

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON LAND USE

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January 27, 2010
Start: 10:31 am
Recess: 10:47 am

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
LEROY G. COMRIE, JR.
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Maria del Carmen Arroyo
Charles Barron
Inez E. Dickens
Daniel R. Garodnick
Daniel J. Halloran III
Vincent M. Ignizio
Robert Jackson
Peter A. Koo
Brad S. Lander
Jessica S. Lappin
Stephen T. Levin
Diana Reyna
Joel Rivera
James Sanders, Jr.
Larry B. Seabrook
James Vacca
Mark S. Weprin

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Jumaane D. Williams

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

Leroy G. Comrie, Jr.
Opening Statement
Chairperson
Committee on Land Use.

Thank you's to all Land Use Committee staff

William Martin
Committee Clerk
Committee on Land Use

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2 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Good morning
3 everyone. My name is Leroy Comrie. I'm the Chair
4 of the Land Use Committee for the City Council.
5 As this is my first meeting, I have a 20 minute
6 speech prepared so if everybody could--

7 [Laughter]

8 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: --sit back and
9 relax for a minute. I'm just kidding. I'm going
10 to let action speak louder than words.

11 [Background comments]

12 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: No. I'm going
13 to let actions speak louder than words. I'm not
14 going to make a speech other than--

15 [Background comments]

16 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: --That's true.
17 Other than thank all my colleagues for their faith
18 and congratulations that they reached out to me
19 and expressed to me on me taking this position. I
20 hope to make you all proud. Today we are joined
21 by Council Member Diana Reyna from Brooklyn, Larry
22 Seabrook from the Bronx, Jumaane Williams from
23 Brooklyn; Vinnie Ignizio from State Island, Jimmy
24 Vacca from the Bronx, Jessica Lappin from some
25 Borough named Manhattan, Robert Jackson from

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2 Manhattan, Mark Weprin from Queens, Jimmy Koo from
3 Queens, Steven Levin from Brooklyn, Dan Halloran
4 from Brooklyn, Charles Barron from Brooklyn,
5 Council Member who? Did I say Dan Halloran was
6 from Brooklyn, sorry, Dan Halloran is from Bay
7 Side, Queens. Welcome.

8 [Background comments]

9 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Yeah. Right.
10 Council Member--I'll leave that to you Dan.
11 Council Member Charles Barron from Brooklyn, Maria
12 del Carmen Arroyo from Bronx, Council Member Brad
13 Lander from Brooklyn, the Majority Leader Joel
14 Rivera from Bronx, and the Assistant Majority
15 Leader now Inez Dickens from the wonderful Borough
16 of Manhattan. Yeah I was just, you know, the
17 outer Borough people--

18 [Background comments]

19 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: I just know--
20 the Village of Harlem. That's true.

21 [Background comments, laughter]

22 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: The City of
23 Harlem. That is true. I am afraid of Inez; we'll
24 put that on the record. No doubt about
25 [chuckling].

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2 Today we have some Land Use items
3 on the docket and we have to read in the record
4 properly because it's legally required to do so.
5 If you can be patient with me we'll do the entire
6 piece and just put in everything unless there--we
7 have no one that's here for public testimony. So
8 we can do this quickly. We have an amendment to
9 the Zoning Map, the Sandy Ground rezoning in
10 Council Member Ignizio's District, Community Board
11 3 in Staten Island. This is item number C 0900457
12 MR.

13 We have an amendment to the Zoning
14 Text, it's also in Community Board 3, it's the
15 Amboy Road Text Amendment, it's also in Council
16 Member Ignizio's District, item number N 090176
17 ZRR.

18 We have an amendment to the Zoning
19 Map in Bronx Community Board 12, the Webster
20 Avenue rezoning in Council Member Seabrook's
21 District, item number C090397 ZMX.

22 We have UDAAP in Bronx Community
23 Board 5, Council Member Cabrera's District, 151
24 East Tremont Avenue, calendar number N10116 HAX.

25 We have a Landmark in Manhattan

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2 Community Board 3, Council Member Mendez'
3 District, the Ralph and Ann E. Van Wyck Mead
4 House, item number 20105196 HKM.

5 We have Landmark in the Speaker
6 Quinn's District, Community Board 4, Lamartine
7 Place Historic District, item number 20105198 HKM.

8 We have a Landmark in Community
9 Board 5 in Council Member Garodnick's District,
10 the Edith Andrews Logan Residence, calendar item
11 number 20105200 HJM.

12 We also have another Landmark in
13 Council Member Garodnick's District, Community
14 Board 5, the 26 West 56th Street, 20105262 HKM.

15 [Background comments]

16 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: You guys are
17 kind of rowdy. I know, I know.

18 Another Landmark in Council Member
19 Garodnick's District, 1780 Broadway, Manhattan
20 Community Board 5, 2010523 HKM.

