTERY: On the market rate  
16 units, I don't want to speculate on what they  
17 would be, but that seems low for a Manhattan  
18 apartment.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: I just wanted  
20 to be clear. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright, great.  
22 Well thank you all very much. We have three  
23 other people to testify on this matter, Rick  
24 Bell, Graham Hill, and Eric Bungee [phonetic].  
25 Gentleman, are you here? Okay. Okay. Well,

1  
2 make your way--okay. Now we're going to put you  
3 on a two minutes time limit so you guys can  
4 coordinate a little bit there, that would be  
5 helpful too, and you know, as much as possible.  
6 Hold it up. Is there anyone else to testify on  
7 this item, 'cause this is the last panel we have  
8 on this item? Okay. Gentleman, so we can set  
9 you up--set it up first. We won't put that on  
10 the clock for the set-up, if you can do it  
11 quickly.

12 [off mic conversation]

13 ERIC BUNGE: Good morning Chairman and  
14 Council--

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]  
16 Whenever you're ready make sure to state your  
17 name, okay?

18 ERIC BUNGE: I'm Eric Bunge, a  
19 founding Principal of nArchitects and the  
20 designer of My Micro New York Project. It's an  
21 honor for nArchitects to participate in this  
22 exciting pilot project. We see in our role as  
23 architects a challenge to design not only  
24 efficient and effective small spaces, but humane  
25 ones. So the--I'll be describing the main design

1 concepts, three scales of the project. First of  
2 all, in terms of the massing you can see on your  
3 right in the handouts passed out. The buildings  
4 massing is comprised of four slender brick towers  
5 with varying shades of grey.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Can you just go  
8 closer to the microphone?

9 ERIC BUNGE: And it's meant to look as  
10 a microcosm of the City's skyline. We're looking  
11 for simple form for a new prototype for the city.  
12 And true that the micro-units as described are 55  
13 units ranging in size as you know. Three of are  
14 UFAS, Uniform Federal Accessibility, for the  
15 hearing impaired and the blind. Each unit is  
16 comprised of what we call a tool box, which has  
17 what you need and a canvas. Nine foot ten  
18 ceilings are significantly different in height  
19 from your typical unit in the City, and eight  
20 foot tall sliding glass windows with a glass  
21 balcony rail. So these will be significantly  
22 humane units, quite beautiful we think. Every  
23 kitchen has a dishwasher, a fridge, and a  
24 convection microwave, and every bathroom is fully  
25 fitted out. Forty percent of the windows have

1 windows on two orientations for cross ventilation  
2 and really good light. Now in terms of the  
3 amenities on the ground floor has been designed  
4 as a kind of residential street leading onto a  
5 fitness center and downstairs to another  
6 recreation room in the cellar, and then up onto  
7 the eight floors there's a salon, as we call it,  
8 community center with a fantastic terrace with a  
9 very good view. So we hoped with bike storage,  
10 tennis storage and other amenities, this will be  
11 a vibrant community. Thank you.

12  
13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Who  
14 wants to go next? Okay. And try to speak right  
15 up in the mic, 'cause it's a--there's a buzz in  
16 the room too. It makes it hard to hear.

17 RICK BELL: Good Morning, I'm Rick  
18 Bell, Executive Director of the American  
19 Institute of Architects New York Chapter, and on  
20 behalf of the AIA and our 5,000 members, I am  
21 pleased to testify in support of the Adapt  
22 Application and to speak of the need for housing  
23 units that address the changing demographics in  
24 our city. The Adapt Competition and the micro-  
25 units that will result from its vibrant exchange

1 of ideas is commendable and replicable. The  
2 winning proposal by Eric and his firm,  
3 nArchitects, benefits from clarity of unit  
4 composition augmented by clear ideas about  
5 modular construction technology. The AIA is  
6 previously stated that we support the initiative  
7 because of its potential to more nimbly provide  
8 space for the growing number of young and  
9 creative individuals looking to move to our city  
10 or remain here after graduating from college or  
11 graduate school. High quality apartments of  
12 small size can be provided in all five boroughs  
13 eventually, units that meet the demand of a  
14 growing population for whom location, value, and  
15 design matter. We also think, by the way, that  
16 this makes a lot of sense for seniors living  
17 alone looking for smaller units that are easier  
18 to maintain. The City's new micro-unit housing  
19 competition was announced by Mayor Bloomberg last  
20 year at the AIA New York Center for Architecture  
21 to demonstrate the potential of change and the  
22 minimum housing unit size, a 300 square foot  
23 apartment was marked out on tape on or lecture  
24 room floor. To conclude we urge this--the  
25

1 Council Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchise to  
2 vote in favor of these applications to encourage  
3 studios, micro-units, shared units, and accessory  
4 units across the board. This is the beginning, I  
5 think, of a larger discussion about the changing  
6 demographics and how we provide housing for it.  
7 I'd be happy to answer questions on design  
8 issues.

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

11 Whenever you're ready.

12 GRAHAM HILL: Hi, I'm Graham Hill.

13 I'm a designer, entrepreneur, New Yorker of 14  
14 years. The US has supersized itself in the last  
15 have century. The average house has gone from  
16 1,000 to 2,500 square feet with smaller families.  
17 So we have about triple the amount of space we  
18 use too. Despite this massive increase in space,  
19 we've also become such shop-a-holics that we have  
20 a separate 22 billion dollar personal storage  
21 industry. Way more space, way more stuff, yet  
22 turns out we're not any happier. We're more in  
23 debt, and we have larger footprints. So my  
24 company LifeEdited believes that with smart  
25 design, we can create really compelling

1  
2 fulfilling ways of living that are smaller, but  
3 done right, these can allow us to live within our  
4 means financially and environmentally, and that a  
5 simpler life is a happier life. I live in a 420  
6 square foot prototype apartment on Sullivan, and  
7 I have for a year. Has room for a couple. Has a  
8 great home office. Guests can stay over in a  
9 civil manner, has a ton of storage and I  
10 regularly have sit down dinners for 12 people in  
11 just over 400 square feet. I've also sold a  
12 couple of companies and made some monies, so I've  
13 lived large. I lived in a 3,000 square foot  
14 home, and I can honestly say that I enjoy very  
15 much living in my small apartment on Sullivan.  
16 It's just right. Easy to clean, does everything  
17 I need it to. I'm saving money and reducing my  
18 footprint. And by the way, this way of life  
19 isn't unique. Many countries in Europe with  
20 happiness levels similar to ours are living with  
21 half the square footage that we do. The response  
22 has been tremendous to the apartment. I did a  
23 TED Talk that has gotten two million views. My  
24 OP ED in the Times was the most emailed article  
25 for five days straight. This has broad appeal

1 and much further than just students. It also  
2 works for the City. Plan NYC, one of the easiest  
3 ways to go green is simply to go smaller.  
4 Hundreds of thousands of people moving here, we  
5 don't have enough space. We need the density.  
6 Keeping ourselves competitive. Many studies tie  
7 density to innovation, and simply to house our  
8 mismatch, our singles. So I believe that done  
9 well--  
10

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Finish up.

12 Finish up quickly.

13 GRAHAM HILL: Thank you. Small living  
14 is just common sense, and I'd really--I live it  
15 myself and I encourage you to support this  
16 project, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. So no  
18 living large. We want to live small. Okay, I  
19 got it. Alright, well I want to thank all of you  
20 very much. I don't think there are any  
21 questions. Oh, there is. Yes, oh, behind me a  
22 question. Alright let me start with Council  
23 Member Lappin behind me, and then I'll get to  
24 Council Member Reyna for questions. So you guys  
25 get to stick around one more minute or so.



2 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Great, thank  
3 you. I know it's hard to hear me back here. So  
4 I don't really care who answers this, it's just a  
5 general question. And I, I lived at one point in  
6 a 400 square foot apartment. I had a Murphy bed.  
7 I hosted Passover Seder, so I know what you're  
8 talking about, and it worked just well for me.  
9 But there's a big difference between 400 square  
10 feet and 250 square feet, and so I'm having a  
11 hard time visualizing hosting dinner for 12 in a  
12 250 square foot apartment. So can you sort of  
13 walk me through what the real threshold is, and  
14 why isn't it a little bit higher, because 400  
15 makes more sense to me.

16 ERIC BUNGE: Council Member, Eric Bunge  
17 from nArchitects. So the median size of the  
18 apartments is 300 square feet. There's a small  
19 minority which are smaller. And also and public  
20 spaces have been designed as an extended  
21 **[inaudible 00:59:11]** of the house. So you could  
22 host a larger dinner in the salon or another  
23 space. It'll be crucial to get outside of your  
24 four walls, but I can say that one thing that--  
25 and I also, my wife and founding partner, Mimi

1  
2 Hoang and I lived in 350 square feet in East  
3 Village for several years. We know this well,  
4 but it's very different form the tenement model.  
5 With nine foot ten ceilings it will be  
6 substantially different kind of apartment, and I  
7 think the flexibility of moving furniture will  
8 allow for the 12 person dinner in some of them.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Well, but the  
10 ceiling height is a lovely concept to have the  
11 light and the air, but that's not--you know, we  
12 can't grow up, right? So, it doesn't really help  
13 you with the actual space that you're living in.

14 GRAHAM HILL: If you look just at this  
15 space, you can imagine if this was seven feet or  
16 eight feet tall, it'd be quite different. So it  
17 does make a tremendous difference, and if you  
18 think about spending time in Europe and various  
19 spaces there, it--yeah, you can. You can use it  
20 actually for storage as they do in this case, but  
21 it also, it does make you feel quite different.  
22 There's a big difference.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: No, I know it  
24 makes you feel different, but it just doesn't  
25 actually make it different.

2 GRAHAM HILL: Except for you can have  
3 more light in the façade, and you can also have a  
4 bunch of storage as they do, so I mean, it's--  
5 this is all about feeling. Otherwise, we don't  
6 have to have this meeting, period.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: So, well it's  
8 not all about feeling, it's about people living  
9 in a space. So, I guess how many units would be  
10 250? How many would be 400? How many would be  
11 300?

12 ERIC BUNGE: Eric Bunge from  
13 nArchitect. So roughly about six units will be  
14 about 260 square feet. The majority of them  
15 about, about 80 percent of them are about 300  
16 square feet. And then the remaining are, again,  
17 350 square feet. Two of them have actually have  
18 ter--or three of them have outdoor terraces as  
19 well.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: I'm sorry, can  
21 you repeat that? Can we get the sound guy to do  
22 something, 'cause it's muffled. I'm having  
23 problems hearing.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yeah, if we could  
25 have quiet in the room. I know people think

1  
2 they're just whispering, but everybody whispering  
3 makes a lot of noise, so just try to keep some  
4 quiet in the room. Thank you. I'm sorry,  
5 Council Member Comrie.

6 ERIC BUNGE: Thank you Council Member.  
7 If you could also look at the handout that I just  
8 handed out there is a floor plan that shows a  
9 typical floor plan, but the majority of the units  
10 are about 300 square feet. That's the median.  
11 One line of units, six, which look onto the park.  
12 They're actually quite nice. They're very  
13 compact. They're 250 square feet, but these are--  
14 -

15 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: [interposing]  
16 You had--you did a specific break down. Can you  
17 just repeat that again about how many are going  
18 to be--

19 ERIC BUNGE: Yes, about six of them  
20 are 250 square feet. The majority of them are 300  
21 square feet and the remainder are 350 square feet  
22 plus.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay.  
24  
25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I'm sorry,  
3 there's 55 units. Does someone not have the  
4 actual break down for this?

5 ERIC BUNGE: Sorry, Council Member,  
6 it's just that each unit has a very different  
7 size. So I'm speaking more in the median, but in  
8 floors two through seven, five of the units are  
9 about 300 square feet. Two of the units are over  
10 300 square feet. That's per floor. And one is  
11 under at about 260 square feet. SO that is your  
12 typical floor plate times six. And so we can  
13 furnish the exact numbers, but there's a great  
14 variety of actual sizes.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay.

16 RICK BELL: On the dinner for 12  
17 question--this is Rick Bell from the AIA. I  
18 would just like to answer if I might that it's  
19 not every day that one prepares dinner at 12,  
20 especially someone who's a recent graduate or  
21 someone in their older years. I lived in a space  
22 that was 200 square feet in New York. It was  
23 more or less legal. It was a house boat at 79<sup>th</sup>  
24 Street Boat Basin. You could have four or five  
25 people over for dinner, and that was pretty

1 normal. I couldn't afford to serve dinner to 12  
2 people back then. I think we're going to find  
3 are that people who choose to live in a smaller  
4 unit have a life style that benefits from the  
5 smaller size, are not living large, are not  
6 entertaining for 12 that often.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Oh, thank God  
9 I don't have to cook Passover dinner more than  
10 once a year. I hear you on that. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,  
12 Council Member Lappin. Council Member Reyna?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you, Mr.  
14 Chair. I just wanted to understand, as far as  
15 the Sullivan Street building, and I don't want  
16 to, you know, put your business out here, but you  
17 mentioned you live in a 400 square feet  
18 apartment, what is the rent, the market rent in  
19 that building for 400 square foot unit?

20 GRAHAM HILL: Great question and I'm  
21 not sure the answer. I own the apartment.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: You don't own  
23 the apartment.

24 GRAHAM HILL: No, I do own the  
25 apartment.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: You own the  
3 apartment? So it's a--it's a condo?

4 GRAHAM HILL: Co-op, yep.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Co-op, and what  
6 is the going sale for a co-op for 400 square  
7 feet?

8 GRAHAM HILL: I'm not sure. I bought  
9 the space for 280.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: How long ago?

11 GRAHAM HILL: A couple years ago,  
12 three years ago. But it--what's the direction of  
13 the--are you just worried about how much these  
14 cost or?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Well, you know,  
16 there's a sense of the economics around this  
17 project, right?

18 GRAHAM HILL: Uh-hm.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And that we're  
20 hearing what would be now this sensitivity to  
21 seniors, right? And what would be a vision for  
22 smaller unit for younger person, and making it  
23 seem like it's also livable for a senior, but the  
24 economics are off, and so we have to understand  
25 that when we're building in the City of New York,

1 we're building not just for one population, we're  
2 building for a spectrum of population.

3  
4 GRAHAM HILL: Uh-hm.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And I think  
6 that gets lost in the conversation of trying to  
7 be innovative with vision, but we have the  
8 economics portion become the last piece as far as  
9 accessibility for everyone. And so I was trying  
10 to understand, you know, space is premium in the  
11 City of New York, and where you have a consumer  
12 who can afford what would be a larger dollar  
13 price for smaller unit, they become the lucky New  
14 Yorker or international student whoever the  
15 population is. And when we're talking about a  
16 senior, you know, the accommodations may be  
17 fitting for that senior, but the fixed income  
18 portion becomes a struggle, and I know that I see  
19 it every day in my own district where  
20 Williamsburg is pushing out all of our seniors.  
21 Is this project accommodating them? And so I was  
22 trying to understand who is this project marketed  
23 to and at what price value. Clearly the Council  
24 Member for that area's trying to accommodate what  
25 would be a 40 percent affordability because that



1 spectrum gets lost in the economics of this  
2 project.

3  
4 ERIC BUNGE: Council Member may I add  
5 something? This is Eric Bunge, nArchitects.  
6 Right after we won the competition our phone was  
7 ringing off the hook with people who wanted to  
8 understand how to get on the lottery and just  
9 this is anecdotal, but they were ranging in age  
10 and many seniors. We know that CHPC has  
11 established that the target demographics spread  
12 across many income levels and many, many other  
13 indices. So it's actually spread all over, and  
14 not really just young people. We expect it to be  
15 very broad, and yes, the design does try to  
16 respond that.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And I  
18 appreciate that because I was wondering where  
19 you're getting the phone calls from, right? You  
20 know, the--there's sense of a waiting list that  
21 people are holding onto, and I'm not too sure  
22 who's holding that waiting list or those calls.  
23 Is it the broker? Is it the city of New York?  
24 Is it HPD?

25 ERIC BUNGE: HPD.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: HPD has a list,  
3 and the project is very innovative and why  
4 wouldn't this project be done across--you know,  
5 what would be other parts of the borough, or is  
6 this a pilot?

7 ERIC BUNGE: So our colleagues  
8 answered this before, but this is definitely a  
9 pilot project. It seeks to make New York City  
10 viable and I think, you know, building it in the  
11 densest areas is where it makes most sense. It  
12 has a big impact on transportation. It's an  
13 infrastructure keeping people in the city,  
14 keeping them next to, you know, great public  
15 spaces and so on. So it's really a lot more than  
16 about the apartment, but about, you know, how it  
17 interacts with the City at large. And this is  
18 why many other cities, more than the ones  
19 mentioned, San Francisco as well have been  
20 successfully you know, starting experiments just  
21 like this one. We're a little behind actually.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And as far as  
23 the, the financial of this building, the price  
24 tag for land at zero dollar, right? Seems to be  
25 very expensive to build out.

2 ERIC BUNGE: Well, this is clearly a  
3 question for our colleagues at Monadnock, and at  
4 HPD, but I mean just as an architect working on  
5 this project, I can say it's a very expensive  
6 project to build. IT's really a project of  
7 bathrooms and kitchens, and then you shrink space  
8 around it. So with so many units, it's a very  
9 very challenging project to make viable  
10 financially. I know it's quite a challenge for  
11 the team.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: So where is the  
13 savings on a model like this?

14 ERIC BUNGE: I think the question  
15 should probably be addressed to our colleagues.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Okay.

17 RICK BELL: Let me just throw out a  
18 couple of numbers. Again, it's not my project.  
19 Rick Bell from the Architecture Institute, but if  
20 there are 55 apartments, as was stated, that  
21 average around 300 square feet, just doing the  
22 math that's around 16,000, 16,500 square feet of  
23 living space.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Uh-hm.  
25

1                   RICK BELL:  If that were a 400 square  
2                   foot requirement, as it currently is by zoning,  
3                   there would 40 such units.  The cost savings  
4                   apart from extra kitchens and bathrooms, which  
5                   are not cheap, you know, I'm not saying it's a  
6                   wash, but if there were 40 apartments instead of  
7                   55 apartments, what would the differential price  
8                   be for an apartment that's still a studio, a very  
9                   very small one bedroom?  You could do the  
10                  economic analysis.  It seems to us at the AIA  
11                  that getting more density as was stated, getting  
12                  55 units that have to be cheaper than a larger  
13                  apartment, you get what you pay for.  A smaller  
14                  apartment should be cheaper.  A lot depends on  
15                  location, on neighborhood, on the amenities and  
16                  the construction, the nature of the building.  
17                  There are a lot of variables, but everything  
18                  being equal on the quality and the neighborhood,  
19                  getting more apartments where there's good mass  
20                  transit, where there are good services, where the  
21                  city works is important.  We think that's  
22                  something that could happen borough-wide, maybe  
23                  city-wide.  
24

2 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you very  
3 much.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay, thank you  
5 very much. Anyone else have any questions? I  
6 don't see anybody, so I'm going to--Okay, sorry.  
7 Council Member Mendez?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: The--I don't  
9 remember who on the panel mentioned the kitechne  
10 area. There is a stove in place already, and  
11 microwave, is that correct?

12 ERIC BUNGE: Yes, Council Member.  
13 Eric Bunge from nArchitects. Every apartment  
14 will have almost a similar kitchen. Each kitchen  
15 will have a dishwasher, a stovetop, and a  
16 convection microwave and a fridge. And in  
17 addition, the publicly shared community space on  
18 the eighth floor will have that same set up  
19 pretty much, so that people can cook communally,  
20 which is quite important.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. And  
22 these apartments have 'em--is equipped with a  
23 Murphy bed or is that--is there like the out fit  
24 for it and someone has to purchase their own  
25 Murphy bed.

2 ERIC BUNGE: At present, they're not  
3 equipped with Murphy beds.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: They're not.

5 ERIC BUNGE: No, it was decided to  
6 leave the flexibility up to various needs.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright, thank  
9 you gentleman. We're going to close this  
10 hearing, and we're not going to be voting today,  
11 but we are closing the public hearing on this  
12 item, and we are going to move onto the next item  
13 on our agenda. We're leaving Manhattan. We're  
14 going to the less controversial item on Staten  
15 Island, the less controversial one. That's Land  
16 Use 929, Charleston. I'd like to call up the  
17 following people to give a testimony, Jesse  
18 Masyr, Eugene Lee, Tom McKnight, and Nick  
19 Mullman. We good? We also, just for the record,  
20 know there are two people who want to testify  
21 after this panel on this item, one in favor and  
22 one against, but I think that's all. And we are  
23 slowly but surely moving ahead, I promise.  
24 Alright, gentlemen, whenever you're ready. I  
25 don't know.

1  
2 EUGENE LEE: Good morning, Chairman  
3 Weprin and other distinguished members of the  
4 City Council. My name is Eugene Lee, and I am  
5 Senior Policy Advisor to Deputy Mayor for  
6 Economic Development Robert Steel. I'm pleased to  
7 be joined by Tom McKnight from the EDC and my  
8 colleagues to update you on the Charleston Mixed-  
9 use development on the south shore of Staten  
10 Island. This project built upon the successful  
11 development of Bricktown Center on an adjacent 42  
12 acres of city property. While past efforts to  
13 develop the Charleston site were stalled, a  
14 renewed and cooperative inter-agency effort led  
15 to the development of the current plan which  
16 accommodates local priorities and generates  
17 significant economic benefits. All of this was  
18 made possible by the direct and continued  
19 involvement of Councilman Ignizio and Borough  
20 President Molinaro, and we are very appreciative  
21 of their efforts. The actions before the  
22 Subcommittee today are the culmination of more  
23 than decade of engagement and coordination with  
24 residents, local businesses, city agencies, and  
25 elected officials. This comprehensive plan

1 addresses many needs of the surrounding community  
2 by providing new recreational facilities and  
3 public open spaces, a new school, a new public  
4 library, a mixture of different retail uses, and  
5 more housing opportunities for seniors.  
6

7 Consistent with our long term goals for this  
8 area, the Charleston mixed-use development will  
9 accommodate those very uses while also generating  
10 economic development benefits and expanding local  
11 employment options. We're particularly excited  
12 that this project will create more than 400  
13 construction jobs and 200 permanent jobs and  
14 generate substantial tax revenues for the City.  
15 Staten Islanders will have access to new active  
16 recreational facilities while the project will  
17 also preserve more than 40 acres of park land.

18 Obviously, traffic and transportation issues on  
19 Staten Island are critically important, and this  
20 plan will improve the east/west connections and  
21 the surrounding network, and we believe the  
22 proposed mapping and construction of Englewood  
23 Avenue should ease congestion and enhance  
24 connectivity. We're pleased that the actions  
25 before the Council have received unanimous



1 support from Community Board Three, had the full  
2 support of the borough President and were  
3 approved by the City Planning Commission. A  
4 complicated project of this size takes the hard  
5 work and persistence of everyone involved, and we  
6 are excite to be able to present it today. With  
7 that I'd like to thank you once again for the  
8 opportunity to testify and look forward to  
9 answering your questions.  
10

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Mr.  
12 McKnight, you're speaking as well?

13 TOM MCKNIGHT: I am.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

15 TOM MCKNIGHT: Good morning Chair  
16 Weprin and members of the Subcommittee. My name  
17 is Tom Mcknight, I'm an Executive Vice President  
18 for the New York City Economic Development  
19 Corporation, and I'm pleased to join Eugene Lee  
20 and my colleagues to testify in support of the  
21 Charleston mixed-use project. This project, over  
22 a decade in the making, will facilitate new  
23 recreational facilities and public open spaces, a  
24 new school, new public library, a mix of  
25 neighborhood and medium to large format retail

1 uses and housing opportunities. In keeping with  
2 goals identified in the City's working West Shore  
3 2030 Study, the project seeks to accommodate  
4 community needs, preserve and link open spaces,  
5 expand local employment options, and improve  
6 east/west connections. The site is part of a  
7 larger 130 acre municipal parcel, a portion of  
8 which was previously developed into the  
9 neighboring Bricktown Center retail complex an  
10 adjacent conservation area. The comprehensive  
11 planning for the remaining approximately 66  
12 acres, the mixed-use plan before you today,  
13 incorporates the needs of the community while  
14 generating significant economic benefits. In  
15 2011 EDC issued an RFP for retail development  
16 within this project area to create new local  
17 jobs, complement the thriving surrounding retail,  
18 and facilitate funding from the land sale of the  
19 comprehensive master planning required to advance  
20 the project. The RFP resulted in an  
21 approximately 10 acre retail project that will be  
22 developed by a joint venture between the  
23 affiliates of the developers of the popular  
24 adjacent South Shore Commons and Bricktown  
25

1 Centere retail complexes. They are Guido  
2 Passarelli and Sons and Bloom [phonetic] and Feld  
3 [phonetic] Development group, respectively. The  
4 joint venture will make an investment of  
5 approximately 25 million to build the complex,  
6 which is expected to generate around 30 million  
7 in tax revenue as well as construction and  
8 permanent jobs. Additionally, two million of the  
9 revenue from the property transaction will be  
10 used towards the library branches' completion,  
11 supplementing the nine million in City Council  
12 and Mayoral funds not allocated for the project.  
13 In addition to the retail space and library,  
14 other community amenities will be created under  
15 the plan, including the 23 acre public Fairview  
16 Park, which will offer a passive and active  
17 recreation. Nick Molinari from the Parks  
18 Department is here to speak specifically about  
19 the Park. The plan also accords--calls for a new  
20 public school to accommodate elementary and  
21 middle school students, senior housing, and  
22 lastly modifications and improvements to the  
23 traffic network. All of the elements of the  
24 Charleston mixed-use plan were developed over the  
25

1 years in collaboration with the local community  
2 and reflect the priority of residents and elected  
3 officials who have called for recreational,  
4 housing, educational and retail facilities, open  
5 space, expanded local employment options, and  
6 improved traffic flow. This input is reflected  
7 in the unanimous support this proposal has  
8 received from Community Board Three as well as  
9 the support of the borough President. Thank you  
10 for the opportunity to testify in support of this  
11 important project. You'll hear next from the  
12 joint venture [phonetic] as well as from the  
13 Parks Department who will discuss other aspects  
14 of the plan in further detail. I'm pleased to  
15 answer any questions.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.  
18 McKnight. Next? **[inaudible 01:18:88]** talk to  
19 everyone? Alright, could we just have a little  
20 quiet in the room? I'm sorry, once again it got  
21 a little noisy. Yes, sir?

22 NICK MOLINARI: Good morning Chair  
23 Weprin and member of the Land Use Subcommittee on  
24 Zoning and Franchises. I'm Nick Molinari, Chief  
25 of Planning and Park Lands for the New York City

1 Department of Parks and Recreation. I'm here to  
2 testify in support of Land Use Application 930.  
3 New York City Parks is in support of this  
4 application for mapping Fairview Park. The park  
5 land to be mapped consist of a 20 acre pre-  
6 existing conservation area and a new 23 acre park  
7 site. Once completed, the full mapped park will  
8 be 43 acres and proposes to include park  
9 amenities such as soccer, tennis, bocce, and  
10 little league fields as well as adult fitness  
11 equipment, a comfort station, and equestrian and  
12 nature trails. Fairview Park will provide much  
13 needed active recreation amenities for the South  
14 Shore of Staten Island, an area where such  
15 facilities are lacking. The park also provides  
16 substantial preservation of natural areas, which  
17 are also an important goal of parks. The design  
18 of the park strives to balance the preservation  
19 of natural features with providing new active  
20 reaction amenities. The park design takes into  
21 consideration the comments we received during  
22 outreach to our stakeholder groups. Knowing that  
23 senior housing is planned nearby, early in the  
24 design process we coordinated with the Tides of  
25

1  
2 Charleston, an active adult community located  
3 across Arthur Kill Road. To determine the  
4 elements that we thought would be desirable and  
5 incorporated adult fitness equipment and bocce  
6 courts into our site plan. We also coordinated  
7 with Community Board Three and the school  
8 construction authority to determine what types of  
9 active recreation amenities to provide and  
10 include in the park. We incorporated active uses  
11 that will comp--complements the plans K-8 school  
12 population and provide recreational amenities  
13 that are generally lacking in the district, such  
14 as tennis. The park will have a 60 car parking  
15 lot, an addition to 30 shared parking spaces  
16 which will be located on retail site A. In  
17 addition to vehicular access, pedestrian  
18 accessibility to and through the park was  
19 important as well. Working very closely with the  
20 Staten Island Department of City Planning and the  
21 adjacent retail site developer, two access points  
22 will be provided linking the proposed library and  
23 retail site A to the park and providing direct  
24 connectivity between the sites. We believe this  
25 is a park that has community support and one

1  
2 which works around the site constraints, creating  
3 a good balance of active recreation, passive  
4 recreation, trails and natural areas. Thank you  
5 for the opportunity to testify before you today,  
6 and I'm happy to answer any questions you may  
7 have.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Mr.  
9 Masyr?

10 JESSE MASYR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,  
11 members of the Committee. My name is Jesse Masyr.  
12 I am Land Use Counsel to the developer, proposed  
13 developer of Charleston Pass for the retail site  
14 A. This is a joint venture of two developers who  
15 have very successfully developed projects  
16 immediately adjacent to this, and you can see the  
17 quality of their work and the acceptance by the  
18 community. One is the developer of the  
19 immediately adjacent Bricktown Center, and the  
20 other is the developer of the South Shore Commons  
21 at the base of the center. We are extremely  
22 excited about the opportunity to not only do this  
23 new retail opportunity, but also to accommodate  
24 the 15,000 square foot library that'll be a part  
25 of our site plan and part of our obligation to

1  
2 get that site prepared. We are prepared to  
3 answer any questions you may have.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.  
5 Masyr. Well, we're really delighted to have the  
6 entire Staten Island delegation here today.  
7 That's unusual. But we're going to call on  
8 Vincent Ignizio who represents this particular  
9 project who has a statement.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Thank you,  
11 Mr. Chairman, and thank you all for being here.  
12 We appreciate it. This is probably all 16 years  
13 of my career has been in some form and fashion in  
14 this Charleston project, and the fact that we  
15 came from massive community opposition in 1996  
16 and 1997 to a project that people are hailing as  
17 a great compromise and a balanced approach  
18 where we saved public land for conservation. We  
19 have some active recreation. We're building  
20 schools and senior housing. We're meeting the  
21 needs of the community while having additional  
22 opportunities for people to spend their money  
23 right in the borough and not take the bridge over  
24 I think is a good think. I think it's a good  
25 balance. It's going to create a lot of jobs and



1  
2 it's ultimately going to be a positive for my  
3 community and that's why I was proud to be a part  
4 of it for a long time. In terms of my questions  
5 or comments, Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to put  
6 on the record a couple of things I have. I gave a  
7 commitment to the people at Tides of Charleston  
8 that we would create site B to be aesthetically  
9 pleasing such that when they look outside their  
10 window that it will be a very nice looking  
11 appealing site for that corner. I just want to  
12 ensure that that's still the case. I don't know  
13 whomever can answer.

14 TOM MCKNIGHT: That's correct. At the  
15 time in the future when we issue the RFP we'll  
16 work closely with your office and the community.  
17 Tom McKnight, EDC. We'll work closely with your  
18 office and the community to assure that it's  
19 aesthetically pleasing.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Okay. And  
21 you know, I'm a little concerned, Mr. Chairman,  
22 and to my colleagues that we have land set aside  
23 for the school construction authority. I'm going  
24 to need some form of additional insurance that  
25 that's actually going to happen, 'cause quite

1  
2 frankly, as much as I like the SEA, I don't trust  
3 them in terms of their portfolio planning that  
4 they will actually build a school here. So I  
5 need greater assurances from this administration  
6 and hopefully something will be somewhat more  
7 binding that that will be--that school will  
8 actually be built. I think it's irresponsible of  
9 me to not ask for that. And is the, either the  
10 school or the park funded at this point? I know  
11 just for--as a side, I know the library is funded  
12 because I funded it. An additional two million  
13 dollars is being allocated from the sale of the  
14 property directly to the library. So I know the  
15 library is fully funded. I have questions about  
16 the funding of the parks and school and I'd just  
17 like some commentary on that.

18 NICK MOLINARI: So, Nick Molinari from  
19 New York City Parks. The park, we have 6.6  
20 million dollars that was the original allocation  
21 from the 2003 plan, which has rolled over in the  
22 budget, and that's what we have available to  
23 build out the park, and we're looking to  
24 construct starting from the western portion of  
25 the park towards the east.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Okay. So  
3 that tells me, you guys, that no, the park is not  
4 funded. And that's a serious concern of mine as  
5 well for this ULURP going forward, because 6.6  
6 million dollars, I mean, we're going to spend I  
7 think somewhere in the neighborhood of six  
8 million dollars building a comfort station at  
9 Allhallows Park starting in the next year. So  
10 you know as our parks official and the Mayor's  
11 office knows that 6.6 million dollars is  
12 absolutely not enough money to build out a park,  
13 and, you know, without the funds for that park,  
14 you're not--all you have is promising me that  
15 you're going to build one, and once again if  
16 history is our guide with regards to building  
17 active recreations juxtaposed to the whole, just  
18 leave it wild. The Parks Department has never  
19 been our partner in insuring that we get active  
20 in the face of a potential passive recreation.  
21 So, we're going to have a follow up conversation  
22 on that. So, my colleagues, basically the plan  
23 is a good one. It's one that's a good balance,  
24 and I just ask your indulgence as we go for the  
25 next couple of weeks to ensure that what is being

1  
2 promised is actually what is going to be done in  
3 my community, and right now I don't have those  
4 assurances, so I ask to defer your vote until  
5 such time. Thank you very much.

6 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.  
7 Ignizio, and we are not going to be voting today  
8 for sure, and we'll be talking to you in the  
9 coming weeks or so. Thank you. Gentleman, I  
10 think we're okay. We're going to move on. We do  
11 have on, only one person to testify on this  
12 matter I believe in opposition to this matter, a  
13 Chip Place. Is he here, Mr. Place? Yes, for the  
14 New York State Department of Parks, office of  
15 Parks. Is anyone else here to testify on this  
16 matter? Just so had to make sure I didn't mess  
17 it up. Okay. Sir, thank you for being here.  
18 Just state your name for the record and we're  
19 going to give you two minutes, but hopefully you  
20 can coordinate that into two minutes, is that  
21 alright? Alright, good.

22 CHIP PLACE: Hello? Okay, thank you.  
23 Good morning. My name is Chip Place from New  
24 York State Parks and I welcome the opportunity to  
25 comment on the proposed Charleston mixed-use

1 development project. The 260 acre Clay Pit Pond  
2 State Park Preserve adjoins the proposed  
3 Charleston project to the northeast. The  
4 preserve is a state DEC bird conservation area  
5 and one of the Audubon's nine important bird  
6 areas in New York City. Among other feature--  
7 treasured features, it hosts two unique state  
8 significant natural resource communities. When  
9 first established in the early 70's, Clay Pit was  
10 part of a much larger forest system. Such  
11 unbroken forest systems are critical to  
12 maintaining a diverse habitat. Over the last 20  
13 years that forest system has shrunk substantially  
14 in the face of suburban type developments for  
15 all. Today Clay Pit exists almost by itself  
16 without supporting open space. The Charleston  
17 project would eliminate the last key link. In  
18 particular, the project environmental impact  
19 statement reveals two major impacts that are  
20 critically damaging to the preserver and its  
21 greater environment. The project would convert  
22 pare Englewood Avenue from a bucolic preserve  
23 horse trail into a four lane city street cutting  
24 through regulated wetlands, significant maple  
25

1 sweet gum swamp, 319 trees and an archaeologic  
2 site. More harmfully, it would bifurcate the  
3 preserve from the 20 acre city wetland  
4 conservation area immediately to the south. Such  
5 devastating fragmentation of fragile ecosystems  
6 cannot be mitigated. The project also needlessly  
7 fractures open space by relocating the new city  
8 park. A major 2003 city plan logically located  
9 Fairview Park along Englewood to join with Clay  
10 Pit and the conservation open space area. They  
11 had it right the first time. The new plan  
12 instead locates senior housing and a school along  
13 Englewood and shifts the city park south to an  
14 existing four lane commercial street. Sound  
15 planning would have suggested an alternate that  
16 accessed all active uses from the existing four  
17 lane street instead of building a new four lane  
18 Englewood through important natural resources.  
19 State parks have proven to be important, direct,  
20 economic catalyst throughout New York City.  
21 Destroying the natural resources protected by  
22 parks does not help economic development, it  
23 denigrates the community character. There's a  
24

1 better way to plan than shown in the proposed  
2 Charleston project. Thank you.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: That was pretty  
5 good. Just over the bill.

6 CHIP PLACE: I tried.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very  
8 much.

9 CHIP PLACE: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Mr. Ignizio, you  
11 have any comments or questions for this  
12 gentleman? Alright, we thank you very much and  
13 we're sorry for the delay. But that ain't going  
14 to be nothing compared to everybody else. Okay.  
15 So we're going to close this hearing on Land Use  
16 929 to 933 inclusive, Charleston in Staten  
17 Island, and we're going to move to our next item.  
18 We're going all the way back to Queens, to Long  
19 Island City for this one. Mr. Van Bramer is in  
20 the building. We're going to call--this is 2244  
21 Jackson Avenue Land Use 903, otherwise known as  
22 Five Points. We have a number of people on this  
23 matter as well. So I hope you guys are all  
24 settled in for a fun day. I'd like to call up  
25 the following people to testify, Michael

1 Silverman--Sillerman, David Walkoff, Jerry  
2 Wolkoff, and Mr. O'Hara. We're just going to  
3 wait one minute, 'cause Mr. Van Bramer, I sent  
4 him out 'cause he'll be right back. He's  
5 downstairs. So--sorry? You want to pass those  
6 out? Sergeant in Arms, we have something to pass  
7 out to the committee, or you can give it to the  
8 lovely Gale Benjamin [phonetic]. Has many skills  
9 that Gale Benjamin. Just give us one second,  
10 gentlemen. Okay, good. We're joined by Jimmy  
11 Van Bramer, James Van Bramer, the Council Member  
12 for this area who's here with us today. And  
13 whenever you're ready to start we are ready to  
14 hear your testimony. Thank you.

16 MICHAEL SILLERMAN: Good morning.  
17 Okay. Good morning Chairperson Weprin and  
18 members of the Committee. Michael Sillerman from  
19 Kramer Levin Counsel to the applicant GNM Realty  
20 LP. It's principle's Jerry and David Wolkoff on  
21 either side of me. This is an application for a  
22 special permit pursuant to section 117-56 of the  
23 zoning resolution for an increase in floor area  
24 from five to eight, for mixed-use development  
25 containing approximately 1,000 housing units, 250



1 public parking spaces, local retail and service  
2 uses, and artist studios with related set back  
3 modifications. The project will provide  
4 approximately 30,212 square feet of landscape  
5 privately owned open area that will publicly  
6 accessible. The site bounded by Jackson Avenue  
7 Sunnyside Yards, Davis Street, and Crane Street  
8 in M15R72 mixed-use district in the special Long  
9 Island City Mixed-use district. The underlying  
10 zoning provides for a base floor area of five  
11 with the ability to increase it to eight,  
12 pursuant to a CPC Special Permit for a ba--with a  
13 provision of A, a public open area of at least  
14 20,000 square feet, and B, a 250 space public  
15 parking garage with the project is providing and  
16 which the CP, the City Planning Commission found  
17 met the findings to qualify for the special  
18 permit. The applicant proposes to develop the  
19 project site as will be described by the project  
20 architect, H. Thomas O'Hara shortly, with a  
21 predominately residential mixed-use project  
22 containing approximately 1,017,248 square feet of  
23 floor area organized into two residential towers,  
24 47 and 41 stories respectively around a courtyard  
25

1  
2 50,000 square feet of commercial uses and  
3 approximately 12,000 square feet of artist  
4 studios. Thorough the Land Use approval process  
5 there have been very productive discussions with  
6 the Community Board and with the Council Member  
7 and we've been able to reach agreement on a  
8 series of steps to address their concerns which  
9 Mr. Wolkoff will describe those commitments. So  
10 what I'd like to do unless there are any further  
11 questions is to turn this over to Mr. David  
12 Wolkoff to describe those community commitments  
13 and then have the architect describe the project.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay, Mr.

15 Wolkoff, just one second. Could we have just  
16 quiet again in the room? Are you working on a  
17 power point? This is for you that we're having  
18 technical difficulties, is that what's going on  
19 here? This is--you have a power point? Well,  
20 we're having technical difficulties, okay.  
21 Alright. Alright, we'll keep trying to fix it.

22 MICHAEL SILLERMAN: Perhaps, I think  
23 the same images that Mr. O'Hara will discuss are  
24 in the hand out that you have, so--

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]

3 Right.

4 MICHAEL SILLERMAN: Perhaps we could  
5 use the old fashion paper.

6 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: No problem,  
7 please continue. I'm sorry.

8 DAVID WOLKOFF: Thank you. David  
9 Wolkoff for G&M Realty. Thank you Mr.  
10 Chairperson and Committee members for giving me  
11 the opportunity to speak. My family and I have  
12 been proud members of the Long Island City  
13 community for over 40 years. Our development  
14 will be two rental buildings so that for many  
15 more decades to come, my family and I will  
16 continue to be part of the Long Island City  
17 fabric. I don't believe Long Island City has ever  
18 been more popular than it is today. It is in the  
19 midst of great change, positive change. We  
20 believe that with this new and attractive  
21 addition to the Jackson Avenue corridor, that we  
22 are adding to this fantastic transition, and that  
23 is the way we look at our project. It is a  
24 transition from the past and present to the  
25 future. By taking down these tired industrial

1 buildings and erecting new wonderfully exciting  
2 places to live and play we are helping to create  
3 Long Island City's new identity. Within the  
4 building itself there will be tremendous amount  
5 of amenities. We will have a 12,000 square foot  
6 gym with a pool, spinning room, yoga room, as  
7 well as state of the art weights and aerobic  
8 machines. There will be media rooms, a gold  
9 simulator, and even a rock climbing wall. There  
10 will be a well decorated party and meeting rooms  
11 and outdoor spaces to lounge and barbeque. There  
12 will be plenty of storage spaces for the tenants,  
13 and there will be 500 spaces for bikes as well.  
14 It is important to note that from the beginning  
15 of the process until now we have been in contact  
16 with Council Member Van Bramer. He has always  
17 had the time to meet with us, been engaged and  
18 helpful. As supporters--as supportive as he's  
19 always been, he has kept his constituents and the  
20 community in the forefront of every discussion.  
21 Therefore, along with these private amenities,  
22 there will be public benefits as well, such as a  
23 250 car public parking garage, and over 30,000  
24 square feet of public open space. Since the  
25

1  
2 Community Board hearing, Council Member Van  
3 Bramer was instrumental in working with us to  
4 commit to a 20 percent affordable component for  
5 the entire residential components. An increase  
6 from 75 units to 209 units. We will use our best  
7 efforts to rent these units to our local  
8 residents. Our development will have a positive  
9 impact on our community. With the addition of  
10 these many new residents, local restaurants and  
11 shops, we'll be that much busier and profitable.  
12 More importantly, with several discussions with  
13 Council Member Van Bramer, we intend to engage  
14 contractors which employ local individuals  
15 represented by labor unions that are affiliated  
16 with the Building and Construction Trades Council  
17 of Greater New York. We will create 800 good  
18 paying construction jobs and approximately 200  
19 full time jobs. We also know that Council Member  
20 Van Bramer is very committed to the City's  
21 cultural arts as we are. That is why we allowed  
22 for so many years artist to adorn our exterior  
23 with interesting and constantly revolving art.  
24 So a nod to this past we will continue to have  
25 art walls placed throughout the base of the

1 building and in the public open spaces. The  
2 Council Member was very pleased to hear that we  
3 have committed to over 12,000 square feet of  
4 artists working lofts. Add to this an attractive  
5 gallery where local art will be shown. We  
6 respectively request that the City Council vote  
7 positively to approve our request for special  
8 permit to allow for this exciting new development  
9 and move forward. Thank you for your time.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, sir.

