

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON LAND USE

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June 29, 2008
Start: 2:55pm
Recess: 3:09pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

- Council Member Maria Del Carmen Arroyo
- Council Member Charles Barron
- Council Member Elizabeth S. Crowley
- Council Member Inez E. Dickens
- Council Member Erik Martin Dilan
- Council Member Daniel R. Garodnick
- Council Member Sara M. Gonzalez
- Council Member Daniel J. Halloran III
- Council Member Vincent M. Ignizio
- Council Member Robert Jackson
- Council Member Peter A. Koo
- Council Member Brad S. Lander
- Council Member Jessica S. Lappin
- Council Member Stephen T. Levin
- Council Member Rosie Mendez
- Council Member Annabel Palma
- Council Member Diana Reyna

A P P E A R A N C E S

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Council Member Joel Rivera
Council Member James Sanders, Jr.
Council Member Larry B. Seabrook
Council Member Eric A. Ulrich
Council Member James Vacca
Council Member Albert Vann
Council Member Mark S. Weprin
Council Member Jumaane D. Williams

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

N/A

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: We're going to start the full Land Use Committee, while before people drift away. Today's Tuesday, June 29th, and we are joined by Council Members Eric Ulrich, Eric Ulrich, Mark Weprin, Dan Garodnick, Vincent Ignizio, Eric Dilan, Jumaane Williams, Joel Rivera, Annabel Palma, Charles Barron, Al Vann, James Sanders, Diana Reyna, Robert Jackson and Larry Seabrook and Jimmy Oddo. And Sara Gonzalez is in the building. Today, we're going to be voting on a number of items. The first we have, item, Land Use Item No. 127, proposed site for new approximately 390 seat intermediate school facility, to be located on the west side of 167th Street, between 168th Street and Dr. Martin Luther King Boulevard, in Council Member Maria Del Carmen Arroyo's district. This is on Bronx Community Board Four. Item No. 2--Item No. 20105366 SCX. We're also voting on a series of Land Use items related to the Domino Sugar Redevelopment in Council Member Levin's district, Brooklyn Community Board Twelve, it's approved with the modifications that were stated earlier, I'm not going to restate for this meeting. With Land Use

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2 Item No. 130, 131, 132 and 133. Items are
3 approved as, as modified with the additions that
4 were stated earlier. Do I need to read these
5 numbers? [off mic: No.] Okay. [off mic: You
6 don't.] Okay, great. All right, I'm not going to
7 read all of the map numbers, so that we could save
8 time. And again if Council Member, we've been
9 joined by Council Member Arroyo, Council Member
10 Lander. If Council Member wanted to--Councilman
11 Jimmy - -, Councilman Peter Koo, and Liz Crowley.
12 Just want to say that we are pleased that, again
13 that the developer, Community Preservation Corp.,
14 Inc., and Council Member Levin were able to come
15 to an agreement on this important project. This
16 project creates 660 units still of affordable
17 housing. It will allow the New Yorkers to see
18 almost a quarter mile of a esplanade for
19 waterfront access, that will be open to the
20 public. It'll create hundreds of jobs over the
21 next ten years. It's also creating an opportunity
22 for, for the residents to get a shuttle, and
23 hopefully transportation directly to Manhattan.
24 Also, there's already been preservation of the
25 main refinery building, and it's a 40 foot high

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2 Domino Sugar sign. And also there'll be a
3 transportation study and some other critical
4 improvements that this community's been long
5 fighting for. I want to thank Council Member,
6 Council Member Levin for representing the wishes
7 of his constituents; Council Member Reyna for her
8 activism in, in this project. And again,
9 Community Preservation Corp. and all of the
10 residents that came out to speak in, and all their
11 opinions on this particular project. Also want to
12 thank Ramon Martinez and all the people in the
13 Mayor's Administration that got involved with
14 this. Want to thank especially again the
15 dedicated staff of the Land Use Division for the
16 Council, they played a critical role in making
17 this process happen. Council Member Levin, did
18 you want to make another statement?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I would
20 actually like to amend my statement from
21 previously and just, I do want to recognize the
22 extraordinary work of Ramon Martinez, that he put
23 into this, as well. I want to add him to the list
24 of folks that, that really put a lot of work into
25 this. So.