21 Another Landmark in Council Member
22 Mendez' District, in Manhattan Community Board 3,
23 the Aschenbroedel Verein Building, item number
24 20105264 HKM. It's now called the La Mama
25 [phonetic] Experimental Theater Club at 74 East 4th

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2 Street. Right.

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We have another Landmark, two landmarks in Speaker Quinn's District, 145 8th Avenue House, Manhattan Community Board 4, 20105265 HKM; and 147 8th Avenue, House, item number 20105267 HKM.

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We have another Landmark, the Paramount Hotel in Speaker Quinn's District, Manhattan Community Board 5, item number 20105268 HKM. Paramount Hotel.

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Another Landmark in Council Member Debbie Rose's District in Staten Island Community Board 1, 327 Westervelt Avenue, item number 20105269 HKR.

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And then we have some non-ULURP and UDAPP's, three of them. One in Council Member Barron's District, Community Board 5 in Brooklyn, 480 and 482 Warwick Street, 20105058 HAK.

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One in Council Member Jackson's District, Community Board 9, it's a building at 3603-3605 Broadway, item number 20105060 HAM.

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And the last item on today's calendar is in Council Member Palma's District. It's 1100 Elder Avenue in the Bronx. It's a

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2 tenant interim lease and it's in Community Board
3 9, item number 20105212 HAX.

4 Any questions on any of the items?
5 Did I read them off correctly? I want to just
6 thank the Land Use staff for the prep and the
7 excellent Land Use staff. It's easy to fall into
8 a position when you have such a seasoned and well-
9 prepped and well-knowledged staff that's second to
10 none in this City.

11 So if there are nay questions or
12 comments from any of the members on any of the
13 projects? Seeing none..

14 [Pause]

15 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay. Seeing
16 none, we can proceed to a vote. Council Member
17 Levin is late for a meeting so we'll let him vote
18 right after me. Oh yes, please, let me just say
19 one thing. Let's try to be on time for the
20 meetings as much as possible--

21 [Applause]

22 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Members have
23 things to do and schedules to keep and while I
24 know we have to allot time, you know, I will
25 endeavor to be here early and on time for every

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2 meeting. So I would ask that the Committee--we
3 have a large Committee and if we can get in on
4 time we can get out on time. With that, Mr. Clerk
5 if you can call the roll.

6 MR. WILLIAM MARTIN: William
7 Martin, Committee Clerk, roll call on the
8 Committee on Land Use. Council Member Comrie.

9 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Aye on all.

10 MR. MARTIN: Levin.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Aye on all.

12 MR. MARTIN: Rivera.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I vote aye
14 on all.

15 MR. MARTIN: Reyna.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Aye on all.

17 MR. MARTIN: Barron.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Aye
19 [microphone skipping]. I used to that happening.
20 First of all I wanted to congratulate the Chair on
21 being the first Black Chair of the Land Use
22 Committee. I know color doesn't matter, it's
23 about qualifications but it did take a minute. So
24 congratulations to the Chair. On the Land Use
25 Item, Ignizio and Lanza [phonetic] in Staten

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2 Island, normally I vote for down-zoning because
3 the down-zoning maintains the character of the
4 communities and it doesn't allow for over
5 development, it doesn't allow for skyscrapers and
6 disrespect for the characters of a community. But
7 in this particular case there is a Black church in
8 that community and they're still trying to work
9 out the details on building housing. Some of the
10 church members are for it. Some are against it.
11 They're working up alternatives to building
12 housing and whether or not it can be--it's three
13 stories right now, they wanted to do a 4-story
14 senior citizen housing there. Since that is
15 swirling, I don't think it's good to just go ahead
16 and down-zone until those things are resolved. To
17 come to the Committee now, knowing that a down-
18 zoning would really eliminate other--or make it
19 very, very difficult if almost impossible to build
20 the senior citizen housing that maybe some of the
21 church members want to happen, I think that those
22 negotiations should have been resolved before we
23 come and do the down-zoning that would make it
24 difficult or almost impossible for this senior
25 housing to occur in that particular Black church

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2 in Staten Island. So for that reason, I'm voting
3 on for, what is that... the first one, CO, what is
4 it?

5 [Pause]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: For the
7 Staten Island Land down-zoning, C090042 ZMR I vote
8 no on that Land Use item and aye on all the rest.

9 MR. MARTIN: Jackson.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Mr. Chair,
11 let me just say to you, I congratulate you on
12 becoming the Chair of our Land Use Committee. And
13 I look forward to working with you and starting
14 our meetings on time. With that I vote aye on
15 all.

16 MR. MARTIN: Seabrook.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: I vote
18 aye on all.

19 MR. MARTIN: Arroyo.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [No audible
21 response]

22 MR. MARTIN: Dickens.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: [No
24 audible response]

25 MR. MARTIN: Garodnick.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.

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3 MR. MARTIN: Lappin.

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4 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Aye.

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5 MR. MARTIN: Vacca.

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6 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Aye.