12 H. THOMAS O'HARA: Yes, good morning.  
13 My name is H. Thomas O'Hara, Junior. I'm an  
14 architect, licensed to practice in the State of  
15 New York and we worked very closely with the  
16 various commissions to come up with the design  
17 which has a 48-story proposed building on the  
18 northern portion of the site and a 41-story tower  
19 on the southern portion of the site. We worked  
20 closely with our landscape architect, Rick Parisi  
21 of MK Friedberg, and what we've done is try to  
22 activate the street life by providing a necklace,  
23 if we could go to the next slide, a necklace  
24 around the site. We've widened the two streets  
25 to get access to the space, the rec space in the

1 back and provided over 30,000 square feet of  
2 total recreation space. We've also submitted  
3 street tree plantings which the--which on Crane  
4 Street allows us to comply with all the bench  
5 requirements, as well as we've created a plaza  
6 where we can enter the building from the main  
7 corner of the intersection of Crane and Jackson.  
8 You can see we've tried to also activate in other  
9 pictures some artist's studios as well as artist  
10 displays. This would be the plaza where we would  
11 enter the building on the corner of Jackson and  
12 Crane. If you could continue please. This is how  
13 we've activated the widened sidewalk using street  
14 planting trees, benches, and grass. If you could  
15 continue please. This is the main public open  
16 space from Crane where we have a variety of  
17 different age groups that we can satisfy,  
18 continuous benching with under-lit for safety as  
19 well as some animals for young people and  
20 obviously street print--tree planting as well as  
21 a artist feature wall for the project. Next  
22 slide please. This slide shows the 30 foot wide,  
23 the widening of the street as we go down. You  
24 can see we have display windows for the artists,  
25

1 and then we have actually 12,000 square feet of  
2 actual studios for the artists that are internal.  
3 Keep going. And this is coming down the other  
4 side, so you can see we've completed the  
5 circumnavigation of the project with a entire  
6 necklace of interaction between public and  
7 private and display of art as well as activating  
8 the various requirements and usage for the  
9 proposed project.  
10

11 MICHAEL SILLERMAN: That, that  
12 completes our presentation unless there are any  
13 questions.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Great. I'd like  
15 to call on Council Member Van Bramer who had a  
16 statement he wanted to make, before we continue  
17 with any questions,

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you  
19 very much, Mr. Chair and members of the Committee  
20 as I visit here today. I want to thank everyone  
21 for being here who cares deeply about Long Island  
22 City and this particular place. I want to say  
23 that G&M Realty has changed the plan in a few  
24 substantive ways and I want to talk a little bit  
25 about some of those. One is I think the 30,000



1 square feet of green space, a public park, is a  
2 very good addition to the neighborhood that  
3 particularly in the court square and Jackson  
4 Avenue corridor has precious little green space.  
5 I also want to say that the project would create  
6 over 1,000 jobs, and these aren't just any jobs.  
7 These are 1,000 union members who will work and  
8 be able to support their families, 800  
9 construction jobs, 200 permanent jobs, and that  
10 is good for our neighborhood and good for Queens  
11 and good for the City of New York. And the  
12 increase in affordable housing is a very  
13 important to me and very important to many  
14 people. We have seen the affordable units rise  
15 from 75 to 209 and while we always would want  
16 more, this is a significant increase, and of  
17 course they'll be some questions about how the  
18 studio space will be allocated, who will use  
19 that, and I do want to ask the Walkoffs that  
20 question. Obviously, 5 Pointz is important to a  
21 lot of people and the art is important, and I  
22 recognize that, and I want to say that it is  
23 important that that legacy that history be  
24 honored and respected, and I believe David and  
25

1  
2 Jerry Wolkoff can speak to the history of 5  
3 Pointz probably better than anybody and how they  
4 plan to honor the artists and the art going  
5 forward should this plan get approved, and I  
6 would like to ask them specifically those  
7 questions, to talk a little bit about years one  
8 and the involvement of the aerosol artist  
9 community in the project going forward should it  
10 be approved, how the artists space will be  
11 allocated and how the heritage of Five Points and  
12 the history and the art will be honored and  
13 respected and still be on display on those wall  
14 on Davis Street and other places, Crane Street as  
15 well. I think that's very important to a lot of  
16 folks, some of the folks who will come and  
17 testify against this project, I know that is very  
18 important to them. It is also important to me.  
19 So, I welcome your testimony and everyone else  
20 who will testify on this very important project  
21 in our district, in our neighborhood, but if you  
22 two could address the, sort of the history and  
23 the heritage question and honoring graffiti and  
24 aerosol art in the future building should it be  
25 built and how it will be occupied and who will

1  
2 occupy the 12,000 square feet of studio space and  
3 if there is involvement from folks who are  
4 currently associated with either 5 Pointz or some  
5 of the institutions within the building currently  
6 and including but not limited to Meres.

7 JERRY WOLKOFF: Jerry Wolkoff with G&M  
8 Realty. Probably not too many people respects  
9 the aerosol art more than I. I go back 20 some  
10 odd years. Meres came and helped us do the  
11 aerosol art right from the beginning when it was  
12 called the Fun Factory prior to it was 5 Pointz,  
13 and have all intentions of continuing the aerosol  
14 art on my buildings. It will probably be better  
15 and when I say better it means that we continue  
16 the way it's been going. The--unfortunately or  
17 fortunately we're taking the building down no  
18 matter what. If I cannot get the additional  
19 space, I wouldn't be able to have the walls to  
20 bring them back. So I need that to bring the 5  
21 Pointz back. Hopefully they realize that. I've  
22 been speaking with Meres for years and trying to  
23 explain to them recently as of yesterday that  
24 we're going to--hes' coming back, and the people  
25 that do the aerosol art on my building are coming

1 back. So they make speak in opposition, but I  
2 tell this, I own the building. It is going down.  
3 I'm bringing them back. I've never lied to them.  
4 I never told anybody any stories. Hopefully--and  
5 I use the term because it's up to them. I can't  
6 spray anything, so I need their cooperation to  
7 bring them back. I appreciate what they've done.  
8 They're doing nothing but good for me, so why  
9 wouldn't I bring them back?  
10

11 DAVID WOLKOFF: And as far as the  
12 heritage, you know, we have been speaking with  
13 Jonathon [phonetic] about having a rotating  
14 exhibit. Jonathon has collected over, and  
15 Jonathon, I apologize, but I think it's over  
16 250,000 images, and however many images those  
17 might be, we will have a continual retrospective  
18 of those pieces that have adorned the walls and  
19 other places on our building, constantly and  
20 we'll find a very suitable and public space for  
21 that. As far as how we will go about renting the  
22 artists spaces, we, you know, our history has  
23 shown that we have always reached out and been  
24 able to contact local artists. And first and  
25 foremost, those spaces will be going to local

1 artists. We do have a list right now of artists  
2 who have been working in our--had been working in  
3 the space, so we can always reach out to those  
4 artists, as well as we're talking to local art  
5 institutions to partner with them in the future.  
6 So we have various ways to accommodate that.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Just a  
8 couple of follow-ups. Based on what Jerry said,  
9 so just to understand, so an offer had been made  
10 to Jonathon/Meres to curate the space essentially  
11 or--

12 JERRY WOLKOFF: [interposing] Yeah.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: To curate  
14 the walls. A, is that true?

15 JERRY WOLKOFF: Yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: And then  
17 B, has he accepted? Is there an agreement?  
18 What's the status of that offer where you offered  
19 to Meres to curate the art that would be on your  
20 walls?  
21

22 JERRY WOLKOFF: For probably close to  
23 20 years I know Meres, and I've always had a  
24 handshake. So and the agreement is my word, and  
25 I welcome him back.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: So did you  
3 shake hands on this one?

4 JERRY WOLKOFF: Well, my hand is out  
5 there, and I believe his hand I also. I mean, he-  
6 -let me explain a little bit. This is part of  
7 his life, this building and many of the artists.  
8 So I--and I understand where they're coming from.  
9 They have to understand that they're going to be  
10 back. If I cannot get--the building is coming  
11 down. The building has to come down, and if I  
12 can get the cooperation from the council and get  
13 it, I can't have them back. It's not because I  
14 just don't have the room to get 'em back. Now,  
15 with the density I can bring them back.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Right.

17 JESEE WOLKOFF: And it'll be as nice  
18 as it now and probably a whole lot nicer.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: So I  
20 understand where you're coming at, coming from in  
21 a sense that you own the building, and as a right  
22 you can tear it down and you can build a fairly  
23 significant building without anybody's approval.  
24 I understand that. I think people know that.  
25 But with the request for the FAR increase comes

1  
2 this proceeding obviously. And so it sounds to  
3 me like you an offer out to Meres, but it isn't  
4 formally accepted in any real sense other than  
5 you have a 20 year agreement or 20 year  
6 relationship and then David you mention that  
7 there's a list of organizations or groups  
8 individual artists maybe who have been in the  
9 building, but obviously would no longer be in the  
10 building once it doesn't exist, and you said  
11 you're open to them, but are there any  
12 commitments to take those who are being displaced  
13 as a result of this change to bring them into the  
14 new building?

15 JERRY WOLKOFF: Let me answer that.  
16 They're not in the building now.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Right.

18 JERRY WOLKOFF: They were asked to  
19 leave because of the safety part of interior. So  
20 the Building Department forced me to have them  
21 leave. They will be contacted, and they'll be  
22 the first choice to come back into the building,  
23 that we had tenants from the community that  
24 worked there before.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Right. I  
3 think that's pretty important for folks who have  
4 been displaced to bring them back should they  
5 want to come back. So this is just the first  
6 hearing. Obviously, we're not voting today, but  
7 I am interested in hearing from everyone else who  
8 is going to testify both for and against, and  
9 look forward to continuing to talk and if you can  
10 solidify some of those agreements before there is  
11 a vote I think that would be very helpful.

12 JERRY WOLKOFF: I believe Meres is  
13 here, you can ask him.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Well, if  
15 he chooses to testify then we might have that  
16 opportunity, but I don't know if he's signed up  
17 to testify. And it's awkward, he's in the room  
18 and we're talking about him, but it's a--it's  
19 yourself, Jerry, who has to come to an agreement  
20 with him, not me. So I urge you to work with all  
21 of the artists to figure that piece out, and to  
22 have more than perhaps a handshake before we vote  
23 on this.

24 JERRY WOLKOFF: If you don't mind,  
25 you can ask him now. I'll bring him up.



2 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Well,  
3 we're not--I don't want to call anybody out here.  
4 I think that's necessarily appropriate.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Thank  
6 you.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: IF he  
8 chooses to testify he can, but with that I'll  
9 just say thank you for the presentation and I  
10 look forward to continuing the discussion.

11 JERRY WOLKOFF: Thank you very much.

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: After the hearing  
13 you can hug, anything you want, whatever you guys  
14 have in mind, you know. So here's where we are  
15 now. Thank you gentleman. Okay? Oh, wait I'm  
16 sorry, Mr. Chair Comrie has a question. I  
17 apologize, I didn't realize.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Just more of a  
19 comment than a question. I just want to  
20 congratulate you for the presentation as you've  
21 laid it out. It's very detailed and I'm looking  
22 at the levels of affordability. I just wanted to  
23 know how are you getting to--are you working--do  
24 you have market rate and affordable rate you're  
25 working to find the affordable rate, and how are

1  
2 you going to get there? The affordability, and  
3 his that going to be permanent?

4 DAVID WOLKOFF: The--we are going  
5 under the HUD guidelines for the affordable.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And the  
7 affordability will be permanent or is it  
8 temporary?

9 DAVID WOLKOFF: I think there's a  
10 specific length of time that HUD sets forth in  
11 their ways.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay, and so--

13 DAVID WOLKOFF: [interposing] I think  
14 it's roughly thir--I'm going to say roughly 35  
15 years.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thirty-five  
17 years affordable, okay. Well, hopefully we can  
18 work on that, 'cause there's--

19 JERRY WOLKOFF: [interposing]  
20 Hopefully, I'll be here.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Oh, I'm sure  
22 you'll find a way. But, you know, I would hope  
23 that we could maintain the affordability  
24 throughout the life of the project as Long Island  
25 City becomes such a highly desirable area due to

1 the efforts of its esteemed Council Member, that  
2 you know, we want to make sure that people that  
3 can live there from all income levels. So I hope  
4 you can work that out. Thank you. Thank you.

5  
6 DAVID WOLKOFF: Thank you.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Other than  
8 that it's very detailed presentation. Thank you.

9 JERRY WOLKOFF: Thank you very much.

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you  
11 gentleman. So we appreciate your testimony.  
12 We're now going to go to a--we're going to  
13 alternate between panels in opposition and in  
14 favor of this project. We have more opposition  
15 than in favor. We have one panel in favor who are  
16 here today. So I'm going to call up the names  
17 four at a time, four to do a panel in favor. So  
18 they'll--I meant in opposition. So I'm going to  
19 call up the following four people. It looks like  
20 Marie Cecile Flageul. You know who are, Marie--  
21 there you are. That is you, okay. Paul Joyce,  
22 Rebecca Kennedy, who gets the best handwriting  
23 award, by the way, Andrew Gutterson, those four.  
24 Then we're going to have a one panel in favor of  
25 the project, and then we'll go back to the rest

1 of the opposition. Again, we're going limit  
2 everybody to two minutes. So if you count it in  
3 you head. Marie, right? We all have--only have  
4 two minutes. I also want to thank you all for  
5 your cooperation, 'cause, you know, I know  
6 sometimes when people testify and they say  
7 something you don't agree with, there's an  
8 inclination to make noise or to react, and I  
9 appreciate everyone's been very quiet, and I want  
10 to encourage that behavior. It's very good. So,  
11 thank you, it makes it a lot easier for all of us  
12 up here. So, you guys can decide who goes first.  
13 Hand writing has nothing to do with who goes  
14 first.

16 MARIE FLAGUEL: Good morning.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Good morning, how  
18 are you?

19 MARIE FLAGEUL: My name is Marie Cecile  
20 Flageul. I'm originally from France. I'm a  
21 resident of Long Island City, a business owner in  
22 Long Island City and a volunteer at 5 Pointz. I  
23 just want, based on what we heard earlier, to  
24 assure everyone that we're fully aware that if  
25 the variance is not granted there will be no art

1 space or space for art space on the new  
2 development. We understand that. Artist and  
3 graffiti artists and street artists are very  
4 selfless, and at this point even I think if it  
5 meant to not have space, bigger is not always  
6 better. In this case, we are very concerned that  
7 the soul of Long Island City is going to be lost.  
8 And we do appreciate the effort made by David and  
9 Jerry, we do. But the amount of wall offered is  
10 not enough. And if anything it's going to remind  
11 people of what we've lost. It's not going to  
12 honor what we had. Ralph Waldo Emerson said that  
13 Americans should not go where the path may lead,  
14 but should go instead where there is no path and  
15 leave a trail. There was no path to get 5  
16 Pointz, but in two decades we've blazed a trail.  
17 I'm respectfully asking for you to vote against  
18 the variance, and I'm still hoping that we will  
19 find a way to save 5 Pointz and save the art.  
20 Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Merci.

23 MARIE CECILE FLAGEUL: De rien.

24 [phonetic]

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Next.

2 REBECCA KENNEDY: My name is Rebecca  
3 Kennedy. Thank you Council for allowing me to  
4 testify in opposition to 903. I do not believe  
5 that this special variance, this special permit  
6 is more beneficial to the community than what is  
7 currently standing. A little bit about myself, I  
8 am a native New Yorker. I reside in Queens. I  
9 hold a Master's Degree, Masters of Fine Arts, and  
10 I'm in the corporate world as well as in the  
11 arts, but I'm a native New Yorker, and whether  
12 you're a native here or not, we all remember  
13 September 11<sup>th</sup>. I'm going to share with you  
14 September 11<sup>th</sup> at 5 Pointz. Each year 5 Pointz  
15 does a 9/11 tribute wall on Jackson Avenue.  
16 Anyone who passes by is welcome to be part of  
17 this wall, anyone, community, non-artist, artist,  
18 tourist, adult, child, and if you refer to the  
19 sheets that were handed out you will see--please  
20 see exhibit A and C for photos of this. This  
21 year was dedicated to the fire department Engine  
22 258 Ladder 115. Our courageous heroes came to  
23 see this wall September 12<sup>th</sup>. You can see  
24 exhibits B, D, E and F. This department is  
25 familiar with 5 Pointz. They were the first

1  
2 responders when the staircase collapsed, the case  
3 involving Nicole Genyay [phonetic] on April 10<sup>th</sup>  
4 of 2009. I have mentioned in previous hearings  
5 my concerns about this developer and their  
6 reputation and their neglect with the property  
7 referred to as 5 Pointz. Today, again, I ask how  
8 e can trust this developer and if you refer to  
9 the next final two pages on there, when the fire  
10 department came to see their tribute wall, they  
11 did an inspection, a surprise inspection and  
12 found six violations on September 12<sup>th</sup>. They  
13 returned on September 25<sup>th</sup> to find more  
14 violations. They have come back repeatedly since  
15 then and nothing has been maintained. So I ask,  
16 why do we grant a special permit to somebody who  
17 hasn't earned it?

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Ms.  
19 Kennedy. Next please.

20 PAUL JOYCE: My names is Paul Joyce.  
21 I'm a--

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]  
23 Just move it closer to you. There you go.

24 PAUL JOYCE: My name is Paul Joyce.  
25 I'm a visitor to New York City. This is my first

1 time here. I traveled here from Dublin, Republic  
2 of Ireland to photograph and paint 5 Pointz. I've  
3 now been doing that in the last few days, and  
4 I've met people from all over the world like  
5 myself that came to 5 Pointz to paint and  
6 photograph the amazing artwork there. In my day  
7 job in Dublin I work for an art department, and I  
8 specialize in urban art and the curation  
9 [phonetic] of urban art and organizing Council  
10 and private walls to paint with artists and young  
11 people. There's nothing like the building that is  
12 5 Pointz anywhere else in Dublin or the world as  
13 far as I'm aware. 5 Pointz is an art community  
14 that welcomes everyone regardless of background  
15 to come there and be creative using a variety of  
16 sorts to paint and create. 5 Pointz, as far as I  
17 believe, and the loss of 5 Pointz would be a  
18 devastating blow to the world-wide art community  
19 and the people and visitors of New York City, and  
20 the community bordering the building known as 5  
21 Pointz. Thank you for your time.

22  
23 ANDREW GUTTERSON: Hi, my name is  
24 Andrew Gutterson, I'm a local New Yorker and I'm  
25 a volunteer over at 5 Pointz. I've been doing



1 that for the past three or so years. 5 Pointz to  
2 me is a amazing plae. Over the past three years  
3 I've seen amazing thing happen, beautiful pieces  
4 go up, and it'd be impossible for me to really  
5 recap everything I've seen. We did have this  
6 great video to show which is about two or so  
7 minutes, but unfortunately I don't believe--we're  
8 not able to see it, but please come to use  
9 afterwards so we can show you, 'cause it's a  
10 pretty amazing video. That being said, while I  
11 was there I had the pleasure of meeting a artist  
12 from Italy, Milan, the guy by the name of Mr.  
13 Blob. I had the privilege of being able to go  
14 out there and meet him in Milan when I was going  
15 to visit my girlfriend. And all I can say is  
16 that over the time of being at 5 Pointz I met  
17 people from around the world and I've never seen  
18 such an open group of people that are willing to  
19 house you and keep you in their area and show you  
20 around and be polite to everyone that's there. I  
21 mean, I myself, while I'm at 5 Pointz am pretty  
22 much a welcoming gate to everyone that comes  
23 through, whether it's a child, whether it's a  
24 parent, a grandparent, someone in a wheelchair,

1  
2 doesn't matter who they are and we are more than  
3 welcoming to everyone that comes through to 5  
4 Pointz. I know that for me, I've seen people  
5 walk by the building and seen smiles and faces  
6 grow bigger than I could ever imagine because of  
7 this building. To remove it from New York City  
8 would be a complete travesty. That's pretty much  
9 all I've got, but thank you so much for your  
10 time.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. And I  
12 know Council Member Van Bramer has a question.  
13 But Andrew, just one question, if we were to look  
14 for this video online where would we find it?

15 MARIE FLAGEUL: We wanted to give you  
16 the preview of it. It's actually 40 Years of  
17 Hip-hop Celebration with **[inaudible 2:03:55]** on  
18 August 11. It was a free event. We had over  
19 5,000 people. We can leave you a key, it's a USB  
20 key video and it will be on the 5 Pointz website  
21 starting tomorrow. We wanted you to have the  
22 exclusive.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright, I  
24 understand. Alright. We'll look at it then on  
25 the 5 Pointz website tomorrow. Mr. Van Bramer?

2 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you  
3 very much. Marie, you mentioned about wall space  
4 and that what's currently being offered is not  
5 sufficient, is there an amount that would be  
6 sufficient or would you like us to get more and  
7 is there a number that would be acceptable or?

8 MARIE FLAGEUL: Currently, we have  
9 200,000 square feet, and we understand that you  
10 have to be reasonable in life, and we understand  
11 that if variance is granted and development  
12 occurs, as a space could not offer as many, but  
13 we have to be realist here. We don't know what  
14 the materials of the wall are. We don't know  
15 where's it going to be located. When you look at  
16 the rendering which are beautiful by the way, you  
17 see plants, you see trees, you see planters--  
18 where are vent systems for the building going to  
19 be located? When you spray any brand that is  
20 currently used by all the artists, it smells  
21 strong. How are you going to make tenants that  
22 are paying top dollar to live in a building, co-  
23 habitate [phonetic] with the artist? It's not  
24 just about the space, it's about the  
25 practicality. And we're loving the effort, and

1 we are respecting the fact that we're being told  
2 there's going to be wall, and there's going to be  
3 maybe projection, projection of 250,000 images.  
4 For us to be able to do that, first off, we need  
5 permission from every artist. They own the right  
6 to their intellectual art. It's just not making  
7 much sense right now. It's not enough, and I  
8 think you're going to hear from a lot of artist,  
9 and I think you should ask them, "Are you going  
10 to come and paint at the two glass towers at 4546  
11 David Street?" You should ask them.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Well, we  
14 will talk to them. Obviously, in a few minutes,  
15 but it sounds to me like we don't have a firm  
16 number in terms of size--

17 MARIE FLAGEUL: [interposing] Nope.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: to fight  
19 for. Okay. Thank you very much.

20 MARIE FLAGEUL: Sure, thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very  
22 much. So thank you, this panel, thank you. I'm  
23 now going to call up the following panel in favor  
24 of the project, Aditi Sen from SEIU 32bj. Paul  
25 Fernandez is here, Paul, still? It says Paul

1 Fernandez from New York Building Trades.

2 Martalicia Matarrita and Nicholas Conn

3 [Phonetic]? I don't know if they're all here or

4 not. Oh, there you are Mr. Fernandez. I didn't

5 see you. You guys can choose up who goes first.

6 It's just the--how many we got? Okay. Alright,

7 good. Okay. You guys choose who you want to go

8 first. Please limit it to two minutes and state

9 your name as you begin your testimony and we

10 appreciate you being here.

11 ADITI SEN: Good afternoon, my name is

12 Aditi Sen. Mr. Chair, Commissioners, thank you

13 for the opportunity to speak today. I'm here to

14 express Service Employees International Union

15 Local 32bj's support for the proposed 5 Pointz

16 redevelopment project. On behalf of its 70,000

17 member janitors, doormen and security officers

18 who live and work in New York City. This project

19 presents an important opportunity for the Long

20 Island City neighborhood to see more permanent

21 jobs in the area that pay good wages, provide

22 access to quality affordable family healthcare

23 and offer access to free training and development

24 programs. These are the kinds of middle-class

1 jobs this community and others across the city  
2 need if New York is to be a place where ordinary  
3 people can raise families, succeed and get what  
4 they deserve. In addition to being a responsible  
5 employer that is committed to wedding local  
6 hiring practices with high quality jobs, G&M  
7 Realty has pledged to provide new amenities for  
8 the neighborhood, including fully integrated  
9 affordable housing units, a public plaza, gallery  
10 space, display panels and artists facilities that  
11 will speak to the rich history of the site. If  
12 the project moves forward, 5 Pointz will be a  
13 vibrant mixed income, mixed-use site with ground  
14 for retail and art elements to enliven the  
15 street. Not every developer is committed to  
16 creating middle class jobs that allow workers to  
17 care for the families and thrive in our city, not  
18 just in the present, but well into the future.  
19 Right now in our city and country income  
20 inequality is on the rise. According to new data  
21 released by the census bureau last month, as many  
22 as 21 percent of New Yorkers, more than one out  
23 of five live in poverty. At the same time, the  
24 cost of living is continuing to increase, with 54

1 percent of New Yorkers paying over 30 percent of  
2 their income in rent. With so many working  
3 people struggling just to get by, we must do  
4 everything we can to create and support good jobs  
5 that allow New Yorkers to live, raise families  
6 and thrive in their own communities. At such a  
7 time it is all the more imperative that we pursue  
8 every opportunity for good job creation in long  
9 term. The growth the City needs should not be  
10 coming at poverty wage rates. To that end, we  
11 want to support responsible developers like G&M  
12 Realty and recognize projects like this one that  
13 will building service workers earn the wages and  
14 benefits they need to make a decent living in the  
15 City. For these reason we urge the City Council  
16 to approve this project. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. I  
19 know you were reading testimony when--I didn't  
20 want humble Hector to get mad at me, so we'll cut  
21 it off there. Thank you.

22 PAUL FERNANDEZ: Morning, Mr. Chairman  
23 and members of the Subcommittee. My name is Paul  
24 Fernandez, I'm the Chief of Staff of the Buildin  
25 and Construction Trades Council of Greater New

1  
2 York. The organization consisting of local  
3 affiliates of 15 national and international  
4 unions representing 100,000 working men and women  
5 in New York City. We're pleased to support the  
6 Land Use application submitted by G&M Realty LP  
7 for its proposed development of property at 2244  
8 Jackson Avenue in Long Island City, commonly  
9 known as 5 Pointz. This project will develop  
10 1,000 housing units, 20 percent of which will be  
11 affordable, and create more than 800 union  
12 construction jobs that pay good wages with health  
13 insurance and retirement benefits. We'd like to  
14 thank Council Member Van Bramer in particular for  
15 his very helpful role in the last few weeks in  
16 assuring that this project will proceed in this  
17 responsible and inclusive manner. This project  
18 will access the City's best training system in  
19 the industry in terms of the number of people it  
20 serves, the quality of the training and skill and  
21 safety that is provided, and the local  
22 representation and diversity of the more than  
23 8,000 individuals enrolled. Seventy-two percent  
24 are New York City residents and 65 percent of  
25 these local residents are African-American,



1 Hispanic, Asian, and other minorities. Included  
2 in this population are graduates of special  
3 programs to promote opportunities for public high  
4 school graduates, women and veterans, all of  
5 which are both locally and nationally acclaimed.  
6 Thanks in large measure to the work of this  
7 Subcommittee and the Council over the last five  
8 years, our industry is now emerging from a steep  
9 decline following the 2008 recession to the point  
10 where we now expect to achieve full recovery of  
11 jobs lost in 2014. In the last two years, in  
12 fact, job performance has actually exceeded a  
13 number of the boom years of the previous decade.  
14 This recovery, however, is tenuous and requires  
15 continued action by this Council to support  
16 worthy projects. We believe the application  
17 before you to be associated with one such  
18 project, and therefore, again urge the  
19 Subcommittee and the Council to approve the  
20 application necessary to allow it to advance.  
21 Thank you.

22  
23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.  
24 Fernandez.

2 NICOLAI CONN: Alright, hello. My name  
3 is Nicolai [phonetic] Conn. I'm an artist myself  
4 that paints at 5 Pointz. Just yesterday I was  
5 Upstate at Trump Golf Course working with people  
6 who have cancer for a really good cause to donate  
7 my artwork for charity. Where I met the person  
8 who connected me to that place as at 5 Pointz  
9 while I was doing graffiti on the wall, alright?  
10 I've done places like Paris, London, India,  
11 Egypt; I painted everywhere based on connections  
12 that I've made at 5 Pointz. It just, as an  
13 artist, it seems like we're closing down the New  
14 York hub for an international art, sort of like  
15 revolution almost. It's beautiful. We have a  
16 renaissance going on everywhere and 5 Pointz is  
17 our main hub. Jonathon Meres and I knew each  
18 other in college. I used to cut school just to  
19 hang out with the guy, and now I'm one of the  
20 most successful people in my graduating class.  
21 Meres' input or his insight about the world and  
22 about art is innovative. It's new. It's nothing  
23 like the art world has ever seen before and so is  
24 5 Pointz. The fact that we're closing this place  
25 down it hurts my heart because--and I know we

1 don't care about feelings and stuff like that  
2 here, this is not about that, but this about the  
3 influence we could have on others through art,  
4 and that's what I'm doing and a whole bunch of  
5 other people are doing. And we're talking about  
6 jobs? I've gotten so many jobs and 25 other  
7 artists under my belt have gotten so many other  
8 jobs working with art every day, sometimes three  
9 or four jobs a day with our passion, with our  
10 love, with everything that we have on the table.  
11 And for me, I used to be just a--to be honest, I  
12 used to be heavy on myself. I used to be in  
13 gangs and on drugs, and 5 Pointz got me off of  
14 all that just because it gave me the ability to  
15 paint, and I haven't touched anything or done  
16 anything in seven years straight, except for a  
17 spray paint can or a paint brush or anything of  
18 the sort.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

21 **[inaudible 02:13:34]** Go 'head.

22 MARTALICIA MATARRITA: My name is  
23 Martalicia Matarrita. I was born and raised in  
24 Harlem. I am a mother. I also joined the Army  
25 National Guard. I spend there for eight years

1 and do it for to help me pay for my college  
2 career which was art. I invested my life. 5  
3 Pointz amplified the intensity of the need to  
4 speak, and there's no other place in the world  
5 that has this ability. I organize programs that  
6 unite other artists together at 5 Pointz.  
7 There's some other--some other event wouldn't  
8 have had this ability or an opportunity. I don't  
9 know if this new project that they are presenting  
10 today will provide that arena in regards to  
11 music, dance, visual arts. They are--it's  
12 beautiful to see what they provided. Yes, a wall  
13 size, but you're talking about not just the  
14 residents of Queens artists, you're talking about  
15 international ones. They only come from all over  
16 the world just to see 5 Pointz in its essence,  
17 not just the history. I'm a--I am a witness and  
18 I see the progress, and it's wonderful to see new  
19 jobs happening, but out of poverty, homelessness  
20 that I have been, there's nothing that, in the  
21 world, that can provide an arena, the harmony of  
22 working with other artist that only just this one  
23 place has. To have it knocked down will be  
24  
25

1 devastating, not just to me, but many others.

2 Thank you.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very  
5 much. No comments or questions from the panel?  
6 We thank you all very much. We're going to  
7 continue with some more speakers now. Also on  
8 opposition, Andy Sydor--come line up. Andreas  
9 Varrarutsos [phonetic]--sorry about that, and I'm  
10 out of time. Adam Milroy? And Christine Wataki,  
11 Whitaker--what is that? I'm going to ask Ms.  
12 Kennedy to write everyone's names out. We got  
13 three or four so far. Four? Sir, do you have  
14 four? Good. That's good, four. Yeah, we're  
15 going to do four at a time. So--there's enough  
16 room there? Okay, whenever you're ready. Again,  
17 state your name and try to keep it within two  
18 minutes. People have been good so far with that.  
19 Thank you.

20 UNKNOWN: You have to turn the mic on?

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: It's alright.  
22 Just make sure the mic's on and near your mouth.  
23 It's still a little noisy in here.

24 ANDREAS VARRARUTSOS: Hello. Alright.  
25 My name's Andreas Varrarutsos. I'm a Queens

1 native, born and bred. I want to start  
2 addressing some of the underlying issues in the  
3 developers attempt to attain this FAR variance.  
4 He claims the building has to come down, but  
5 that's because of 40 years of neglect on his  
6 part. They've had cement staircases collapse on  
7 tenants. They have numerous amounts of fines and  
8 violations by the fire department. They claim to  
9 be a part of the community, but in essence, they  
10 just have a building there for 40 years. They  
11 don't live there. They don't come there. The  
12 neighborhood needs more affordable housing and  
13 not more over priced housing. The median one  
14 bedroom rent in this neighborhood is about 2,800  
15 dollars. So the--I'm asking for the special  
16 exception, why are they going to get a special  
17 exception? Their track record is spotty at best.  
18 For their developments out on Long Island they  
19 have a very bad history of problems with unions,  
20 problems with financing, also problems on meeting  
21 any of their, I'm sorry, their promises that they  
22 said they would be keeping. They also talk about  
23 inadequate parking for an already parking  
24 strained neighborhood. You have about 250 spots  
25

1  
2 for about 1,000 units of high end housings where  
3 households usually have more than one car. They  
4 also have no concrete plans for affordable  
5 housing, and again, history shows that these  
6 developers have gone against their promises  
7 before. They've been voted down twice by the  
8 Community Board as well. And that's pretty much  
9 all I have to say. I don't think anyone's really  
10 done their research into these developers. They  
11 keep talking about their promises, but they have  
12 a really really really bad track record.

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay, thank you  
14 for your testimony. Sir?

15 ADAM MILROY: Hi there. My name's Adam  
16 Milroy. I've come to New York from Scotland and  
17 just for 5 Pointz, you know. There's the  
18 opportunity in this city to see--you know, the  
19 city's amazing over here. There's all the  
20 sights, you know. It's world famous for its  
21 sights and tourism, but I choose to come to  
22 Scotland for 5 Pointz. I'm also here  
23 representing the aerosol art community in  
24 Scotland, Ireland, and England. Myself and my  
25 girlfriend who's here today, we both got engaged

1  
2 at 5 Pointz last year, and we work very hard so  
3 we can afford to come here as well. And we enjoy  
4 being part of what is the most special arts--art  
5 areas in the world. You know, we could choose to  
6 go anywhere on earth for our holidays, but we  
7 choose to take what valuable time we have and  
8 spend it here. Everyone in the aerosol art scene  
9 back home knows of how significant and important  
10 this unique place is. It's a lot more than a  
11 building. It's a community which shouldn't  
12 disappear. The artwork which stands there is  
13 very important. Because of the location and the  
14 theme that the building has for itself and the  
15 efforts that the artist put in to create these  
16 pieces, most guys--I mean, speaking for myself,  
17 I've spent my entire life perfecting my artistic  
18 ability. So when people see it at 5 Pointz, it's  
19 not just the locals it's the eyes of the world  
20 can see your pieces. So you put the time and the  
21 effort just to grace those walls. Back in the  
22 UK, what they're doing on certain occasions and  
23 certain artists, they're preserving the work on  
24 the walls. You know, some local councils are  
25 covered in pieces of artwork in the street with



1  
2       perspect, so they can't be--you know, the  
3       original pieces can't be touched or ruined or  
4       gone over. And you know, the art community  
5       needs--all these things need to be preserved. 5  
6       Pointz is the most important building in the art  
7       scene and that needs to--it needs to stay.

8               CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very  
9       much. Ma'am, I guess, is next? Sure the mic's  
10      on--

11              CHRISTINE WHITAKER: [interposing]  
12      Oh, sorry.

13              CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: and keep it close  
14      to your mouth, 'cause it' hard to hear.

15              CHRISTINE WHITAKER: My name's  
16      Christine Whitaker. I'm a New York City artists  
17      and I want to thank the Wycoff [phonetic] family,  
18      because I was an artist in the building and the  
19      arts don't survive without the support of people  
20      that believe in the sponsorship of them. I think  
21      the last meeting I was at I'm not really sure if  
22      they had the finances in place to build these new  
23      buildings yet. I'm not really sure if that's been  
24      clarified before they talk about bull dozing the  
25      buildings. A lot of people in the community have

1  
2 been busy putting together land mark petitions. I  
3 believe the last I heard there were 11,000 land  
4 mark petitions. I'm more coming from the--I was  
5 with Mark [inaudible 02:21:24] sculpture park.  
6 His wife is Kate Levine, Commissioner of Culture  
7 Affairs, and I'm coming more from the perspective  
8 of the arts. I have three degrees in the arts.  
9 My father worked for NASA. He helped put two  
10 Saturn Five's [phonetic] on the moon. And in  
11 particular what I think the community is more  
12 interested in is the preservation of this  
13 building, redeveloping it and redefining it as a  
14 museum. We are at the 50 year mark of the Civil  
15 Rights Movement right now. This is the language  
16 of the urban environment. New York City has a  
17 conviction to culture New York, it's been going  
18 on for many decades. Right now where we really  
19 make our money has shifted more to tourism. We  
20 have--there are already a lot of residential  
21 buildings in Long Island City. I think it's over  
22 built at this point. I mean, you can look at--I'm  
23 not sure what the stats are, but it's obvious  
24 that that may be--it's maybe not essential to  
25 have these new buildings. And I think that it

1  
2 might serve the community of New York better and  
3 the culture of America better if it was just  
4 transitioned into a museum. And I think that's  
5 what over and over again we're trying to state.  
6 I don't think that the building is beyond  
7 reparability. If my father put two Saturn Five's  
8 on the moon--I'm not even set up to think that  
9 way, but I think it's important to address the  
10 culture and the needs of the culture in this art  
11 form and to preserve it at this 50 year land mark  
12 of the Civil Rights Enactment.

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

14 ANDY SYDOR: Hi, my name's Andy Sydor,  
15 I'm a licensed New York City Tour Guide. I've  
16 been one for 15 years. I used to take people to  
17 Twin Towers, and I have taken people all around  
18 this city, including the outer boroughs, which is  
19 something I'm trying to work and building as I'm  
20 also a resident of Astoria Queens, and not far  
21 from this building. This building is an  
22 attraction to tourist. When I can get tourists  
23 out there to Queens, which is not often, this is  
24 a must see location. There are also people who  
25 are touring Manhattan, but they know about this

1 place. They ask about this place. I can show  
2 them how to get there. I can tell them to ride  
3 the seven, stay in the left side. You'll see it  
4 after you emerge from the ground. That'll cue  
5 you what stop you'll be getting off at. I can  
6 tell about other things to go to in the area as  
7 well. That's the draw. A couple of more glass  
8 towers in addition to the--all the glass towers  
9 are already going up and being built already in  
10 Long Island City. You guys talk about like this  
11 is the first building we ever built over there.  
12 It's not. Those are not attractions to tourists.  
13 It's nice to look at from the boat in the water,  
14 but you know, you won't even see this one from  
15 the water. It's nowhere near the waterfront.  
16 This will be a tear-down as we've seen in  
17 Manhattan where we got vacant lots in Times  
18 Square on the East River where a few years ago we  
19 all sorts of promises; we have nothing. You  
20 know, important lessons to draw, land mark and  
21 land mark preservations when they tore down the  
22 old Penn Station. And if you look back at the  
23 articles and promises made then, they promised  
24 all sorts of beautiful things are going to  
25

1  
2 happen. None of those things actually came out  
3 there. We have a version of MSG that looks like  
4 a toilet, literally. And they have nice pictures  
5 of what Penn Station used to look like hanging in  
6 Penn Station, but nobody's coming to look at  
7 that, just as nobody's going to go out of their  
8 way, ride the subway on their own to go see a  
9 couple of murals at the bottom of a couple of  
10 glass towers out of so many other glass towers  
11 that may or may not even get occupied by the  
12 people they think they're going to sell them to.  
13 It's difficult to get people out to Queens. It's  
14 a community of 2.3 million people. You know,  
15 there's a cliché about Brooklyn, if you split  
16 off, be the fourth largest city. The same is  
17 true of Queens. Queens doesn't realize its  
18 potential, and it is not getting all these  
19 tourist dollars that are coming in here, these 50  
20 million people. It's hard to get people out to  
21 Queens. Tearing this down is going to make it a  
22 lot harder. Don't make my job harder. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you and  
24 thank you for your cooperation. Thank you all  
25 very much. Alright, next group of people, four

1 people. I'm going to call up Lois Stavsky,  
2 Samuel Sellers, Andrew Faria [phonetic], and  
3 Stephanie Caballero [phonetic]. I got that  
4 right. They all four here? One thing I want to  
5 know is---come on up, sit at the table, and while  
6 you're getting set up, I just want to acknowledge  
7 the fact, I understand that people have other  
8 parts of their lives that they might not be able  
9 to stay here the entire day. Every name that's  
10 given to us we will read into the record and what  
11 their position is if by some chance people have  
12 to leave. I know there are people here for a lot  
13 of different issues today. This is one of our  
14 busiest days we've had in my four years here, so  
15 I apologize. We're trying to get through it.  
16 But we will read everyone's name in the record if  
17 you have to leave, that at least we can do for  
18 you. So, are we mi--the three of you only?  
19 'Cause I'll ask another person to come up if only  
20 three of you. Oh no, you are there, okay.  
21 Alright. Thank you.

22 LOIS STAVSKY: Yeah, can you hear me?

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I can hear you  
24 well, great.  
25

LOIS STAVSKY: Okay, great. I'd like to speak first from the perspective of a long term Educator. I worked for 35 years for the New York City Department of Education. First as a high school English teacher, then as a coordinator, then as a consultant after I retired, and then as the co-founder of an alternative arts driven high school. I witnessed the transformative power of 5 Pointz in my student's lives. It would be a devasta--it would be devastating to see 5 Pointz as it is destroyed. There was no--I could offer my students no greater incentive to attend school, do their homework, and pass their classes than a trip to 5 Pointz. After visiting 5 Pointz, my student no longer vandalize their desks. Instead, they went to the sketch books and sketch pads, and they started holing their skills. And this transferred over to their academic studies as well. 5 Pointz also instilled, instills a sense of pride within students as they identify with artists who paint there and witness the global impact of an art form that was born here, here in New York City. So when I hear someone say,

1 "Graffiti saved my life," I know it's not a  
2 cliché; I've seen it for years and years. Okay.  
3 These days I work as the editor of the Blog  
4 Street Art NYC, and I've contributed to about a  
5 dozen books on street art, books and articles  
6 about street art and graffiti. Every day, every  
7 day I get e-mails from artists from around the  
8 world asking me if I know of a legal space for  
9 them to paint. There is no alternative to 5  
10 Pointz. There is nobody as welcoming as Meres to  
11 artists from abroad, from anywhere. 5 Pointz has  
12 launched careers. If you're speaking about jobs,  
13 there are artists who were commissioned to paint  
14 only because of the work that they did for free  
15 at 5 Pointz. They've been invited to exhibited  
16 galleries where they sold their work because of  
17 what they did at 5 Pointz.