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2 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Council Member
3 Arroyo would like to make a statement on the
4 school. Council Member Arroyo.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Thank you,
6 Mr. Chair, and I want to thank you and the Chair
7 of the Landmarks Subcommittee, for your support
8 and work on this item. The Highbridge Middle
9 School is a project that the Highbridge community
10 has been working towards for decades. And I want
11 to thank the community and stakeholders who, for
12 many years, have been trying to send a very strong
13 message to the Department of Education that middle
14 schools should be an experience for young children
15 to experience in a positive way, not by having to
16 dedicate almost three hours of travel a day, in
17 order to get to school. So, today we have an
18 application before us to site a middle school in
19 Highbridge, and I want to thank the Speaker's
20 Office, Chuck Meara, the Education Committee
21 staff, Regina Ryan. In particular, the School
22 Construction Authority for understanding that,
23 although the school is not as large as the
24 community would prefer, that we could've added
25 some amenities to the school that would make it a

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2 model school, not only in the borough, but in the
3 City as a whole. We will be able to build the
4 school building that can accommodate a fully
5 developed green roof that can serve as an
6 additional learning environment for the children
7 that attend that school. It's probably the second
8 school in the City that would be developed in that
9 way. And the Department of Education, Rebecca
10 Miller, who has been also very supportive, the
11 Deputy Mayor Wolcott's office. Our colleagues in
12 government, The Bronx Borough President's office,
13 Jessie Mojica, for his work. Assemblywoman
14 Vanessa Gibson and her staff, my colleague, Helen
15 Diane Foster, who I hope is in the room somewhere,
16 and can speak about it as well. But in
17 particular, the community advocates. Concerned
18 parents of Highbridge, all of the parent
19 associations in District Nine in that area, the
20 tenants association. And I want to particularly
21 thank a few individuals who gave up their time to
22 come down to our Subcommittee Hearing and give us
23 public testimony. Chauncey Young, Cynthia
24 Williams and Jose Gonzalez, Carlton Curry, who is
25 the PTA president, Council President for District

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2 Nine, and the new Community Board Chair, Community
3 Board Four, Wenzell Jackson, who took on this,
4 this challenge with his community, and working
5 together we were able to really bring back to the
6 community a school that we can all be proud of,
7 and one that has been desperately needed in this
8 community for so long. So, I urge my colleagues
9 to vote yes, on the Highbridge Middle School item.
10 And thank you all for your support in this
11 project.

12 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Yeah, I'm
13 sorry. We've been, we're now joined by Council
14 Member Lappin, Council Member Dickens, Mendez,
15 Halloran, and Brad Lander. Did I miss anyone?
16 Council Member Lappin has a technical issue that
17 we're going to work to resolve. 'Cause she's been
18 here since 11:00, and she was stuck outside and
19 could not get back in here to vote in the
20 Subcommittee. So, going to make that happen.
21 Council Member Ignizio, did you have a comment,
22 you're at the podium? Okay. Again, I just want
23 to thank, also, thank Council Member Domenic
24 Recchia for working with Council Member Levin and,
25 and the Administration on making sure that his

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2 community needs were met. And Council Member Eric
3 Dilan, for his great role as Chair of the
4 delegation that made me actually not have to have
5 as big a role sometimes, it's a, a good
6 opportunity to step back and get out of people's
7 ways so that they can do what they need to fight
8 for their communities. And I think that they all
9 did an excellent role in, in creating a
10 balance here. I want to make sure we've taken
11 every, every other technicality that we have to
12 take care of at this meeting, and seeing that no
13 one's whispering in my ear, I'll ask the clerk to
14 call the roll. And I recommend an aye vote on all
15 of the projects on today's calendar.

16 CLERK: William Martin, Committee
17 Clerk, vote and roll call on the Committee on Land
18 Use. Council Member Comrie.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Aye on all.

20 CLERK: Rivera.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I vote aye
22 on all.

23 CLERK: Reyna.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: [off mic]
25 Aye.

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2 CLERK: Barron.

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COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: May I be
4 excused to explain my vote:

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CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: So moved.