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7 MR. MARTIN: Lander.

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8 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: May I be

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9 excused to explain my vote?

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10 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Yes.

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11 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you.

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12 I just want to add my congratulations to the Chair

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13 and to the other two Subcommittee Chairs and thank

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14 the staff for helping me navigate through

14

15 yesterday's Landmarks hearing. To say that I was

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16 especially excited about the Lamartine Historic

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17 Place Historic District which commemorate an

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18 important spot of Abolitionist History where folks

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19 were attacked during the draft riots who were

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20 involved in the Underground Railroad and the Isaac

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21 Hopper Home and the Women's Prison Association

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22 where we were noting not just architectural

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23 features worthy of preservation but also some of

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24 the important history of the City and I vote aye

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25 on all.

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MR. MARTIN: Weprin.

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COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Aye on all.

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MR. MARTIN: Williams.

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[Pause]

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COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: May I

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please be excused to explain my vote? I also want
to extend congratulations to the new Chair. I'm
looking forward to working with you and doing some
great things. I had my first Subcommittee hearing
meeting with Chairman Brad Lander yesterday and I
also wanted to say that I was very--I felt very
great that I could also vote aye on providing
historic landmark to the Lamartine for the
Abolitionist work and also they brought up the
fact and began discussing the lynchings that
happened in New York City and I was very happy
because of that. A lot of people think of New
York State and New York City as anti-slavery but
there was a lot of pro-slavery things going on and
a lot of lynchings that--and things of that nature
that get attention brought to it.

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Also I am going to vote aye on all
but there was one that concerned me, 147 8th Avenue
House. And I was just concerned to try to, again,

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2 wish that the LPC work with that homeowner to make
3 sure the cost to her is as minimal as possible.

4 [Pause]

5 MR. MARTIN: Halloran.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: May I be
7 excused to explain my vote? Mr. Chairman, first
8 I'd like to congratulate you on becoming our Chair
9 and I'm glad that as a fellow Queens' member, you
10 know, we'll be working together. The other thing
11 I'd like to say is it's great. Yesterday I was--
12 had the pleasure of having Charles Barron to my
13 right on an issue and today I get to sit in the
14 majority seat. So I'm doubly, doubly pleased that
15 things have progressed so far and that the City
16 Council has come such a long way to including
17 diverse representation. Thank you very much. I
18 vote aye on all issues.

19 MR. MARTIN: Ignizio.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Yes.
21 Consistent with my philosophy to vote against
22 Landmarking where the owners oppose, I vote no on
23 Land Use 145 and 147 and aye on all others.

24 MR. MARTIN: Koo.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: [Mic not on] -

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2 --and I also want to congratulate Mr. Chairman to
3 become our new Chair of this Committee.

4 MR. MARTIN: By a vote of 18 in the
5 affirmative, 0 in the negative, no abstentions,
6 all items have been adopted with the exceptions of
7 Preconsidered Land Use C090042 ZMR, Preconsidered
8 Land Use 20105265 HKM, and Preconsidered Land Use
9 application number 20105267 HKM, are adopted by a
10 vote of 17 in the affirmative, 1 in the negative
11 and no abstentions. Council Members please sign
12 all Committee Reports. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Please
14 remember to sign the Committee Reports. The next
15 Land Use hearings are scheduled for February 8th
16 and 10th. Please mark your calendars accordingly.
17 Your offices should have received the entire
18 calendar for now in September. Please put them in
19 the schedule. If there are any--if there's anyone
20 that has a problem with any of the Committee
21 meetings, please let us know as soon as possible.
22 And we're going to hold the roll open for 15
23 minutes. We have 2 members that are expected. We
24 know 2 members are not making it in. With that I
25 will declare the session closed but we'll hold the

1 roll open for 15 minutes Thank you very much.

2 [Gavel banging]

3 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Not too bad at
4 all, right?

5 [Pause]

6 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member
7 Sanders is here.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: I vote
9 aye--

10 [Pause]

11 MR. MARTIN: Council Member
12 Sanders.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Aye on all
14 except 145, 20105265 I vote no, and 20105267 I
15 vote note.

16 [Pause]

17 MR. MARTIN: The final vote on the
18 Committee on Land Use now stands at 19 in the
19 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions
20 with the exception of Preconsidered Land Use Sandy
21 Ground rezoning C090042 ZMR is adopted by a vote
22 of 18 in the affirmative, 1 in the negative, no
23 abstentions, and Preconsidered Land Use items
24 20105265 HKM and 20105267 HKM, are adopted by a
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2 vote of 17 in the affirmative, 2 in the negative
3 and no abstentions. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: With that the
5 meeting is adjourned. Is that on tape? With that
6 the Land Use meeting for January 27th is hereby
7 adjourned.

8 [Gavel banging]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Laura L. Springate certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura L. Springate". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Signature _____ Laura L. Springate _____

Date _____ February 2, 2010 _____