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: If you could just  
20 wrap up, I appreciate it.

21 LOIS STAVSKY: Alright, the other  
22 thing is that it brings artists over from all  
23 over the globe. In the summer I interviewed  
24 artists from--I interviewed Australian, Swiss,  
25 German, Turkish, Tunesian, French, Latin



American, Native American artists in addition to those here, and as I think Andrew said, we've become a global community. I can go anywhere in the world now and have a artist take me around, invite me to their home all because of 5 Pointz.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very much. Who's next? You don't have to leave, you could stay. Okay. It's up to you. Who--go ahead.

STEPHANIE CABALLERO: You guys can hear me right?

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yeah.

UNKNOWN: Turn it on, press the button.

STEPHANIE CABALLERO: There you go.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Better.

STEPHANIE CABALLERO: Hi, my name is Stephanie, originally born in Jersey, but I have been living down in the lower east side for the past eight years now. I'm a professional dancer, artist appreciator and an artist as well. I just want to begin by just--just saying that this industrial complex turned art exhibit is a total of 2,000 square feet of aerosol art, making it one of the largest art collections in the world.

1 Now, the name itself was given because it's  
2 connected to the five boroughs in the city. Now,  
3 when you hear the largest collection, what is the  
4 first thought in your head? International  
5 attention, correct? That means photographers  
6 from all over the world, artists, musicians, even  
7 film work has been done there, and when you have  
8 international attention you have tourism. Now,  
9 people who come to the City do not want to just  
10 come to Manhattan, they want to see elsewhere  
11 including Queens. Local officials said that  
12 Queens is just beginning to generate tourism  
13 dollars for the city, and now just in the few  
14 years alone we added 7-8,000 hotel rooms in  
15 Queens, and now with that being said, tourist  
16 attractions means more of a business growth,  
17 profitable growth is shown in many restaurants,  
18 business shops, hotels, and many more to come if  
19 you keep this attraction there. Now, I  
20 understand the gentleman said that there's a  
21 group of artists that he will help out in the  
22 future, but I want to ask him this, do you have  
23 any idea who Tats Crus is, from the Bronx? Do  
24 you have any--known of--knowledge of Revs or  
25

1 Centil [phonetic] from the Bronx or even Lady  
2 Pink, a Queens resident. These are all New York  
3 artists that I'm sure you probably may have never  
4 even met or heard of. So I just need you to keep  
5 in mind that these artists are portraying their  
6 art out there and you by giving this small  
7 promise of just saying that they're going to have  
8 a couple walls, not a lot of people will be  
9 coming and approaching them. So just keep in  
10 mind and vote not in favor of this project.

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Good  
13 timing. Who wants to go next gentlemen? Don't  
14 fight.

15 ANDREW FARIA: Hi, my name is Andre  
16 Faria. I run a website that's dedicated to the  
17 aerosol arts, and what I pretty much want to talk  
18 about is the history of aerosol arts. Back in  
19 the 70's, 80's and 90's artists needed a way to  
20 express themselves. The only way they did that  
21 was on the walls. It was done illegally. People  
22 did it on the trains, on the walls, people got  
23 hurt. Now we have a forum, an art forum, and a  
24 way to do it legally and people can express  
25 themselves where everyone could see it, which is

1  
2 5 Pointz. And let's not even talk about when 5  
3 Pointz used to be Fun Factory. Since Meres took  
4 it over he changed the whole landscape. I can't  
5 express this to you, 'cause I doubt you guys even  
6 saw it, I challenge you guys to ride the subway,  
7 come out of the seven train, and see it for  
8 yourself. We can speak here 'til we turn blue.  
9 You have to see it for yourself. Now we have a  
10 way where artists can express themselves. They  
11 can see it. They see the landscape. People can  
12 do it legally. People are safe, and I believe  
13 crime has dropped, not because of those cameras  
14 that are out there, but because people now have a  
15 place to, you know, put it through. You can't  
16 ruin the integrity of the building by false  
17 promises. Fix the building up; don't tear it  
18 down, and I think 5 Pointz needs a chance. Thank  
19 you.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. In defense  
21 of Council Member Van Bramer, he does take those  
22 subways and is there all the time. So you don't  
23 have to tell him, I know. You can yell at me.  
24 Go ahead sir.

1  
2 SAMUEL SELLERS: Okay. Thank you. My  
3 name is Samuel Sellers, I'm a hip-hop artist, not  
4 a visual artist. I'm an MC poet, a dj, and also  
5 an educator in the New York City Public School  
6 System. I used to teach middle school social  
7 studies and English and have evolved into a  
8 teaching artist, a co-founder of a not for profit  
9 call the Hip Hop Re:Education Project and I  
10 designed a rap song based New York State regions  
11 test prep curriculum for what is now the largest  
12 arts education not for profit in the New York  
13 City.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I've tweeted  
15 that.

16 SAMUEL SELLERS: It's called Fresh  
17 Prep. Thank you, yeah. So you're--we're  
18 familiar with each other's work.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

20 SAMUEL SELLERS: 5 Pointz, this tired  
21 industrial building has become an institution, a  
22 cultural landmark unique to the world let alone  
23 New York City. As we've heard, 5 Pointz is an  
24 internationally renowned tourist destination,  
25 artist hub and educational resource. It plays an

1 interval role in this this state's standards  
2 online curriculum that I've developed, and  
3 provides countless moments of epiphany to  
4 hundreds of thousands of visitors, not including  
5 the millions of commuters glimpsing it from the  
6 train. The city and the state are turning to hip  
7 hop culture to revive the educational system, to  
8 re-engage disengaged young people and 5 Pointz is  
9 at the epicenter of that, that striving to bridge  
10 the achievement gap in New York City. It's  
11 heartbreaking to speak of honoring a legacy and a  
12 heritage for a living being, which is what 5  
13 Pointz most certainly is. The only people who  
14 have shown care and tenderness for the building  
15 have been the artists. I get the sense that the  
16 idea is to destroy and rebuild in the mold of New  
17 York now, this Bloombergian [phonetic] utopia.  
18 It's difficult to convey to new New Yorkers, to  
19 our children and to visitors the spirit and the  
20 cultural history of New York. What we're  
21 discussing is the obliteration of a living  
22 museum. It's a beautiful plan, and it sounds  
23 like something beautiful to add to an urban  
24

1 landscape that could benefit from it like in  
2 Staten Island.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I'm not sure what  
5 that means, and I'm afraid to follow up what that  
6 means, the last line because there's a lot of  
7 Staten Island people here.

8 [laughter]

9 SAMUEL SELLERS: They would love the  
10 local work. You don't have to cross the bridge  
11 to--

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing] You  
13 got us out numbered, so be careful. Alright.  
14 Well thank you all very much. We do appreciate  
15 that and I appreciate all your work and all your  
16 talent and we thank you for coming. We're going  
17 to keep moving on, though. Here we go. Alright.  
18 So we're going to--there's five, we're going to  
19 bring you all together and someone may have to  
20 just--oh, we have five seats, so one will get the  
21 far away one. Cynthia King, Ben Velazquez, Hans  
22 Van Reitturn, Ritturn [phonetic]? Jerry Rotondi,  
23 and Anthony Serica. I apologize for anything  
24 I've done to anyone's name. I've done worse, I  
25 promise. Excellent. So, alright, let's do this

1 first. Fine, you guys decide who goes first.

2 State your name and begin your testimony. Just  
3 make sure the mic is on and right up to your  
4 mouth and nice and loud. Thank you.

5  
6 CYNTHIA KING: I'm Cynthia King, and  
7 although I have a couple of titles, I'm here  
8 today as a mother, and I just very briefly want  
9 to say that my sons who are B boys which are  
10 break dancers, when they're at 5 Pointz I know  
11 that they are creating and that they're not in  
12 trouble, and I know them and many, many of their  
13 friends and their compadres are there creating on  
14 a regular basis and this is a very important and  
15 vibrant environment for young people in New York  
16 City. I kind of can't picture them at those  
17 glass towers with that same energy.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

19 ANTHONY SHERICA: Hi, I'm Anthony  
20 Sherica [phonetic]. I'm 28 years old and I've  
21 been coming to 5 Pointz for half my life, since I  
22 was 14. And I used to paint on the streets when  
23 I was younger, but being there it turned me into  
24 a artist. You know, I keep--it gives me a safe  
25 place to paint. I've met a lot of nice people



1 there, and it's awesome for the youth, you know.  
2 A lot of tourism and I think we should save this  
3 place, 'cause it's good for the youth and the  
4 community. And--

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.  
7 Excellent. Who wants to go next? Okay.

8 BEN VELAZQUEZ: My name is Ben  
9 Velazquez. I'm an aerosol artist. Aerosol was  
10 born in New York City. Although it spread around  
11 the world, tourists still come to New York City,  
12 especially 5 Pointz to take pictures and be part  
13 of this aerosol movement. 5 Pointz gives the  
14 artist space to paint as well as talk to those  
15 who were always amazed at how we, aerosol  
16 artists, do our work. Long Island City has  
17 always been a dead place, since the days of me  
18 growing up in Astoria Queens back in the 80's.  
19 Today it's all condos, but really nothing to do.  
20 If you look closely, the only two places that  
21 serve as entertainment is 5 Pointz and PS1.  
22 Destroying 5 Pointz for an already condo-filled  
23 Island City will make Long Island City a even  
24 more boring place. We aren't vandals. We're  
25 artists who love to paint, who love to paint

1  
2 there and enjoy doing so. We do it from our  
3 heart. We don't get paid to do what we do. We  
4 do it for the love of it to put a smile on those  
5 people's faces who support our art. If this  
6 building is destroyed, I really don't want to go  
7 back to the streets to go bombing at night. I'm  
8 40 years old. I need to--you know, and I have a  
9 12 year old daughter. I need to be--have a place  
10 to paint, and two big boring buildings is just--  
11 Long Island City's boring to begin with, and  
12 you're going to put two more condos; it's more  
13 boring. There's nothing to do there. There's  
14 absolutely nothing there. I think maybe the  
15 hookers in the 80s were the only exciting part--

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright. See I--  
17 you let 'em go on one little bit too long. Stay  
18 there. Stay there. Stay there. We're not done.  
19 Alright. Gentlemen, who wants to go first?

20 JERRY ROTUNDI: Alright, I will do it.  
21 What I'm hearing is mendacity and tokenism from  
22 the Wolkoff pair, but let's leave that for now.  
23 My name is Jerry Rotondi. I'm 71 years old and  
24 have lived in New York City for all of my life.  
25 I'm a graduate of Art and Design High School,

1  
2 Parsons School of Design NYU. I'm a retired  
3 advertising executive, not a cook--An award  
4 winning art director at a world class agency  
5 handling major accounts like Sony, Volkswagen,  
6 Clairol, Seagram's Distillers, etcetera. I  
7 worked with my boss on Bobby Kennedy's campaign,  
8 okay? My work can be found in the archives in  
9 the American Institute of Graphic Arts,  
10 therefore, my professional background qualifies  
11 me to be a judge of both art and business, not  
12 just art. No doubt about it, the art that graces  
13 the walls of 5 Pointz is indeed art, Council  
14 Member Van Bramer. 5 Pointz is a cutting edge  
15 crucible of creativity. This is where the  
16 research and development of the art world is  
17 housed. Is 5 Pointz a museum that draw thousands  
18 upon thousands of international visitors  
19 annually? Yes. Is it good business to see that  
20 this most important attraction for the tourism  
21 industry remains in New York City? Yes. Do we  
22 need another series of glass glitz boxed in that  
23 already glutted Long Island City real estate  
24 market? No. Instead of enriching an already rich  
25 landlord, rather slumlord, even further we should

1  
2 preserving the 5 Pointz art mecca as an important  
3 asset that will enrich our whole city for years  
4 to come. I've served as a volunteer, advisor,  
5 mentor, etcetera at the 5 Pointz site for almost  
6 20 years and can attest to the great value to  
7 young people who were steered to successful  
8 careers in the arts. All of the services are  
9 offered free. Its graduates, so to speak, often  
10 return to give their thanks. Council Members,  
11 think carefully before you decide what will  
12 happen to 5 Pointz. Once it's gone, it will  
13 never be replaces. New York City made one very  
14 big mistake in the past. It allowed the late and  
15 great Penn Station to be demolished. 5 Pointz is  
16 an international institution, part of what makes  
17 Long Island City major tourist arts destinations.  
18 Let's not look back in 10 years and ask how it  
19 could be raised. Now I'd like to briefly address  
20 Council Member Van Bramer. As a matter of public  
21 records, since you've received campaign  
22 contributions from the Wolkoff family, which owns  
23 5 Pointz site--

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]

25 Sir--

2 JERRY ROTONDI: I hope you will have  
3 enough integrity to--

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]  
5 Sir, I'm going to--

6 JERRY ROTONDI: [interposing] recuse  
7 yourself from--

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Let me interrupt  
9 you for a second. Hold on a second. Let the  
10 next gentleman go. And we have only a certain  
11 time limit. If there's something you want to  
12 give us in writing about it, that's fine. I just  
13 don't want to you to get on the soap box, 'cause  
14 once I start, I'm going to have a lot--

15 JERRY ROTONDI: [interposing] No, I'm  
16 finished, I have one line.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: of other people  
18 doing that.

19 JERRY ROTONDI: I have one line.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: One line?

21 JERRY ROTONDI: I timed this, yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Go 'head, take  
23 one line.

24

25

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISING 158

2 JERRY ROTONDI: I want him to recuse  
3 himself from the voting, and sir, you are in no  
4 position to--

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]  
6 Okay.

7 JERRY ROTONDI: decide what is  
8 significant in art and--

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]  
10 Thank you.

11 JERRY ROTONDI: what is not. You are  
12 only a politician.

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. But a  
14 damn good one, so that's--

15 JERRY ROTONDI: Matter of opinion.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Next, sir? Let's  
17 try not to make it too personal if you can, you  
18 know. And Mr. Van Bramer's a big boy, I know he  
19 can take it, but you know, let's try to not make  
20 it personal.

21 HANS VAN RITTURN: Okay.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yes, sir, go  
23 ahead. Whenever you're ready.

24 HANS VAN RITTURN: My name is Hans Van  
25 Rittturn [phonetic], born raised in Queens,

1 licensed tour guide of eight years. I've been  
2 hired by Harlem Spiritual Tours to take Europeans  
3 on a five our tour of Brooklyn. They see  
4 Brooklyn, Coney, Fulton Ferry, Park Slope. They  
5 thank me. They smile. The end point of the tour  
6 is supposed to be hipster Williamsburg. I chose  
7 not to do that and end my tour at 5 Pointz as a  
8 surprise. When I get back onto the bus, each and  
9 every single time they burst out into spontaneous  
10 cheers and applause saying, "This is the  
11 highlight of the New York tour. This is New  
12 York." 5 Pointz is an untapped rich resource  
13 that needs imagination of design and investment.  
14 There are two ways to make money, the quick bang  
15 fix of a glass box or the wise investment for  
16 perpetual monetary return on your investment by  
17 restoring the building and let the artists go hog  
18 wild on the interior. Hipsters would love a  
19 graffitied loft. Stores and restaurants would  
20 love the ambiance, and above all, charge  
21 admission into the building as a fully fledged  
22 museum. Oh, well, wait a minute. It can't be a  
23 museum. It's not art. Well, who's going to say  
24 that. Toulouse-Lautrec was dismissed as street  
25

1 art, and his posters were torn of the walls.  
2 Matisse was dismissed as scribble. Picasso was  
3 considered a crack pot because he put noses where  
4 ears should be. Warhol was seriously not taken at  
5 all. Soup cans as art? Today they're worth  
6 millions. Keith Haring use to graffiti on the  
7 subway stations. Today, he hangs in MOMA and  
8 Cathedral of the Saint John of the Divine.  
9 Buskie art was looked down upon as a want to be  
10 street artist. His work is now in major museums  
11 around the world. Yes, I fully realize this is  
12 not what the building was intended to become, but  
13 it has, and it has become bigger than what you  
14 realize. So who are you to say this is not art,  
15 and therefore not worth saving and investing in?  
16 I should think greed alone would take over and  
17 try to save it. Don't have your names forever  
18 associated with the destruction of this building  
19 so all of you can make a fast buck rather than a  
20 wise invested buck. Look back. Which one of you  
21 doesn't wish right now that you owned a Warhol  
22 soup can? Well, you have dozens of them here  
23 right now in front of you. Just because it's  
24 relatively new does not make it less relevant  
25



1 art. Remember, all the people who said the same  
2 of Lautrec, Warhol, and Haring, well don't be  
3 those same short-sided people. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Thank  
5 you. [applause] Thank you all very much. Just  
6 on behalf of myself and other members, I mean, I  
7 don't think anyone's questioning the art. I  
8 mean, or that this is art and art comes in many  
9 forms. I don't think anyone--I've heard anyone  
10 question that, even the developer. The question  
11 is this particular location at this particular  
12 time in this particular condition. I mean,  
13 that's being discussed here, but I don't think  
14 anyone's questioning the art, but--

15 HANS VAN RITTURN: [interposing] No,  
16 it has come into question.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I thank you very  
18 much. We actually have two, two other people in  
19 favor. Right? You guys are done, right? Yeah.  
20 Thank you. Sorry. She just asked me. I said,  
21 yeah they all went. Is there anyone else here  
22 who is going to testify on this matter that  
23 didn't get called, that was planning on  
24 testifying? These are the final two people I  
25

1  
2 have is Mike Halpin [phonetic] and Rodrigo  
3 Resende [phonetic], close enough? Okay, Rodrigo.  
4 Gentlemen? Alright, we're going to keep you to  
5 two minutes in case you haven't been paying  
6 attention. So please state your name, Rodrigo,  
7 and give us your testimony.

8 RODRIGO RESENDE: Yeah, good  
9 afternoon. My name is AK, actually self-named  
10 AK. I'm from Brazil. I studied art. I made my  
11 degree in design and arts in Brazil. I married  
12 in Brazil. I lived in Brazil two, a couple months  
13 ago, and I just sold all my stuff in Brazil to  
14 come to New York City to live the graffiti scene  
15 here. I just went to 5 Pointz a couple of weeks  
16 ago, and I decided to speak here just because I  
17 noticed 5 Pointz not only a cool building for  
18 having fun for painting, it's not only a  
19 beautiful place. Acutually, 5 Pointz is a  
20 foundation. 5 Pointz is a life museum like MOMA,  
21 like the Louvre. It seems stupid to me, from my  
22 point of view. Destroying MOMA, for example, and  
23 seeing 5 Pointz being demolished is the same  
24 situation for me. That's all. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Okay,  
3 Mike, yeah. Whenever you're ready.

4 MIKE HALPIN: My name's Mike Halpin. I  
5 reside in the Council District in question here,  
6 and I'm also reside in a community district in  
7 Queens Community Board Two, and I applaud the  
8 developer for making a commitment to good middle-  
9 class jobs. I mean, in that council district, as  
10 in many council districts around, the area that--  
11 people are in need of good middle-class jobs. I  
12 mean, I see people who don't have the ability to  
13 pay rent, who, you know, struggle to pay their  
14 bills on a month to month basis, and coming out  
15 of this economic downturn that we just  
16 experienced, the creation of good middle-class  
17 jobs is important. I don't mean to downplay the  
18 art aspect of it. Personally, it's not my bag,  
19 but that's me. And I would hope the developers  
20 would work something out with the art community,  
21 but I support the project in my daily life; I'm  
22 an organizer for a labor union. And vehicles for  
23 the middle-class are dwindling, and the fact that  
24 we could have a project like this, that is a  
25 vehicle to the middle class. It's very very

1 helpful. The more opportunities we create, the  
2 more people we can get into good middle class  
3 jobs. So thank you.

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.  
6 Halpin. I am going to ask Council Member Van  
7 Bramer to make a closing statement on this  
8 matter, and then we are going to wrap up this  
9 hearing and move onto Richmond County. Mr. Van  
10 Bramer?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you  
12 very much, Mr. Chair, and I want to thank  
13 everyone who came out today to speak on this  
14 matter, both for and against. I would say other  
15 than one person, I thought everybody was  
16 judicious and thoughtful and it is clear how much  
17 you love this institution and how much you love  
18 the art. And let me just say, I do believe that  
19 legal graffiti is an art form that is to be  
20 cherished, but since I'm a politician that is now  
21 rendered invalid, my belief that graffiti art is  
22 a valid form of art apparently. So I just want  
23 to say thank you. The reason that we had this  
24 public hearing is because I called it up. I  
25 didn't have to call it up, but I wanted the

1 community to have this opportunity to speak.  
2  
3 There's another hearing tomorrow, and then of  
4 course, perhaps a vote next week. I am so glad  
5 that everyone came. I'm so glad that we had this  
6 opportunity. There were some very thoughtful  
7 comments made and I will follow up with the  
8 Wolkoffs on those issues. There is no vote as of  
9 yet on this issue, but I want to say that I  
10 believe that we all very much want similar things  
11 and I agreed with a lot more of what I heard  
12 today from those who testified in opposition than  
13 disagreed. So I want to thank everyone for being  
14 here, for loving Long Island City as much as I  
15 do. And I want to thank the members of Organized  
16 Labor who are here today who are incredibly  
17 important to me. I have never made it a secret  
18 that I am a son of Organized Labor, and those  
19 good paying union jobs, they're going to help  
20 Queens families make the rent and maybe get into  
21 the middle class. It's everything that I am  
22 about and I make no apologies for that today or  
23 ever. So let me just say thank you to everyone.  
24 Thank you to the Chair and thank you to my fellow  
25 members and I look forward to continuing this

1 discussion about this project and then going  
2 forward about how we can best honor and display  
3 aerosol and graffiti art and those artists, if in  
4 fact, 5 Pointz is taken down. So thank you all  
5 very much.  
6

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

8 Alright. Hold the--

9 [applause]

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright. We can  
11 cut down the applause. I just want to--we're  
12 going to close this hearing now. They'll be no  
13 other hearing on this matter, but there will be  
14 discussions. I want to thank everyone. Really,  
15 I mean this sincerely for your cooperation. And  
16 for the most part, for your respectful behavior.  
17 So I really do appreciate that. We are going to  
18 close this hearing as I mentioned and move onto  
19 the Saint George Project, which I know a lot of  
20 people are here. We try to put the biggest  
21 crowds later because that way the people who were  
22 here earlier don't have to stay for everything  
23 so. I thought we'd try to warn people ahead of  
24 time. So here we go. We are joined by the way on  
25 the panel not only by all of Richmond County, but

1 also by it's neighboring Councilman Domenic  
2 Recchia, Domenic M. Recchia, Junior, I should  
3 say. We are now going to call up Land Use 923,  
4 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28, the St. George Waterfront  
5 Development. I'd like to call up the following  
6 people for pre--to present: Eugene Lee, Kyle  
7 Kimball, Tom McKnight back again, Donald  
8 Capoccia, and Shelly Friedman. I'm going to ask  
9 that you all--

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Quiet please.

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: You've all been  
13 very patient. I'm going to ask that you please  
14 be respectful to the people as they testify. I  
15 understand you might not agree with everything  
16 you hear or say, but that's New York City baby.  
17 We don't always agree, but let's try to be  
18 respectful to each other as we listen to each  
19 other, okay? Thank you very much. Gentleman, you  
20 know who's going first? You figured that all  
21 out, okay. I'm going to let you start. I'm  
22 going to step away myself for a second, but you  
23 continue.

24 EUGENE LEE: Good afternoon, Chairman  
25 Weprin.

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright, we're  
3 going to try to cue up your screen and get it  
4 working properly. So we'll give it like a minute  
5 or two, but once that's ready or we decide it's  
6 not working, you can start. I'm just going to  
7 step out for one minute.

8 EUGENE LEE: Alright.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: While we're  
10 waiting for the technical, if anyone would like  
11 to speak, please go over to the Sergeant of Arms  
12 desk and fill out a form. Please, a reminder to  
13 turn off your cell phones; put them on vibrate or  
14 preferably turn them off, and remember we will  
15 have no demonstrative actions--no demonstrative  
16 actions. We will not have a lot of cheering or  
17 yelling either way. Please respect all speakers.  
18 So they are here to testify. We're at City  
19 Council Chambers. We're trying to be as  
20 democratic as possible, so please let all of the  
21 speakers speak without being interrupted. Small  
22 D, democratic body. We're in a democratic  
23 society. I didn't mean it--small d. We're going  
24 to make sure that everybody's heard. If we have  
25



1 someone that's speaking without needing the  
2 graphics, you can start, yeah. Here we go.

3  
4 EUGENE LEE: Great.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Say your name  
6 and--

7 EUGENE LEE: Sure. Good afternoon  
8 distinguished members of the City Council. My  
9 name is Eugene Lee and I am Senior Policy Advisor  
10 to Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, Robert  
11 Steel. I'm pleased to be here today to testify  
12 in favor of the St. George Waterfront  
13 Redevelopment Plan, an incredibly exciting  
14 project that will significantly benefit all of  
15 New York City, but Staten Island in particular.  
16 Along with other important projects like the home  
17 port, this plan will revitalize Staten Island's  
18 north shore, making it a top tourist destination  
19 and creating a more vibrant neighborhood for  
20 residents, visitors, and businesses. This plan  
21 unlocks the potential of some of the City's most  
22 visible under-utilized waterfront property,  
23 leveraging access to the ferry terminal, a key  
24 transit hub for Staten Islanders and visitors  
25 alike. The project will transform this area,

1  
2 creating jobs and bringing new opportunities to  
3 the local community. As you're aware, more than  
4 two million visitors ride the ferry each year,  
5 making it the third most popular attraction in  
6 New York City. Yet the vast majority of riders  
7 never leave the terminal, a perennial source of  
8 frustration for local leaders. This plan takes  
9 dramatic steps to change that. These projects  
10 maximize the site potential, achieving many of  
11 the development goals envisioned for St. George.  
12 This includes bringing more tourists and city  
13 residents onto Staten Island, connecting the  
14 waterfront to the civic and retail centers of St.  
15 George, introducing Staten Island businesses and  
16 cultural organizations to new and wider  
17 audiences, and creating new open spaces for  
18 public use. Each of these outcomes has been  
19 desperately sought by Staten Islanders and their  
20 elected leadership for years and years, and this  
21 project will deliver on all of those fronts.  
22 Staten Islanders and their families will have  
23 immediate access to a world class attraction.  
24 Staten Islanders will be able to do their holiday  
25 shopping without going to New Jersey. And Staten

1 Islanders will be best positioned to get the jobs  
2 that will be created here. With more than a half  
3 billion dollars of private investment, this  
4 project will clearly catalyze economic activity  
5 in a part of the island that needs it most.

6 Having grown up on Staten Island and taking the  
7 ferry every day to high school, I'm thrilled to  
8 be part of a project that will reshape St. George  
9 and put Staten Island on the map for people from  
10 around the world. I also intimately understand  
11 the ferry's importance to commuters and I'm  
12 pleased that this project will leverage the  
13 significant investments that have been made to  
14 the terminal and the surrounding area. Shortly  
15 you'll hear from my colleagues who will answer  
16 questions and provide additional information. We  
17 appreciate the opportunity to testify and  
18 reiterate our enthusiastic support for this  
19 transformative project. Thank you.

20  
21 KYLE KIMBALL: Good morning members of  
22 the Subcommittee and Zoning Franchises. I am  
23 Kyle Kimball, President of the New York City  
24 Economic Development Corporation. I know a lot of  
25 people came out today to have their voices heard,

1  
2 so I want to thank them by being as similar to  
3 succinct to my remarks. I also have today with  
4 me Tom McKnight, who's Executive Vice President  
5 of the New York City Economic Development  
6 Corporation, who has spent several years getting  
7 this project to where we are today. We are  
8 pleased to join Eugene Lee from the Mayor's  
9 office to testify in support of the St. George  
10 redevelopment plan on Staten Island. This  
11 project is part of our integrative plan that will  
12 revitalize Staten Island's north shore and  
13 represents one of the largest private investments  
14 in the history of the borough. My brief remarks  
15 will underscore the significant community  
16 benefits that will result from this project,  
17 which will bring jobs and economic activity to  
18 the area, pull visitors off the ferry, enhance  
19 waterfront access, and create additional  
20 amenities in retail options for residents and  
21 visitors. Because this plan calls for the  
22 creation of a new icon that will be seen from the  
23 entire harbor, the New York Wheel, many assume  
24 that this proposal primarily benefits tourists  
25 and visitors. However, as you will see from my

1 presentation, this plan will also bring  
2 significant short and long term benefits to  
3 Staten Islander. The St. George waterfront  
4 redevelopment is the culmination of decades of  
5 work by the community, the city, elected  
6 officials and other stakeholders who have spent  
7 significant time and energy thinking about how to  
8 unlock the potential of these two critical sites.  
9 This project builds upon the recommendations for  
10 the neighborhood outlined in the North Shore  
11 20/30 report, a document issued in 2011 that  
12 resulted from two years of collaboration among  
13 city agencies as well as more than 200 local  
14 stakeholders. This report recommended several  
15 strategies for capitalizing upon the  
16 neighborhood's assets, including it's proximity  
17 to transit and waterfront in order to revitalize  
18 the area. In particular the 14 acres under  
19 discussion today have long been recommended for  
20 development because they have been under-utilized  
21 for years. In addition, many Staten Island  
22 voices have long called for a plan that would be  
23 economic activity to this promising area. EDC,  
24 therefore, saw an opportunity to activate this  
25

1 site in a way that capitalizes upon its strategic  
2 location as well as the tens of thousands of  
3 passengers who ride the ferry every day, 75,000  
4 to be exact. With development projects that are  
5 symbiotic in their features in order to catalyze  
6 economic benefits for Staten Island. Although  
7 you certainly can have a retail outlet mall  
8 without a large wheel and vice versa. Creating  
9 only one would be denying these two parcels the  
10 opportunity to be used in a way that actually  
11 achieves their full potential. In this case, the  
12 whole is greater than the sum of the parts. New  
13 York City Economic Development Corporation issued  
14 a REI, or a Request for Expressions of Interest  
15 to develop, redevelop the area in 2011 in  
16 accordance with these principles. The planning  
17 process that has followed has involved the  
18 collaboration of multiple city agencies and has  
19 incorporated extensive community outreach. The  
20 resulting proposal which we are here to discuss  
21 today has announced, was announced almost a year  
22 ago. The proposed development includes the New  
23 York Wheel, which will become the western  
24 hemisphere's tallest observation wheel as well as  
25

1 the Empire Outlets, which will become the City's  
2 first retail outlet center. This project will  
3 not only create a New York icon in Staten Island,  
4 it will have a transformative effect on St.  
5 George and downtown Staten Island for visitors  
6 and residents alike, creating jobs and other  
7 economic benefits for the borough and the city as  
8 a whole. In total, this project represents a  
9 private investment of more than 580 million and  
10 will create more than 1,100 construction jobs and  
11 1,350 permanent jobs. Contractual agreements  
12 with the developers will encourage the  
13 participation of minority and women-owned  
14 business, including a obligation to hire at least  
15 20 percent minority women and local contractors  
16 and subcontractors and participation in the  
17 Economic Development Corporation's Hire NYC  
18 Program to create meaningful employment  
19 opportunities for low income Staten Islanders.  
20 Thanks to excellent transit access ability to  
21 this location and the--at the convergence of the  
22 Staten Island ferry, railway, and the bus  
23 terminal, the Wheel and retail center will  
24 attract both visitors and Staten Island  
25

1 residents. The 625 foot high wheel is expected  
2 to attract three million people per year. Empire  
3 Outlets will include space for up to 15 retailers  
4 as well as 200 room hotel with a 20,000 square  
5 foot catering facility. By creating a world  
6 class destination right in Staten Island, this  
7 project will pull visitors off the ferry,  
8 visitors who otherwise may have immediately  
9 turned around and gone back to Manhattan.  
10 Instead of turning back around, these visitors  
11 will linger instead, riding the wheel, shopping  
12 the outlet center and other nearby local  
13 businesses and attractions, dining in local  
14 restaurants, catching a Staten Island Yankee's  
15 game, and spending money in Staten Island.  
16 Importantly, this project brings both jobs as  
17 well as much needed amenities for Staten  
18 Islanders as well, providing additional retail  
19 options for local residents, and keeping retail  
20 dollars in New York City, some of which would  
21 have otherwise potentially been spent in New  
22 Jersey. I want to highlight several important  
23 aspects of the proposal that have been  
24 incorporated as a result of the community  
25



1 feedback. First, the project will add additional  
2 600 parking spaces beyond the existing 1,600 on  
3 the site, bringing the total number to 2,200.

4 During construction ferry commuters will be able  
5 to use the interim off-site parking lots,

6 accessible by a free ADA accessible shuttle

7 during the morning and evening peak commuting

8 hours. In response to concerns that this project

9 will increase congestion, I want to emphasize

10 that several measures are in place to improve

11 circulation and ease congestion, including

12 additional access routes, a new traffic signal at

13 the intersection of Skylar and Richmond Terrace,

14 and other traffic capacity improvement measures.

15 In addition, the developers will construct a

16 post-opening monitoring assessment in

17 coordination with the City's Department of

18 Transportation and will add additional traffic

19 mitigation measures if necessary. I also want to

20 respond to concerns that this project will strain

21 the existing Staten Island ferry capacity. The

22 city in fact already anticipates increase demand

23 for the ferry resulting independently of this

24 project due to projected growth in Staten Island  
25

1  
2 by 2016. The city will continue to monitor ferry  
3 operations to determine if future capital  
4 improvements or service changes may be necessary  
5 in the future. Potential solutions include  
6 increasing the width of boarding aprons,  
7 increasing frequency of service, utilizing time  
8 ticketing for the wheel or adding supplemental  
9 water born transit options. We will continue to  
10 study all of these options; we'll keep you  
11 updated as we work to develop any necessary  
12 solutions should issues arise. One of the major  
13 goals of this project is to connect the  
14 waterfront to the civic center of St. George.  
15 This project accomplishes just that by providing  
16 seamless pedestrian connections between the  
17 redevelopment sites, the waterfront and upland  
18 St. George. As a result, the design of this  
19 project integrates approximately eight acres of  
20 dynamic new open space as well as waterfront  
21 access, helping to achieve our shared goal of  
22 enhancing and improving access to our city's  
23 waterfront. This includes a new Waterfront  
24 Esplanade, a new publicly accessible rooftop open  
25 space that'll provide sweeping views of New York

1 harbor, and a new playground. The existing  
2 Waterfront Esplanade will also be improved with  
3 new seating, lighting, and plantings and other  
4 pedestrian connections between Richmond Terrace  
5 and the waterfront. Of course as you know, in  
6 the wake of hurricane Sandy we continue to work  
7 not just on new development, but on resiliency.  
8 The project, therefore, features several elements  
9 that will make it resilient. The majority of the  
10 site will be built well above the 100 year flood  
11 plane with generators and emergency equipment  
12 either weather proofed or raised at least 10 feet  
13 above the flood plane. Eight acres of green  
14 roofs will include sustainability elements such  
15 as solar panels, wind turbines, and will also be  
16 able to absorb and purify large amounts of rain  
17 water before releasing them back into the harbor.  
18 More broadly, this proposal builds upon and  
19 complements the city's other development efforts  
20 in downtown Staten Island, including the new  
21 **[inaudible 3:06:59]** and waterfront development  
22 and lighthouse point as well as several other  
23 initiatives EDC has launched to attract promising  
24 businesses in the area. These include the  
25

1  
2 borough's first business incubator, the Staten  
3 Island Maker Space as well as the Staten Island  
4 store front's Race for Space, through which we  
5 are offering financial incentives to encourage  
6 promising retail businesses to open their doors  
7 in downtown Staten Island. Taken together all of  
8 these investments make up the comprehensive  
9 strategy for the north shore that will attract  
10 visitors, generate jobs and economic activity,  
11 and create a more vibrant downtown, the goals  
12 that we share for this community. We are very  
13 excited to move forward with the New York Wheel  
14 and retail outlet center which will bolster  
15 economic growth on Staten Island while creating a  
16 more vibrant waterfront commercial and  
17 entertainment destination. The St. George  
18 Redevelopment Plan is an essential piece of this  
19 administration's integrative plan for the north  
20 shore and will help to ensure that the borough  
21 and the city as a whole continue to thrive for  
22 decades to come. With your continued support and  
23 partnership, I am confident we can achieve this  
24 vision. I will now turn over to Don.

DON CAPOCCIA: Good afternoon, Council Members and Chairs. Thank you very much for hearing my presentation to day on Empire Outlets. My name is Don Capoccia. I'm a Principal and BFC Partners who sponsor the Empire Outlet Project. BFC Partners has built thousands of residential units, many with substantial commercial and retail components and numerous mixed-use mixed income projects across New York City for the last 35 years. The project before you today, Empire Outlets offers an incredible opportunity to transform the north shore by allowing us to make the largest private investment Staten Island has seen in a generation. The various components of this project including the activation of a long under utilized site, local job creation, establishing a local, regional, and global destination, capturing local and tourist spending that's currently lost to other areas in the region and extensive infrastructure improvements, all together constitute an exceptional opportunity to reset New York City's vision for commercial waterfront development. We have attained--we have retained an extraordinary

1 design team led by SHoP Architects, with a global  
2 reputation for design excellence. They overcame  
3 many challenging site conditions and met unique  
4 program requirements and always with a determined  
5 eye to designing a waterfront landmark for the  
6 north shore. The adjacent critical infrastructure  
7 and lack of convenient access to the waterfront  
8 required us to commit to costly interventions in  
9 public infrastructure improvements that will  
10 result in a project that seamlessly integrates  
11 and connects Empire Outlets with Upland St.  
12 George, a new waterfront Esplanade, and the ferry  
13 terminal. Empire Outlets is a million plus square  
14 foot project that includes a series of retail  
15 structures arranged around a unique urban grid of  
16 pedestrian boulevards and public plazas. The  
17 site is currently used for surface parking and  
18 can accommodate 786 cars. That lot will be  
19 replaced with a 500,000 square foot parking  
20 structure that will accommodate 1,250 cars. The  
21 center also includes a hotel and elevated food  
22 and beverage deck. The project design  
23 incorporates storm resiliency measures that will  
24 help fortify the center and play a crucial role  
25

1  
2 in the hardening of critical north shore  
3 infrastructure components including the terminal  
4 and the Sertoa [phonetic] control center. Our  
5 plans call for the construction of a retaining  
6 wall and elevated esplanade at the waterfront,  
7 which will be at least one foot above the flood  
8 plain elevations that will protect against the  
9 intrusion of flood waters and storm surge. The  
10 majority of the retail space, however,  
11 approximately 92 percent of it is programed to  
12 elevations 15 feet above the flood elevation  
13 plain with all critical mechanical systems,  
14 including back up generators and electric  
15 substation at 20 feet and above. These measures  
16 offer practical solutions to complex problems. In  
17 addition to resiliency measures we've  
18 incorporated the--in addition to the resiliency  
19 measures we've incorporated, the MTA and New York  
20 City Department of Transportation have required  
21 that we make a series of developer funded  
22 improvements to their installation that will  
23 result in a much improved transit support  
24 facility. Vehicular access to the site will be  
25 expanded by an addition, by the addition of a

1  
2 third lane on the Wall Street ramp where two  
3 separate entrances to the parking garage will be  
4 located. We have dedicated 786 parking spaces in  
5 the new garage for commuter parking. The  
6 commuter experience will be enhanced by parking  
7 in a weather protected structure with convenient  
8 access to the ferry terminal. The new garage  
9 structure and adjacent infrastructure  
10 improvements will be made at a cost of  
11 approximately 50 million dollars or 30 percent of  
12 our entire hard cost budget. During the  
13 construction period we have secured a series of  
14 nearby temporary parking lots that will be  
15 available to commuters with a dedicated handicap  
16 accessible shuttle service. We worked closely  
17 with Council Member Rose to address her concerns  
18 that commuter parking not be interrupted and that  
19 the temporary parking plan focused primarily on  
20 customer convenience. In addition to the shuttle  
21 service, the temporary lots are either within  
22 walking distance of the terminal or adjacent to a  
23 Sertoa [phonetic] station. The cost of the  
24 temporary commuter parking will be consistent  
25 with current pricing. Empire Outlet will offer a



1 unique shopping experience for New Yorkers and  
2 tourists alike. It'll be the first and only  
3 outlet center in New York City. As it stands now  
4 New Yorkers in Staten Islanders need to drive  
5 west to New Jersey or north to upstate New York  
6 to get to a--the outlet centers closest to us in  
7 New York. Not only is this inconvenient, but the  
8 City loses the direct and indirect economic  
9 impacts that the consumer's spending as well as  
10 the additional sales tax revenue. Empire Outlets  
11 will enable New York City to recapture that  
12 economic activity, but in order to do so we must  
13 be competitive with those other regional centers.  
14 Empire Outlets will be occupied by well-known,  
15 nationally recognized tenants covering a wide  
16 range of retail demand. Visitors will enjoy  
17 access to exclusive brands as well as affordable  
18 quality apparel retailers that are found in other  
19 leading centers across the country. Tenant  
20 representatives from the largest well-known  
21 national/international brands have made multiple  
22 trips to New York City to inspect the site. They  
23 see extraordinary value and opportunity at this  
24 location, and we are currently in negotiation  
25

1 with dozens of perspective tenants and look  
2 forward to major leasing announcements by the  
3 second quarter of 2014. Our market studies  
4 estimate that Empire Outlet Center will attract  
5 approximately four million visitors annually.  
6 Although each of these projects will be  
7 separately financed, built and owned by their  
8 respective development teams, they're  
9 complementary and will stand as a single large  
10 scale waterfront development project. Visitor  
11 spending at these projects will be in the  
12 hundreds of millions annually and will transform  
13 the north shore in St. George into a leading  
14 destination for New Yorkers and tourists. Unlike  
15 the standard outlet center model that allows for  
16 expansion as consumer demand increases, Empire  
17 Outlets parking and retail components will be  
18 fully built out in a single initial phase. So as  
19 customer demand increases along with then number  
20 of visitors, excuse me, so as customer demand  
21 increases along with the number of visitors and  
22 without the potential for a second phase on the  
23 site, the resulting expansion and economic  
24 activity will undoubtedly migrate across Richmond  
25

1 Terrace and into the Upland Commercial and Civic  
2 Centers of St. George. The impact hurricane--the  
3 impact of hurricane Sandy left Staten Island and  
4 many of its neighbors struggling to recover. The  
5 Empire Outlet project is a well timed catalyst  
6 that will trigger the transformation on the north  
7 shore and position Staten Island for sustained  
8 growth into the foreseeable future. This project  
9 along with the New York Wheel, the ball park, the  
10 9/11 Postcard Memorial will transform the  
11 waterfront adjacent to the terminal into a  
12 thriving and vibrant gateway to St. George to the  
13 Greater North Shore Staten Island communities.  
14 The potential impact of Empire Outlets on the  
15 local economy, one currently defined by high  
16 unemployment and struggling small businesses is  
17 unmatched by an projects or economic development  
18 efforts underway are contemplated for the north  
19 shore. Empire Outlets is a 260 million dollar  
20 project that will be a dynamic economic engine  
21 benefitting its residents, businesses, cultural  
22 and community organizations. The project will  
23 generate over 1,000 construction jobs and over a  
24 1,000 permanent jobs. Since the Center will be  
25

1 home to as many as 125 separate stores, the  
2 number of management and career path job  
3 opportunities will be significant. We are  
4 projecting that 25-30 percent of all permanent  
5 jobs will be management or supervisory positions.  
6 Having worked and invested in the north shore for  
7 years in response to a broad spectrum of economic  
8 needs clearly expressed to us in a number of  
9 public hearings and many meetings with local  
10 organizations and residence, we have proposed an  
11 employment model that seeks to respond to those  
12 needs. That plan includes the hiring and  
13 training of north shore residents and  
14 construction trades through the Building Skills  
15 New York Program with an emphasis on green  
16 building methods and early and sustained outreach  
17 to local subcontractor sector and MWBE Business  
18 Community, a PLA for the site improvement work  
19 with an estimated value of 25 million dollars and  
20 a creation of a pool of job-ready local residents  
21 from which our retail tenants will recruit for  
22 the 1,000 plus permanent jobs that the project  
23 will generate. In addition to addressing the  
24 needs of the community, we believe this plan is  
25

1 consistent with Community Board One's  
2 recommendation that accompany their approval of  
3 this ULURP. Beyond the immediate local benefits  
4 the project offers, New York City will recapture  
5 hundreds of millions in lost spending, real  
6 estate taxes, sales tax revenue and payroll tax  
7 revenue from the 1,000 plus new permanent jobs.  
8 All of this revenue is currently being lost to  
9 other municipalities in tri-state region. Our 35  
10 billion dollar tourism industry is one of the  
11 City's major economic generators and with the  
12 Empire Outlets and the New York Wheel in place on  
13 the north shore of Staten Island, we will fill a  
14 void in the tourism experience not currently met  
15 in New York City, virtually ensuring that every  
16 New York City visitor can spend their time and  
17 money here without ever venturing outside the  
18 City. Today, I am asking you to take a long view  
19 at the numerous benefits that Empire Outlets  
20 brings to the City and especially to Staten  
21 Island, a New York City borough that hasn't seen  
22 near as much investment and new development as  
23 the City's other four other boroughs. As you  
24 consider and weigh the relative merits of this  
25

1 project, please lead with a visionary perspective  
2 that can result in transforming the lives and  
3 prospects for hundreds of thousands of New  
4 Yorkers. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.  
6 You're going to have to move closer to that.