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COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: You know,
7 I'm going to support this project, 'cause I got a
8 lot of calls from people from the community, but
9 we cannot keep having the affordable number at 30
10 percent. And I know that seems like a big
11 victory, and people worked hard on it, but you're
12 talking about 70 percent luxury housing coming in,
13 and that could change the complexion and direction
14 of a community. And when you look at the
15 affordable range, I think two units of it, or two
16 segments of it, is 30 percent and 60 percent,
17 which covers about 400 plus units, and then you
18 got another 150 at 130 percent of the AMI. So I
19 think we need to be very, very careful when we
20 start talking about "affordability," and defining
21 it more. And I don't see why we always have to be
22 on the short end of the affordable formula, even
23 when you've made progress through a lot of
24 negotiations. The other thing is the jobs.
25 Oftentimes we see things listed like 1,000

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2 permanent jobs, hundreds of construction jobs, but
3 then these developers come in with their general
4 contractors, and they come in there with their
5 subcontractors, and they already have all of their
6 people that are going to be working on these jobs.
7 And some of these jobs never reach the 'hood, like
8 they need to, never get to the people who really
9 need them. So I'm hoping in this project that it
10 will be monitored very, very closely, so that
11 affordability is real, and that the jobs really
12 come to our neighborhoods and come to our people.
13 So with that, I vote aye on all.

14 CLERK: Jackson.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Aye on
16 all.

17 CLERK: Sanders.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Permission
19 to explain my vote?

20 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: So moved.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: First, I
22 want to commend Council Member Levin and Council
23 Member Reyna for the incredible work they, that
24 they've done. I also want to draw the attention
25 of my colleagues up to the balcony, where a group,

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2 Build, is up there, and they are here paying
3 silent witness to all of us, that, that the job
4 situation is real. That there is a great need for
5 a community benefits agreement, because we see
6 that after all is said and done, the great ideas
7 that we have, just don't get to the people that we
8 need to get them to. So, I would encourage
9 everyone, if you have a, a project in your
10 district, a community benefits agreement is--and a
11 strong one--is, is the way to go. Otherwise, it
12 simply won't happen. On that one, I vote aye on
13 all.

14 CLERK: Seabrook.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: Aye on
16 all.

17 CLERK: Vann.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Aye on all.

19 CLERK: Gonzalez.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: [off mic]

21 Aye on all.

22 CLERK: Palma.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Aye on all.

24 CLERK: Arroyo.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Aye.

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CLERK: Dickens.

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COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: [off mic]

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Aye.

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CLERK: Garodnick. [pause]

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Garodnick.

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COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.

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CLERK: Lappin.

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COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Aye.

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CLERK: Mendez.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: [off mic]

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Aye.

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CLERK: Vacca.

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COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: [off mic]

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Aye.

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CLERK: Lander.

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COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Aye on all

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and congrats to all parties on reaching, a well

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considered compromise.

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CLERK: Levin.

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COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Aye.

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CLERK: Weprin.

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COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Aye.

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CLERK: Williams.

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COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Just want

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2 to congratulate everyone who was involved for
3 reaching the agreement, and I know sometimes
4 through the process, it can seem a little
5 aggravating, but I just want to congratulate the
6 Council Members for representing and providing
7 leadership to their communities. Aye on all.

8 CLERK: Ignizio.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Once
10 again, congratulation to Council Member Levin, who
11 made a difficult project far better than its
12 original version. So, congratulations.

13 CLERK: Halloran.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: Aye.

15 CLERK: Koo.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye on all.

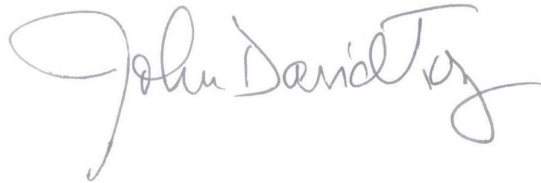
17 CLERK: By a vote of 23 in the
18 affirmative, zero in the negative, and no
19 abstentions, all items have been adopted.
20 Members, please sign the Committee reports.

21 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay, we can
22 call the hearing adjourned, since we have a full
23 house. Thank you all. But the Land--Land Use
24 Hearing is hereby adjourned, sorry.

25 [pause until end]

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, JOHN DAVID TONG, 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 "John David Tong". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Signature_____

Date July 15, 2010