7 SHELLY FRIEDMAN: I'm good. I'm good  
8 right from here. We're fine, Mr. Chairman, thank  
9 you. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, and good  
10 afternoon Mr. Chairman. Shelly Friedman,  
11 Friedman & Gotbaum, we are Land Use Counsel to  
12 the Wheel. I want to begin by conveying the  
13 regrets of Rich Marin who has been the voice and  
14 the tireless visionary behind the Wheel Project  
15 since its inception when the Council changed the  
16 calendar, Mr. Marin could not make the adjustment  
17 from a trip to Europe.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I just want to  
19 comment on that. We do know he did really want  
20 to be here and was very upset about that. We  
21 assured him that he was well represented in your,  
22 by you and his staff.

23 SHELLY FRIEDMAN: I appreciate that,  
24 Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I should stop  
25

1  
2 now then and you just--and just hand it back, but  
3 I'll go on. You've heard from the other speakers  
4 and of course you can read it practically in the  
5 world press how transformative the New York Wheel  
6 project will be. It clearly will redefine the  
7 tourism industry in New York City and probably in  
8 the region and in the state and it will also  
9 redefine New York Harbor which has been long  
10 waiting for a project of this magnitude to infact  
11 reinvent it from its glorious past. This project  
12 will now provide an iconic presence on Staten  
13 Island that in conjunction with the Statue of  
14 Liberty with Manhattan with the other boroughs  
15 and with the Verrazano Bridge will totally  
16 transform New York Harbor with a Staten Island  
17 base into a new and very vibrant harbor worthy of  
18 its world class reputation. Most importantly,  
19 however, this project will redefine St. George  
20 and Staten Island to beyond it. It will do it by  
21 creating a visitor's hub through which others  
22 will come to travel to Staten Island where as  
23 previously mentioned the two million riders who  
24 currently ride the Staten Island ferry as a  
25 tourist attraction will have a reason to come off

1 the ferry, spend time on Staten Island, can serve  
2 as a hub that will project its visitors to all  
3 the great treasures on Staten Island in St.  
4 George and upland. It will also provide and  
5 educational venue. Incorporated in this project  
6 are a number of sustainability features and  
7 sustainability educational opportunities in  
8 conjunction with Cornell University, they'll be  
9 programming regarding how best to educate both  
10 the children and the residents of Staten Island  
11 and the students beyond about the current  
12 transient sustainability, both in terms of the  
13 exterior features and in the exhibition halls  
14 inside. There will also be additional exhibition  
15 halls regarding history. We have already made a  
16 commitment to make sure that those features will  
17 be available for, at no charge to many in the  
18 community and available to the community when  
19 necessary as venues for its own uses. We do all  
20 this importantly without costing one traffic, one  
21 parking spot in a very busy regional parking  
22 situation. As Mr. Cappocia indicated, our  
23 requirements are that we must both construct and  
24 operate further on the Wheel in a way in which we  
25



1 will not displace during construction or beyond  
2 one parking spot in the St. George commuters.  
3 And that has been done through a--on our side  
4 through a logistical plan that's very complex,  
5 but we will build this and we will operate it at  
6 the end of the day, and throughout there will be  
7 820 parking spaces are there now is, as there now  
8 are for commuter parking on Staten Island, and  
9 when it's completed there'll be 920 spaces. I  
10 would like to take you very briefly through some  
11 of the plans that we have for the project and  
12 then answer your question. Could we go back to  
13 that? Thank you. This is the ferry itself. As  
14 indicated, 620 feet high, 36 capsules. It will  
15 carry approximately 1,400 people for each cycle.  
16 It will be ridden by tens and tens of thousands  
17 of tourist throughout the week and throughout the  
18 week and New Yorkers as well. It moves  
19 approximately--it's a non-stop wheel like all the  
20 other wheels that operate. It moves a very slow  
21 pace. It will never stop. People will be able  
22 to get on and off the wheel while the wheel is  
23 slowing moving. The ride experience lasts 38  
24 minutes and there has been considerable amount of  
25

1 energy expended on making sure that from an  
2 emergency stand point and from a safety stand  
3 point the, you know, the wheel will be state of  
4 the art in terms of being able to give its  
5 riders, its passengers an excellent and safe and  
6 memorable experience on Staten Island. Next.  
7 This is the 95,000 square foot terminal building.  
8 It contains obviously the methods for getting on  
9 and off the ferry, but beyond that I'm sorry, the  
10 wheel, but beyond that it offers retail space,  
11 restaurants. These restaurants will be outside  
12 of the wheel experience perimeter, meaning that  
13 anyone can use these restaurants, not simply  
14 people who have bought a ticket for the wheel  
15 experience. It will have exhibition spaces and  
16 will have a 4D Theater. It will have a garage  
17 for 950 parking spaces with 12 bus parking slots  
18 and its roof--next please. Its roof will hold a  
19 7.1 acre publicly available open space. Let me  
20 use this drawing to take you on a quick tour of  
21 our site. You see in the middle, the open space,  
22 the active and accessible open space. This is  
23 actually the roof top of the parking garage  
24 beneath it and portions of the terminal building.  
25

1  
2 It will be heavily landscaped. It will be  
3 accessible to all and it will have educational  
4 programs--in the right hand corner you'll see the  
5 wind turbines and there will also be--there will  
6 also be affordable tag equipment there for  
7 energy, for energy purposes. In the lower left  
8 hand corner where you see the two blue circles,  
9 that is an 18,000 square foot playground that  
10 will be available to the public that we've been  
11 happy to provide at the suggestion and the  
12 request of the local Council Member. You will  
13 see the Wheel itself going back up to the upper  
14 right hand side and the reflecting pond beneath  
15 it, and you will see on the far right hand side  
16 the entrance way for Richmond Terrace that will  
17 lead down to the Wheel. It also will be a much  
18 more gracious entrance and a much more dignified  
19 entrance for those who are visiting the 9/11 post  
20 cards memorial, and it will access directly the  
21 ferry terminal so that for the first time  
22 commuters who are not parking and using the ferry  
23 will have a landscape and well-designed and  
24 friendly method of gutting from Richmond Terrace  
25 to the ferry terminal. Along the shore, the

1 waterfront, this is property that is not  
2 controlled by the Wheel, it remains in control of  
3 the City, but we have agreed to expand the  
4 roadway that's currently on it to a 30 foot width  
5 and we will be providing a bike lane that will go  
6 from the 9/11 memorial along the shore front  
7 along with this new 30 foot wide road all the way  
8 to Jersey Street. We will also during the course  
9 of that be improving that area. There has been  
10 some aspects of it that were damaged during  
11 previous storms, some equipment and things like  
12 that, some trees down. We will--we have agreed  
13 that we will include in our 30 foot widening as  
14 well to replace the public amenities that have  
15 been previously damaged by the two storms. Next  
16 please. This again is a more diagrammatic--a  
17 more diagrammatic plan of the site. It shows in  
18 the green in the middle, the open space. It  
19 shows in number seven in the yellow, the  
20 sustainability features that will become--that  
21 will both assist in the powering of the Wheel,  
22 but also will be an educational resource that  
23 will be heavily programed for educational  
24 purposes. You see the playground, number five,  
25

1  
2 in the lower left. And you see the public plaza  
3 area including the wheel, number three in the  
4 upper right. Two is the public plaza that will  
5 lead down to the other public plaza and the wheel  
6 to the memorial and onto the ferry for those  
7 using it. Number one is a promenade and it's an  
8 example of what we were doing--what we are doing  
9 all along Richmond Terrace currently. As the  
10 residents of Staten Island know, Richmond Terrace  
11 has a 30 foot drop to its--on its boundary onto a  
12 railroad easement which is not used by the NPA.  
13 We are going to deck over that railroad easement  
14 so that our elevations will connect to the rest  
15 of the project, providing Staten Islanders with a  
16 new opportunity to gain access to the waterfront  
17 at several places along Richmond Terrace where  
18 they presently have none. I should also add that  
19 next to number five, just to the left of it there  
20 is the entrance to our parking garage at Nicholas  
21 Street carefully designed so that we can assure  
22 that the traffic to the greatest extent possible  
23 that will be using our site for commuter purposes  
24 and for visitation is as far removed from the  
25 current--the current terminal transportation grid

1  
2 as possible. That will be a new entrance off  
3 Nicholas Street that will lead to our parking  
4 garage. Next please. Here again is the  
5 vehicular circulation showing how we will be  
6 working around the project area to bring cars in  
7 and out. I should again, est--I should again  
8 state that it is the Wheel's opinion and it is  
9 it's hope and it will be actively working to  
10 assure that most of those arriving at the wheel  
11 will be coming by ferry of one form or another,  
12 but that it will be a waterfront experience  
13 primarily. We are not expecting to add  
14 significantly to the traffic grid, the existing  
15 traffic grids on Staten Island, every bit of our  
16 programming, and in fact the design you're  
17 looking at has been done to assure that to the  
18 greatest extent possible, our departures and  
19 arrivals will be by waterborne transit of one  
20 form or another. Next please. This is the  
21 pedestrian circulation patterns. You will see  
22 how Staten Islanders will reach the recreational  
23 features of the landscape area and find new paths  
24 down to the waterfront, and in the red you will  
25 see how commuters will be able--who are not

1  
2 parking in the parking garages will be able to  
3 access the waterfront and ferry terminal. Next  
4 please. This again simply reviews the specifics  
5 of the open space, seven acres increased access  
6 to the waterfront, sustainability features. The  
7 green roof will also add to storm water  
8 management in the area. We believe that we will  
9 be improving the storm water management systems  
10 considerably in that--in what is now simply a  
11 surface parking lot, totally impervious, with a  
12 new storm water management system that will be a  
13 great asset to St. George generally. There will  
14 be access to the terminal building, restaurants,  
15 and exhibits from the roof top and of course the  
16 views from New York Harbor. These will be new and  
17 spectacular views of the New York Harbor open to  
18 our visitors and to anyone and anyone who wishes  
19 public--to publicly use the open space. Next  
20 please. This is a blow-up of the playground,  
21 18,000 square feet, a very dynamic interactive  
22 playground. We believe that many people coming to  
23 the Wheel may want to--they have small children  
24 who will not want to go on a 38 minute ride in  
25 the world's tallest observation wheel. We want

1  
2 to have a playground so that they--so that those  
3 who aren't using the wheel, will be able to have  
4 some place for their visiting children. We had a  
5 very small playground when we began this project  
6 As I indicated at the request of the Council, we  
7 now have a very large playground, and that that  
8 playground will be opened to all members of the  
9 community as it was intended to be originally.  
10 Next please? This is the diagrammatic plan for  
11 the wheel lighting. The important part is that  
12 this wheel lighting has been designed so that all  
13 of its lighting will be headed toward the harbor  
14 and not back upland and uphill towards residents  
15 of Staten Island. We have no interest in  
16 creating any inconvenience on our neighbors and a  
17 lot of attention and care has been put into this  
18 to make sure that our lighting will be shining  
19 out towards the harbor, but will not be  
20 reflecting in. Next please. Pretty much we'll  
21 pass through this, but this is an indication of  
22 our resiliency and our strengthening of the site.  
23 We have taken a number of suggestions from the  
24 City and from EDC and incorporated them into  
25 this--into our resiliency plan. We believe that



1  
2 it's a top notch and state of the art approach to  
3 storm resiliency. Next please. This is a further  
4 illustration of the commitment that we're making  
5 to the off-site improvement. It shows the bike  
6 path and the widening of Bank Street that will  
7 begin at the memorial, go right past our site,  
8 which is in green, and then if you'll follow the  
9 yellow and red, you'll see how it leads a  
10 considerable distance across city property to  
11 Jersey Street where we will be continuing the  
12 bike path and continuing the 30 foot wide--the  
13 widening of Bank Street, and as I said, during  
14 the course there are some public infrastructure  
15 improvements that we will be making basically to  
16 remediate against storm damage. Next please.  
17 This is the view from Richmond Terrace. Next  
18 please. This is the--this is the view looking  
19 back to the south at the New York heart. It's  
20 five miles to Manhattan, and you know, it will be  
21 seen from Manhattan. This is the view which  
22 shows primarily the open space and the  
23 relationship of the wheel to that open space, the  
24 stadium to its immediate right. Next please.  
25 Here is the--here is our chart regarding our jobs

1  
2 and what this project will mean to employment in  
3 Staten Island, 350 permanent job 350 construction  
4 jobs. As indicated, we are fully signed on to a  
5 robust minority, Women's Business Enterprises  
6 Program and a robust public hiring program to  
7 give preference to local hires where possible to  
8 the residents of Staten Island. We will bring  
9 four million--we will bring four million in  
10 addition to the two million who currently get off  
11 the ferry, turn around and go back. We will  
12 bring another two million, and we're hoping this  
13 combined total of four million visitors will  
14 spend a lot of time on Staten Island, and we'll  
15 be working with the other Upland cultural  
16 institutions to try and provide opportunities to  
17 pass along all the good news about what else  
18 awaits these visitors when they get--when they  
19 get to the Wheel. I think we can go through this  
20 one, Matt. Next? Here are the zoning actions  
21 I've been asked to briefly describe, the Land Use  
22 Applications that are in front of you. We are  
23 primarily doing this through an expansion of the  
24 St. George special permit, special district which  
25 will create a--which will be expanded to include

1 these two sites which will have a special  
2 district regulations calling for two special  
3 permits. We are applying for one of those  
4 special permits; BFC is applying for the other of  
5 the special permits, and that they, those special  
6 permits will control all aspects of the planning  
7 and environmental and the lighting and signage  
8 and all the rest of the issues that the zoning  
9 resolution provides for will all be contained  
10 within these special permits. So what you see  
11 here in these drawings are really what you're  
12 getting, because those are--these are the only  
13 things we'll be permitted to build. Next please?  
14 This is simply a summary of both projects and the  
15 site plan. I thank you for your attention and  
16 I'm sure that BFC and I together state we're very  
17 happy to answer your questions. Thank you for  
18 your time.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All set. Before  
21 we get into questions, I'm going to ask Council  
22 Member Debbie Rose if she would like to make a  
23 statement. And she would.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yes. Thank you,  
25 Chair. I want to thank Subcommittee Chair Weprin

1  
2 and Land Use Chair Comrie and the members of all  
3 the zoning subcommittee and Land Use Committees  
4 and to everyone who took the time here and stayed  
5 to testify regarding this ULURP process. And  
6 before I go further I want to say Happy Birthday  
7 to Vinnie Ignizio. And--

8 [applause]

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And to say I am  
10 really envious of his Charleston Project. So EDC,  
11 we got some work to do. And to Mr. Capoccia's  
12 condolences on your loss. The Wheel and Empire  
13 Outlets Project is the largest project ever  
14 proposed for the north shore of Staten Island.  
15 It is worth 500 million dollars and while this  
16 project, these projects capitalize on the tourist  
17 trade, as I've said many times, what is of  
18 paramount importance to me is that this project  
19 is--will ensure that Staten Islanders get the  
20 best deal possible, and what I need to see  
21 addressed to move this project forward in  
22 addition to some other things are that, you know,  
23 the provisions to address the traffic congestion  
24 and ferry commuter concerns, improvements to  
25 infrastructure, good paying jobs for Staten

1 Islanders pre, during, and post construction, and  
2 economic development provisions just to name a  
3 few. This project has a potential to bring great  
4 benefits to Staten Island, and if done in the  
5 right way with all of these concerns addressed  
6 and others straight out of the gate. I have  
7 lived through the fits and starts of the  
8 Lighthouse Point Project and the Home Port  
9 Redevelopment. Both excellent Staten Island  
10 projects that are thankfully now underway, but  
11 which was stalled when the hard questions were  
12 not answered at their onset, forcing everyone to  
13 go back to the drawing board more than once. I  
14 know from experience that if you lay a faulty  
15 foundation, the house will not stand. So I am  
16 thanking and I am thinking about every step of  
17 this project, from the beginning to the end, from  
18 St. George to Fort Wadsworth and from St. George  
19 to the Goethals Bridge. And I'm working to  
20 ensure that Staten Island benefits--that Staten  
21 Island benefits and flourishes from this project,  
22 not withers in its shadow. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,  
25 Council Member Rose. Before we get into other

1  
2 questions, I wanted to start off one--so we have  
3 a big crowd here today, Mr. Capoccia, you might  
4 have noticed, and I just was curious if you could  
5 expel out for me and for the members of the  
6 committee why they're here. You know, you've  
7 been dealing with, I know, a lot of discussions  
8 about--I see you have in your testament this  
9 BCTCPLA. I'm not even sure what that stands for,  
10 truthfully, BCTC part, but I'm just curious what  
11 the status is of discussions with labor, just as  
12 a curiosity to know, 'cause I know a lot of  
13 people are here to testify and maybe you can  
14 answer some of our questions in advance.

15 DON CAPOCCIA: Yes, thank you. BCTC is  
16 Building Construction Trades Council, I think,  
17 and yes, we have offered to do--we have offered  
18 up a PLA for what we call the site improvement  
19 work that we think has a value of around 25  
20 million dollars. The balance of the project, we  
21 have offered to build on an open shop basis that  
22 would be with pricing it to both union and non-  
23 union contractors. And largely the reason for  
24 this is that the economics of our project at this  
25 point and what we're seeing in our negotiations

1 with tenants, it looks as if we will be somewhere  
2 in the neighborhood of 38 dollars a foot on our  
3 revenue--on the revenue side. When that number  
4 is priced out against all the infrastructure  
5 improvements and the capital cost of the job,  
6 it's simply not possible to manage that at that  
7 kind of a market number. However, not  
8 withstanding that fact, my company, my partners  
9 and I have been working in the Staten Island and  
10 north shore for the last five years. We've made  
11 75 million dollars in investing in two affordable  
12 housing mixed-use projects in Stapleton. We've  
13 worked very closely with the community, with the  
14 residents of Stapleton Houses with other  
15 residents in the community. We have always hired  
16 from the community. There--we see that there is  
17 a very significant need among under employed,  
18 unemployed young men and woman and older men and  
19 women for that matter who need, you know, who  
20 need opportunity, and we're trying to take the  
21 opportunity that this project, that this project  
22 offers up and spread it across the spectrum of  
23 need that we have personally seen and experienced  
24 in the north shore.  
25

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. I'm going  
3 to let some of the Staten Island members and  
4 Brooklyn members to see if they have any  
5 questions. Birthday boy, no? Oh, okay, alright.  
6 The birthday boy turns it over to Council Member  
7 Rose. Council Member Rose?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you. And  
9 I'm sure I'm going to have to give you the mic  
10 'cause I have a lot of questions. **[inaudible**  
11 **03:40:56]** So for EDC, I've been trying to find  
12 out what the rate of return to the City is for  
13 this project, and I was wondering if you could  
14 give me an es--you know, a figure on that?

15 KYLE KIMBALL: In terms of a  
16 comprehensive cost/benefit analysis of the  
17 overall project in terms of the overall economic  
18 benefits, given the fact that the City is putting  
19 no capital into the project, we are providing no  
20 subsidy. We are not waiving any taxes. And we  
21 are getting hundreds of millions of dollars if  
22 not billions of dollars of economic activity.  
23 It's zero, you know, the denominator is zero. So  
24 it's essentially millions of percent return given



1 that we're putting virtually no capital into the  
2 project.  
3

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: No, I know that  
5 you're not putting any capital into the project.

6 KYLE KIMBALL: Nor is the City.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Or nor the city.  
8 I want to know what will be the benefit, the  
9 city--what benefit will the city gain from these  
10 two projects?

11 KYLE KIMBALL: I think we've talked  
12 about to the permanent constructions jobs. So  
13 first of all, 2,500 jobs across the two projects,  
14 both permanent in construction, which we can  
15 extrapolate into--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [interposing]  
17 How about taxes and, you know income?

18 KYLE KIMBALL: Sure, taxes--all of  
19 those, yes. I mean, we can give you a  
20 comprehensive cost benefit analysis. I don't  
21 think we have actually calculated a specific  
22 number that I can give you and we can do that  
23 quickly just because it's such a home run from a  
24 overall perspective.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Is there any  
3 plans, does EDC have any plans to provide any  
4 ongoing benefits based on some of the return that  
5 we're going--or the benefits we're going to get  
6 from these projects over the long term that would  
7 help us improve infrastructure, would maybe help  
8 us address some of the issues that came up in the  
9 Community Boards rep--request in terms of helping  
10 with the Bay Street Landing Promenade, the North  
11 Shore Greenway, ongoing long term projects.

12 KYLE KIMBALL: Are you talking about--  
13 it's a question does EDC specifically providing  
14 or is the city?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: EDC and the  
16 Mayor's Office.

17 KYLE KIMBALL: So we are going to be  
18 maintaining the--just on a smaller scale, we're  
19 going to be maintaining the open space on behalf  
20 of the project and working with DOT. I don't  
21 know, Tom, if you want to talk through an of the  
22 other specifics.

23 TOM MCKNIGHT: Sure. So there was the  
24 range of issues that you raised and the Community  
25 Board has raised. There's a set of them that are

1 kind of focused project--on the project there are  
2 those that are focused on the broader community  
3 and you've articulated your sort of, your vision.  
4 The--there are things that I think we can work  
5 together on, and you mentioned Bay Street  
6 Landing, I think as we've talked about is a  
7 complex issue, and one that we look forward to  
8 continuing to engage on. As it relates  
9 specifically to the project, there are a range of  
10 improvements that are being implemented to ensure  
11 that there isn't a negative impact on the  
12 community, in fact that it's a positive, that  
13 achieves the benefits that we've articulated  
14 here. And for example, around infrastructure,  
15 new access points are being provided to allow  
16 commuters and visitors to easily get to the site,  
17 get to parking garages without delay on local  
18 streets. There is a range of traffic  
19 improvements, signals, traffic enforcement agents  
20 and other measures aimed at ensuring that there  
21 isn't a traffic impact. So we believe the  
22 project's been very responsible in insuring that  
23 this is significant development and needs to be  
24 done responsibly and the investments are being  
25

1  
2 made as part of that project to ensure that it  
3 has a good fit for the St. George community.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSIE: Thank you.

5 Traffic has been, you know, a major issue and so,  
6 you know, there were a number of things that--  
7 improvements that we've discussed. So where does  
8 the traffic mitigation efforts come in the  
9 timeline of this project?

10 TOM MCKNIGHT: The mitigations that--  
11 there's two categories. There are mitigations  
12 that are laid out in the EIS and ones that we  
13 spent a lot of time working on and developing  
14 because we understand that from your perspective  
15 and the communities that traffic is critical. So  
16 those mitigations and again, those are the range  
17 of improvements that I referenced. They will be  
18 implemented as part of the project as the project  
19 proceeds. Then we've also agreed collectively to  
20 undertake a traffic monitoring program at the  
21 completion of the project and should other  
22 measures be necessary to be implemented such as  
23 an additional signal, such as additional traffic  
24 enforcement agents; we've committed to implement  
25 those if necessary.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And we also  
3 discussed quite a bit about the ferry, and you  
4 know, the anticipated increased passenger  
5 utilage--utilization and overcrowding and the off  
6 time launch, and we talked about one of the  
7 things was the purchasing of new ferries. At  
8 what point do you think there will be  
9 consideration for moving this timeline of the  
10 purchase of ferries up?

11 KYLE KIMBALL: Well just to be clear,  
12 one of the issues raised in the EIS was not about  
13 ferry capacity in the study.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: It's--

15 KYLE KIMBALL: [interposing] It was  
16 about the loading and unloading times of the--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [interposing]  
18 Absolutely.

19 KYLE KIMBALL: of the boats. So at no  
20 point during our EIS study does it contemplate  
21 there's a point where the, the boats themselves  
22 are too full to take passengers both residents,  
23 commuters, and tourists. But I think our overall  
24 goal here is to do what we can and monitor the  
25 situation closely as the project develops, and to

1 see how ridership develops. We have explored with  
2 New York Water Taxi, additional waterborne  
3 options. I think the Wheel has particularly  
4 looked in that in terms of ways they can package  
5 deals or something like that. So we are open to  
6 considering other waterborne options as the  
7 project is built and successful.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And Mr.  
10 Capoccia, you've committed to 20 percent of the  
11 Staten Island jobs to--for MWB--20 percent of the  
12 Staten Island jobs for Staten Islanders. How  
13 does this figure compare with other jobs that  
14 you've developed and where does this rank in  
15 terms of other jobs of this magnitude?

16 DON CAPOCCIA: Well, we haven't--we  
17 have not done a job of this magnitude where we  
18 had projected 800 construction workers on one  
19 job, but we have in most instances met and  
20 exceeded that number, and that's on construction  
21 jobs not on permanent jobs. In this case on the  
22 permanent jobs, it's or plan to make sure that  
23 all--that community residents are given  
24 preference when the retailers come to hire on the  
25 permanent jobs.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And is this  
3 percentage sort of the norm on other jobs of this  
4 magnitude?

5 DON CAPOCCIA: For local employment?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Twenty percent?

7 DON CAPOCCIA: I'm not sure what the  
8 norm is, but this is the commitment that we have  
9 made.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Because I've  
11 looked at others and, you know, they've been as  
12 high as 50 percent.

13 KYLE KIMBALL: So, just in the--I can  
14 just step in on here. So with respect to the  
15 Hire NYC, which is what you might be seeing which  
16 is an EDC administered program, that number is  
17 correct and that's one of the things that the  
18 development team is agreeing to in terms of local  
19 hiring and using the EDC Hire NYC program.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I'm sorry, it's--  
21 --it's what? It's the norm for what program?

22 KYLE KIMBALL: EDC has a program  
23 called Hire NYC that we administer on  
24 construction projects.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: High NYC.

2 KYLE KIMBALL: Hire NYC, yes.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Could you, you  
4 know, sort of expand upon that program? What is  
5 that?

6 KYLE KIMBALL: Sure. So these are part  
7 of our contractual commitments with these two  
8 developers. It's a program, encourages developers  
9 to make good faith efforts to create meaningful  
10 jobs, permanent jobs for low income persons to  
11 provide advancement later as well. And so with  
12 respect to the permanent jobs at the development,  
13 both development teams have agreed to within the  
14 EDC contract to do Hire NYC, and the idea there  
15 is we do marketing to the local community and put  
16 them into the jobs, into the permanent jobs. And  
17 there are specific performance goals within that  
18 program.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Is this the same  
20 as the Building Skills New York Program that Mr.  
21 Capoccia has?

22 DON CAPOCCIA: NO, it isn't.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: It's separate.  
24 So, you're going to provide 20 percent of these  
25 jobs there. These are permanent and



1 construction, 20 percent permanent and 20 percent  
2 construction?  
3

4 DON CAPOCCIA: No, let me separate  
5 them for a moment for you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: No, no, no.

7 DON CAPOCCIA: Sorry.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I'm talking  
9 about--

10 KYLE KIMBALL: [interposing] Oh, I'm  
11 sorry.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: the Hire NYC.

13 KYLE KIMBALL: The program I was  
14 talking about was with the Hire NYC was for the  
15 permanent jobs.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Is for the  
17 permanent jobs.

18 KYLE KIMBALL: Once the project is  
19 created.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay.

21 DON CAPOCCIA: You know, just to  
22 clarify, we've committed to 20 percent. We're  
23 happy to strive beyond that number. It's not an  
24 issue for us to try to expand that further.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And would you--

1  
2 KYLE KIMBALL: [interposing] And one  
3 other thing to just add to that is SBS has a  
4 workforce and a physical location in St. George  
5 where they will help work with people from the  
6 local community to connect them with the  
7 permanent jobs that'll be on the site.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And with the  
9 Building Skills New York, that's a training  
10 program, training and placement, right?

11 DON CAPOCCIA: That's correct.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. And those  
13 jobs, the training is in what?

14 DON CAPOCCIA: The training's in the  
15 basic construction trades. It's a 10 week  
16 program that is offered by CUNY City College at  
17 Brooklyn College, and the--each of the men and  
18 women who participate in this get an OSHA card  
19 when they complete and a certificate that they've  
20 completed, and anybody who works on a  
21 construction site in New York needs an OSHA card.  
22 They need to be trained in construction safety.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And what type of  
24 building trades? I mean, that's very--

2 DON CAPOCCIA: [interposing] Basic.

3 It's basic--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [interposing]

5 broad. That's very--

6 DON CAPOCCIA: Basic construction,  
7 masonry, plumbing, electric, carpentry. It  
8 depends upon what they're offering at any given  
9 semester, but that's what I just went through,  
10 the trades I just went through are pretty--that's  
11 pretty common in this program.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And when they go  
13 through this program, are they guaranteed  
14 placement on the job?

15 DON CAPOCCIA: Absolutely.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And what's the  
17 duration of this placement, for the entire job?

18 DON CAPOCCIA: Yes, we hold this  
19 commitment through the whole job.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: At the end of  
21 this job, do they have a--maybe are they now  
22 members of a union?

23 DON CAPOCCIA: No, they're not members  
24 of a union.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. And with  
3 this training program, is--does this include your  
4 green roof training program?

5 DON CAPOCCIA: Yes, it does.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So I would  
7 maybe--I shouldn't assume, but if these jobs that  
8 you're going to provide for them is in terms of  
9 the green roofs, that would sort of come at the  
10 end of the project, would it not? Or close to  
11 the end of the project?

12 DON CAPOCCIA: I'm not--yeah, probably  
13 the last third of the project would be the green  
14 roof work.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So then they  
16 would probably not be working until that time?

17 DON CAPOCCIA: Well, I think this is  
18 the good part about this program, is that they  
19 get experience in a variety of different trades,  
20 so they can work on the project literally from  
21 the outset and move from trade to trade. A lot  
22 of times when--we do this with **[inaudible**  
23 **03:53:47]** our company has been one of the funders  
24 of this program. We also now have Goldman Sachs  
25 funding it as well along with the Robin Hood

1 Foundation. We're in a partnership with the  
2 resident training academy at NYCHA, and the whole  
3 goal here is to get under and unemployed men and  
4 women into a program, a training program where  
5 there is a guaranteed job at the end. The point  
6 of this is to bring them into the--and bring  
7 them--give them the training, bring them into the  
8 field and see what they're most comfortable with  
9 and what area they excel in.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And since  
12 they're being trained in the construction trades,  
13 will they be making comparable salaries to the  
14 construction labor force?

15 DON CAPOCCIA: They'll be making--  
16 they'll be making salaries that range, I guess on  
17 the low end for un--well, if they come out of the  
18 training program they're not--they're skilled to  
19 some extent, so they'll be making in the range of  
20 20 to 22 dollars an hour.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And will they be  
22 kept on with you after the--after this project?  
23 Do they continue on with you?

24 DON CAPOCCIA: Yes, provided that  
25 they--provided we have the work to keep them

1 busy, abso--and they're--they've been good  
2 employees, absolutely.

3  
4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Uh-hm. But they-  
5 -but they're not unionized at that point?

6 DON CAPOCCIA: No, they're not  
7 unionized.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. And both  
9 of the developers have made a commitment to the  
10 formation of the North Shore Alliance, could you  
11 explain to us what you're going to do with this  
12 alliance, how this is going to be constructed?

13 DON CAPOCCIA: First of all, I like  
14 the name. It's got a name finally.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Oh, okay.

16 DON CAPOCCIA: That's great. North  
17 Shore Alliance, I like that. Well, I'm going to  
18 let Shelly speak a little bit about it as well,  
19 but, you know, our interest was largely, as I  
20 said, having been--having worked in your  
21 community for as long as we have, there is such a  
22 need for job training, job placement. That's  
23 really one of the focus that we want to bring to  
24 this. We're--we've each committed to make a  
25 50,000 annual contribution to this fund. We're

1  
2 hopeful that other developers who are seeing the  
3 same kind of value we see in your community will  
4 also supplement that, and we want to turn it into  
5 a big fund to be able--at least in our--to our  
6 minds, job placement, job readiness, job  
7 training, education is very important for us, but  
8 let me let Shelly speak for his client.

9           SHELLY FREIDMAN: Well, we joined BFC  
10 in our enthusiasm regarding the program Don just  
11 described. Our understanding was that there  
12 would also be an effort to--for both entities to  
13 serve as the--as the foundation for a larger  
14 association within this community along Richmond  
15 Terrace and to the south so that we could look  
16 into the kind of--to make it a--the street  
17 experience a better experience. The civ--

18           COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [interposing]  
19 That was requested by the borough president was  
20 it not?

21           SHELLY FRIEDMAN: The Civic furniture--  
22 -the civic furniture, street cleaning, maybe look  
23 at security, some banners, something that will  
24 obviously promote the better business interest of  
25 the two projects, but was also envisioned to be a

1 much larger effort to bring in all of the  
2 business community that's going to be surrounding  
3 the project so that we can come up with perhaps  
4 some unified branding of some type or another,  
5 but we're enthused about the possibilities and  
6 looking forward to talking about it further.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Right. Yeah, I  
9 was going to clarify the North Shore Alliance is  
10 separate from the foundation.

11 SHELLY FRIEDMAN: Okay.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So, Don, you  
13 were talking about the foundation.

14 DON CAPOCCIA: Correct.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And Shelly, you  
16 were talking about--

17 SHELLY FRIEDMAN: [interposing]  
18 Correct.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Are both of you  
20 participating in the North Shore Alliance?  
21 That's the street enhancing the--

22 SHELLY FRIEDMAN: Well, I know it's  
23 been a recommendation of the borough president  
24 and we've indicated our support for to have those  
25 discussions go forward.



2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Are you  
3 participating in that Don?

4 DON CAPOCCIA: Yes, we are.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay.

6 DON CAPOCCIA: And just so you know,  
7 the foundation is also going to be supporting  
8 cultural organizations in the North Shore as  
9 well.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And what is the  
11 duration of that fund that you are going to  
12 contribute to that fund?

13 DON CAPOCCIA: We set out--we set it  
14 an initial 10 year commitment.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Ten year  
16 commitment. Is there the option to continue  
17 beyond the 10?

18 DON CAPOCCIA: Of course, yeah.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. And, you  
20 know, the parking is a huge issue. I'm sorry. I  
21 know my colleagues have questions. But the  
22 parking is of, you know, paramount concern.  
23 While we understand that this is a wonderful  
24 tourist attraction, it actually takes place at  
25 our major transportation hub, and we want to

1  
2 limit the impact that it has on our commuters,  
3 and I know we've talked about staggering times  
4 and whatever, but could you clarify your position  
5 with respect to keeping the parking rates low and  
6 at--and comparable to the current rates that  
7 Staten Island commuters, you know, now  
8 experience? You know, one of those lots are a  
9 municipal lot. So, I'm looking for a commitment  
10 to those rates, and have you agreed to this being  
11 reviewed by the Community Board? Any potential  
12 increases in the rates being reviewed by  
13 Community Board?

14 DON CAPOCCIA: I'm not aware of that  
15 commitment having been made, but we are committed  
16 to keeping the rates at the comparative  
17 comparable rates where they are now. Right now  
18 they're market based rates based up on the cost  
19 of parking anywhere in that community, and we are  
20 not looking to change or increase it beyond  
21 comparable rates and given the market  
22 environment.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. You know,  
24 I'll stop hogging the mic, and I might have some  
25 more questions for you.

2 DON CAPOCCIA: Sure.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Vincent Ignizio.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Thank you

6 very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you Debbie,

7 and I absolutely defer to you in that it's your

8 district and have the most at stake. My colleague

9 Council Member Otto and I are very much

10 interested in the project, me in the zoning in

11 Staten Island, and he in a future endeavor I

12 guess, James. But I want to set the stage though

13 for the audience and for everyone that--anybody

14 I've met with thus far on this project has viewed

15 it as a positive thing on all sides, and I want

16 to be clear to that. Because it's almost when

17 you take a look at the media accounts and

18 whatnot, it's an us against them type of scenario

19 and I just want to let the public know that the

20 project as a whole has been relatively

21 universally embraced. How we get there has been

22 an issue. What we do and to what extent is always

23 an issue. The parking and the traffic is always

24 an issue, but just so you know, I don't want the

25 message out there to be that Staten Islanders

1 initially upon a very broad project that's 600  
2 million dollars and people that--Staten Islanders  
3 stand up and say no, and that's not the case  
4 here. There are people who are working very hard  
5 to get to a situation where the community is  
6 happy and it's a better community for it, and I  
7 want that to be on the record. I know Don is a  
8 Staten Islander, you appreciate that, and I know  
9 Eugene in the Mayor's Office, and that's just the  
10 stage where I want to set the tone. Because when  
11 you take a look at--you know, I have a red shirt  
12 on. I have a yellow shirt on. I have a blue  
13 shirt on, and it makes it look like there's the  
14 animus is palpable that people are against each  
15 other. People want to get to a point where this  
16 project is one that's acceptable by the community  
17 and that people end up with good jobs that  
18 ultimately can become careers and not just day  
19 laborers, and I'm not saying that's what we're  
20 using. I'm saying that's the--that's the goal.  
21 So that's where we begin from. If I can, I have  
22 a question about the 20 percent commitment of  
23 union jobs. And I want to dispel potential  
24 rumors, if they are. I was told that the 20  
25

1                   SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISING   229

2   percent that you're referring to, the work, can't  
3   be done non-union.  So in essence you're giving  
4   nothing.  Is that the case?

5                   DON CAPOCCIA:  First of all--

6                   COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO:  [interposing]  
7   I'm not saying it's--

8                   DON CAPOCCIA:  [interposing] First of  
9   all--

10                  COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO:  [interposing]  
11   I'm saying--

12                  DON CAPOCCIA:  You referred to me as a  
13   Staten Islander, so I think I'm really now  
14   starting to--I think I've been doing the right  
15   job over here.  Unfortunately, I don't live in  
16   Staten Island.

17                  COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO:  Alright.

18                  DON CAPOCCIA:  I feel like I do.  I  
19   spend a lot of time there, but thank you anyway.  
20   I consider that a compliment.

21                  COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO:  Oh, I'm  
22   sorry.

23                  DON CAPOCCIA:  Compliment to my--to  
24   our work.

25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: I gotta get  
3 Joe on here then.

4 DON CAPOCCIA: That's great.  
5 **[inaudible 04:02:55]** Joe Furalis [phonetic] in  
6 Staten Island. The 20--the 20 percent commitment  
7 that we've made to labor, that's a PLA with a  
8 value of about 25 million dollars.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Right.

10 DON CAPOCCIA: That does--there, there  
11 are no federal funds involved in that or Davis  
12 Bacon funds requiring that Davis Bacon wages be  
13 paid. So consequently it does not have to be done  
14 as union.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Right, but I  
16 think that the fact **[inaudible 04:03:22]** is there  
17 aren't firms in the City that do that work that  
18 are not union jobs. Do you understand the  
19 question?

20 DON CAPOCCIA: Yes.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: It could be  
22 not true. I'm saying that's what was presented  
23 to me. I just wanted to--

24 DON CAPOCCIA: Well, no that is not.  
25 That is not the case. However, the last time we

1 did a structural steel subgrade project similar  
2 to this was done at an open shop job that we  
3 started and completed on myrtle avenue in  
4 downtown Brooklyn where we did use the iron  
5 workers and the operating engineers to do our  
6 subgrade--to do our subgrade work adjacent to the  
7 Flatbush Avenue and the 12 subway lines that run  
8 underneath it. So you can get--you can get  
9 contracts for both union or non-union to do this  
10 work. Our preference in the past for work like  
11 this has been to work with union contractors.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Okay. I'm  
14 jump around a little bit if you don't mind, guys.  
15 Mr. Kimball, the issue with Richmond Terrace is  
16 one that keeps coming up, and what I hear a lot  
17 about is the problem that is in front of the 120  
18 precinct, being huge bottleneck and a problem  
19 there. Is that at all addressed in this plan?  
20 Can that be addressed in this plan? Because if  
21 you have a road that is encumbered by vehicles,  
22 personal vehicles of police officers or police  
23 vehicles, it cuts--with anything that my  
24 colleague Council Member Rose and we do here  
25 today in terms of the traffic plan.

2 KYLE KIMBALL: Sure, I will turn it  
3 over to Tom who can talk specifically about the  
4 mitigations in detail, 'cause he spent a lot of  
5 time thinking about this, but in the EIS that  
6 the--the FEIS that was done, virtually everything  
7 has been mitigated in terms of the traffic  
8 impacts. There's one--one mitigation that is  
9 considered un-mitigatable, so we have layered  
10 that on with traffic enforcement agents to have  
11 24 hours. So in terms of the traffic--in terms  
12 of if you look at the EIS versus what we're doing  
13 and the improvements that have been in place and  
14 the mitigants that have been put in place, we are  
15 really doing absolutely everything that we can to  
16 address these issues, and I'll turn it over to  
17 Tom.

18 TOM MCKNIGHT: Tom McKnight. And then  
19 just specifically to your question about around  
20 the 120<sup>th</sup> precinct, this has been an issue  
21 historically of parallel parking along Richmond  
22 Terrace. We've--we understand this is an issue  
23 that's been flagged by the Council, by the  
24 community. We've had discussions with the police  
25 department, and they've agreed to modify how they



1 park to keep vehicles out of the moving lane.  
2 That's really been the issue. They've agreed to  
3 do that. The precinct commander's been very  
4 responsive. So that also will help with traffic  
5 movement and then just specifically to the one  
6 location Kyle referenced, in that--that's at the  
7 entrance to the terminal. What the city is  
8 implementing there is a protected pedestrian  
9 phase. I think as you all know very well it's  
10 difficult to get from the terminal into Upland  
11 St. George. A community request had been to put  
12 a protected pedestrian phase. We're doing that.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Is that an  
15 elevated thing?

16 TOM MCKNIGHT: No, it's a signal  
17 light, so it'll save time in the cycle of the  
18 signal for pedestrians to cross the intersection,  
19 and that's the reason why there's a traffic  
20 effect, because of the additional time we're  
21 providing for pedestrian safety results in slower  
22 vehicle movements, but because that was a  
23 priority, the City's implementing that.

24  
25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Okay. Can  
3 you tell me the lease payment that either project  
4 will be paying to the city?

5 TOM MCKNIGHT. Sure. The wheel is  
6 paying about a million dollars a year over a 99  
7 year--25 year initial term with extensions, and  
8 the St. George retail is paying about a million  
9 and a half per year, similar terms with  
10 escalations.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Okay. And  
12 the status of the ferry, I heard the conversation  
13 about fast ferries potentially being utilized I  
14 guess for both projects. Is that the intent of  
15 either? I heard the Wheel speak about it, but  
16 Mr. Capoccia, is that--if the market drives it  
17 and we see, then we'll--then we would engage, or  
18 is the city looking at expanding their ferry plan  
19 as they have throughout the other borough to  
20 Staten Island finally? Happy that they  
21 recognized that we exist.

22 DON CAPOCCIA: I just want to you let  
23 you know that Rich Marin and I have had meetings  
24 with private water taxi operators to talk about  
25 private ferry service to the site.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: And I think  
3 the city ought as well, Don, by the way. I don't  
4 pin this just on the developers. When the city  
5 looks at an interborough water taxi plan, five  
6 borough water taxi plan, they should actually  
7 look at all five boroughs. You know, I know  
8 that's crazy of me to say sometimes, but it's  
9 something that I think they ought do, and you  
10 know, has been--and I've been very critical of  
11 the fact that I have the, you know, community  
12 with the worst commutes in the country, and you  
13 know the administration looks at the low lying  
14 fruit of the ones that have the most services, ie  
15 subway systems. So I hope that's something that  
16 you all will look at and continue to look at, and  
17 I think that's something that the city ought be a  
18 partner in as well.

19 KYLE KIMBALL: Sure. So, in terms of  
20 the EDC, we--the--a water taxi landing is not  
21 part of this ULURP application which is something  
22 we would have to do if we wanted to put something  
23 in place. We have had conversations around  
24 expanding ferry service to Staten Island. We  
25 have contemplated issuing an RFP for a water taxi

1 landing in Staten Island. It would be a separate  
2 Land Use process over and above this, but I--the  
3 developers has expressed their interest in having  
4 this as well.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Okay, well  
7 look, those opportunities come when you have an  
8 opportunity to negotiate a deal. Oh, yeah, we  
9 have an opportunity to negotiate a deal. Hey,  
10 Deb? We're talking about fast ferries, I'm  
11 trying to help you with fast ferry conversation.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: You're  
14 welcome.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you very  
16 much.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: But I mean,  
18 potentially that's something that we can have a  
19 discussion about in the context of this and the  
20 city on helping on that end. Finally, I'm going  
21 to--and then I'll turn it over to my colleague,  
22 Council Member Otto. What is the net loss or  
23 gain on parking for the community, commuter and--

24 KYLE KIMBALL: There's a net gain of  
25 600 spaces.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Net gain of  
3 600, and that's excluding or inclusive of the  
4 commuter parking you guys were referring to?

5 KYLE KIMBALL: It's a--there's two.  
6 Basically at the end of the project there will be  
7 two large lots, one underneath the retail and one  
8 underneath the Wheel. The will, I guess, both  
9 will be available for commuter parking. So it's-  
10 -they will be potentially spread across the two  
11 sides.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: I guess my  
13 question is how do we--let's pretend 5,000 cars  
14 want to come and park there now because it's a  
15 great big parking lot and we don't have to, you  
16 know, we can just go there and park every day.  
17 How does that impact the mall scenario? I mean,  
18 there has to be a way of discerning between this  
19 is a commuter parking and this is somebody going  
20 to spend money on shopping?

21 TOM MCKNIGHT: Just to speak generally  
22 on this issue, this has been something that the  
23 Council has flagged as well, how do you differen-  
24 -we are spending resources to recreate all the  
25 commuter parking. How do we ensure that it'll

1 actually be accessible to commuters, and there's  
2 a couple different ways I'd like to Shelly and  
3 Don to comment, but overall, the commuting  
4 patterns are different than shopping patterns.  
5 Commuters tend to come earlier and then there are  
6 ways to manage commuter parking through monthly  
7 passes, through shorter term passes, and then  
8 specifically to each project they have measured  
9 to be able to protect commuter parking.

11 DON CAPOCCIA: Yes, we're going--we,  
12 as you know, have to reserve 786 spaces for  
13 commuters in our garage. The, you know, our  
14 feeling is that the outlet center will probably  
15 open at 10 o'clock. The commuter parking occurs  
16 earlier than that in the day. We have a three  
17 level parking garage. We believe the first level  
18 will be able to accommodate the demand for the  
19 commuter parking and we're going to control--it  
20 will be controlled electronically, digitally, as  
21 Tom says through monthly passes, but it will be  
22 clearly reserved without question, and the 1,250  
23 cars that we can currently--that we will be able  
24 to accommodate in the structured parking garage  
25 would be considered to be self park. So in the

1 event that we had additional demand for parking,  
2 we would put in a valet system and we would be  
3 able to accommodate an additional 300 cars under  
4 that scenario.  
5

6 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Okay, thank  
7 you very much. I just want to close with how I  
8 opened, which is that a--you have several days  
9 left on the ULURP, and I believe that all sides  
10 want to come together and find a better product  
11 which will be great for the North Shore and the  
12 redevelopment therein, and my colleague Debbie  
13 Rose I know has been working very hard as well as  
14 the Chairman of both this committee and the  
15 Chairman of Land Use, and I hope to be somewhat  
16 of a voice of reason for everyone that can  
17 ultimately come down to a consensus, and I think  
18 we can. And I want to thank my colleague,  
19 Council Member Rose who is--this is not easy to  
20 be dumped on anyone's lap in terms of a big, big  
21 project like this, but she's doing a good job and  
22 hopefully ultimately will be here in a couple of  
23 days and we'll be all supportive. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Mr. Chairman--

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yes.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: If Council  
4 Member Ignizio is the voice of reason, does that  
5 mean I get to be unreasonable?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: I knew I  
7 walked totally right into that. I just want to  
8 be--

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: You guys going to  
10 try to take this show on the road aren't you?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Yeah, we'll be  
12 here all week. Take care of--

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Mr. Otto, you  
14 want to ask questions?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Yes, yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay, okay.  
17 Please.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: **[inaudible**  
19 **04:13:18]** more shtick I could do.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: No problem.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: I just want to  
22 follow up on the issues that Debbie and Vinnie  
23 actually had asked, interestingly enough. Don,  
24 on the fast ferry question, is it unfair for us  
25 to ask that that agreement be in place prior to



1  
2 us voting at the end of the month? Shouldn't we  
3 have that as part of the package on the table  
4 before we vote, knowing that we're going to  
5 mitigate to whatever extent some of the traffic  
6 concerns by knowing that you have an agreement  
7 with whomever?

8 DON CAPOCCIA: Fortunately or  
9 unfortunately I've had direct experience with  
10 this exact issue. We did a water--we built a job  
11 on the Brooklyn waterfront called Schaefer  
12 Landing. We thought, you know, the best way to  
13 get people interested in this property at that  
14 time was we should have a water taxi dock there.  
15 That required a full ULURP. So we went through a  
16 process similar to the process that we have been  
17 through with this project for that water taxi,  
18 which we were successful in getting. So I mean  
19 I--fair or unfair, I think there's a process that  
20 we'll have to go through.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Okay. The  
22 question about the ferries, and this just sort of  
23 overlaps on ancillary issue and a piece of  
24 legislation that we've been negotiating, the  
25 Staten Island delegation have been negotiating

1 with the administration over the last several  
2 months, and those new negotiations have sort of  
3 hit a peak in the last several days and hours.  
4 Mr. Kimball, on page three of your testimony, you  
5 say the City in fact already anticipates increase  
6 demand for the ferry resulting independently of  
7 this project due to the projected growth in  
8 Staten Island by 2016. I guess my question would  
9 be one work, end? So what does that mean? So the  
10 City's anticipating--what does that mean the city  
11 is doing?

12  
13 KYLE KIMBALL: So the ferry service  
14 was going to grow, so what we're saying is that  
15 the ferry service was going to grow regardless of  
16 whether or not these projects--the demand for  
17 ferry service ridership was going to grow  
18 regardless of whether or not these two projects  
19 happen. Second, it's also important to know that  
20 we are not talking about ferries being at  
21 capacity. The issue is just that it takes--the  
22 more people you put on the ferry, the longer it  
23 takes to get them on and off. And so what that  
24 does if you--if it takes--there's a certain  
25 amount of time that's put into the schedule for

1  
2 turnaround, and if you increase that amount of  
3 time, it messes with the schedule. And so the  
4 real issues is you either do a big capital  
5 project to widen the births, which will take a  
6 number of years and potentially hundreds of  
7 millions of dollars, or you monitor it over time  
8 and see what you need to do, and then we  
9 potentially put in place other solutions like  
10 other waterborne options potentially to relieve--  
11 to relieve the need. So, I think that's--the  
12 issues is yes, the cycle on ferries is popular  
13 and there are ways we--this will certainly have  
14 increase demand potentially, but it's also about  
15 just the big part of this project is almost  
16 regardless of who's ride--the numbers of people  
17 who are riding it, is to get them to get off the  
18 ferry and stay for a little while. So while we  
19 are surely going to see increased ridership, the  
20 economic development comes from the existing  
21 riders who are currently on it regardless of the  
22 increase in ridership.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: And I assume  
24 that the City and you folks are willing to

1 recognize that that growth in ferry ridership is  
2 throughout the day?

3  
4 KYLE KIMBALL: I--what do you think?

5 TOM MCKNIGHT: The growth that was  
6 projected in the EIS was predominantly weekend  
7 related.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Okay. There's  
9 been--Council Member Rose raised it; Mr. Kimball  
10 you talk about it in your testimony again on page  
11 three talking about that several measures are in  
12 place to improve circulation and ease congestion,  
13 and you talk about one specific traffic signal.  
14 Council Member Rose asked about traffic. Tom  
15 spoke about traffic. Vinny spoke about traffic,  
16 but I guess my question is at the end of the  
17 mitigations that you have planned, the level of  
18 service at some of these intersections is far  
19 from ideal. So are we saying to Staten  
20 Islanders, you have to anticipate an actual  
21 decrease in service, in the level of service at  
22 intersection, life at several intersection will  
23 be worse even after these mitigations, are we  
24 saying that to the public?

1  
2 TOM MCKNIGHT: NO, we're not saying  
3 that. We're saying that through the measures that  
4 I referenced and the Councilwoman referenced that  
5 conditions will not be worse, that through those  
6 mitigation measures--they, in certain instances  
7 that they may better, but by in large they will  
8 not be worse.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: They will not be  
10 worse.

11 TOM MCKNIGHT: That's the criteria  
12 that you need to meet for the environmental  
13 review.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Just on the  
15 concept of mitigations, in a perfect world,  
16 printing press in the basement; we have all the  
17 money we want. Are there infrastructure changes  
18 that would make the mitigations that much more  
19 effective and allow traffic to flow much more  
20 freely, mitigations that you guys looked at and  
21 realize cost money, but were sort of kicked  
22 around and thought about and decide--and you  
23 decided ultimately to go in a different way in  
24 terms of the mitigation?

2 TOM MCKNIGHT: The answer is no. The  
3 range of things that we're proposing we really  
4 felt there wasn't some other magic silver bullet  
5 that really solved traffic problems. And the  
6 issue there is that that unlike other portions of  
7 Staten Island that are less urban, this  
8 particular area is very built up. It's not  
9 really feasible to do significant lane widening.  
10 There's--a lot of buildings are built right up to  
11 the street. So the kinds of things that you  
12 implement in this kind of neighborhood and other  
13 kinds of similar more urban areas is you make  
14 operational changes. You make changes to the  
15 direction of traffic, which is something we  
16 proposed. You implement new signals, which is  
17 something we've proposed. In high traffic times  
18 you implement traffic enforcement agents, which  
19 is something we're doing. And then in terms of  
20 addressing what is really a future project, we're  
21 making projections here. We're also committed to  
22 monitoring and to potentially implementing other  
23 things in the future should other problems arise  
24 that we just can't foresee at this moment.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: My last  
3 question, Mr. Chairman, is about the conversation  
4 you mentioned the relationship with the cultural  
5 organizations. Sometimes we don't think about  
6 cultural organizations as an economic development  
7 too, but we all know that they are and they  
8 create jobs in their own right, and I think  
9 everyone who's here today or a lot--most of the  
10 folks are here today because this project  
11 represents hope in the form of a job. The  
12 relationship or the conversations that you've had  
13 with the cultures across the North Shore, are--  
14 just tell us about some of those conversations,  
15 and are you going to formalize in a memorandum of  
16 understanding or some sort of, you know, tangible  
17 document that will detail the relationship you  
18 will have with the culturals?

19 SHELLY FRIEDMAN: I think much of what  
20 we have already indicated, Mr. Marin has met with  
21 all of them, most cases more than once, and the  
22 idea is that these people are going to come off  
23 the ferry and they're going to be coming for the  
24 Wheel primarily; we have to provide that--the  
25 information of what else awaits. And since most

1 of this ticketing will be by pre-purchase, we  
2 want to meet that head on. We don't want them to  
3 just come here and see a kiosk and say, "Gee, I  
4 wish we had time to do this. We don't." We want  
5 to build into the entire--in the entire  
6 relationship with our visitors what else they  
7 might want to do before they purchase their  
8 ticket and while they're purchasing their ticket.  
9 So, we have to have those discussions. There's no  
10 formal arrangement at this point with how to go  
11 about doing that, and then once we're here we  
12 have discussed exploring ways to transport, ways  
13 to make sure that they know, understand how close  
14 by some of these venues are and to make sure that  
15 these venues have the maximum opportunity of  
16 grabbing these folks and getting them upland and  
17 uphill and to other parts of Staten Island.  
18 There's nothing formalized in writing at this  
19 point, but I think we've--all of those  
20 discussions are ongoing and we see this as a sum-  
21 -the rising tide is going to affect all of us.  
22 If we can bring more to Staten Island, we're  
23 simply going to get more back.  
24



1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Mr. Chairman, I  
3 just close by saying to the folks who are going  
4 through this ULURP process for the time, I know  
5 it's been frustrating and there's lot of--they  
6 see lots of fits and starts, and they've read a  
7 lot of things, and the waters have been a little  
8 bit choppy and inadvertently I made it a little  
9 choppier last week, but there's 30 some odd days  
10 or 29 some odd days and I think everyone needs  
11 just to keep the faith. The worst thing that  
12 could happen is that you lose some of your hair  
13 and you look like me, but we--I think those of us  
14 in this side of dais understand the importance of  
15 this job and this project, these projects and  
16 what it means to Staten Island. I think all of us  
17 want the best project for Staten Island, and I  
18 will close by saying, when you are the member  
19 that represents this district and you navigate a  
20 project of this size and you have various  
21 interests and competing interests and people  
22 pulling out, it is a difficult process, Council  
23 Member Rose is right at the tip of the spear of  
24 this, right in the eye of the storm, and she's  
25 doing a very good job in trying to represent

1 Staten Island, and it's not easy. So I just  
2 wanted to tip my hat to her today. Thank you Mr.  
3 Chairman.

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,  
6 Council Member Oddo. I think we're going to  
7 cross the bridge now and we'll go from Staten  
8 Island so you don't have to pay the toll,  
9 Domenic. But Domenic M. Recchia, Junior.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Thank you,  
11 Mr. Chairman, and I want to just say that I think  
12 my colleague Debbie Rose is doing an excellent  
13 job. This is a tough, tough process, and you get  
14 pulled in all directions. I speak from  
15 experience, and but she's doing a good job. And  
16 like Jimmy said, the next 28 days is going to be  
17 real tough and we will support her and figure out  
18 what's for the best interest of Staten Island and  
19 her district in order to make this work. I want  
20 to just--I have a few questions in reviewing this  
21 whole process, this whole development. You  
22 talked about--I know that you've come up with  
23 this foundation where you're going to put up  
24 50,000 between the wheel and the stores, correct?

25 UNKNOWN: Yes.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: And you  
3 testified earlier that you're committed for doing  
4 this for 10 years.

5 DON CAPOCCIA: That's correct, yes.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: And how do we  
7 know that you will put this money in for the next  
8 10 years? There's no guarantee.

9 DON CAPOCCIA: The, the way we have  
10 talked about, the way we presented it is we want  
11 to be sure that it is directed to organizations  
12 that are in need and are proven organizations and  
13 can handle the--handle the money. And we, we  
14 have committed to do that for a 10 year period. I  
15 don't think any of us--I don't think I--I can't,  
16 I guess I can't speak for Rich on this, but we  
17 don't have any problem formalizing that  
18 commitment.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Oh, that's a  
20 concern because four years from now, if business  
21 goes down, the economy drops, you know, you say  
22 you don't have the funding to do this, you can't  
23 afford to do this anymore, and it's the community  
24 that planned on getting this money that will get  
25 hurt, and I think this is an issue that we have

1  
2 to look into. Community Benefits Agreements are  
3 good but they're unenforceable, and so there are  
4 other mechanisms that I think we need to do in  
5 order to protect the community about this  
6 funding. In addition to that you talked about  
7 the parking rates, okay, and so right now, tell  
8 me if I'm wrong; it's my understanding that these  
9 parking rates, this parking lot is controlled by  
10 DOT, is that correct?

11 TOM MCKNIGHT: It's partly controlled  
12 by DOT and partly by EDC.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: And it's the  
14 DOT that sets the rates, isn't that correct?

15 TOM MCKNIGHT: DOT sets the rates for  
16 its municipal lot. EDC's practice is to  
17 generally reflect the price that's based off of  
18 that municipal rate.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Okay.

20 TOM MCKNIGHT: The municipal rate is  
21 eight dollars a day. It's a better location.  
22 EDC's parking is a little bit farther away so we  
23 charge seven.

24

25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Will those  
3 rates continue to be set by DOT when this is all  
4 established?

5 TOM MCKNIGHT: They won't be est--set  
6 by DOT. They would be operated by the  
7 developers. Something to be mindful though here  
8 is that we talked about parking. We are  
9 recreating all of the commuter parking in  
10 addition to that, the projects are creating  
11 additional parking to satisfy the demand of their  
12 individual projects, and as Mr. Capoccia  
13 mentioned there's even a potential to expand that  
14 parking. So given your increasing the supply, we  
15 don't expect the rates to increase.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Sounds good.  
17 Let me give you an example. EDC, East 14<sup>th</sup>  
18 Street in Brooklyn, Kings Highway Municipal lot,  
19 people park there all day for five dollars. The  
20 private developer took it up, took it over--20  
21 dollars. That is what happens. I speak from  
22 experience. I've been through this and my  
23 constituents suffer from it today, and as a  
24 member of this I can only say I speak from  
25 experience, and that is a problem. Yes, you say

1 they increase more so you don't, but this is a  
2 serious problem, especially when a private  
3 developer runs the municipal parking lots. This  
4 is an issue that has to be worked out, and I just  
5 bring this to the attention 'cause I speak from  
6 experience. Like I said, I've been down this  
7 road before, and I just bring this to your  
8 attention, and I think it's something that we  
9 need to have a discussion about.

11 TOM MCKNIGHT: I would just note that  
12 the Councilwoman's also raised it, and it's one  
13 that we're having ongoing discussions related to.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Also, you  
15 talked about the training program, is that a  
16 union approved pre-apprentice program or non-  
17 union pre-apprentice?

18 DON CAPOCCIA: No, it's not an  
19 apprentice program, it's the Construction Trades  
20 Training Program. Unlike the apprentice program  
21 the union has, because the apprentice program  
22 with the union doesn't guarantee you a job when  
23 you finish that apprentice program. The Building  
24 Skills New York Program does guarantee you a job  
25 at the end of the training.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: And is your  
3 program approved? Is your program union approved  
4 or accredited by anybody?

5 DON CAPOCCIA: By CUNY, but not by a  
6 union, no.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Alright. In  
8 developing the waterfront, I see that you also in  
9 another project you're developing the Homeport,  
10 correct? This is EDC? Now you're building a  
11 promenade in the Homeport, and you build a  
12 promenade here, and the two, there's no money in  
13 this plan that I see from the--as being the  
14 Finance Chairman, to connect the two promenades  
15 together. How could that be accomplished? You  
16 want to comment on that?

17 TOM MCKNIGHT: There's a--that's true  
18 between this project which will create a  
19 significant esplanade as well as the Stapleton  
20 redevelopment which will create I believe  
21 ultimately about a one mile long esplanade.  
22 This, the area in between, Lighthouse Point is a  
23 part of that and that would include improving the  
24 plaza area. The main issue, however, it's  
25 something that we've spent time talking about is

1  
2 there is some privately owned waterfront in  
3 between Lighthouse Point and Stapleton. It's a  
4 degraded waterfront. The Councilwoman has asked  
5 us to see if there's ways for us to intervene to  
6 address that, but that's a core issues that it's  
7 not--it's not city controlled.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: I understand  
9 that's city control, but this is important. It  
10 has to be addressed now. If it's not addressed  
11 now, Staten Island will never be able to address  
12 this. This is their only opportunity to get  
13 everything they need is in this ULURP. So when  
14 you say that it's privately owned, who privately  
15 owns this, this one piece that you're--that's in  
16 question.

17 TOM MCKNIGHT: There's a couple  
18 pieces, but it's Bay Street Landing, it's a co-  
19 operative.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Right. Has  
21 anyone reached out to them to see if there is a  
22 way that we could connect this and build a  
23 promenade? And how much would it cost?

24 TOM MCKNIGHT: We don't have  
25 information on costs. Again, the Councilwoman



1 has flagged this issue as well. We are in talks.  
2 We haven't reached out to the co-op, but it's  
3 something we would be amenable to having a  
4 discussion around.  
5

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Well, my  
7 recommendation to EDC is you have 28 days to  
8 figure out a way, because just in reviewing this  
9 plan, and if you want this waterfront to be  
10 successful, you have to connect it all, and there  
11 has to be a way to do it, and it has to be  
12 addressed now. This is the only time. I mean,  
13 it could benefit the retail stores, and it could  
14 benefit the whole waterfront. You'd be developing  
15 the waterfront and Staten Island, and that really  
16 really blossomed and really bring visitors that  
17 just don't want to come and go on the wheel.  
18 Come, go on the wheel and stay and walk the whole  
19 promenade and go to all these different  
20 restaurants. Like we said, be an attraction and  
21 then some of them might even want to go to Snug  
22 Harbor. So, you have 28 days. My recommendation  
23 to my colleague is 28 days to figure out how we  
24 get this done. This is very, very important. In  
25 addition to that--[inaudible 04:33:28]. So I

1 just want to be--so the wheel is paying a million  
2 dollars a year rent for the lease of the  
3 property?  
4

5 KYLE KIMBALL: Sure, so the--I can go  
6 through the entire--so that's just--he asked the  
7 question about what the rent is. There's--there  
8 are other financial terms. So, the rent is what  
9 I mentioned. There's also a participation  
10 interest that the city gets if--based on  
11 ridership. And they are also agreeing to pay  
12 pilot--pay a pilot, which is equivalent to taxes,  
13 and they are making a 225 mi--225,000 dollars a  
14 year esplanade maintenance contribution.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: 225, and  
16 they're going to maintain the promenade, that's  
17 the money?

18 KYLE KIMBALL: Yeah, and all--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: [interposing]  
20 And who's going to be in charge of that?

21 KYLE KIMBALL: Yeah, go ahead.

22 TOM MCKNIGHT: They will be  
23 responsible for maintaining upland from Bank  
24 Street and EDC will be responsible for  
25

1 maintaining the waterfront. We maintain it  
2 today.

3  
4 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: And I just  
5 want to leave with this one thought is about the  
6 ferry terminal, and the ferry 24 hour service,  
7 and what's your thoughts on improving the ferry  
8 service, that it runs all night? Where are we  
9 with that?

10 KYLE KIMBALL: So the--again, going  
11 back to the previous answer around ferry service,  
12 I think this is something that we are committed  
13 to monitoring over time. The ferry in terms of  
14 the projects itself are not necessarily--the  
15 ferry's not impacted on a 24 hour basis by the  
16 projects, but again, it's something that we will  
17 continue to monitor. Everyone here at this table  
18 and on the dice has the best interest in making  
19 sure that the ferry is--that people can get to  
20 and from Staten Island, whether or not they're  
21 going to the wheel, retail, home, or somewhere  
22 else. So I think it's this--something that we're  
23 all committed to making sure that it works 24  
24 hours, but there's no specific plan to address

1 the ferry operations during business hours  
2 outside of the--aside of the ferry and retail.

3  
4 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Well, the  
5 ferry service is extremely important and it's  
6 something that I think the people of Staten  
7 Island deserve and they really need. I think  
8 it's something that going through this major  
9 ULURP and the City benefitting a great deal from  
10 this, I really see that there is a way to offset  
11 the course of these additional ferry services all  
12 night. I think that's something that should be  
13 addressed before this ULURP is passed. Okay.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright. Just--  
15 Mr. Capoccia, let me just--I just want to get  
16 clear on the one issue of the building--this  
17 Building Skills Training curriculum that you  
18 mentioned with CUNY, and you say this guarantees  
19 them a job. You're saying that if they take this  
20 course, they'll get a job on this project. Is  
21 that what you're saying?

22 DON CAPOCCIA: Yes, all the builders  
23 who are supporting, financially supporting this  
24 program all commit to deliver x number of jobs  
25 every year under this program.

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Right.

3 DON CAPOCCIA: So there is a  
4 guaranteed job when the training is completed.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: On this project?

6 DON CAPOCCIA: In this project there  
7 is--yes, in this project there is.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: And how does this  
9 type of program differ from a state approved  
10 construction, apprenticeship program, do you  
11 know?

12 DON CAPOCCIA: I don't know. I don't  
13 know what--I don't know.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: So the people who  
15 come out of this, taking this training course  
16 from CUNY, and they get a job here. Do they get  
17 health benefits for this?

18 DON CAPOCCIA: Some may. I don't know.  
19 Our construction field workers do not get health  
20 benefits.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Right. And do  
22 they get a pension benefit?

23 DON CAPOCCIA: No.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. So the  
25 difference might be that the other ones, they

1  
2 train you for the long term, a long term job,  
3 long term benefits, long term pension in a union.  
4 I mean that's a distinction there.

5 DON CAPOCCIA: Provided that there's a  
6 job after the apprenticeship, yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Right, okay.  
8 Anybody else have any questions? Oh, Ms. Rose?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you. And  
10 I'll be brief because I know people, other people  
11 want to testify. But with--the Building Skills  
12 Program is not a Department of Labor approved  
13 program, is it?

14 DON CAPOCCIA: It's the--the academic  
15 portion of the Building Skills Program is  
16 administered by CUNY.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: By CUNY.

18 DON CAPOCCIA: City of University of  
19 New York.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: But it's not the  
21 department of labor trans--approved, and  
22 therefore, isn't that program only for NYCHA  
23 residents?

24 DON CAPOCCIA: No, it is not.  
25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: It's not. And  
3 so anyone can participate in that program?

4 DON CAPOCCIA: Yes, we founded that  
5 program and we brought NYCHA into it last year.  
6 We started this with Laguardia Community College  
7 five years ago. A group of builders and I, we  
8 funded this.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So are these--  
10 because it's not DOL approved, right? It is--  
11 they're not--

12 DON CAPOCCIA: [interposing] I don't  
13 know.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Department of  
15 Labor approved?

16 DON CAPOCCIA: I have no idea.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay, alright.  
18 So the skills are not--non-transferable?

19 DON CAPOCCIA: The skills are  
20 transferable. It's provided that the--I'm  
21 assuming that if someone goes through the 10 week  
22 program and they acquire some fundamental skill  
23 in one of these construction trade areas, that it  
24 can be implemented in any construction site.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: But it wouldn't  
3 give them an advantage or entrance into unionized  
4 labor, would it?

5 DON CAPOCCIA: I don't know whether it  
6 would--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [interposing]  
8 Because it's not--

9 DON CAPOCCIA: [interposing] give them  
10 an advantage in unionized labor. I don't know.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Alright. Okay.  
12 And I want to thank you--

13 DON CAPOCCIA: It wouldn't--it  
14 wouldn't just so you know, it would not prevent  
15 them from becoming union members.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And Council  
17 Member Otto, I want to thank you for bringing up  
18 the commitment to the culturalists. You know we  
19 are--discussions are ongoing, and again as I said  
20 that, you know, my concern is that all of Staten  
21 Island, you know, Staten Islanders benefit, and  
22 so I want to thank you for bringing that up. And  
23 the Bank Street corridor from Jersey Street to  
24 the ferry terminal, which is a major access  
25



1 route, could you expand on your comments about  
2 what you plan to do for the corridor?

3  
4 SHELLY FRIEDMAN: Yes, of course. The  
5 area of the shoreline from the memorial out to  
6 Jersey Street is not part of our development  
7 site. There is an unmapped street, Bank Street,  
8 that has been used for access to the commuter  
9 lots on the development--that are presently on  
10 the development site. Since we will be taking all  
11 of our parking in off of new entrance off of  
12 Nicholas Street, that road is more interest for  
13 emergency vehicles and for servicing the wheel  
14 and beyond. We have been asked and we have  
15 agreed to widen that road so it can be a full-  
16 service road to 30 feet. I think it's presently  
17 22 or 26 feet wide. We will take that from the  
18 memorial all the way out to Jersey Street. We  
19 will also include a dedicated bike lane within  
20 that portion, that strip of the city-owned  
21 property which we are improving. And finally,  
22 along that path there are--there are some damaged  
23 public amenities, benches, waste receptacles,  
24 some lighting, and some trees that have never  
25 been removed or repaired since the last two

1  
2 storms to reach Staten Island, and we have a  
3 program for replacing those and upgrading those  
4 that are along the path of, you know, of this  
5 band that we'll improving to widen Bank Street.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And I, I just  
7 want to ask Mr. McKnight, because I was  
8 requested from my constituents--they--it's really  
9 difficult to understand how traffic won't  
10 actually decompose, dissolve to you know--you  
11 know, just chaos due to the fact that it's  
12 unmitigatable [phonetic]. How are you--you said  
13 that it won't get any worse than, you know, it  
14 is, could you explain how if we're increasing  
15 volume it won't get any worse?

16 TOM MCKNIGHT: Of the--sure. The  
17 traffic analysis that was completed looked at  
18 about 40 intersections as far as five miles away  
19 from the project site to ensure that if there  
20 were impacts from the project we were aware of  
21 them and we could mitigate for them. That  
22 analysis determined impacts at about  
23 approximately 15 locations, and then that was the  
24 mitigation process that we went through to  
25 identify what improvements could we put in place

1  
2 to address those issues, and so that's the menu  
3 of things that I mentioned before, and with those  
4 measures in place in certain instances you're  
5 preventing traffic from getting--going far--below  
6 levels than they are today. And in certain  
7 instances you're improving compared to traffic  
8 conditions today. And again, that menu of things  
9 is additional signals, additional traffic  
10 enforcement agents, new crosswalks, a range of  
11 improvements aimed at addressing this issue.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And we're going  
13 to monitor it to see if smart lights is a viable  
14 option, right?

15 TOM MCKNIGHT: As part of the project,  
16 we've collectively agreed to monitoring to ensure  
17 that what we proposed is adequate. If it's not  
18 adequate, then other measures would be taken.

19 KYLE KIMBALL: And just to be clear, as  
20 Tom is indicating, that's, you know, as I said  
21 this is an ongoing partnership to make sure that  
22 this project is successful long after it's built,  
23 between EDC, the developers, this community, and  
24 so we have committed with the developers to  
25 continue ongoing monitoring, post approvals, post

1 construction, and have set out a range of traffic  
2 improvements that can be made including  
3 restriping signage, new lights, etcetera that  
4 both developers and EDC have committed to pay  
5 for. So the idea here is we are doing what we  
6 think we--what we know that we can do know.  
7 We're also committing to a period of time after  
8 the project is built in which we will continue to  
9 monitor it very closely and have also set aside a  
10 commitment to doing additional measures should  
11 they be necessary.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright, let me--  
15 Mr. Oddo and then Mr. Recchia, just for last  
16 questions and then we'll try to finish up this  
17 panel.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Just one point.

19 Listen, you guys, I've worked with you for almost  
20 20 years and you two guys a little, you know,  
21 less than that, and I respect you and I take you  
22 at your word. The unfortunate reality is when  
23 the stuff hits the fan on this traffic issue,  
24 it'll be a different administration, and we're  
25 going to, hopefully God willing, still be here

1 and it's going to be difficult to say, "Well,  
2 they promised us that they would in the future do  
3 x, y, and z." That's why as per Councilwoman  
4 Rose's questions and the point made by Council  
5 Member Recchia, in the next 28 days we have to  
6 get as much of this committed to writing to tie  
7 the hands, if you will, you know, of the next  
8 administration so that this is not just an I owe  
9 you, and forgive me for showing my Republican  
10 stripes, but let's break out a little Ronnie  
11 Reagan here and "trust but verify." So as much  
12 as we can put this, you know, into some sort of  
13 commitment that binds, you know, that's going to  
14 be the gist, I think, of a lot of the  
15 negotiations in 28 years, because Debbie and I  
16 and others don't want to go to Mayor de Blasio or  
17 Mayor Lhota's staff and say, "but these guys said  
18 x, y, and z." And now you guys are reneging on  
19 that.  
20

21 KYLE KIMBALL: Specific to the traffic  
22 we are doing, going beyond trusting and  
23 verifying. We've actually contracted. So the  
24 language of the things that I'm talking about,  
25 the things that Tom has talked about specific to

1 traffic are contractual terms that are in ink  
2 will be executed.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Mr. Recchia?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Yeah, I just  
6 have a few questions. I'm a--I just want to be  
7 clear, the job training, Mr. Capoccia, the job  
8 training, is that state approved or it's just  
9 something given at CUNY?

10 DON CAPOCCIA: It's a course of study  
11 given at CUNY.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Okay, so it's  
13 not state approved. Do they get their  
14 scaffolding card, their OSHA card, or?

15 DON CAPOCCIA: They get their OSHA  
16 card, and a certification that they've completed  
17 this 10 week program.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Okay. And if  
19 you do develop this, are the contractors, the  
20 subcontractors, are you going to make sure that  
21 they meet all locals and federal safety  
22 regulations, rules and regulations and health  
23 regulations?

24 DON CAPOCCIA: Yes, absolutely. In  
25 fact, we're now bidding this job currently.

1 We're bidding it to a number of contractors,  
2 Staten Island based, union and non-union  
3 carpenters. We have recommendations from BCTC,  
4 three contractors, large contractors, names you  
5 would know who are currently bidding the entire  
6 project for us. The have--they have indicated  
7 that they think they can be competitive, but as  
8 far as safety is concerned, we will take every  
9 step to make sure that it's safety. Our company,  
10 BFCE, partners BFC construction. When we are  
11 rated for our insurance at this point there is a-  
12 -there's a mean number which everyone is keyed  
13 off of. Either they have more incidents or  
14 losses above that number or less incidences.  
15 Over the last 10 year period our rating has  
16 always been 12 percent below the median as far as  
17 losses and safety incidents are concerned.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Are you going  
20 to have a process where if work is--want to make  
21 a complaint or file an issue that should be  
22 corrected, is there a process for that?

23 DON CAPOCCIA: Yeah, always. They, if  
24 they feel that there's a safety exposure they  
25 come immediately to their supervisor and are

1 encouraged to make sure that that is known and  
2 corrected immediately.

3  
4 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: A big issue  
5 is it's great that you want to hire local and  
6 train that, that's very good, 'cause we need  
7 jobs, but once this job is completed, where do  
8 these workers go?

9 DON CAPOCCIA: Well first off all, once  
10 this job is completed, there's 1,000 permanent  
11 jobs for which we have committed priority for  
12 everyone of those jobs to community residents.  
13 So you're talking about permanent jobs for the  
14 life of the project being with the recruitment  
15 coming directly from the community. When we've  
16 completed the construction job, provided we have  
17 other work to continue onto, our crews go with  
18 us. We have--we have employees that have been  
19 with us for 25 years that we--that came to us  
20 when we were working perhaps in West Harlem,  
21 Central Harlem, Central Brooklyn, and many of  
22 these employees have followed us over the years.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: So, they do  
24 have an opp--they do have a chance of staying  
25 with you?



2 DON CAPOCCIA: Oh, absolutely.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: The  
4 construction part of it.

5 DON CAPOCCIA: We rely on this. We  
6 rely on this labor source.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: The other  
8 question I have, this is for you and EDC as far  
9 as the jobs, the permanent jobs, would you have  
10 any objection is that certain residents from  
11 certain zip codes be given priority first for  
12 those permanent jobs and telling those stores  
13 that you have to interview first from these zip  
14 codes first so we can ensure that certain zip  
15 codes get addressed?

16 DON CAPOCCIA: We are doing that. We  
17 are going to do that.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: You're going  
19 to do that?

20 DON CAPOCCIA: Yeah. I mean, assuming  
21 you're talking about the North Shore community.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Yeah, but  
23 also--

24 DON CAPOCCIA: [interposing] If you're  
25 talking about--

2 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: [interposing]

3 I just want to make sure that certain--

4 DON CAPOCCIA: [interposing] I mean,

5 that's what we're--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: [interposing]

7 you know--

8 DON CAPOCCIA: [interposing] That's

9 what we be--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: [interposing]

11 certain zip codes are addressed. The only way to

12 do it is by having let's say the first 30 or 40

13 days if you live in zip--in the zip code you

14 could apply for the job, and those people get

15 first preference.

16 DON CAPOCCIA: Yeah, we're going to

17 assemble a pool of job-ready, pre-vetted

18 applicants of--this is probably one of the--one

19 of the best benefits we can offer to our tenants

20 is the job pool right in their back yard. So we

21 think it works very well.

22 KYLE KIMBALL: And just so--just so

23 you--from the EDC perspective, the job program

24 that I was talking about with Council Member

25 Rose, the EDC administered Hire NYC, those are

1 for the permanent jobs. Those are locally  
2 targeted and so with the target population it's  
3 very similar to what we did in Coney Island.  
4

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Right, that's  
6 why I talk from my experience, and I just want to  
7 make sure that certain people from certain zip  
8 codes get first priority, not that, oh, they  
9 weren't qualified, they didn't have this  
10 experience, that experience or this--you know,  
11 let's put everything on the line exactly what  
12 kind of jobs are there, what we need to--and if  
13 we do move forward with this, I think that we  
14 should immediately start a retail training  
15 program and funding should come from, from this  
16 ULURP, so people who want to work in this field,  
17 you know, in retail, that we start training them  
18 now so when they go on the interview, they'll be  
19 prepared on how to do an interview, how to write  
20 a resume, and they have a little bit of  
21 experience.

22 KYLE KIMBALL: Just one thing that  
23 does happen with Hire NYC program is one of the  
24 percentages that are hired, one of the  
25 requirements within the program is about 30

1  
2 percent of those or a certain, a big portion of  
3 those are required or is encouraged to be  
4 promoted of the one year. And also during that  
5 process there's a fairly robust skills training  
6 program that we conduct to build capacity. So  
7 we're--some of that's already happening.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Well, this is  
9 something that I think we have to put in writing  
10 within the next 28 days.

11 KYLE KIMBALL: It's in our contract  
12 with developers.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: I know, but  
14 it's not in the contract between you, Mr.  
15 Capoccia, and the City Council, the actual Land  
16 Use documents. So we would definitely want to  
17 put that in that.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

19 DON CAPOCCIA: Just to--just to let  
20 you know, we have already agreed to do training  
21 for these retail workers so that they are--so  
22 that they are job ready and can be recruited  
23 immediately from the pool by this--by the  
24 retailers.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Thank you  
3 very much.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. I think  
5 we're done for now, I think with you guys. I  
6 just--we have people here who have been here for  
7 six and half hours or so, many of them, and I  
8 just want to hear from them. I know a lot of  
9 people had to leave, so we want to get to that.  
10 So you guys I'm sure are miserable about that,  
11 but we're going to let you go. And then we're  
12 going to try to get in to hear from the people  
13 out here who have been so patient and cooperative  
14 throughout this very long day. So with that in  
15 mind I'm going to call. I'm going to remind you  
16 of the game rules here. I'm going to call panel-  
17 -I'm going to call panels in opposition and in  
18 favor alternately, everyone, probably panels of  
19 four. We're going to try to get up there. We're  
20 going to limit people to two minutes again. You  
21 should know this by now, right? And try to adapt  
22 it. I am going to read every name that I'm  
23 holding here, and holding there. It's over 50  
24 something names. If they happen to had to leave  
25 we will understand, and if by some chance you

1 say, "You know what, those six people just said  
2 the exact same thing I wanted to say." You don't  
3 have to say it and we could just read your name  
4 and say how patient you were, but if you want to  
5 we absolutely will be here to hear it from  
6 everyone if they'd like. So with that in mind,  
7 I'm going to pi--read off as they're listed here.  
8 [off mic conversation] Right, and if I call your  
9 name and you're in the balcony, just say "here"  
10 and I'll wait for you to get down here if you  
11 happen to be the next name on our list. So with  
12 that in mind, in opposition: Shirley Aldebol,  
13 Paul Fernandez, Miranda Nelson, Stan Hellman  
14 [phonetic]. Yeah, so in the future, when I do  
15 say your name give me some, some acknowledgement  
16 so I know who's here and who's not. I think we're  
17 good. Oh, you're sitting in? For Miranda,  
18 alright. Well that's certainly a step down, but  
19 alright, what the heck. Josh Gold for Miranda  
20 Nelson. So again, make sure to state your name  
21 when you speak. I'm sorry I'm getting a little  
22 punchy myself. State your name when you speak and  
23 then we're happy to hear your testimony. So  
24 whoever wants to go first, thank you.  
25

2 SHIRLEY ALDEBOL: I guess I'll go  
3 first. Good afternoon. My name is Shirley  
4 Aldebol and I'm Vice President of SEIU Local  
5 32bj. 32bj is the City's largest private sector  
6 union representing the office cleaner, security  
7 officers, doormen, superintendents and handy  
8 persons who provide vital--who perform vital  
9 roles in maintaining the buildings where New  
10 Yorkers work and live. I'm here to testify today  
11 on behalf of the 70,000 New Yorkers represented  
12 by 32bj in expressing our concerns about the St.  
13 George Waterfront Revitalization Project, Staten  
14 Island Harbor Commons Project. Thirty-five  
15 hundred of our members live on Staten Island.  
16 Right now in our city and country income  
17 inequality is on the rise. According to new data  
18 released by the Census Bureau last month, as many  
19 as 21 percent of New Yorkers, more than one out  
20 of five live in poverty. At the same time the  
21 cost of living is continuing to increase. Fifty-  
22 four percent of New Yorkers pay over 30 percent  
23 of their income in rent. With so many working  
24 people struggling just to get by, we must do  
25 everything we can to create and support good jobs

1 that allow New Yorkers to live, raise families,  
2 and thrive in the City. The Staten Island Harbor  
3 Commons St. George Waterfront Revitalization  
4 Project--it's very long--utilizes public land, a  
5 valuable and very public resource. Spokespeople  
6 for the project have asserted that these  
7 developments will help to spur economic  
8 development throughout Staten Island that will  
9 increase employment and economic activity in the  
10 borough for decades to come, but the single best  
11 way to make sure these promises are not empty is  
12 if the selected private developers commit to--  
13 commit that all the jobs created through these  
14 two developments will be high quality safe jobs.  
15 So far, the developer of the--of empire outlets  
16 has refused to guarantee this.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: If I can just ask  
19 you to wrap up. I apologize.

20 SHIRLEY ALDEBOL: Okay. So I just  
21 want to ask one question, and you could probably  
22 ask it later on, is, you know, I don't know how  
23 they can guarantee safety in these construction  
24 sites with a 10 week certification training. I'm  
25 not in the construction trades, but it just to me



1 raised a red flag and you know, we have a  
2 training program--

3 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing] It's  
4 a good segue to our next speaker--

5 SHIRLEY ALDEBOL: [interposing] for  
6 security officers, yeah.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: So, I'm going to--  
8 -

9 SHIRLEY ALDEBOL: For security  
10 officers that, you know, prepares our security  
11 officers to secure buildings like the Empire  
12 State building and the Port Authority and other  
13 places like this that are high profile buildings  
14 and locations--

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing] Got  
16 it.

17 SHIRLEY ALDEBOL: throughout the City.  
18 So we just wanted to flag that.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.  
20 Sorry, about that cutting you off. Just if I  
21 start right off the bat, I'm going to really be  
22 in for it. So, Mr. Fernandez?

23 PAUL FERNANDEZ: Thank you--  
24  
25

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]

3 You like coming here, don't you?

4 PAUL FERNANDEZ: Yeah, I've been here  
5 a while. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, members  
6 of the Subcommittee. My name is Paul Fernandez.  
7 I'm the Chief of Staff of the Building and  
8 Construction Trades Council of Greater New York.  
9 The organization consisting of local affiliates  
10 of 15 national and international unions  
11 representing 100,000 members in New York City.  
12 I'm also here on behalf of Build Up NYC, which  
13 represents 200,000 union members in construction,  
14 building services, security and hospitality. The  
15 St. George Waterfront Redevelopment has been  
16 touted as an economic boom to Staten Island and  
17 that is indeed what it should be. Regrettably at  
18 this point it is not, and we must therefore  
19 oppose two specific Land Use Applications  
20 contained in LU 926 and LU 928, associated with  
21 the development of the Empire Outlets Project.  
22 As matters now stand, this project has yet to  
23 address important conditions upon which Community  
24 Board One extended its support for the project.  
25 Empire Outlets has said maybe it will utilize

1 contractors which employ individuals paid good  
2 wages with health and retirement benefits under a  
3 project labor agreement, but this possibility has  
4 been offered only for less than 15 percent of the  
5 project which had reportedly anticipated 20  
6 million dollars or more of state economic  
7 development grants, but was recently approved  
8 only to apply for six million dollars. So thus  
9 far we have maybe some good jobs on less than 15  
10 percent of the project that lacks financing for  
11 critical infrastructure improvements. We have no  
12 commitments of substance for those employed on  
13 the remaining 85 percent of the project who will  
14 presumably be treated as second class citizens  
15 which we Staten Island residents have had enough  
16 of. And they should not have to endure again on  
17 a project of this potential magnitude. Empire  
18 Outlets has further indicated it will provide  
19 training to local residents to enter the  
20 industry, but upon closer inspection this  
21 training is revealed to be under a relatively new  
22 small and untested program Building Skills that  
23 does not have a curriculum capable providing the  
24 level of training to give individuals the skills  
25

1 needed to compete for long term employment and  
2 upward mobility. In contrast, the New York Wheel  
3 Project which had Land Use Applications before  
4 you that we support has taken measures consistent  
5 with creating good jobs for 100 percent of the  
6 workers involved in its construction. And  
7 utilization of contractors which do participate  
8 in state approved training programs that offer  
9 two to five years of classroom and supervised on  
10 the job instruction. I know that you have a time  
11 constraint here, so I'll wrap up my testimony  
12 there. We support the Land Use Application  
13 specific to the New York Wheel. At this point in  
14 time, we're constrained to oppose the  
15 applications affecting only the Empire Outlets  
16 portion of the ULURP. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.  
19 Fernandez and thank you for your cooperation.  
20 You want to--who's going next now? You want to?  
21 Okay, alright. Thanks.

22 STAN HELLMAN: Thank you, Mr.  
23 Chairman, members of the Council for this  
24 opportunity to speak. My name is Stan Hellman.  
25 I'm a resident of St. George. We are Staten

1 Islanders for Responsible Development of the New  
2 York Wheel. We agree that the waterfront  
3 development promises to be a great benefit to the  
4 north shore of Staten Island. The north shore of  
5 Staten Island has a most amazing and wonderful  
6 amenity, the Hudson Harbor Vista seen from  
7 Richmond Terrace between the St. George Ferry  
8 Terminal and Jersey Street to the west. One  
9 third of this panoramic view free for anyone to  
10 see 24/7 as they drive or walk by now will be  
11 blocked by a proposed accessory terminal building  
12 and a public parking garage. If it is proposed  
13 that the landscaped roof of a parking garage is  
14 to replace the New York City skyline, the view of  
15 the George Washington Bridge, the Statue of  
16 Liberty, both the Brooklyn Bridge and the  
17 Manhattan Bridge and all of Brooklyn, St. George  
18 will have its own great kills landfill scape.  
19 The developer's plan calls for the structure to  
20 begin its rise from four feet above the existing  
21 terrace wall at Nicholas Street and in almost a  
22 quarter of a mile it will tower almost 50 feet  
23 above the sidewalk. As seen in the developers  
24 plans and sections, there will be no view  
25

1 corridors in the 900 foot long structure. We  
2 cannot understand how it is justified that a  
3 multi-block long canyon will be created between  
4 Nicholas Street and Hamilton Street where  
5 presently the most unique view in all of New York  
6 can be seen. This magnificent scenic view is now  
7 available to anyone at any time without climbing  
8 a hill. If the additional 100 plus parking spaces  
9 gained by the accessory terminal are truly  
10 needed, there are many undeveloped acres to the  
11 west of the site that could be used for  
12 additional parking. At present, there are  
13 shuttle buses that take commuters from the  
14 parking lot to the ferry terminal, so the added  
15 distance would not pose a hardship. As  
16 understood from the developer's plans and  
17 sections, there will be no view corridors, a 900  
18 foot parking structure. The structure slopes up  
19 toward the waterfront, not down as would be  
20 natural. There will be no additional direct  
21 public access to the waterfront beyond that which  
22 now exists, approximately a one mile entry point  
23 between the two entrances.  
24

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

2 STAN HELLMAN: We are asking that the  
3 proposed accessory terminal building, a public  
4 parking garage plan be amended to allow the  
5 unobstructed view of the Hudson Harbor waterfront  
6 to remain. We ask that the city desire--that in  
7 the City's desire to improve the economy of the  
8 north shore, the well-being of future generations  
9 of Staten Islanders will not be compromised.

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Great. Thank you  
11 very much. I'd like to call on Josh Gold. I want  
12 to note that this morning when we started he was  
13 clean shaven.

14 JOSH GOLD: On that note I'm going to  
15 skip thanking everybody and go right into my  
16 testimony. Josh Gold, hotel workers representing  
17 32,000 hotel workers in the New York area. As  
18 part of the outlet mall project BFC Partners  
19 plans to build a 200 room hotel. It has the  
20 potential to create many jobs for the local  
21 community. However, we're concerned that these  
22 jobs will not necessarily be good jobs, since we  
23 have yet to work out a process for a fair union  
24 election with the developer. Over the years,  
25 hotel workers in New York City and throughout the

1  
2 area have fought to change what tends to be a low  
3 wage, exploitive work into one of the best career  
4 options for working class people in New York  
5 City. Being a hotel worker has become the kind  
6 of stable middle class occupation that is rare  
7 these days with good wages, free family  
8 healthcare, and retirement security that doesn't  
9 rely on public subsidies. But throughout New York  
10 these jobs are being threatened with the opening  
11 of non-union hotels where workers have to  
12 struggle to make end meets and rely on public  
13 subsidies from city and state government. These  
14 hotels undercut our contract, and the jobs are  
15 not the kind of family supporting jobs the  
16 workers there deserve. We're very concerned that  
17 this hotel could become another such hotel.  
18 Public land and public dollars should not be used  
19 by developers to undercut middle class jobs  
20 supported by private developers on private land,  
21 and therefore we are currently opposing the land  
22 use application.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Wow. Very good.

24 [cross-talk]



1 JOSH GOLD: I was speaking to my  
2 Republican Colleague.  
3

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: No, don't clap  
5 for him, it'll go to his head. You can do like  
6 those, at the end of commercials. You could do  
7 those legal things for like Viagra ads at then  
8 end, you know, "Don't use this if." Anyway, any  
9 one in the panel have a question for their--these  
10 panel? Sorry, losing my mind here.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: The hotel--

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing] Mr.  
13 Recchia?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Yeah, are  
15 they going to have catering in that hotel or just  
16 rooms?

17 JOSH GOLD: I'm not privy to that. I  
18 don't believe that they will have catering. I  
19 believe they'll just have rooms. And you give me  
20 an opening to say that everybody in the red shirt  
21 who says Staten Island first, we support 100  
22 percent local jobs and you should make sure the  
23 developers who asked you to come here, that the  
24 management jobs that pay really good wages are  
25

2 also given to north shore residents as well as  
3 the low wage jobs that they're proposing.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Alright.  
5 Alright. Great. Alright. Well thank you all  
6 very much, and again I appreciate all your  
7 patience. Alright, we're going to do a panel in  
8 favor now. Okay, Michael Enritas [phonetic]? I  
9 can't really read it well. Dr. Demetrius  
10 Carolina? Annette Kraljev and Sal Sotiel  
11 [phonetic]? Sotiele [phonetic]? How many we  
12 got? Have those four. I want to--I'm going to  
13 run you this by, when I call your name just give  
14 me some sound that makes me know you're here,  
15 'cause otherwise--we're one short? So then I can  
16 call another name. I'm assuming we only have  
17 three, right? No? Theo Dorian, are you here?  
18 Theo, come on up. Come on down. Have a seat.  
19 Start whenever you guys are ready. We'll get  
20 right into it.

21 REVEREND CAROLINA: I'll, I'll defer  
22 to the--

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Again, if you're  
24 working on a written text, you got to try to work  
25

1 with me on this and skip ahead to the parts that  
2 are more important, okay?

3 REVEREND CAROLINA: Ladies first. Go  
4 ahead.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thanks.

6 ANNETTE KRALJEV: Good afternoon,  
7 Council. My name is Annette Kraljev, I am the  
8 owner of ATO Contracting. I've had a relationship  
9 with BFC Construction, both as non-union 10 years  
10 ago, and four years ago I joined the union to  
11 help them do the Bay Street Project. I know Joe  
12 Ferrara and Donald Capoccia for 10 years.

13 They're nothing but good people. They pay their  
14 contractors, I'll tell you that much, and I think  
15 that they deserve a fair chance at this job.

16 They can build it. I will help them build it. I  
17 will join any PLA they ask me to. I will go

18 along with getting the people in Staten Island  
19 into the union, into an apprenticeship program,  
20 which the unions do offer. It is up to the

21 person to be able to fit the criteria that the  
22 union needs. One is we will hire all union

23 workers, but we would help to get these people

24 into the union if they have--they need to have a  
25

1 GED or a high school diploma. The union only  
2 lets you put apprentices in on certain time of  
3 the year lottery. So maybe negotiations have to  
4 be made with the union ahead of time to put the  
5 people in Staten Island into the union, then they  
6 continue to work for myself or other firms in the  
7 union. I did Resorts World in the Aqueduct. I  
8 joined many unions there. So I am willing to  
9 help BFC get this job done in any way possible,  
10 any union matter. I'm a local. I'm a taper  
11 union, a drywall union, local 580, miscellaneous  
12 ironworks, and I will join--I'm local 79. I did  
13 Madison Square Garden. I will join any union to  
14 help them. And they're really nice people.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

17 ANNETTE KRALJEV: Okay.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright.

19 REVEREND CAROLINA: Mr. Chairman,  
20 Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Reverend  
21 Demetrius Carolina. I am a local pastor, senior  
22 pastor of a local church, also Executive Director  
23 of a Community Development Corporation and  
24 formally Executive Director of Community  
25 Development Corporation in the Bronx. We built a

1 150 million dollar shopping center there. It is  
2 my great pleasure to be here and to join the  
3 sentiments of those who support this waterfront  
4 development project on the north shore. This  
5 project has been a long time in coming, since  
6 2009. Many variations of this multibillion  
7 dollar now initiative has been discussed, debated  
8 and rumored throughout Staten Island. Today many  
9 of our community residents have some concerns  
10 regarding the potentiality of long term viable  
11 employment, which you've heard over and over  
12 again, employment regarding the building of this  
13 great development project along with long term  
14 retail management and even technological  
15 employment for green spaces and alike as well as  
16 long term sustainability and viability of this  
17 economic engine for the north shore. We are also  
18 keenly aware that there has been terms--it has  
19 been termed that there is some competition of  
20 interests between the north shore community,  
21 unions, and the developing--developers of this  
22 particular project. We believe strongly that our  
23 City Council person who has an unparalleled  
24 understanding of the socioeconomic factors that  
25

1  
2 come into play regarding the complex dynamics  
3 that come into play for the long term  
4 sustainability and for a win/win in our  
5 community, and I do mean win/win in our  
6 community. Therefore, there is a need for open  
7 dialogue and for negotiation on all sides so that  
8 we can as a community all benefit. Let me be  
9 clear, this project is needed. This project has  
10 the support of the large majority of our  
11 community, and with open dialogue we can expand  
12 tourism, property values, employment, and higher  
13 quality of life for all of Staten Island. I want  
14 to end by saying happy birthday to Vinny. It is  
15 also my birthday. I've been here for 7 hours,  
16 and--

17 ANNETTE KRALJEV: Happy birthday.

18 [applause]

19 REVEREND CAROLINA: we want this to  
20 happen.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: What a happy group  
22 we are. Look at that. Happy birthday to you.

23 REVEREND CAROLINA: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Who wants to go  
25 next?

2 UNKNOWN: [inaudible 05:12:22]

3 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: We accept  
4 birthday wishes as long as you can do it within  
5 two minutes, okay?

6 THEO DORIAN: Yeah, it is a little  
7 tiring after being here all day, but I'll try to  
8 talk as lucidly as I can. My name is Theo  
9 Dorian, I'm the President of the St. George Civic  
10 Association representing the residents and  
11 businesses of the location of the neighborhood,  
12 where these developments are to be located. I  
13 want to say a very briefly, although I could talk  
14 for hours on the benefits of these complexes to  
15 our community. In this particular case, all of  
16 the complaints raised by the community, and there  
17 are many, are--have to do with complaints with  
18 the City, things that the City has not taken care  
19 of and should have all along. And even the  
20 opponents--the opponents of this, but even the  
21 proponents of it, many of them say, "Well, the  
22 City ain't never going to do anything for us  
23 until we cause a serious crisis of matters." And  
24 that really is a cynical and terrible way to get  
25 things done, but after listening to the EDC's

1 testimony, I have some breath left. It didn't  
2 take it all away, but it's really quite amazing  
3 that the--to listen to the steps or non-stops  
4 that are being taken to mitigate our concerns.  
5 Our association voted to support this project, as  
6 did the Community Board, with certain  
7 stipulations, and they're identical in many ways.  
8 The Community Board has quite a few more than we  
9 do, and I'll let them speak for themselves, but I  
10 can tell you that painting a few lines and  
11 changing a few lights and the minor gestures that  
12 they've taken do not address the problems that we  
13 have. The very part of the plan that we like the  
14 best is the Empire Outlets and that's the one  
15 that's going to admittedly exacerbate the traffic  
16 problems that we have, and so we need to see  
17 these mitigated. Not by the developers but by  
18 the city. First of all, we need to pass the Otto  
19 bill requiring greater ferry service. It's  
20 extremely important. That's one thing the city  
21 council can do. And the E--and there are many  
22 things that the EDC needs to do and the other  
23 city agencies such as the DOT which have not  
24 expanded. Councilman Otto really hit the nail on  
25



1  
2 the head when he said, "And what are you doing to  
3 mitigate these concerns. So if--well, alright.  
4 So it's important not to put the cart before the  
5 horse. The only time the city or the EDC pays  
6 any attention to our north shores is as a source  
7 of profit to its associates and it's fascinating  
8 to see the vigor and the speed with which this  
9 project is being expedited, if only the same sort  
10 of energy could be put into taking care of  
11 traffic concerns. We want to see these projects  
12 happen. We especially would like to see the hotel  
13 and the mall which could help our neighborhood,  
14 but we really need to see some type of action and  
15 on just about--

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing] Got  
17 it.

18 THEO DORIAN: every point that you  
19 have addressed to the city I've really heard no  
20 answer, any plan to address ferry runs, no.  
21 Traffic mediation?

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright.

23 THEO DORIAN: Not really. Retailing,  
24 putting retailing program into ULURP, these  
25 things have to be put in writing.

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Got it.

3 THEO DORIAN: Because as--

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]

5 We're going to have to cut you off right there.

6 I'm sorry.

7 [cross-talk]

8 THEO DORIAN: Fair enough.

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: The 5 Poitnz

10 people were much better than you guys. I want

11 you to know, on both sides.

12 MICHAEL ARVANITES: Mr. Chairman,

13 before my time, I if I could just point a

14 personal privilege, welcome back to the City

15 Council Chambers. I missed you guys. I love what

16 you've done with the place. Speaking on behalf of

17 State Senator Diane Savino who is unfortunately

18 at a co-location hearing across the street at the

19 exact same time. I just want to read her

20 testimony into the record and thank you for the

21 privilege. I'll skip over some of the

22 interesting points, which you guys have already

23 enumerated. In order for Staten Islander to

24 realize the benefits and development and others

25 like it, we must keep simple and clear goals in

1 mind, whether they are jobs in construction,  
2 hospitality, building operations and maintenance  
3 and security. The jobs created by the St. George  
4 waterfront must be good jobs. Good jobs create  
5 strong community, support local businesses,  
6 reduce dependence on public services, increase  
7 our tax base and stimulate economic development.  
8 The jobs created should provide good middle class  
9 opportunities to Staten Island residents. State  
10 approved training and apprenticeship programs are  
11 time-proven method for creating good middle class  
12 careers. Recently, OSHA statistics show that  
13 workers who participate in state approved  
14 apprentice programs are involved in much fewer  
15 incidents or fatal injury on the job site than  
16 workers who have not participated in these  
17 programs. Up to 72 percent of construction  
18 fatalities in New York City occurred on job sites  
19 had not participated in job approved--in state  
20 approved training and apprentice programs.  
21 Projects such as St. George Waterfront  
22 Redevelopment must provide real opportunity for  
23 local minority and women owned businesses.  
24 Development must support the diversity and local  
25

1 culture that is Staten Island. Businesses in New  
2 Brighton, Tompkinsville, and Stapleton must be  
3 considered. If we learned only one thing from  
4 the recent devastation brought by hurricane Sandy  
5 to our community is in New Dorp, South Beach,  
6 Great Kills, Port Richmond is that any new  
7 waterfront development must be built in a way  
8 that is resilient and sustainable. When we look  
9 at the environmental impact, we must not only  
10 look at the impact the project will have on the  
11 environment such as traffic and congestion, but  
12 we must also look at the impact the environment  
13 will have on the community as a result of the  
14 project. Environmental impacts we must consider  
15 include protecting our surrounding communities  
16 from rising sea levels, increased flooding and so  
17 on. The high traffic and population density in  
18 the area, the ferry terminal calls for a  
19 heightened sensitivity to the new traffic and any  
20 development it will bring. New developments in  
21 our community must also enhance the public space  
22 and improve waterfront access. I just have one  
23 more paragraph, Mr. Chairman. The recent spike  
24 in downtown construction and development  
25

1  
2 activities gives us an opportunity to think  
3 through the plan for the future for our great  
4 borough, from Tompkinsville to St. George we have  
5 a wealth of diversity, energy and talent. We  
6 have a vast amount of land some of it prime  
7 waterfront real estate and it's time that we  
8 shape and mold this development for the coming  
9 development of Staten Island's waterfront that we  
10 have been anticipating for decades, and that it  
11 will be enjoyed by generations to come. Thank  
12 you, sir.

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. You  
14 got a slow start so we gave you that extra.

15 MICHAEL ARVANITES: I appreciate--

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]  
17 Tell Senator Savino we said hello. Thank you all  
18 very much. You guys okay? Appreciate it, and  
19 we're now--who do you want to ask a question of?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Of the, the  
21 young woman.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Oh, ma'am? Can  
23 you come back Ms.--just one quickly. Yeah, go  
24 ahead. No problem.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I'm sorry.

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISING 302

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I apologize.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I don't have  
4 your name.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I didn't realize.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I just wanted to  
7 ask--

8 ANNETTE KRALJEV: Yes.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Have you been  
10 already approached to be a contractor on this  
11 job?

12 ANNETTE KRALJEV: Yes.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And you, you've  
14 already submitted a bid?

15 ANNETTE KRALJEV: I'm going to be  
16 submitting a bid. They asked me if I would join  
17 on their PLA, 'cause I'm a union firm to help  
18 them get the job done. So I'm going to look at  
19 the trades that I do.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay, and you  
21 been accepted on the job?

22 ANNETTE KRALJEV: What do you mean? I  
23 am a WBA.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yes.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay.

2 ANNETTE KRALJEV: Okay?

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you.

4 ANNETTE KRALJEV: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Great.

6 ANNETTE KRALJEV: Have a nice day.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright, yeah,  
8 you too. Edward Josey from NAACP, Judith  
9 Febraro, Linda Winkler--Linda Winkler [phonetic]?  
10 David Goldfarb. I'm not getting that uhm--give  
11 me a "here, present, aqui," whatever works.  
12 Susan Bradly? Do I have four? Susan Bradly will  
13 be left. Just, I want to mention the 32bj, I  
14 know they're in the audience. I want to  
15 apologize. I know there was an issue with a lot  
16 of people being outside on actually the project  
17 we're doing after this, and I just wanted to  
18 apologize. I didn't realize that they were all  
19 stuck out there. We were trying to get people  
20 in, so if you could just pass that message back,  
21 I appreciate it. Okay. Great, how many we got?  
22 Four, look at that, perfect.

23 DAVID GOLDFARB: Okay, can I go ahead?  
24  
25

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: This is the four?

3 So whenever you're ready. I think you know the  
4 drill by now. State your name, and then--

5 DAVID GOLDFARB: Yeah, my name is  
6 David Goldfarb. I'm a resident of St. George.  
7 This year I've been there 40 years. I'm a past  
8 President of the Civic Association. I am their  
9 Land Use Chair, and I'm going to be speaking  
10 regarding the Civic Association's position. The  
11 St. George Civic Association welcomes responsible  
12 development of our waterfront area, especially  
13 those that integrate with the neighborhood and  
14 provide access to the waterfront and view  
15 corridors along Richmond Terrace, and we have--we  
16 do--we did support this project. We have not  
17 always supported projects in this area. In 1985  
18 and 1987 we opposed projects which were going to  
19 basically isolate the community from the  
20 waterfront. We appreciate the developers, the  
21 fact that they've been very responsive to the  
22 community. They've come back with playgrounds,  
23 the hotel orientation. After Sandy they made a  
24 number of adjustments to their thing that made it  
25 more--that it could withstand storms. But we do



1  
2 have come concerns, and our support is subject to  
3 the mitigation. The first one which has been  
4 discussed here is the traffic. We really feel  
5 that the changing, the environmental impact  
6 statement which talks about changing a few of the  
7 timing of traffic lights and making a few left  
8 turn areas will not solve the problem. They  
9 really have to develop Bay--redevelop Bay Street,  
10 Front Street, Richmond Terrace, add lanes,  
11 possibly add parking gara--parking areas along  
12 Front Street with shuttle buses in order to  
13 alleviate some of the traffic, and we really feel  
14 they could add lanes to these streets. We really  
15 feel that some of the money from this development  
16 should go to developing a north shore railroad or  
17 at least a road bed from that railroad to be used  
18 for dedicated bus service and public  
19 transportation, and also the ferry service which  
20 is so important. Now they really said that this  
21 project would not have impact on ferry service at  
22 off hours, but a hotel. Who's going to stay in a  
23 hotel and come to the City, if after a Broadway  
24 show, you have to wait an hour to get back to  
25 catch a ferry to get back to where you're going.

1 We really feel that this project should be  
2 contingent on the City dedicating the funds to 24  
3 hour half hour ferry service, weekends and  
4 evenings. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Next please.

6 SUSAN BRADLEY: My name is Susan  
7 Bradley. As a Staten Island north shore resident,  
8 I am deeply disturbed about the impact that the  
9 proposed Ferris wheel and Empire Outlets will  
10 have upon our community. The developers are  
11 interested in maximizing their own profit,  
12 painting a glowing picture of a renaissance of  
13 money, jobs, success for every business entity,  
14 profit, or non-profit nearby. But the devil is  
15 in the details, increased traffic and decreased  
16 parking are no friends to surrounding businesses.  
17 The St. George area is the heart of the  
18 transportation hub of Staten Island. Now, we're  
19 switching it to a com--a hub for tourists, which  
20 is a definite switch. 70,000 passengers a day  
21 ride the ferry. We have no subways. This is our  
22 connection to Manhattan, where good jobs actually  
23 exist, where careers can be made, and now we're  
24 going to put road blocks in front of our  
25

1  
2 commuters to getting there. To park, commuters  
3 will have to navigate the site. It's going to  
4 sandwich together the 60 foot wheel, the six  
5 story hotel, the 125 stories--I'm sorry, the 125  
6 stores, restaurants, catering hall, hundred foot  
7 electrical tower, and other structures with  
8 delivery trucks, car traffic, tour buses and a  
9 projected 30,000 tourists a day flooding a very  
10 confined area. Instead of the parking lots which  
11 took up all of this space before the projected  
12 construction, we will have structured parking  
13 garages, which admittedly take greater time to  
14 access and are not as easy to enter and exit into  
15 the main areas. This Staten Island Yankees games  
16 produce tremendous traffic, which have caused  
17 half hour delays. I have heard people talk about  
18 this. And this is without any of the increased  
19 traffic, without--with less parking available.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright, I'm  
21 going to have to ask you wrap up there, and--

22 SUSAN BRADLEY: Okay. And Saint--  
23 okay. St. George is an older congested area,  
24 narrow roads, parked cars lining in the streets,  
25 government offices, business, schools, apartments

1 already create traffic and parking problems. A  
2 huge courthouse complex near in completion will  
3 add to it. The 4.5 million projected tourists  
4 who will come will not all take the ferry, I'm  
5 sorry. The environmental impact study indicated  
6 that the New York Wheel and outlets project would  
7 cause delays at 16 intersections on Staten  
8 Island. They further noted that conditions at  
9 three of them will make it impossible to mitigate  
10 all of these problems.

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Thank you.  
13 I'm going to have to cut you off there. And  
14 who's next? Okay.

15 LINDA WINKLER: Good afternoon. My  
16 name is Linda Winkler, I'm a native New Yorker, a  
17 Staten Island resident and home owner, and I've  
18 lived on Staten Island for over 50 years. I've  
19 seen a lot of changes and many of them have not  
20 been for the better. I'm here to say that I  
21 think these projects should be voted no. The  
22 biggest is the danger of over capacity on the  
23 ferries, which the Draft Environmental Impact  
24 Survey for this project states that six week day  
25 trips, four Saturday trips and more when there

1  
2 are Yankee's games on Staten Island will be over  
3 their functional capacity in 2016. I heard this  
4 addressed by one of the City's speakers, and as  
5 he acknowledged, there's no mitigation or  
6 solution for this problem of over capacity  
7 ferries, and by the City's own study, any  
8 mitigation that would be increasing the width of  
9 the aprons and changing the docks to fit those  
10 ferries would take eight to 10 years and require  
11 significant capital investment. I know the  
12 numerous quality of life issues have already been  
13 addressed. I won't repeat them, but I will add  
14 that the bucolic view of Staten Island from the  
15 harbor as you approach by ferry will now be  
16 marred by a big wheel and the people's views of  
17 the harbor and the skyline and the bridges will  
18 be blocked and obstructed by that wheel. And an  
19 additional quality of life issue is that when the  
20 ferries start to become over capacity, that means  
21 you're going to wait for a boat; it's going to  
22 come and you're not going to get on because there  
23 are too many people waiting. That will add at  
24 least an additional 15 minutes to your commute,  
25 longer if it's during an off hour time or on a

1 weekend. People are going to be ready to  
2 scapegoat tourists and let's not pretend that's  
3 not going to happen. And finally, how will these  
4 projects cause tourists to leave the immediate  
5 area and visit other Staten Island attractions or  
6 businesses. It's illogical to think that a  
7 Ferris wheel and a shopping mall in St. George  
8 near the ferry will impact the rest of the island  
9 other than the backed up traffic form Victory  
10 boulevard, Bay Street, and Richmond Terrace.  
11 Staten Island needs to create an advertising  
12 campaign and market tourism if that's an  
13 objective. It's illogical or wishful thinking to  
14 think that a Ferris wheel and outlet mall are the  
15 solution to Staten Island's tourism.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Great, thank you.  
18 Sounds like a good thing for a borough president  
19 to do.

20 EDWARD JOSEY: Okay, good afternoon,  
21 and to Staten Island Council Members, hi. Okay,  
22 I'm speaking from the viewpoint of NAACP. I  
23 think the project itself sounds pretty good to  
24 me, but I have a few comments I would like to  
25 make about good jobs, for example. Economic

1  
2 development, especially projects when the city or  
3 state have a stake, should provide a gate, a  
4 pathway to good middle class careers. The  
5 development should make a commitment to the  
6 creation of continual careers and affordable good  
7 family sustaining wages, healthcare benefits, and  
8 retirement security. The project should help our  
9 community to grow and flourish. The--this cannot  
10 be done with dead end jobs and low paying wages.  
11 Frequently it's been said that low paying jobs do  
12 create a foundation for crime, and we have enough  
13 crime as it right now, and it's been mentioned  
14 before about the parking and traffic. Ample  
15 parking must be provided by the developers to  
16 accommodate all of the vehicles that will be  
17 utilizing this facility. The comprehensive travel  
18 plan must be in place to assure that the north  
19 shore does not become overly congested, dividing  
20 the traffic generated by this some 125 outlet  
21 stores could be overwhelming unless real traffic  
22 plans are put in place. As far as education  
23 training is concerned, in order for workers to  
24 sustain good middle class careers, you must have  
25 contractors and employees who will participate

1  
2 and stay certified and approve compre--apprentice  
3 training programs as industry grows, the people  
4 must change with the jobs, and therefore you must  
5 be trained time and time again. Employees who  
6 did not participate in time tested state approved  
7 programs with a history of success, graduation  
8 should not be considered. The availability of  
9 continual education is critical to meet the  
10 demands of the changing world, and the jobs must  
11 be healthy, must be safe, because you cannot have  
12 anybody on the job that's not trained in health  
13 measures, because health measures endanger  
14 yourself plus those working with you. And thank  
15 you for these minutes.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Okay.  
17 Thank you very much. We okay, Jimmy? Debbie?  
18 Okay, thanks. Following people in favor of the  
19 project, again if I call your name just let me  
20 know you're here. Michael Harwood?

21 MICHAEL HARWOOD: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright. That a  
23 way, Michael. Edward Gomez? Priscilla Marco?  
24 There you go. Lynn Kelly?

25 LYNN KELLY: Here.



1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISING 313

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright. Now we  
3 got it. James Prendamono [phonetic]? He's not  
4 here? Good, he didn't--oh, he is. I didn't want  
5 him to hear me butcher his name. You're here?  
6 Mr. Prendamono? Yeah, okay. Yes. Alright,  
7 that's four.

8 MICHAEL HARWOOD: Here you go, I got  
9 five copies. I push this button to start?

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright. Okay,  
11 we ready? We have a fourth seat up there. There  
12 were five of you, no?

13 STEVE MARGARELLA: I called James, he's  
14 coming.

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Did I call  
16 you, though, no?

17 STEVE MARGARELLA: No, no.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Oh, he's just  
19 going, okay. So James is coming, he'll go last.

20 UNKNOWN: Anybody need one of these?

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Or we'll, we'll  
22 start right here. Sorry for the wait.

23 MICHAEL HARWOOD: My name is Michael  
24 Harwood. I reside on St. Mart's Place in St.  
25 George. I've lived there for over 25 years, and

1 I'm a member of the St. George Civic Association.  
2 For many years we've heard about St. George being  
3 a natural area for organic development and that  
4 change was just around the corner. And over the  
5 years we saw many fits and starts in an area that  
6 in Brooklyn or Queens would have been a magnet  
7 for mixed-development. And there are two primary  
8 reasons why so much has happened over those years  
9 and so little has changed. There's been a  
10 complete lack of follow-through on intelligently  
11 planned development and a lack of adequate  
12 transportation, and it's time for something both  
13 dramatic and useful in our neighborhood.  
14 Certainly the New York Wheel brings drama, but it  
15 also brings something we haven't had enough of,  
16 which is waterfront access and open park land.  
17 The Yankees' minor league stadium largely  
18 protected the view corridors through design  
19 cooperation with local residents, and it cleaned  
20 up the dirt parking lots and gave us a beautiful  
21 waterfront promenade. But the promenade has only  
22 limited access point and the isolation can be  
23 frightening at night. The wheel will give us a  
24 platform over the train tracks and several direct  
25

1  
2 access points to the waterfront in addition to a  
3 lawn and a playground which will give the  
4 neighborhood significant amusement free and open  
5 to the public, and one that will also encourage  
6 restaurant and retail development of its own  
7 along Richmond terrace. The outlet mall will  
8 also bring something that we've never had, which  
9 is shopping. We only got our first supermarket a  
10 few months ago, and the design by shop architects  
11 is right for the neighborhood, adding a boulevard  
12 design that provides view corridors as much as  
13 possible and as also to waterfront access, and we  
14 hope that shopping developers will listen to the  
15 neighbors going forward to see how their plans  
16 can be approved, improved. But there remains a  
17 very large problem, which you've heard much  
18 about, which is transportation. And it may be  
19 true as they say, "If you build it, they will  
20 come." But if nobody can get there, then no  
21 one's going to come. And no one in the  
22 neighborhood can get in and out and our property  
23 values are going to fall because of the increased  
24 traffic. And they may have told you that there's  
25 traffic impact in the EIS, Council Members, but

1  
2 the fact is that the EIS itself says that traffic  
3 time from the site to the Verrazano will double  
4 even with the mitigation impacts and changes that  
5 they have suggested. And there are things that  
6 can be done including, you've heard, you can  
7 widen Front Street to twice the size it is now,  
8 while it's being constructed. You can increase  
9 the ferry service and pass that bill before this  
10 bill gets approved. You can make space for the  
11 fast ferry even if it will take a while to get  
12 the fast ferry there, but put the infrastructure  
13 in now. There's plenty that can be done, and the  
14 point is here as each of Staten Island Council  
15 Members and Council Member Recchia have said the  
16 time to do that is now. Get it in writing in  
17 these 28 days. These people from EDC were saying  
18 we're going to look at that after it's built and  
19 after the problems.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

21 MICHAEL HARWOOD: That's not the time  
22 to do it.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

24 MICHAEL HARWOOD: Thank you.  
25

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Appreciate it.

3 Next please.

4 PRISCILLA MARCO: Good afternoon. My  
5 name is Priscilla Marko and I am the President of  
6 the Van Duzer Street Area Civic Association. I  
7 live in the Stapleton area, which is the next  
8 community over from St. George. We have been  
9 waiting for these developments for a long time.  
10 We're looking for improvements in our quality of  
11 life and we're looking for improvements in our  
12 property values. We do have some concerns about  
13 the parking, the commuter parking, and in  
14 particular if their solution to some of the  
15 traffic is to say make Bay Street a one-way,  
16 that's going to impact Van Duzer, which is a very  
17 narrow, used to be a former carriage-way in the  
18 horse and buggy time. You can't have all the  
19 traffic diverted onto Bay Street, I mean, from  
20 Bay Street onto Van Duzer. But that aside, we  
21 think that the benefits of these projects  
22 outweigh the detriments, and so I would not want  
23 to see it hung up for that reason. We do believe  
24 that the jobs that are going to be created and  
25 the renewed interest of developers in our

1  
2 community in Stapleton as well as St. George is  
3 too important to let slip by. I happen to work  
4 for a labor union. My boyfriend is a member,  
5 card carrying member of the carpenters, so I  
6 could not sit here and not support the use of  
7 labor on this project. There's a happy median  
8 between the two parties, and somehow outside of  
9 this process because it doesn't happen in this  
10 room. Outside of this process, the negotiations  
11 need to happen and both sides need to come to the  
12 table and work that out, and between 25 and 100  
13 percent is the magic number, and they need to do  
14 that. Staten Island--this should be about jobs  
15 for Staten Islanders and about our quality of  
16 life, nothing else. The issues between the  
17 developers and laws as I said need to be resolved  
18 at the table, and I hope and pray that they will.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Next  
20 please.

21 LYNN KELLY: Good afternoon. My name  
22 is Lynn Kelly and I am the CEO and President of  
23 Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Garden.  
24 Thank you to the Council and a special thank you  
25 to our Staten Island delegation and to Council

1 Member Recchia for so well articulating the  
2 concerns of our community for this monumental  
3 project in our borough. I'd like to say that as  
4 a native Staten Islander, I have never before  
5 seen this level of private investment proposed in  
6 Staten Island, and I fear that we have a once in  
7 a lifetime shot to get this right. So I'm so  
8 pleased to hear that the Council is now  
9 recognizing that there needs to be an equal  
10 commitment on the public side of this public and  
11 private investment so that we all benefit.  
12 Simply put, this is our opportunity to no longer  
13 be called the forgotten borough, and we need to  
14 rise to that occasion and work as the Council and  
15 the City and as a community to ensure the success  
16 of this project. These projects will help define  
17 the future of the north shore waterfront, and  
18 Snug Harbor seeks to be the cultural anchor of  
19 this revitalization much in the way that the  
20 aquarium was the anchor of the revitalization in  
21 Coney Island. If Snug Harbor is able to capture  
22 just 10 percent of the projected annual  
23 visitation to the wheel, it will be an 83 percent  
24 increase in attendance to our site. Thus  
25

1  
2 benefitting all the culturals and patrons on our  
3 site. As a business and community leader, I  
4 thank the council and the developers for having  
5 the foresight, the vision and the encouragement  
6 to bring this project to fruition, but I want us  
7 to recognize that time is of the essence. This  
8 may never happen again in our lifetimes. This is  
9 the shot in the arm we need for public, private  
10 investment job generation, waterfront access and  
11 more importantly the future economic  
12 sustainability of our community. This is bigger  
13 than the north shore. This is bigger than all of  
14 us. Again, I never want to be referred to as the  
15 forgotten borough, and this is our chance.  
16 Please let's all work together to make this  
17 happen.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very  
19 much. This gentleman, you could start. Just  
20 give your name and--

21 STEVE MARGARELLA: Yeah, I'm Steve  
22 Margarella. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank you  
23 and our esteemed colleagues for allowing me to  
24 speak in James' place. I can speak confidently  
25 for all Staten Island residents of the north



1 shore when I request that you do not separate the  
2 wheel and the outlets. For the first time, there  
3 are millions of riders that come across the bay  
4 on our iconic ferry will now have a reason to  
5 stay on Staten Island. The wheel alone is reason  
6 for only some visitors to take the trek from the  
7 ferry terminal, to stay for a few hours and  
8 return on the next ferry. Imagine on their way  
9 to and from that wheel they will be able to stop  
10 in our outlets and generate several million  
11 dollars that will be infused into our suffering  
12 economy. The owners of the outlet stores will  
13 have the ability to capture visitor dollars of  
14 those tourists that choose not to go on the  
15 wheel. Our toll issues may never be resolved. I  
16 had to go there. But the proposition placed  
17 before you today will mean more to our struggling  
18 economy than any other proposal of our  
19 generations and many generations to come. You  
20 know, Fred Astaire was a consummate professional  
21 and Ginger Rogers was gracefully amazing, but  
22 your memory is of them dancing together. Why?  
23 It was because of the synergy that occurred when  
24 the performed as a duet. Do not make light of  
25

1 the remark. The price point of the wheel will  
2 only entertain some. We need the outlets to  
3 capture the remainder of the tourist to make the  
4 trek across the city. This project is a winner  
5 for Staten Island and New York City. There are  
6 too the thousands and thousands of Staten  
7 Islanders that go to the outlet--that go outlet  
8 shopping and Elizabeth Secaucus [phonetic] in  
9 South Jersey. This is a perfect time for the  
10 City Council to say no, we will not send our hard  
11 earned New York dollars into the office of New  
12 Jersey companies and the New Jersey tax base.  
13 The project is a winner for Staten Island and a  
14 winner for New York City. Our financial wellness  
15 and growth depends on our keeping this project  
16 intact as is. The wheel and the outlets, Fred  
17 and Ginger. Let's keep those tourists and  
18 shopping dollars on Staten Island as long as  
19 possible. Now it's time for all of you to step  
20 up, put your shoulders back, and not be swayed by  
21 a dog whose bark is worse than his bite. A vote  
22 for the wheel and the outlet project as one  
23 entity is a vote for New York City, a vote for  
24 Staten Island, and vote for your own legacy in  
25

1  
2 being part of this historic revitalization  
3 **[inaudible 5:41:48]** that will bring thousands of  
4 jobs to my hometown, Staten Island.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

6 STEVE MARGARELLA: Any developer that  
7 would come to our island--please allow me a  
8 moment, that would come to our island and invest  
9 hundreds of millions of dollars should get a  
10 medal, keys to the city, and a parade down Forest  
11 Avenue. Yet, there are those amongst us that  
12 would challenge, or better yet, **[inaudible**  
13 **05:41:48]** these same investors. It was bad  
14 enough that all your Sandy repair money went to  
15 companies whose home bases were everywhere but  
16 New York, but now we're asked to endure the  
17 additional insult of a bureaucracy that would  
18 jeopardize the financial security and growth of  
19 thousands of families and hundreds of local  
20 companies. Let's not forget the City of New York  
21 did little or nothing for the north shore  
22 businesses after Sandy. Many of those companies  
23 went to sleep at a cost of thousands of jobs, and  
24 now we are here today discussing the possibility

1 of taking this project away from the companies  
2 that are struggling to stay alive.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Got it. Okay.  
5 Let's cut you off right there. I'm sorry. I--  
6 alright, thank you all very much. You have any  
7 questions? Jimmy wants to ask--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: So, Steve, did  
9 you identify yourself in the beginning, I'm not  
10 sure, as a small business owner on Staten Island?  
11 Did I hear that or not?

12 STEVE MARGARELLA: Yeah, I'm a--I am a  
13 small business owner on Staten Island. I'm in the  
14 construction industry, and I'm hearing this--the  
15 word union band aid about--I listen to very  
16 articulate people here talk in very disingenuous  
17 ways. We're not talking about a union or non-  
18 union issue. It's Building Trades Council, they  
19 don't want any other unions. They want only  
20 their unions.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright.

22 STEVE MARGARELLA: And there's an  
23 important distinction. My company is one of the  
24 ones that got wiped out in the storm, single  
25 largest loss my insurance carrier had. We're

1 struggling to stay alive. I know, he wants me  
2 to.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I have that look  
5 about me, huh? No? It's alright. Well thank  
6 you. We appreciate that answer. You didn't want  
7 to ask another question, Jimmy?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Did he finish  
9 the point?

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. I think he  
11 made his point. No? Let's take a vote. How  
12 many think he made a point? No. Thank you. I  
13 apologize. I don't mean to be rude, I--just try  
14 to accommodate and we got a lot of people here  
15 and they've been waiting a long time, so let me  
16 move on. Okay? Okay. Joe Carter is here. Joe  
17 Carter, in opposition. Robert Bradley? There  
18 you go. Ronaldo Torres? Epifanio Ortiz? Joe  
19 Carta, SEIU. How many are here? Okay. Alright.  
20 So that's four. Stop there, mark my place.  
21 Gentleman, whenever you're ready.

22 JOE CARTER: My name is Joe Carter.  
23 I've been a security officer for the past nine  
24 years, and I've always been assigned high profile  
25 worksites that encourage regular visits from the

1  
2 general public, very similar to that of the  
3 Staten Island development. That meant that in  
4 addition to my normal duties, like protecting  
5 life and property, securing access areas,  
6 checking for safety hazards and acting as a first  
7 responder, I was also tasked with being a travel  
8 aid tour guide, bouncer, and personal GPS. On  
9 some of my work sites life at the job was a lot  
10 more stressful. My income did not meet the basic  
11 needs. I frequently worked 50 to 70 hours a  
12 week, sometimes working 16 hours straight, taking  
13 an hour break and then working additional eight  
14 hours afterward. If I couldn't get the over time,  
15 then I had to decide whether to pay my bills  
16 late, partially pay, or charge it to my debit  
17 card and worry about overdraft fees, which in  
18 turn made my next check even smaller. I also  
19 could not afford medical or dental attention  
20 aside from emergencies, I had not seen a doctor  
21 in over 10 years, this includes working--I'm  
22 sorry. That includes working a double shift with  
23 a dire need of wisdom tooth removal. My physical  
24 health deteriorated which in turn influenced my  
25 disposition and eventually my work performance.

1  
2 Once I started working for a responsible  
3 employer, everything changed. My bills got paid  
4 on time because my wages were now livable. I was  
5 able to afford medical attention. I fixed my  
6 aching teeth, no more pain, no more stress, which  
7 allowed me to think clearer and be more efficient  
8 as an officer. This benefitted me, my co-  
9 workers, the general public and my employer. I  
10 would hope that any employer who required  
11 security would want the officers to be in the  
12 best condition possible, especially when public  
13 safety is at stake. That being said, I urge you  
14 public officials to make sure that a responsible  
15 security company is hired for the Staten Island  
16 development, and that responsible employers are  
17 hired for all of the construction operations and  
18 maintenance work on this project. Also, I thank  
19 you for your time.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: You get a gold  
21 star, my friend.

22 EPIFANIO ORTIZ: Good afternoon, my  
23 name is Epifanio Ortiz. I'm a carpenter's  
24 apprentice. I graduated from McKay High School  
25 in Staten Island in 2012, and entered a pre-

1  
2 apprenticeship program called Construction Skills  
3 2000. I'm speaking on behalf of Build Up NYC.  
4 City sponsored projects on public land like the  
5 New York Empire Outlets should promote  
6 responsible development that provides real  
7 benefits to our communities. One component of  
8 responsible development is a commitment to good  
9 jobs in a level playing field for employers.  
10 Although BFC partners speaks about creating good  
11 jobs, the facts tell a different story. I want  
12 to make clear that we are fully satisfied with  
13 New York wheel component of this project. However  
14 we have significant concerns about Empire Outlets  
15 and its developer. Community Board One voice  
16 support for commitment to local hiring and good  
17 jobs at Empire Outlets through a project labor  
18 agreement with the NYC Building Trades. We feel  
19 that the Community Board suggestions should be  
20 incorporated into this project. Empire Outlets  
21 should create good local jobs that build a real  
22 pathway to the middle class, that is temporary  
23 low wage, no benefit employment. Staten Island  
24 residents deserve the opportunity for long term  
25 career development and advancements in this



1 project of such an opportunity. The permanent  
2 jobs at Empire Outlets can be good jobs with  
3 healthcare, good wages, and retirement benefits.  
4 Staten Island residents should have priority on  
5 permanent jobs. Empire Outlets will increase  
6 these economic inequality gap, but failed to use  
7 it as a vehicle to promote long term career  
8 opportunities. Thank you.

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Next,  
11 please.

12 RONALDO TORRES: Good afternoon, Mr.  
13 Chairman and City Council. My name is Ronaldo  
14 Torres, and I'm a resident of St. George, and a  
15 sheet metal craftsman. I'm speaking on behalf of  
16 Build Up New York, an organization of members  
17 representing 200,000 workers in the construction  
18 building operations and maintenance and  
19 hospitality industries that advocate the good  
20 jobs and responsible development. Now, I just  
21 want to talk about a couple of things that I've  
22 heard today. Currently, I'm unemployed, but  
23 because I am a member of the union, I'm able to  
24 support myself because I have a good benefit  
25 plan. I still maintain my health benefits, and I

1 do have a pension. So being that I am  
2 unemployed, it's not the end of the world for me,  
3 and that goes for the most union workers that are  
4 here today. Now, I have just come off a job at  
5 the courthouse on Staten Island. I just wanted  
6 to say that it's a fairly big job, and on that  
7 job there's a site--there was a site safety  
8 officer, which is something that I would suggest  
9 that should be mandatory on that job if it goes  
10 through. I also wanted to say that 800  
11 construction workers on that job I think is  
12 padded. I think that on a job that size there  
13 would be less, unless you have 800 construction  
14 workers that don't know what they're doing. If  
15 they use building construction trades, I believe  
16 there would be less craftsman on that job, which  
17 would be able to do the job in a timely manner  
18 and on time. Thank you.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Well, you guys  
21 are starting to show off now. Okay. Yes, sir.

22 BOB BRADLEY: My name is Bob Bradley,  
23 and I live a mile, about a mile west of the site  
24 of the proposed New York wheel. I have some  
25 concerns with the project, and I thank the City

1 Council for providing the opportunity to present  
2 them here. I guess we've already gone over the  
3 issue of overcrowding with the ferry terminal and  
4 the ferry boat, but I'd just like to mention one  
5 thing in a surreal world, in my experience. When  
6 I worked at the municipal building and I'd walk  
7 back to the ferry terminal every day down  
8 Broadway, I was sort of upset that I had to walk  
9 up the escalator, and at one point later on I  
10 found the reason was the part was on back order  
11 for 17 years. Okay? So if you're going to do  
12 something about another ferry boat or another  
13 boat slip, don't wait too long. Another issue is  
14 the schedule that the ferry is--the Ferris wheel  
15 is going to have, which most recently I  
16 understand is from 10:00 a.m. to midnight. I  
17 think that's a great idea to not start it until  
18 10:00 in the morning to alleviate a lot of the  
19 traffic problems, but that's only a statement. I  
20 think you need to take--hold the developers feet  
21 to the fire on that, and if they deviate from  
22 that and say, "oh, let's make it six in the  
23 morning." There should be some fine or something  
24 for that. Thirdly, the Ferris wheel is going to  
25

1  
2 be a great attraction for tourists, but it's  
3 also, I'm afraid, probably going to be a  
4 terrorist target or could possibly be a terrorist  
5 target. At least that should be considered in  
6 terms of security. Fourthly, health problems,  
7 despite the assurances of the St. George water  
8 environmental, waterfront environmental review, I  
9 think the health problems will result from an  
10 increase of automobile traffic and traffic jams,  
11 in particular from ozone, which will be generated  
12 at street level and flow through the community  
13 and other parts of Staten Island. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very  
15 much. Did you want to say something? No? Okay.  
16 Alright, thank you gentleman very much.  
17 Appreciate it. Appreciate you keeping, most of  
18 you, under the time. I apologize that was bold  
19 of me. Alright. The following are people in  
20 favor of these projects. Phillip Harris, it  
21 looks like. Is it Bobbie--is it Disc? Oh, Digi,  
22 oh, okay. It's a "g" okay. Bobby Digi. F.L.  
23 Peters or something Peters, and the--Okay,  
24 present. Thank you. The Reverend Doctor Harris,

1 Janice Harris? Presence, yes. So is that four?  
2  
3 I think we do have four.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Folks, keep it down  
5 please. Take any conversations outside.

6 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Or is that three?  
7 Okay. Was there someone else was run out to get,  
8 or should I give you another name? No, I think  
9 they're coming, right? Yeah, okay. Is that it?  
10 So I'm going to read another name then to join us  
11 if they--up here. Curt Ward, is Curt Ward here?

12 CURT WARD: Here.

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay, Kurt, join  
14 these guys on the table and the Reverend.

15 [cross-talk]

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. We have a  
17 fifth? If you do just sit and we'll jump in  
18 after. Okay, good. Sorry about that. Whenever  
19 you're ready.

20 PHILLIP HARRIS: Yeah, how you doin'?

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Doing good,  
22 thanks. How are you?

23 PHILLIP HARRIS: Good, good. My name  
24 is Phillip Harris, I'm from Staten Island. I  
25 lived on Staten Island for 55 years. I'm a long

1  
2 time Staten Islander, and I'm here to say that  
3 Empire, excuse me. We want the program to go  
4 forward, 'Cause we're here with the red shirts.  
5 We represent the community. And the community  
6 wants jobs, and BCF builders provides jobs. I've  
7 worked with BCF builders for six years, over six  
8 years, and they've done the Staten Island Rail  
9 and they've also done a home--senior citizen home  
10 in Stapleton, and within that time they've hired  
11 over 40 people from the community. So know that  
12 they, their direction is to help the community,  
13 and we know that this project at the ferry, at  
14 the ferry terminal will put people to work. So  
15 I'm a little nervous right now because I've never  
16 been in front of, you know, a microphone like  
17 that. But we are definitely here to get jobs,  
18 and we definitely want to say that BCF builders  
19 will supply jobs. I know Joe Ferarra. I know the  
20 gentleman over there that's with Joe, Al  
21 Capoccia. I'm sorry, I've got his name right.  
22 So, that's all I got to say.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Thank you.

24 PHILLIP HARRIS: For right now.  
25

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Appreciate that.  
3 Next please.

4 BOBBY DIGI: Hello, good afternoon.  
5 My name is Bobby Digi. I am the President of the  
6 North Shore Business Association, over 70  
7 business owners that go up from Rosebank to Port  
8 Richmond, the Bay street Corridor. I am also  
9 lifelong Staten Islander, Community Organizer,  
10 and I represent the young social entrepreneurs  
11 that are very active in the community and I  
12 support this project because I feel that the  
13 North Shore has been the forgotten community in  
14 the forgotten borough. We've been overlooked for  
15 decades. The community has faced the harshest  
16 conditions you can imagine. Just recently we  
17 were hit with--we were all impacted, business  
18 owners in the North Shore were impacted by the  
19 storm and we were forgotten then also. I worked  
20 aggressively with city and state agencies and we  
21 are constantly overlooked. I think this is a  
22 lifetime opportunity for the north shore to get  
23 that kicker that it's long overdue to help  
24 revitalize not just the employment, provide  
25 employment opportunities, but also to bring the

1  
2 culturals, Snug Harbor, Alice Austen House, the  
3 Staten Island Museum, and there's so many other  
4 organizations that need this project as an anchor  
5 and as a highlighter that could really bring  
6 upland of Bay street and the rest of the northern  
7 portion of Staten Island on the map so that we  
8 can begin to receive more projects, more  
9 investment, and more a positive development in  
10 our community. So I support the project. Thank  
11 you.

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Who  
13 wants to go next? Okay.

14 AL PETERS: Good afternoon, Chairman  
15 and City Council persons. My name is Al Peters,  
16 and I'm the CEO of MWB, Men Who Build. I think  
17 this is a kind of common sense issue here. This  
18 is not about us against the union, because the  
19 last job I had I was a shop steward and proud to  
20 be that. And as I look around this room, I see  
21 the pictures of elders in this room, and what  
22 comes to mind to me is an elder that passed on,  
23 and he said, "Emancipate yourself from men to  
24 none but our sellers can free our world." And  
25 it's that type of mindset that made it possible



1  
2 for Barack Obama to become President. It was  
3 that type of mindset that made it possible for  
4 our illustrious Debbie Rose to become the first  
5 City Council person here on Staten Island. And  
6 also as a videographer, as I was outside video  
7 taping the young people for the first time coming  
8 into these chambers to actually watch our  
9 government works--so I'm saying that Staten  
10 Island actually really needs something like this  
11 because it's beneficial to all of Staten Island,  
12 and in particularly the north shore. And the men  
13 that are in these red shirts and the women that  
14 are in these red shirts, we are not anti-union,  
15 we're just kind of like sensitive to our needs  
16 and what is necessary because it's all about  
17 making this money and paying the bills, just like  
18 the people in the green shirts. So I just hope  
19 that as we pontificate over this situation, that  
20 we actually come to an understanding that this  
21 particular situation is advantageous and  
22 beneficial to all of Staten Island, and Staten  
23 Island would definitely be beneficiary from this  
24 particular effort, and if there are concerns that  
25 we do have pertaining to as we move forward, then

1  
2 let's kind of address those things, but actually  
3 understand that living in the north shore there  
4 is a need for jobs for young people. And we're  
5 constantly talking about crime, and what better  
6 way to eradicate crime by giving somebody a job,  
7 because when somebody's out on a street corner  
8 doing something in the name of illegal,  
9 unauthorized pharma[phonetic] distributors, it's  
10 nothing but a business opportunity. So let's  
11 redirect those efforts and create the necessary  
12 job employment that is necessary for our  
13 community and thank you very much for listening.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Thank  
15 you. Reverend?

16 REVEREND HARRIS: My name is Reverend  
17 Janice Harris, I'm from Staten Island, but I live  
18 in Jersey, but I work on Staten Island and I go  
19 to church on Staten Island.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright.

21 REVEREND HARRIS: That's my  
22 connection.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: We'll forgive  
24 you.

2 REVEREND HARRIS: Thank you. I really  
3 want to be back on Staten Island. We are  
4 supportive and confident about New York city  
5 Councilwoman Debbie Rose' insight and judgment to  
6 make the best decision for our community.

7 Collectively, we also would like to be on public  
8 record highlighted additional conditions to be  
9 considered. As Jersey Street and its residents  
10 and surrounding communities have been viewed as  
11 marginalized communities, it is essential that  
12 any improvements also seeks to improve the lives  
13 of local residents. Therefore, we to undersign  
14 off for conditional for the development of the  
15 outlet mall by BFC Partners. We believe the mall  
16 along with the Ferris wheel has the potential to  
17 server as a major conduit for increased tourism  
18 and an enhanced economy for the north shore of  
19 Staten Island. It is our position that critical  
20 to a commitment of ironclad support for the  
21 project is the following conditions; Number one,  
22 we recommend a 50/50 split of union/non-union  
23 labor. The labor force should consist primarily  
24 of Staten Island residents and unions. Labor  
25 force should also consist of no less than 50

1 percent minority representation. Number two, we  
2 recommend that of the nearly 2,000 projected jobs  
3 that will be created by the development, no less  
4 than 75 percent should be hired from the north  
5 shore community. We define community as zip  
6 codes 10301, 10302, 10303, 10304, 10305, and  
7 10310 with the cut off being Forest Avenue. We  
8 further advocate for a strong commitment to  
9 minority hiring and management within the outlet  
10 as well as every phase of construction. The  
11 third recommendation is that we recommend that as  
12 a part of social responsibility, there should be  
13 a contribution of 500,000 dollars per year by  
14 each developer to a foundation that has been  
15 proposed. Additionally, every outlet store  
16 required to engage in social responsibility, and  
17 those not required by law, but shall conduct  
18 business within the community should be required  
19 to contribute a specified amount annually to the  
20 foundation as well.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay, that worked  
23 out alright. Thank you. Sir, please?

24 CURT WARD: Chairman Weprin and  
25 esteemed Councilmen, Councilpersons. My name is

1  
2 Curt Ward, I am the Waterfront Chair of the  
3 **[inaudible 06:02:34]** of this afternoon Community  
4 Board One, and I'm here this afternoon to read  
5 into your records the official position of  
6 Community Board One shared by the esteemed  
7 Leticia Remauro who is also in the room.  
8 Community Board One covers the area of St. George  
9 Ferry Terminal where the project is to be  
10 located. For the past three decades, Community  
11 Board One had been asking New York City agencies  
12 to improve the area surrounding the ferry  
13 terminal to make an obvious connection between  
14 the ferry, New York City icon and the Upland  
15 neighborhood to attract tourists off the boat and  
16 onto our island so they can shop, eat, and  
17 experience our cultural institutions. This  
18 project will do that and more. The New York  
19 Wheel attraction and Empire Outlets along with  
20 Lighthouse Point and the Navy Pier will bring  
21 residents and jobs to the bay street corridor.  
22 Finally, the north shore will return to its hay  
23 day of the hub of Staten Island. In its vote to  
24 support this project, the body of Community Board  
25 One stated where as it is extremely important

1 that all applications are approved to utilize and  
2 develop the St. George waterfront to attract  
3 tourists, service community residents, and be an  
4 economic benefit to all, be it here by resolve  
5 that Community Board One approves the St. George  
6 Waterfront Re-development Application numbers C10  
7 315 ZMR, C13 0317 ZSR, 310318 ZSR, 310319 PPR and  
8 finally 310320 PPR with the following for  
9 conditions. First, that all plantings are low  
10 grade to allow a view corridor. Second, that  
11 both operators provide offside parking beyond the  
12 interim construction with shuttle service to meet  
13 the demands for all users during peak  
14 utilization. Third, all parking rates will be  
15 held at existing rate or lower and any future  
16 increase be subject to the review and approval by  
17 Community Board One. Priority should be given to  
18 the members of--

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]  
21 Just wrap up quickly, yeah, if you can.

22 CURT WARD: Okay. I'll speed read. Of  
23 the NYC Building Trades, Staten Island businesses  
24 organized and unorganized, women and minority  
25 workforce for all aspects of the construction and

1  
2 include the project labor agreement with the NYC  
3 Buildings Trades by both developers be a further  
4 resolve that 100 percent of the monies allocated  
5 for the rent by both projects by the New York  
6 City Economic Development Corp be used to fund  
7 and maintain the following 12 community  
8 improvements, which I will submit for the record.

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Beautiful, thank  
10 you. Again, I apologize, but especially when you  
11 have a written testimony, you got to try to like  
12 think ahead of time. I understand. Anyway, so  
13 thank you. Any questions for this panel?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yes.

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yes, okay. Ms.  
16 Rose?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Very, very few.  
18 Mr. Harris, have you been hired by the--

19 PHILLIP HARRIS: [interposing] Yes, I  
20 was.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: By the  
22 developer?

23 PHILLIP HARRIS: I was.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay.  
25

2 PHILLIP HARRIS: I did their security  
3 for about three years.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Three years,  
5 okay. And do your workers get benefits?

6 PHILLIP HARRIS: Not necessarily. The  
7 workers from me? You mean my security workers?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: The workers that  
9 work on the project?

10 PHILLIP HARRIS: No.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Thank  
13 you panel, appreciate it. Alright, I'd like to  
14 call up what may be our last panel in opposition.  
15 I'm not sure, but let's see. Jeannette Harjo-  
16 Cobb? Alex Simpson? Dane Finley, Juana Velez,  
17 and Isetta Bokum [phonetic]? Not so good, huh?  
18 I heard a snicker. That's not--mean I didn't do  
19 well. All five of you--not for now, but is  
20 anyone else here in opposition that wanted to  
21 testify? We do have other people in favor still  
22 before you guys in the back get excited. Okay,  
23 great. Well, I appreciate your patience, and I  
24 know you guys have been here since the very



1 beginning. So thank you. So who wants to go  
2 first?

3  
4 JUANA VELEZ: I do.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

6 JUANA VELEZ: Hi, my name Juana Velez,  
7 and I have work in, at the Wesson Grand Central  
8 for 14 year. I am a proud member of the New York  
9 Trade Council. Thank you for the opportunity of  
10 testifying today. Being in the union have been a  
11 middle class job with good wage, free health  
12 insurance and a pension that I can support my  
13 family. In recent year, New York has seen a huge  
14 growth on non-union hotel. There work are not  
15 paid well, and only few benefit. We don't need  
16 any more of those hotel. I am very concerned  
17 that other, that other union hotels, a non-union  
18 hotels will be built as part of Harbor Common  
19 Project. We shouldn't be using public land to  
20 undercut middle class job.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Muchas gracias.

22 JUANA VELEZ: De nada.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Who's next?

24 JEANNETTE HARJO-COBB: I'll go.

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

2 JEANNETTE HARJO-COBB: Hi, my name is  
3 Jeannette Harjo-Cobb. I am a resident of Staten  
4 Island. I am mother of two boys. I am also--

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing] A  
6 little closer to the mic.

7 JEANNETTE HARJO-COBB: I am also a  
8 veteran of the United States Army, a member of  
9 the New York City District Council of Carpenters  
10 Local 20, Staten Island, and I'm also a graduate  
11 of New Non-traditional Employment for Women. By  
12 looking at me you may not know that I am your  
13 typical--you may think I'm your typical, you  
14 know, union member, but this is the face of the  
15 union today. Women, more and more women are  
16 coming through programs like New, becoming  
17 skilled and trained construction workers. I am  
18 here representing Build Up New York City, and the  
19 District Council of Carpenters. The Staten  
20 Island waterfront is a precious asset that should  
21 be developed to strengthen our communities for  
22 generations to come. To achieve this, the  
23 developers of Empire Outlets needs to present a  
24 comprehensive plan to protect the waterfront and  
25 surrounding communities from rising sea levels,

1 increased flooding and other extreme weather.  
2 Empire Outlets is located in an area that was  
3 affected by hurricane Sandy. Community Board  
4 Member, I mean--excuse me. Community Board One  
5 recommended that the developer of Empire Outlets  
6 amend their plan to include additional  
7 investments in coastal protection and  
8 restoration. Some design changes have been made  
9 to the buildings, however, they may not be  
10 sufficient. The proposed project's design  
11 includes features to improve the resiliency. The  
12 New York City panel on climate control, climate  
13 change, MPCC has projected--projecting sea level  
14 rise up to two--excuse me--projected through the  
15 2050's. The proposed projects design addresses  
16 this potential rise in sea level. Yet the MPCC  
17 also projects that sea levels could rise up to 59  
18 inches by 2080's. The proposed two feet in  
19 additional height go beyond illegal requirements  
20 to address the potential effects of climate  
21 change on the project. Excuse me. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

23 Appreciate it. Next, sir?  
24  
25

2 ALEX SIMPSON: Good afternoon. My name  
3 is Alex Simpson. I'm a native Staten Islander. I  
4 also belong to Local Seven, Tile, Marble and  
5 Terrazzo. This means I install ceramic tile and  
6 marble for a living. Working in the union  
7 allowed me to work for responsible contractors,  
8 enabling me to buy and own my own house. I am  
9 speaking on behalf of Build Up New York.

10 Projects such as Empire Outlets should be built  
11 and operated according to the highest quality,  
12 safety, and transparency standards. Construction  
13 is a dangerous industry. I've actually seen  
14 first-hand sprains, breaks, fall, and severe  
15 cuts. In fact, according of 2012 OSHA statistics  
16 out of 35 total workplace fatalities New York  
17 City, 28 or 75 percent were construction related.  
18 Providing adequate safety training can literally  
19 be a matter of life and death. For this reason  
20 it is crucial to ensure the construction work is  
21 as well as building operations and security  
22 workers are provided vital safety training that  
23 protects workers and the public. Not all  
24 construction employees are permitted to maintain  
25 in these high safety standards. In fact, 72

1 percent of construction fatalities in New York  
2 City in 2012 occurred on job sites where workers  
3 did not participate in state approved training  
4 and apprenticeship program. These employers  
5 create dangerous work environments that put  
6 workers and the public at risk. Empire Outlets  
7 should support high construction safety standards  
8 by ensuring that contractors employed on this  
9 project can participate in state approved  
10 training and apprenticeship programs. While the  
11 developer of Empire Outlets is offering a 10 week  
12 training program to some workers, state approved  
13 apprentice programs are registered with New York  
14 State Department of Labor consists of both  
15 classroom instruction and on the job training for  
16 two to four year periods depending on the  
17 construction trade. Personally, I would rather  
18 work alongside someone who has gone through  
19 multiple years of training in school and in the  
20 field. Thank you.

21  
22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, sir.

23 KARINA BEDNAREK: Hi, my name is  
24 Karina Bednarek from Local 79. I'm here to read  
25 for Dan Finley's testimony who couldn't make it

1 today. Dan Finley is a proud resident of Staten  
2 Island. "In fact, I live about two blocks from  
3 the proposed development. I have been a union  
4 carpenter for 31 years, and on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012 I  
5 was able to retire with the comfort of knowing my  
6 bills will be covered, and after raising four  
7 kids, I don't owe a dime in medical bills. I  
8 have worked for 100's of companies over the  
9 years, but they all had one thing in common, they  
10 paid their ben--they pay into benefits fund and  
11 were responsible contractors. Contrary to BFC's  
12 promises of creating good jobs on Staten Island,  
13 BFC's track record tells a much different story.  
14 BFC has employed construction contractors that  
15 have been sued for undermining the wage and  
16 benefit standards that responsible employers have  
17 worked hard to establish. For example, BFC has  
18 previously hired Thomas Ulringer's [phonetic]  
19 super structure builders. Ulringer and his  
20 family of construction companies have been sued  
21 by employees claiming violations of state and  
22 federal minimum wage and overtime laws, and are  
23 currently facing a class action suit over ongoing  
24 minimum wage and overtime violations. BFC has  
25

1 also hired Wholesale Plumbing and Heating which  
2 settled a 2009 class action lawsuit filed by its  
3 employees over alleged overtime violations.  
4 Furthermore, BFC contractor S&J Industrial is  
5 currently listed on the New York State Department  
6 list of violating New York State worker's  
7 compensation law, and will be debarred from  
8 public works projects until 2014. If this is the  
9 kind of contractor that we are going to handle  
10 over city land to, then my neighbors on Staten  
11 Island will not be able to sustain careers where  
12 they can rely on their healthcare and retirement  
13 as I have been able to." Construction--

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]

15 I'm going to have to cut you off in a minute.

16 [cross-talk]

17 KARINA BEDNAREK: Just one--

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

19 KARINA BEDNAREK: It beats up on your  
20 body. I hope you keep that in mind while making  
21 your decision. Thank you."

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: That was good.

23 Alright. We screwed up the clock at the  
24 beginning so that's why you got a quick thing.  
25

1  
2 Okay, one more and then we have other additional  
3 last one in opp. Okay.

4 ISETTA BUKUM: Hi, my name is Isetta  
5 Bukum [phonetic] I've worked at the New Yorker  
6 Hotel for 17 years, and I am a proud member of  
7 the New York Hotel Trade Council. Being a union  
8 has meant that I have middle class job with good  
9 wages, free health insurance and pension. I can  
10 support my family. In recent year, New York has  
11 seen a huge growth of non-union hotel. The  
12 workers are not paid well and have few benefits.  
13 We don't need any more of those hotels. I'm very  
14 concerned that another non-union hotel will be  
15 built in the part of Harbor Commons projects. We  
16 shouldn't be using public land to undercut middle  
17 class job. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

19 Alright. And our last person in opposition I  
20 believe. We're going to cut it off at that  
21 point.

22 LENORE FRIEDLAENDER: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yes. Go ahead.

24 LENORE FRIEDLAENDER: Okay. Thank you  
25 very much. My name is Lenore Friedlaender. I'm



1 the assistant to the President for Local 32bj,  
2 and here on behalf of Build Up NYC. We have an  
3 incredible opportunity to create good middle  
4 class jobs on this project, and not--the  
5 testimony that we've heard from the developer has  
6 indicated that there's not health insurance, that  
7 there's no real training program past some kind  
8 of an initial orientation to working on a  
9 construction site or building operations or  
10 maintenance, and no retirement security for those  
11 workers. And that after the construction phase,  
12 the jobs are presumed to be in the retail sector,  
13 which is notorious for having low wage jobs and  
14 there's no assurance that those actually, those  
15 jobs are with commercial tenants. So is a  
16 developer planning to require the tenants pay a  
17 living wage and provide benefits for those  
18 workers in the eventuality. All unknown at this  
19 point from the testimony. And finally, the  
20 developer stated that there may not be enough  
21 money to create good jobs because of the  
22 projected rent. Well, the reality is New York  
23 City in the outer boroughs and places around New  
24 York City, that there have been commercial  
25

1 buildings that have been built and operated in a  
2 way that provides good middle class jobs at the  
3 established standards with the training and  
4 apprenticeship programs that really provide  
5 careers for people, where the rent is--where the  
6 tenants are paying 40 dollars a square foot or  
7 less in rent. So it is very possible with the  
8 projected rent that we think it is on the low end  
9 of what is possible to get on this project, that  
10 it is possible and in fact has happened in New  
11 York city, that responsible developers and  
12 responsible employers have been able to provide  
13 those kinds of good jobs, and for Staten Island  
14 like many other places where there's high  
15 unemployment, there is a need for good jobs, not  
16 low wage dead end jobs.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Great.

19 LENORE FRIEDLAENDER: Thank you very  
20 much.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright. That's  
22 you're closing statement. Thank you all very  
23 much. I am now going to call panel in favor.  
24 Again, if you're here please signal that you're  
25 here. William Cuffe [phonetic], it looks like.

1  
2 Michael Brown? Mike Lombardi? Shawn Smallwood?  
3 Arjo [phonetic] Phillip? How many of those guys  
4 are here? These four? Alright, got four? Okay,  
5 gentlemen, whenever you're ready. Make sure to  
6 state your name as we go forward. Is there a  
7 fifth or four? Did you get called? No, okay.  
8 Just get started. I'm going to just step out for  
9 a second. Chair Comrie, can you just chair the  
10 meeting for a second?

11 WILLIAM CUFFE: How you doing? My  
12 name's William Cuffe. I'm a resident at Staten  
13 Island. I lived in Staten Island my entire life.  
14 I came here to basically say that I'm so for the  
15 work that you're trying do for Staten Island.  
16 Staten Island definitely needs the work. The  
17 thing is, a lot of times when we have these job  
18 opportunities, a lot of the jobs and the  
19 contracts go to Jersey contractors. There are a  
20 lot of people from out of New York City that are  
21 getting these jobs. Our people need these jobs.  
22 Like my friend said before, they want the people  
23 off the streets. They want us to stop doing bad  
24 and illegal activities. There are people that  
25 are willing to do the work. They're here and

1 they are willing and able. People are not giving  
2 these young gentleman or females the opportunity  
3 to actually present themselves the way that  
4 they're supposed to. You can't get a union book  
5 without the work. You can't do the work without  
6 being in the union. There's a circle that needs  
7 to be broken. Somebody needs to break this chain  
8 of command. You want these gentleman to get into  
9 a union, give them a job. You want the union to  
10 have workers, it's the only way you're going to  
11 do it. Open the door for these men to get a job.  
12 Let them start their job now. Let them get their  
13 couple of pay stubs so they could go to union  
14 hole, get a union book, get a good job to pay for  
15 the houses and make their families. You know, be  
16 able to do something and benefit for themselves.  
17 We can't do this in our own. We can only speak a  
18 word, but if you're not going to listen to this  
19 word that we speak, then where does it leave us.  
20 I have not more--nothing really to say, but it's  
21 just a reoccurring circle that we need to break.  
22 Right now there's so many projects in Staten  
23 Island. The expressway's being built. The  
24 Staten Island ferry, but look at the contractors  
25

1 names on the side of the trucks, New Jersey this,  
2 New Jersey that. Where are the New York  
3 contractors at? Where are the people from New  
4 York getting their jobs from. Our rent needs to  
5 be paid. This 1,400 dollars for rent, we can't  
6 pay this not without a job. Welfare's not going  
7 to help us. Who's going to do this for us?  
8 Somebody needs to help us out with this  
9 situation.  
10

11 [applause]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thank you.  
13 Quiet please. We have a long day. We really  
14 can't--no clapping. Next person, please.

15 MICHAEL BROWN: Good afternoon,  
16 Council and Committee. My name is Michael Brown.  
17 I've been a Staten Island resident for the last  
18 40 years. I'm here on behalf of United Work  
19 Force. We are a community organization and we  
20 create jobs for the community. I have 30 years  
21 construction experience and I am now a retiree of  
22 the union. I have a pension, so I'm here to try  
23 to get other brothers and sisters, minorities, or  
24 not minority to be able to get on these jobs  
25 whether they're union or not, to be able to feed

1  
2 their family, possibly have a career with  
3 construction whether it's a known trade, a skill  
4 trade, or whether you're just a laborer, a basic  
5 laborer, and you'll be able to feed your family.  
6 You're not out in the street. You're not locked  
7 up in somebody's prison cell because you're out  
8 beyond certain hours and you don't have the  
9 proper identification on you. So basically what  
10 we're saying is if this job can be 50/50, 50  
11 percent union, 50 percent non-union, then the  
12 people who are not not--the people who are not  
13 union will get the training to become union  
14 someday. Construction has been--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: [interposing]  
16 Quiet please.

17 MICHAEL BROWN: Construction has been  
18 very good to me. I have raise four kids off of  
19 construction. I have four grandkids and life was  
20 great. It's a different economy now. I think  
21 it's--I think Staten Island needs this to go down  
22 and I'm here just to represent for the brothers  
23 and sisters out here who want to work and who  
24 don't just want to be on welfare. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thank you. No clapping, please. Next person.

MIKE LOMBARDI: Hi, my name is Mike Lombardi. I'm a Staten Island resident my whole life. I'm representing my family's business, Staten Island Harley Davidson. We're actually a fourth generation family-owned business. We've been in Stapleton on Bay Street since 1905. We've been serving motorcycle needs for about 108 years now. I just wanted to say something short. Basically, you know, we are in favor for this outlet mall. You know, as you said earlier, Staten Island Ferry is, you know, the third largest tourist population on the island that generates a lot of tourists as it is. It's the second best view of the Statue of Liberty without actually taking a ride itself. You know, us ourselves, we have a lot of Harley enthusiast from around the world, so when they come in they like to travel down to our store, and I feel that, you know, if we have an outlet mall here, and you know, the ferry--the project does go through, it is going to give them a reason to stay once they get off that boat, not just to

1 shop in those retail malls, but also, you know,  
2 maybe expand down Bay Street to other small  
3 businesses. You know, to Snug Harbor West, the  
4 Stapleton Rose [inaudible 06:23:12] etcetera.  
5 You know, and, you know a lot of those businesses  
6 including myself, you know, we got hit hard by  
7 Sandy, lost hundreds of thousands of dollars in  
8 inventory. You know, didn't have insurance so  
9 you know myself like many other businesses could  
10 really boom. You know, really get a lot revenue  
11 from this, so, you know, just all for it.  
12

13 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thank you.

14 : Alright, how you doing?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Good.

16 : My name is Arjo. I'm originally  
17 from Brooklyn, to be honest, you know. You can  
18 start that clock back over, matter of fact, you  
19 know what I saying. I'm just getting started.  
20 What I'm saying is I'm from Brooklyn originally,  
21 you know.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: [interposing]  
23 You don't get time off for being from Brooklyn.

24 : Alright.

25 [laughter]



1 : Alright. And so, you know, I  
2 haven't been in this type of forum since like,  
3 you know, elementary school like on a school  
4 trip, so I'm kind of happy to be here to speak to  
5 people who can actually get things done on paper,  
6 you know what I'm saying? As opposed to the way  
7 people do it in the streets. Yeah, I'm at the  
8 wrong place, I know. But what I'm saying is  
9 basically me living in Staten Island for like the  
10 last 10 months, I could tell you that I see a lot  
11 of disadvantage, you know, a lot of lack of  
12 opportunities for the community and the people  
13 out there, you know. Realistically I think that  
14 this is a good opportunity to have something for  
15 Staten Island itself because it's--number one,  
16 it's very boring out there sometimes, but two,  
17 Brooklyn has the Barclay Center. That's a big  
18 money machine for Brooklyn, and I'm from Brooklyn  
19 all the way, but Staten Island, you got to have  
20 the big wheel on there and all that. You know  
21 that's going to be nice, you know what I'm  
22 saying? So basically--and then as far as the work  
23 force, everybody here with the red shirts on,  
24 everybody just wants some work, man. You know,  
25

1  
2 everybody that is--and there's a whole stream of  
3 people who had on red shirts who was outside  
4 earlier who got impatient because they weren't  
5 getting in, so this is just a small fraction of  
6 what was actually out here to actually, you know,  
7 demand that these things take place, you know?  
8 And we have the right correspondence. And so,  
9 you know, we're just happy to be heard right now,  
10 and you know, the proper representation was  
11 already here. They left already. The opposition  
12 spoke, and I just think this thing needs to  
13 happen. And I guess that's my time, you know  
14 what I'm saying.

15 MICHAEL BROWN: United Work Force.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Well done.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: I want to thank  
18 the panel.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. We've  
20 been waiting all day for you.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: I want to  
22 thank the panel, thank the panel for coming down  
23 and speaking up.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

25 Everybody, thank you guys. Alright. I'd like to

1  
2 call up the next panel of people if they want. I  
3 can't read the first name so well, but Mazzei is  
4 the last name, M a z z i e--e i. Alright. And  
5 then the last name Bankey. I'm having a hard  
6 time reading the first names, B e h n k e, it  
7 looks like if they're here. Martin Green?  
8 Camilla Hanks? And Mark Macron? How many are  
9 here? Let's see. How did we do? There's  
10 movement, but I can't tell who's coming up.  
11 Alright, I'm going to call more names. Doesn't  
12 look like they're coming. Loretta Caldwell  
13 [phonetic], Caldwell [phonetic]? Okay, should I  
14 stop there? Okay. Did we call your name? Okay.  
15 No problem, we'll take it, take her testimony,  
16 and--so that's three. Anybody else? Thank you.  
17 Frank Rizzo, are you here? Alright, Mr. Rizzo  
18 why don't you come up and let's see what we got  
19 now. Alright. Alright, guys. I wonder why  
20 Vinny is standing there like that, though. What  
21 are doing? You're making me uncomfortable there.  
22 Okay, I know the feeling. Alright--sure, there's  
23 an open seat, but you want to--you want to sit--  
24 are you--is Ms. Caldwell here? I called her  
25 name. I think she was the one who said they left

1 her testimony, right? Yeah, she left her  
2 testimony. Did we call your name, sir? I'm  
3 sorry. Alright, so then let's just do the ones  
4 that are here, and then we'll get to the next,  
5 okay, 'cause I don't want to show favorites. I'm  
6 just working off a list here. So, go ahead  
7 gentleman, who wants to go first?

9 ETORIE MAZZEI: Good afternoon. My  
10 name's Etorie Mazzei. I support the outlet mall  
11 and the wheel. Twenty-seven years ago I started  
12 my small business, catering company in a modest  
13 store front in Stapleton, 691. Through hard work  
14 over 20 years, I was fortunate enough to be able  
15 to purchase my building. Purchased the building  
16 next door, 695 and build mixed-use building at  
17 701 and my home at 703. For 86 to 2006 business  
18 was wonderful. Regulation was light, and the  
19 last six years has decimated my small business  
20 and many in our neighborhood. New York City  
21 Department of Health fines for my two food  
22 businesses are in excess of 25,000 for the last  
23 three years, and I have an A on my window. I've  
24 always had an A. The Department of Consumers  
25 Affairs, all but my construction business out of

1 business because of minor infractions on our  
2 contracts. I applaud the risk takers, the  
3 developers of the outlet mall and the Ferris  
4 wheel. Politicians so often say small business  
5 is the heart of America. Everybody says that  
6 including our President, our Governor, but they  
7 do not put their money where their mouth is.  
8 They do not support the small business man.  
9 Right now we are being decimated as one of the  
10 Committee members of the North Shore Business  
11 Association, I speak to small businesses and they  
12 are decimated. Okay, we need to do something  
13 about the regulation. We need to cut back on the  
14 fines. We need to let the developers come in,  
15 develop the property so we have a second chance,  
16 because if things don't get better, you know, I  
17 will sell my buildings and leave the state, and  
18 that's what we're looking at. So we need to let  
19 the developers come in and let them do their  
20 work, and hopefully we get additional business to  
21 small businesses. And I thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you in  
24 keeping--

25 : Thank you Mr. Chairman, Subcommittee

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Two minutes.

3 Okay.

4 : Thank you, Mr. Chairman,  
5 Subcommittee. My name is Mark Macron. I am a  
6 resident of the north shore since 1965. It's  
7 where my wife and I raised our children. I am  
8 also a small business owner on the north shore as  
9 well, and I can attest--I don't have the same  
10 business as the gentleman to my left, but it's  
11 very hard to maintain a small business on the  
12 north shore. In the interest of--in the interest  
13 of disclosure, I am also the candidate for the  
14 City Council for the 49<sup>th</sup> Council District. I  
15 have reviewed the Executive Summary for the  
16 projects that are being proposed, and I am amazed  
17 at its scope, its breadth and its thoughtfulness.  
18 This is the single greatest economic opportunity  
19 that I have seen on Staten Island and especially  
20 on the north shore in my lifetime. We are  
21 talking about 2,500 jobs. I understand it's 1,300  
22 permanent jobs. I've heard numbers as high as  
23 2,000 permanent jobs. When a person is hired,  
24 you're not just hiring that person. You are--  
25 that person receives the benefit, but so does his

1 family, and so you effect--is a ripple effect,  
2 this multiplier effective hiring a single person.  
3 This body has the opportunity now to help or  
4 assist 2,500 families. We are talking about  
5 thousands and thousands of people. I'm asking to  
6 be flexible in your negotiations. Much of the  
7 issues--much of the--outside of the union issue,  
8 much of the criticism that I have heard today  
9 really revolves around fine tuning the overall  
10 project. It's not a criticism of the project  
11 itself, well there have been some, it's more  
12 about the fine tuning of the project. I'm asking  
13 you to be flexible in your negotiations. We  
14 don't go forward with this project--if the  
15 approvals are voted down, we're going to lose the  
16 jobs, all the revenue, and the long term economic  
17 benefit that would be gained from the wheel, the  
18 outlet mall, and the hotels, and as a rising tide  
19 lifts all boats, it would help the gentleman to  
20 my left, it'll help me, and the people in this  
21 room.  
22

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you sir.

24 MARK MACRON: I just--okay.  
25

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I appreciate it.  
3 Thank you. Who's next?

4 MARTIN GREEN: Good afternoon.  
5 Council, I appreciate the time. My name is Martin  
6 Green. I live on the north shore of Staten  
7 Island. I'm New York City born and bred, and  
8 anyone who's been born and bred in New York knows  
9 that they could easily list what the attractions  
10 are of the different boroughs, major ones. The  
11 Bronx has the Yankees, the Bronx Zoo, the  
12 Botanical Garden. Queens has Flushing Meadow  
13 Park, put on the map by World Fair, the Mets who  
14 aren't much of an attraction lately I admit.  
15 Manhattan obviously is an attraction unto itself.  
16 And Brooklyn, the waterfront, now the Barclay  
17 Center. And Staten Island has always been known  
18 for two things, the ferry and the dump. Alright?  
19 The dump thankfully is gone. The ferry is a huge  
20 attraction. It brings in tourist and families  
21 every day, 'cause I see them every day because I  
22 work in Midtown and I live in Staten Island. So  
23 I see them every day. I'd like to tell them, "Oh,  
24 you have to see the Ferris wheel. You have to go  
25 to the outlet mall. Beyond that, I have no



1 financial interest in this development. As a  
2 matter of fact, by being here what amounts to be  
3 an entire day of work just to sit here and talk  
4 to you for two minutes, I've invested more  
5 financially than the city ever will in this plan.  
6 There's not much more that I can say other than  
7 I'd like to have a destination on Staten Island  
8 for myself, for my family to go to, rather than  
9 have to go into the City every single time. It'd  
10 be nice to walk on the promenade. It'd be nice  
11 to go on this, you know, what I hope is going to  
12 be the biggest Ferris wheel in the country, and  
13 it--nice to go Christmas shopping there. This is  
14 layman's point of view, and that's it. I have to  
15 rebut what I think the gentleman, Council Member  
16 said that, you know, the entire promenade needs  
17 to be developed, if I were that private owner of  
18 that piece of promenade I would be ecstatic about  
19 this development, and further development would  
20 occur, and his property value's going to sky  
21 rocket if he doesn't develop it himself. Things  
22 like that are going to happen all over that area.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

2 FRANK RIZZO: Good afternoon Council

3 Members and thank you for the opportunity to

4 speak at today's hearing. My name is Frank

5 Rizzo, I'm a Director for the Staten Island Board

6 of Realtors. My firm, Cornerstone Realty

7 Partners is based on the north shore where I've

8 conducted business for the past 10 years. For an

9 entire generation, St. George and the entire

10 Staten Island waterfront has suffered from

11 underinvestment and underutilization. When I

12 began my real estate career on Staten Island, I

13 believe that St. George and downtown Staten

14 Island had the same potential for rebirth that

15 we've now seen in areas such as Williamsburg,

16 Greenpoint, Bushwick, Harlem, and Bedford

17 Stuyvesant. For many years the overwhelming

18 feedback that was received from potential home

19 owners, potential business owners or potential

20 investors was no. No to relocating here, no to

21 becoming a stakeholder in the community, and no

22 to investing in the neighborhood. It wasn't from

23 a lack of potential in the area, but by

24 themselves, no one individual felt they were big

25 enough to make a difference. During the past

1 year, our office completed a survey of the  
2 available retail spaces in the neighborhood  
3 encompassing Bay Street, the Bay Street corridor  
4 from Stapleton down to the ferry terminal, and we  
5 found over 20 percent vacancy rate. For some  
6 perspective, consider that as we sit here in  
7 downtown Manhattan, there is a 2.2 percent  
8 vacancy rate, and the national average for retail  
9 vacancy is 10.5 percent. It may seem  
10 inconceivable for us as we sit here to believe  
11 that a waterfront district in New York City in  
12 close proximity to downtown Manhattan is saddled  
13 with double the national vacancy rate because  
14 individuals could not find a compelling reason to  
15 invest in this blighted community. Now since the  
16 news of this project was first announced, the  
17 mood has from wait and see to a genuine  
18 excitement with merchants, property owners and  
19 residents in the area. Myself and other members  
20 of the Staten Island Board of Realtors have seen  
21 more requests for space in the past six months  
22 than we have in the past six years. Local  
23 merchants and property owners have organized to  
24 collaborate on safety, beautification, and  
25

1 streetscape ideas. Investments have been  
2 discussed and planned along the Bay Street  
3 corridor. Investments that are being made on the  
4 premise that the wheel and the Empire Outlets  
5 will bring new vibrancy to the area and that  
6 opportunity as it expanded throughout the St.  
7 George and Stapleton neighborhoods. With  
8 rejuvenated stores, new businesses and new  
9 capital invested in an area that's crying out,  
10 we're looking at a revival in these neighborhoods  
11 that will positively impact the people who live  
12 there with better services, more employment, and  
13 better opportunity and a higher quality of life.  
14 It this project does not go forward, it will not  
15 just set back the area a year, but set the  
16 project back, the area back many years. You'd be  
17 sending a message to the business and property  
18 owners that are currently there not to invest,  
19 not to change anything, and you're condemning  
20 this area to experience the same conditions of  
21 blight and vacancy that's doubled the rate of the  
22 national average. The new business and  
23 individuals that have been viewing this area as a  
24 viable location will pull away altogether with no  
25

1  
2 compelling reason to come and experience all that  
3 St. George and Staten Island has to offer. Now  
4 as this--despite the fact that Staten Island on  
5 its own is the 35<sup>th</sup> largest city in the United  
6 States, larger than Sacramento, Miami, or  
7 Atlanta. As a borough, the residents have a  
8 genuine feeling that they are forgotten by the  
9 rest of the City where people off the island are  
10 making our decisions.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

12 FRANK RIZZO: You have the opportunity  
13 to change this here. You have the opportunity  
14 with the vo--with this vote to transform downtown  
15 Staten Island by putting Staten Island on the  
16 right track by voting yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Great, thank you.

18 [applause] Hold on a second, one second.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Just one second.  
20 Just one second.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Mr. Oddo has a  
22 comment.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Just on the  
24 point on small business. This Council under  
25 Christine Quinn has tried so hard to address the

1 issues that you talked about, including most  
2 recently where under the Speaker's leadership  
3 we've changed the system on the letter grades.  
4 The cultural change that needs to happen so that  
5 New York City government stops looking at  
6 businesses like yours as a cash cow, has to come  
7 from the other side of the building. And the--  
8 and there's a little bit of hope in that both  
9 mayoral candidates, democrat and republican, de  
10 Blasio and Lhota have campaigned on the fact that  
11 they will change the system. It can't change to  
12 the degree that you need to continue to be  
13 vibrant in this side of the building. You could  
14 only, I don't want to say at the periphery, but  
15 to get to the heart of the matter has to come  
16 from the other side of City Hall, and hopefully  
17 whomever is the next Mayor understands that, and  
18 I'll close my rant with this, but it also means  
19 that the 100 million dollars in extra you get  
20 every year from fines, you have to stop spending  
21 it, and that's a huge problem in both sides of  
22 this building.  
23

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Great. Thank you  
25 for the statement, Mr. Oddo, and thank you all

1 very much. No problem at all. No problem at  
2 all. Next in favor if they're here still,  
3 Cynthia Davis, Representative Bishop Brown, Dana  
4 Boyd, Linda Collier--alright. Kevin Bary?  
5 You're a good man. Okay. We have a--you have a  
6 munchkin here for you. Come on up. Fred Davis,  
7 Linda Barron? Yeah, she left testimony, okay. I  
8 understand how people can only wait so long.  
9 Lynn Kelly from Snug Harbor. Oh, she did,  
10 alright. Peter Gioello and Michael Kramer.  
11 Last, but not least Michael Kramer, maybe. Who  
12 else just wanted to testify, didn't testify?  
13 Anybody? No? Okay. Gentleman, thank you for  
14 your patience.

16 PETER GIOELLO: I'm on the air?

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: You're on the air  
18 baby. And lady, okay.

19 PETER GIOELLO: Okay.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I don't know  
21 who's--

22 PETER GIOELLO: My name is Peter  
23 Gioello. I am a resident of Staten Island for  
24 over 35 years. I've been doing work for BFC for  
25 the last 30 years. I'm a non-union contractor

1 that always wanted to be in the union, but 20  
2 years ago I waited on line for two days and could  
3 get into Local Three. Started a non-union shop.  
4 I employ 92 young men today. We have 401k. We  
5 have medical benefits. We have profit sharing,  
6 and we have safety. We pay time and a half. We  
7 have overtime, etcetera. We work in the five  
8 boroughs, located in Staten Island, and I  
9 wouldn't want more than to employ people in the  
10 neighborhood, okay? Teach them a skill. We do  
11 work with that Work Force Program. We also  
12 worked with union labor. We did Schaeffer  
13 Landing, 350 units. Worked right alongside with  
14 the iron workers, carpenters, etcetera. It's  
15 called work, okay? And we're looking forward to  
16 put the people in the community to work. Any  
17 questions?  
18

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Not at the  
20 moment, but thank you. We'll move on and we'll  
21 see at the end if there's any questions.

22 MICHAEL KRAMER: Good afternoon,  
23 Council Members.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.  
25



2 MICHAEL KRAMER: My name is Michael  
3 Kramer. I am an electrical contractor on Staten  
4 Island. I live and work on Staten Island as do  
5 all of my employees. We currently do maintenance  
6 work on two projects that BFC has successfully  
7 completed on the north shore of Staten Island.  
8 And again, these are jobs in the trades that are  
9 long term jobs. They go on after the initial  
10 construction is completed, because the  
11 maintenance of these buildings is just an ongoing  
12 project. I'm here also as a local business  
13 person to support a project that Staten Island  
14 has been waiting for for a long time.  
15 Economically, I think it's something that we just  
16 can't let pass us by at this time. We need this  
17 on Staten Island. We need this on the north  
18 shore. I'm also a resident of the north shore.  
19 My business is based on the north shore, and we  
20 absolutely need this for Staten Island, and I  
21 hope that the City Council will vote in favor of  
22 this project. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

24 Ma'am, you may be our closing act.

2 LINDA COLLIER: Good afternoon. My  
3 name is Linda Collier, and I am speaking on  
4 behalf of Reverend Doctor Kathlyn B. Lane who is  
5 Senior Pastor for Reach out and Touch Ministries,  
6 and also President of the Staten Island United  
7 Ministerial Alliance. To New York City Council  
8 Members and the Land Use Committee, the north  
9 shore communities of Staten Island will be  
10 directly impacted by the proposed building of the  
11 New York wheel, mall, hotel, and 900 plus parking  
12 space, which will increase traffic, commerce, and  
13 employment opportunities. Whenever a proposed  
14 project of this magnitude is undertaken, it  
15 should be for the purposes of boosting the local  
16 community and economy, revitalizing the  
17 communities where revitalization is needed and  
18 providing employment to the unemployed and the  
19 underemployed of the community. As a community  
20 faith based organization that provides  
21 extensively for community needs, we want to  
22 ensure that there's a commitment to local hiring  
23 and that there is a commitment to hiring persons  
24 of color, particularly from the African-American  
25 and Hispanic-American communities. In past

1 projects, promises of jobs and job opportunities  
2 have been made and broken. Therefore, we want  
3 to--an opportunity to see a written plan  
4 detailing the commitment of hiring these persons  
5 of color along with recruitment for the pre-  
6 construction and post-construction phases of this  
7 project will take place. Presently there is a  
8 disproportionate number of valuable human capital  
9 being lost We believe this project could attract  
10 and keep our skilled, trained and educated young  
11 men and women who are coming out of high school,  
12 technical trainings, school age and colleges.  
13 There are definite concerns about the burden of  
14 traffic congestion going into and out of the  
15 ferry terminal. One proposal was to make one-way  
16 streets out of Bay Street and Front Street. As  
17 we do not believe this would be a viable option,  
18 we are requesting that passage ways and roadways  
19 for local residents traveling into and out of the  
20 mall be re-examined, and more viable option for  
21 traveling be presented. Local roadways are  
22 already being compromised and local residents are  
23 experiencing increased parking issues as most  
24 look for free parking on the outskirts of the  
25

1 terminal areas near the proposed site for the  
2 proposed wheel, hotel, and mall projects. This  
3 has caused a great deal of problems for residents  
4 as well as personnel who work at local schools  
5 and businesses in the area. Even with the  
6 proposed parking lot and backlash of the traffic  
7 and parking might be very much a critical issue  
8 that must be processed and outlined before the  
9 undertaking of this project can be approved.  
10 While this is it. It's two minutes, and I have  
11 submitted the written statement so you can read  
12 the rest of it. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you so  
15 much. We appreciate that. Is there anyone else  
16 here who wanted to testify on this matter? I--I  
17 don't see anybody. So we are going to close this  
18 hearing on Land Use 923 to 928. I thank everyone  
19 for their patience, and I know it's been a long  
20 time waiting, and we're going to close that  
21 hearing and I want to let the members of the  
22 panel, if they want to stick around we actually  
23 have one more item, which I don't anticipate to  
24 be too long. So I'm going to call up for  
25 Halletts Point, and that's Land Use 904 to 909.

1 The following gentleman are going to be  
2 testifying, Joel Bergstein, Robert Schenkel and  
3 Ken Fisher. I know Bishop Taylor is here to talk  
4 in favor. Mr. Fisher, you want Bishop Taylor  
5 after you or you want to bring him up?  
6

7 KEN FISHER: He's welcome to join us.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Bishop, if you  
9 want to just come up with this group, we'll bring  
10 you all together. My pocket is ringing, hold on.  
11 Okay, I'm sorry. I would apologize for the late  
12 hour, but you know what I would say to that to  
13 you guys, so I won't say it. Oh, before we  
14 start, Council Member Rose wants to make a  
15 statement for the record on our item that we  
16 closed the hearing on.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I'm sorry. I  
18 just--

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing] Oh,  
20 on this?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: No. I just want--  
22 -

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]  
24 Whatever you want.  
25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I just wanted to  
3 say for the record that any--it's just  
4 coincidental that I have red on today. I didn't  
5 want anybody to think that I was biased one way  
6 or the other.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Well, I hadn't  
8 thought of it before now. But now that you  
9 mention I, okay. Alright. Gentlemen, you ready?  
10 You looked--I--so, hypothetically, if a Council  
11 Member was Chairing a committee had his citizen's  
12 union endorsement hearing at 6:30 in Long Island  
13 City--we'll be good. Okay.

14 UNKNOWN: On Council time or real time?

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Just to let you  
16 know, just you know. Just saying, you know. As  
17 quickly as you want to do this is fine with me.

18 UNKNOWN: As long as you don't ask any  
19 questions.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I will keep it to  
21 a minimum. Thank you.

22 JOEL BERGSTEIN: Chairman, thank you.  
23 Chairman and committee members, I am Joel  
24 Bergstein President at Lincoln Equities Group.  
25 We are going to make a presentation no Halletts

1 Point in Astoria. They'll be a short three  
2 minute video that will start the presentation,  
3 then I'll turn it over to Robert Schenkel, who is  
4 the Head of Development and Ken Fisher who's our  
5 Land Council. Thank you.

7 VIDEO: **[inaudible 06:48:56]**

8 ROBERT SCHENKEL: Can you stop it?  
9 Are we going to be able to--can you plug this  
10 into the **[inaudible 06:49:03]** box? Can we use a  
11 mic on it? Can we bring the mic to it?

12 VIDEO: So folks, if they go to a  
13 supermarket it's five miles away. If they want  
14 to go a bank, three or four miles away. There's  
15 just nothing in this neighborhood. So the need  
16 for this neighborhood is development. **[inaudible**  
17 **06:49:28]** This truly is a once in a lifetime  
18 opportunity to take a waterfront site that has  
19 been **[inaudible 06:49:35]**

20 [off mic conversation]

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: You're working on  
22 that? I'm going to read to the record while  
23 we're waiting. Council Member Vallone, who  
24 represents Halletts Point had a statement he  
25 wanted me to read into the record, so I'm going

1 to do that while we're working on the technical  
2 issues of getting the video working. So this is  
3 from Council Member Peter Vallone, Junior.

4 "Hallets Point, a predominately industrial area  
5 in my district has been overdeveloped and under-  
6 utilized for quite some time. This area lacks  
7 certain basis services, so this proposed project  
8 is bringing cautious optimism to many of my

9 constituents who live in the surrounding area. I

10 have worked closely with Lincoln Equities in

11 their partners for five years now. There have

12 been--they have been responsible actors

13 throughout this process. They engaged the

14 Astoria community and me in an effort to better

15 understand our specific needs and vision for the

16 area. They agreed to many if not all of the

17 communities asks, which include cutting the

18 proposed size of the development in half,

19 providing better site lines to the waterfront and

20 integration with the existing community routes

21 and amenities to support increased bus service, a

22 new supermarket, community space, a waterfront

23 esplanade, and designs for a new school among

24 other things." Uh-oh. Stop one second. "The  
25



1 community engagement model that these developers  
2 employed is one that others should follow. The  
3 final two issues that need to be addressed by the  
4 city before I am comfortable giving this project  
5 my blessing, is the implementation of ferry  
6 service to Halletts Point and the creation of a  
7 new school at the site. The influx of new  
8 residents will undoubtedly create a greater  
9 strain on our existing already overburdened  
10 public transportation system. Ferry service will  
11 be needed to help alleviate this problem.

12 Additionally with new families come more children  
13 to the community. With elementary school  
14 operating near and above capacity in my district,  
15 a new school will be necessary, will be

16 necessary. Therefore, I urge the administration  
17 to provide these missing pieces to the puzzle so  
18 that we may responsibly develop this area in my  
19 district." Administration, you hear me? Okay.

20 Dually noted, okay. Thank you. That was from  
21 Peter Vallone, Junior. That was his statement  
22 not mine, and we're ready now? Perfect. Thank  
23 you.  
24

25 [video playing/no audio]

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Beautiful. Joel,  
3 a shameless pander to the body here, 'cause both  
4 Leroy Comrie and I are Jamaica High School  
5 graduates as well. So--

6 ROBERT SCHENKEL: Okay. I'm Robert  
7 Schenkel from Lincoln Equities Group,  
8 representing Halletts Development Company.  
9 First, I wanted to thank you for having us here.  
10 It's a pleasure to be here. So thank you Council  
11 Members. Turn the first light on?

12 KEN FISHER: Slideshow.

13 ROBERT SCHENKEL: Slideshow on the  
14 right.

15 KEN FISHER: All the way to the left,  
16 and to the right. Yep, there you go.

17 ROBERT SCHENKEL: Click that? And  
18 from the beginning, the left. That's it. Got to  
19 click it. There we go.

20 KEN FISHER: Thank you for your  
21 patience, Council Member.

22 ROBERT SCHENKEL: Okay. Okay.  
23 Alright, Halletts Point is in Astoria, Queens. I  
24 think Astoria's a very special neighborhood. You  
25 can see the site is a peninsula opposite from

1 Gracie Mansion. You get a little closer, you can  
2 see the relationships to the City, to the  
3 bridges, and you can see the isolation from  
4 Astoria, from the rest of Astoria from 31<sup>st</sup>  
5 Street where the subway is. Get a little bit  
6 closer and again you can see that, you know,  
7 again, the site is really very isolated. There's  
8 no transportation. There's no shopping. It's  
9 physically separated, you know, from the rest of  
10 Astoria, the area zoned industrial for uses that  
11 are no longer really there, no longer viable.

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Could I stop you,  
14 since it's just us here now, right now. Just  
15 **[inaudible 06:58:30]**. So I know Council Member  
16 Vallone mentioned this idea of ferry service and  
17 I know that there are a lot of logistical issues  
18 with that because of it's Hell's Gate right there  
19 in front of it. It was mentioned that there may  
20 be other site that might be more workable in the  
21 future. Could you just point, and this--as long  
22 as we're on this slide.

23 ROBERT SCHENKEL: Halletts Cove to the  
24 South.

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Those will be a  
3 little less current-wise, problem. Okay.

4 ROBERT SCHENKEL: Pot [phonetic] Cove  
5 to the north and Halletts Cove to the south.

6 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

7 ROBERT SCHENKEL: Halletts Cove to the  
8 south as I understand EDC controls and owns that  
9 property. There was discussion of a kayak  
10 launch, but it certainly would be a viable  
11 location.

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Right.

13 ROBERT SCHENKEL: As would Pot Cove.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: But doing on the  
15 west side there is impossible because of the  
16 currents?

17 ROBERT SCHENKEL: Swirling waters and  
18 currents would be very tough.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Right. Okay,  
20 thanks. Sorry.

21 ROBERT SCHENKEL: Okay. This is, again,  
22 this is the existing neighborhood. You can see  
23 the top of--looking down the hill towards our  
24 site. Again, you can see how it's separated. The  
25 context of Astoria Houses, the limited shopping,

1 this is the one of two shopping neighborhoods for  
2 1,104 families. This is a location of Astoria  
3 houses, you can see how it's open. The grass is  
4 fenced in, and gives you some sense of context.  
5 These are our sites, which you know are old  
6 industrial warehouses. We have construction  
7 companies storing materials on a month to month  
8 basis, but there's no use for it anymore. Again,  
9 the waterfront, we can certainly all do better  
10 for the people who live in that community. Now  
11 this is the end of the existing Astoria houses  
12 promenade where it touches our site and it almost  
13 has symbolically fallen into the water. We're  
14 going to restore it, and I'll show you some  
15 pictures of how we're going to create a beautiful  
16 esplanade. Project benefits, this site will  
17 generate 483 affordable housing units. And the  
18 plan, because partly the community wanted it, we  
19 listened to the community and engaged with them a  
20 lot. They want affordable seniors housing,  
21 **[inaudible 7:00:27]** preference to the Astoria  
22 Community. This 5.4 million dollars from the  
23 acquisition of sites on the NYCHA campus for the  
24 affordable housing and NYCHA has committed to  
25

1  
2 reinvest that money to do repairs and capital  
3 improvements on the NYCHA campus. Jobs, one of  
4 the biggest things from the community obviously  
5 is jobs. This project will generate 1,400  
6 construction jobs and 300 permanent jobs, and we  
7 have--we're committed to a jobs program. We've  
8 talked with URTA about establishing something,  
9 and we want to absolutely get the community  
10 involved. The supermarket, which was also the  
11 biggest, big ask of the community because there's  
12 no place to buy groceries, and we have a 30,000  
13 square foot properly priced as we like to call it  
14 supermarket, that we're committed to putting in  
15 the first phase the first building. So it will  
16 happen right away. Unlike most of these large  
17 developments with a supermarket comes at the end  
18 if ever. We think there's a built in population  
19 that will shop and support the supermarket now.  
20 Public school, and so you said Council Member  
21 Vallone has request for a school. He was the one  
22 that, you know, identified this as a need early  
23 on. The EIS showed he was correct, and I'll show  
24 we've worked out an agreement with the FCA and

1  
2 NYCHA to locate a school site on the NYCHA  
3 campus.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Can I say this--  
5 back up one second, and just ask, the Astoria  
6 House houses residents preference, how does that  
7 work exactly? How does a preference work in that  
8 case? Yeah.

9 KEN FISHER: For the affordable  
10 housing buildings, all of them not just on the  
11 land that we've--we're going to be acquiring from  
12 NYCHA--for the record, I'm Ken Fisher. The way it  
13 will work is when the buildings are complete, as  
14 each building is completed, 'cause it will be  
15 built in phases, we will--the rent op will first  
16 be offered to Astoria Houses' residents, then  
17 other NYCHA residents, and then to the Community  
18 Board, 50 percent of the units. So 50 percent of  
19 the units will be a lottery that's open to  
20 anybody, and 50 percent will be held aside in  
21 that order for Astoria Houses, other NYCHA  
22 residents in that Community Board. If at the end  
23 of the year we haven't been able to fill the 50  
24 percent that had been set aside, then we would  
25

1  
2 move to the remaining people in the lottery to  
3 fill those--to fill those units.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: But if a member  
5 of Astoria Houses was interested in moving in and  
6 going to that building, they would absolutely get  
7 it?

8 KEN FISHER: They would get first  
9 dibs. Now, as with any affordable housing, there  
10 are certain rental criteria that HPD has  
11 established. I think--I once printed the  
12 regulations. There were 900 pages, but we expect  
13 to be working with the Tenant's Association and  
14 with the local development corporation in the  
15 area on credit worthiness and helping people  
16 prepare for that process. Ultimately it's a  
17 lottery, but we can--we're going to help people  
18 get pre-qualified to be able to participate in  
19 the lottery.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Continue. I'm  
21 sorry.

22 ROBERT SCHENKEL: Okay. And again, a  
23 new sea railing. You know, I'll show you some  
24 images. It was a big ask of the community  
25 because their promenade, the sea railing is



1 rusted. There's a playground that we'll speak to  
2 and we're going to refurbish that, and we're  
3 going to be paying parks to maintain it in  
4 perpetuity. A new service retail and community  
5 facility spaces, and we've talked with **[inaudible**  
6 **07:03:51]** about increased frequency, a bus  
7 service and distribution to more subway stops.  
8 You know, a mixed income community is something  
9 that everybody wants. This community is really  
10 industrial warehouses and 1,004 are low income  
11 families. Now we're going to have a real mixed  
12 income community. Undo the isolation that they  
13 feel, protect and improve the infrastructure.  
14 Council Member Vallone was very adamant on  
15 speaking to Con Edision and looking at the sewer  
16 capacity and all the infrastructure to make sure  
17 that the population was supportive on this  
18 location. We're creating a new public park. I'm  
19 going to show you that, and we're upgrading the  
20 existing park. We do have a plan for new school.  
21 The jobs we talked about. I know displacement or  
22 rent increases for Astoria resident. There was  
23 some misinformation percolating through the  
24 Astoria Houses population. At some point they  
25

1 thought there'd be gentrification, the rent would  
2 go up, they'd be kicked out; absolutely not. The  
3 neighborhood's getting better and they're going  
4 to benefit from it. You know, and Joel and I  
5 spent a lot of time grass roots so to speak,  
6 meeting with the community leadership, the  
7 Astoria Houses leadership, other leaders in the  
8 community, and you know, we wanted to get their  
9 input. We wanted to understand, you know, their  
10 interest in change, their tolerance for change,  
11 what their needs were, and I think we were pretty  
12 successful. We've bonded well for them, and the  
13 Community Board rewarded us with a unanimous  
14 approval. Borough President recommended us, and  
15 the City Planning Commission unanimously approved  
16 us with flattering remarks. I'm just twisting  
17 this to orient you now as we show the architect's  
18 plans. You can see again where I outlined in red  
19 between Whitey Ford Field and the Halletts  
20 playground. And there's the Astoria Houses  
21 Campus. Again, this is kind of getting you to  
22 the architect's drawings, showing the warehouses  
23 on our site. And this is the master plan for the  
24 new project. You can see there's five buildings  
25

1 along the East River. There's two buildings next  
2 to Whitey Ford Field where the supermarket will  
3 be. That's the first phase. There's two  
4 affordable housing buildings on 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and  
5 to the left you'll see there's the site for a  
6 school, that curved site for a school. And next  
7 to it is a building that we have obtained  
8 entitlements for NYCHA, and NYCHA has plans when  
9 they want, probably at the end of this--of the  
10 development when the community had changed, where  
11 they'll be able to construct a new building.  
12 They'll be able to RFP it to somebody else, and  
13 it will have value to them as they look to find  
14 more money to improve the Astoria Houses' Campus,  
15 and they've said they've committed to using funds  
16 that they are generated through this project to  
17 fix up the Astoria Houses' Campus. And also to  
18 go back one second, no parking is being lost on  
19 this campus. There's no loss of parking. We're  
20 configuring the pathways to line up with the  
21 openings in our buildings. We've designed it as  
22 hard as we can to visually and psychologically  
23 integrate them into the new project. One of the  
24 things we're most proud of is the public design.  
25

1  
2 We've hired James Corner Field Operations who  
3 designed the High Line in Manhattan, of course,  
4 to design the public spaces and the esplanade,  
5 and at the end of 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue is this beautiful  
6 public lawn which we envision being lined with  
7 some cafes and restaurants. This is the end of  
8 the existing Astoria Houses Promenade where I  
9 showed you piece of concrete falling into the  
10 ground. And this is what it's going to look like  
11 after our project is built. This is the  
12 termination of 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue at the waterfront that  
13 you stood looking at the--at Midtown Manhattan,  
14 and this is what it will look like in the future.  
15 This is the end of 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue which is a little  
16 street stub that dead ends in the water, and this  
17 is what it's going to look like after the public  
18 space is completed, and there's, of course,  
19 connects into Whitey Ford Field, and you will  
20 have an esplanade that goes all the way around  
21 the peninsula. We think we're a poster child for  
22 a smart development post Sandy. We worked hard  
23 with City Planning and DOT, and we are  
24 essentially elevating the grade of our buildings  
25 about six feet, and we designed beautiful

1 transitions so that it fits into the community.  
2 This is on 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue looking towards our site.  
3 On the left you'll see a small little fenced in  
4 area and a small parking lot, and we're going to  
5 be building some nice new affordable housing for  
6 seniors, and on the ground floor we have  
7 opportunity for retail space on the Astoria  
8 Houses Campus, or maybe some community facility  
9 space. And this is the sea railing that runs  
10 around the Astoria Houses promenade that's  
11 rusted, and it was really kind of the biggest  
12 non-project related ask of the community. We  
13 have agreed to replace 1,800 feet of it. It's a  
14 lot, but we've agreed to do that and upgrade the  
15 existing promenade and have it feel as nice as  
16 ours. This is the playground that's between us  
17 and Astoria Houses, and it's kind of a  
18 basketball, kickball park, but it needs some  
19 refurbishment and we've agreed to refurbish it,  
20 new black top, new fencing, new multi sports  
21 striping for the kids, new basketball hoops and  
22 all that new lighting, benches. The  
23 transportation, there were three existing bus  
24 lines that actually run to this site now, the 18,

1  
2 102, and 103. They don't run so frequently, but  
3 this is the end of the line where they stop.  
4 This is how the existing buses go, and we've  
5 talked about adding the 19 bus so we can get  
6 through the Vernon Boulevard corridor, and we've  
7 talked with distributing the population to both  
8 the Astoria Boulevard and the 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
9 stations on the--and in the Q line, and also  
10 getting down to the F train at 21<sup>st</sup> Queens  
11 Bridge, and at Queens Plaza to 7. So we'll be  
12 able to distribute the population to four  
13 different subway stops, and also we're repaving  
14 Astoria Boulevard. Astoria Boulevard several  
15 years ago, some years ago, was separated with two  
16 cul-de-sacs, and we're going to connect that  
17 again, and of course, that's an opportunity to  
18 get bus service and a bus station in the center  
19 of the Astoria Houses Campus. This is some of  
20 the proposed zoning and again it's giving  
21 opportunities on the NYCHA campus for to have  
22 some retail and some other possibilities. We're  
23 also remapping Whitey Ford Field which is  
24 actually zoned R6. Today it's not zoned to park  
25 and we're kind of cleaning up some of that

1  
2 technical work. And the mapping actions, again,  
3 we're de-mapping two street stubs and turning  
4 them into privately owned publicly accessible  
5 public space. We're not remapping the section of  
6 Astoria Boulevard that we're repaving, but we are  
7 de-mapping the pieces of the cul-de-sac. And  
8 this is an image that just kind of shows how the  
9 massing of our site fits into the peninsula with  
10 the new buildings on the Astoria Houses' campus  
11 and has some of the public space fitted.

12 KEN FISHER: Mr. Chairman, let me just  
13 amplify on a couple of points that Bob made, then  
14 we'd be happy to answer any questions that you  
15 have before we turn the mics over to Bishop  
16 Taylor for the benediction. First of all, when  
17 we talk about senior housing, Council--Congress  
18 Member Maloney in whose district the project is  
19 located has implored us to apply for section 202  
20 federal housing, which is the--a specific funding  
21 strain for seniors, and she's committed to work  
22 with us to try and get funding. We don't  
23 anticipate--and that's for seniors only. We  
24 don't anticipate being able to get funding for  
25 all of the 400 and some odd units of affordable

1 housing for seniors, and there is a need for  
2 families, low income families to have  
3 opportunities as well. So, those buildings are  
4 at least some of them will be designed and  
5 marketed for seniors, things like having the  
6 elevator's doors close a little bit more slowly  
7 than they otherwise would. And we would make a  
8 special outreach to encourage seniors to  
9 participate in the application process. With  
10 respect to Council Member Vallone's comments, and  
11 he's been a great guide for us in terms of  
12 reaching out to the local community and making  
13 sure that his concerns were addressed early on,  
14 and which is why I think his comments were  
15 largely addressed to the City. I want to make  
16 two observations. The first is that the school  
17 construction authority and the New York City  
18 Housing Authority will be entering into a formal  
19 agreement, a memorandum of understanding  
20 reserving the site for the school for a period of  
21 time, 10 years, and when the site is needed it  
22 will be turned over to the SEA at no cost to  
23 them. That's subject to approval by the Federal  
24 Department of Housing and Urban Development, and  
25



1 we look forward to processing that application as  
2 soon as the government is functioning again. In  
3 addition to that, we're advised by the--that the  
4 SEA will be including the school, will be  
5 referencing the school in the November plan. The  
6 school--the need for the school is identified to  
7 recur I think when our project is some 60 percent  
8 built, and that also--our baseline assumes that  
9 other development in the area will occur also,  
10 adding to the need for a school. With respect to  
11 a mass transit and specifically the ferry, I'd  
12 like to say that we love the idea of a ferry. It  
13 has never been part of our project plan. It was  
14 identified in Plan NYC as a candidate. Senator  
15 Schumer recently spoke about it, although we're  
16 not quite sure specifically what he had in mind,  
17 'cause it wasn't at our request. As we mentioned  
18 before, we can accommodate it, but I also want to  
19 mention that as--as nice as an amenity it is for  
20 a neighborhood, it's not a small commitment on  
21 the City's part. There's a substantial  
22 investment that's associated with it that's not  
23 part of the plan, and for anybody at the moment.  
24 But more importantly, and I think this is  
25

2 important to note on the record, and I say this  
3 with a great deal of respect for Council Member  
4 Vallone, but the environmental impact statement  
5 did not identify a mass transit impact, and we  
6 have our consultant here who'd be happy to walk  
7 you through it page by page if you like, but the  
8 bottom line is that the MTA bus company is  
9 preparing to provide additional bus service for  
10 us. There is not--even though there is not a  
11 required impact to be mitigated. So while we  
12 think that the ferry service would be a good  
13 idea, if other development wants to do it or the  
14 city wants to do it at some point, it is not--it  
15 is not a mitigation effort, because we actually  
16 don't believe that it's required by the traffic  
17 impacts. So it would be a nice idea, but--and  
18 I'm sure that the Councilmen would like ferry  
19 service all up and down the waterfront, but it's  
20 not something that the project is dependent upon.  
21 And with that we'd be happy to answer any of your  
22 questions.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very  
24 much. Mr. Comrie, you have any questions for  
25 this group?

2 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Because you  
3 came on after 5:00, I'm not supporting the  
4 project anymore. I have no questions. I just  
5 want to congratulate you on putting together such  
6 an extensive package and getting the unanimous  
7 support of the Community Board, the local board  
8 and at the borough President's office, and Bishop  
9 Taylor, and I hope that the project is moved to  
10 completion as quickly as possible.

11 KEN FISHER: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Great. Now, one  
13 question I have, just what--I know there was  
14 discussion about meeting with the unions, some  
15 union discussions, could you just tell us what  
16 the status of that is?

17 ROBERT SCHENKEL: You know, again,  
18 first as it relates to that, we've been open and  
19 transparent from the start of this project.  
20 We've met with community leaders, the Astoria  
21 Houses' Residents Associations, others; we had  
22 many town hall meetings in local churches, at the  
23 Astoria Houses' Community Center, even at the  
24 historical society had a meeting set up by the  
25 Community Board. So we've been very open. We've

1 met with the unions and we met with the Building  
2 Trade. We reached out to them, okay? So we've  
3 had several meetings. This is--

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing] Who  
5 did you have meeting with?

6 ROBERT SCHENKEL: We had meetings with  
7 Kyle Bragg [phonetic] of 32bj. We had meetings  
8 with Gary Labarbra [phonetic], I'm sorry, of the  
9 Building--

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]  
11 Okay.

12 ROBERT SCHENKEL: And we recognize  
13 this is a very big complicated project, and while  
14 we have not designed the buildings, you know,  
15 through the zoning process you do the zoning  
16 envelopes and a lot of work, but we don't design  
17 the buildings themselves. The construction will  
18 require skill and depth; they're complicated.  
19 Bogus Lend Lease is one of the largest union and  
20 general contractors in the City, has been our  
21 team. I have an extensive project team that I  
22 often bring a lot of them with me to these  
23 meetings as back up. They've been on the team for  
24 five plus years, since the beginning. Okay.

1  
2 Again, we haven't designed the building. So,  
3 we're committed to sitting down with the building  
4 trade, you know, once we design the buildings and  
5 we understand, you know, what we need and what  
6 we're looking to construct. I'm sure I'm going  
7 to have more conversations with them between now  
8 and then, but we've met with them.

9 KEN FISHER: And also, we have a  
10 meeting scheduled next week, I bel--I've lost  
11 track of--we have a meeting scheduled with Kyle  
12 Bragg of 32bj. We've already had one meeting  
13 with him. We have another meeting scheduled to  
14 follow up with him, and Council Member you may  
15 recall, but just a note for the record, that  
16 under the 421A Incentive Program, which is  
17 critical for the success of this project--

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]  
19 Right.

20 KEN FISHER: Prevailing wages--

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [cross-talk]  
22 prevailing wages.

23 KEN FISHER: Yeah, prevailing wages  
24 are required and so we've always factored that  
25 in, so I think it's just a question of when we

2 know what our needs are, and we know how we--  
3 we're--and we're a little bit further along also  
4 in thinking about a job training program for the  
5 residents, 'cause that's something else that  
6 we've committed to. We look forward to sitting  
7 down with 32bj and eventually with the Building  
8 Trades and we're sure--

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]

10 Okay.

11 KEN FISHER: that those will be  
12 productive conversations.

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. Now,  
14 Bishop Taylor, I know you're supposed to testify  
15 in favor. Do you want to do that now with them  
16 sitting here or did you--

17 BISHOP TAYLOR: I think that they just  
18 saved my designation, instead I'm coming for the  
19 benediction.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay, alright.  
21 It's okay with me if you want to go. We saw you  
22 on the video so we got a good sense of how you  
23 feel.

24 BISHOP TAYLOR: I think that it's a  
25 great project, and i--

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Come on. Just  
3 come on up and say hello, and if you want to give  
4 us a benediction, we're always happy to receive  
5 one.

6 UNKNOWN: Amen.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Amen, exactly.  
8 Say your name for the record.

9 BISHOP TAYLOR: Bishop Mitchell  
10 Taylor, President and Founder of the East River  
11 Development Alliance and Pastor of the Center of  
12 Hope International. To the Council and the body  
13 of the Land Use Committee, I'm glad to be here  
14 today to support this project. It's been five  
15 and half years or so that we've been in constant  
16 communication with the developers. I always say  
17 this, that development is inevitable. It's not  
18 the development, it's the developer. We were  
19 lucky to have a passionate concern and engaging  
20 developer that wanted to bring the community  
21 together and not divide it. So, saying that--

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [interposing]  
23 Good to hear.

24 BISHOP TAYLOR: Amen, bless everybody.  
25

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright, well

3 thank you very much gentlemen. Now is there

4 anyone else here who's supposed to testify? I

5 just want to mention 32bj had contacted us just

6 to hope that that conversation will continue and

7 hopefully to fruition. Alright. So thank you.

8 We're going to close this hearing on Land Use 904

9 to 909 inclusive. This--so we're going to close

10 this hearing and we are going to recess this

11 Subcommittee until tomorrow morning at 9:45 at

12 250 Broadway 16<sup>th</sup> Floor. So this very long day

13 isn't quite over, 'cause we're only recessing

14 until tomorrow. But I want to thank you. 9:45

15 is the hearing tomorrow. I don't know if we'll be

16 taking the meeting--the meeting, no hearing

17 tomorrow though. This--the hearing's closed. We

18 may have a meeting 'cause we'll see if we have

19 agreements on a couple other items, okay? I

20 don't--not this one, though, 'cause we do have

21 some conversations as we discussed to have. So

22 thank you all very much. I'm going to wrap the

23 gavel even though we are no recessed 'til 9:45

24 tomorrow morning. Thank you all for a very long

25 day. Bye-bye.



C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is no interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date 10/21/2013