

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND  
MARITIME USES

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January 31, 2019  
Start: 12:00 p.m.  
Recess: 12:25 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm.  
16<sup>th</sup> Fl.

B E F O R E: ADRIENNE E. ADAMS  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Inez D. Barron  
Peter A. Koo  
I. Daneek Miller  
Mark Treyger

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

Gayle Mandaro, Senior Director and Senior Attorney  
Real Estate Services Group, New York City School  
Construction Authority, SCA

Tamara Smith, Community Relations Manager, New York  
City School Construction Authority, SCA

[sound check] [pause] [gavel

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Good afternoon, and welcome to this meeting of the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses. I'm Council Member Adrienne Adams, the Chair of this Subcommittee. Today, we are joined by Council Member Koo and are expecting our other members to join shortly. Today, we will be holding a public hearing on a school site selection submitted by the New York City School Construction Authority pursuant to Section 1732 of the Public Authorities Law. We will also be voting on this application. This Preconsidered LU is an application for the site selection of the new approximately 676-seat primary school facility on property located on the eastern end of the block bounded by 63<sup>rd</sup> Street to the north, 64<sup>th</sup> Street to the south, 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the east and 12<sup>th</sup> to the west in Community School District No. 20, Community District 10 in Council Member Menchaca's district in Brooklyn [coughs] I now open the public hearing on this item, and will read Council Member Menchaca's statement. Good afternoon, I'd like to start by thanking Chair Adams for her willingness to deliver these comments and questions on my behalf.

1 I'd also like to extend my deep gratitude to the  
2 School Construction Authority who has been doing the  
3 critical work of finding sites and building new  
4 schools in the neighborhoods I represent. Many of  
5 the schools in District 20 are overcrowded, and I'm  
6 excited that another primary school is on the way to  
7 improve the access and quality of schools for our  
8 kids. I fully support this application and encourage  
9 the committee to vote yes. I do, however, want to  
10 reflect some concerns brought to my attention by the  
11 local community board. I'm hoping SCA can provide  
12 answers to these questions either today, during the  
13 hearing or in writing in the near future. Regarding  
14 bus congestion. Is SCA aware of traffic concerns  
15 from neighbors of the site in question particularly  
16 overnight bus parking near existing schools? Does  
17 SCA consider these traffic concerns significant?  
18 Does SCA plan to evaluate the unique school bus  
19 congestion that neighbors claim is already negatively  
20 impacting the neighborhood? (2) Regarding a  
21 potential driveway, is SCA open to Community Board  
22 10's request that the school design include a  
23 driveway to alleviate congestion during school drop-  
24 off and pickup times? And by extension, is SCA

1 willing to forego dedicated bus curb parking zones if  
2 such a driveway was implemented? (3) the proposed  
3 school sits on a site adjacent to the historic  
4 Angel Guardian Home. Many residents Dyker Heights  
5 consider this architectural—consider this an  
6 architectural gem in the neighborhood and are  
7 requesting that the new school be designed with  
8 respect to this historic character. Does SCA plan to  
9 consider a contextual design for this proposed  
10 school? Is SCA willing to engage with Community  
11 Board 20 periodically during the school design  
12 process to elicit feedback and (4) does SCA plan to  
13 include open space as part of the design for this  
14 school? Thank you and thank you all for your work to  
15 improve access to quality public schools across New  
16 York City. Sincerely, Council Member Carlos  
17 Menchaca. [bell] I now call upon Tamara Smith from  
18 the SCA and Gayle Mandaro from the SCA. Before you  
19 begin, Counsel will swear you in.

21 LEGAL COUNSEL: Please raise your right  
22 hands and state your names.

23 GAYLE MANDARO: Gayle Mandaro, SCA.

24 TAMARA SMITH: Tamara Smith, SCA.

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2                   LEGAL COUNSEL: Do you affirm to tell the  
3 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in  
4 your testimony before this committee in response to  
5 all Council Member questions?

6                   GAYLE MANDARO: Yes.

7                   TAMARA SMITH: Yes.

8                   LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you.

9                   CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: You may begin.

10                   GAYLE MANDARO: Good afternoon,  
11 Chairperson Adams, Counsel and Council Members. My  
12 name is Gayle Mandaro, and I am a Senior Director and  
13 Senior Attorney for the Real Estate Services Group in  
14 the New York City School Construction Authority's  
15 Real Estate Department. Also with me is my colleague  
16 Tamara Smith, a Community Relations Manager for the  
17 SCA. The New York City School Construction Authority  
18 has undertaken the site selection process for a new  
19 approximately 576-seat primary school facility on  
20 Block 5739 portion of a lot 1 in the Borough of  
21 Brooklyn. The site contains a total of approximately  
22 24,000 square feet of lot area on a portion of the  
23 former Angel Guardian Home property. The site is  
24 privately owned and comprised of gardens, lawn areas,  
25 paved walkways and trees, which served as the

1 recreational space for the former Angel Guardian  
2 home. The site is located within Brooklyn Community  
3 District No. 10, and Community School District No.  
4 20. It is located in the neighborhood of Dyker  
5 Heights. Under the proposed project, the SCA would  
6 acquire the site and construct a new approximately  
7 676-seat primary school facility. The notice of  
8 filing for the site plan was published in the New  
9 York Post and city record on December 10, 2018 at  
10 which time Community Education Council No. 20,  
11 Brooklyn Community Board No. 10 and the City Planning  
12 Commission were also notified of the site plan. The  
13 CEC and the and Community Board were asked to hold  
14 public hearings on the proposed site plan. Brooklyn  
15 Community Board No. 10 held a public hearing on  
16 December 11, 2018, and submitted written comments.  
17 Community Education Council No. 20 held a public  
18 hearing on December 12, 2018. Written comments were  
19 not received from the Community Education Council or  
20 the City Planning Commission. The SCA has  
21 considered all comments received on the proposed site  
22 plan, and affirms the site plan pursuant to Section  
23 1731 of the New York Public Authorities Law. I  
24 accordance with Section 1732, of the PAL, the SCA  
25

1 submitted the proposed site plan to the Mayor and  
2 City Council by a letter dated January 28, 2019. We  
3 look forward to your Subcommittee's favorable  
4 consideration of the proposed site plan and are  
5 prepared to answer any questions the committee may  
6 have.  
7

8 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Thank you. Before  
9 you go on, we have been joined by Council Members  
10 Treyger and Miller. Please continue.

11 GAYLE MANDARO: We will take any  
12 questions that the committee may have at this time.

13 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: The only questions  
14 that I have are the ones that were brought by the  
15 statement by Council Member Menchaca. Can you  
16 address any of those questions? Do you remember  
17 them? Do you need for me to restate them?

18 GAYLE MANDARO: No, I'm going to defer to  
19 my colleague Tamara Smith who will address those  
20 questions.

21 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay, thank you.

22 TAMARA SMITH: Thank you very much. I  
23 want to thank Council Member Menchaca for his  
24 support. [bell] It's very important to us. We will  
25 be happy to carefully consider the questions that he



1 brought to our attention and will answer them in  
2 writing very soon.

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4 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Okay, so, let me just  
5 make sure that there are no questions that can be  
6 answered right now today. You're going to—you're  
7 going to address them all separately at another time  
8 for him?

9 TAMARA SMITH: Actually, we can provide  
10 some insights to some of the things. While we have  
11 not commenced design yet, we are committee to take  
12 into consideration the proposed suggestions for  
13 driveways and bus parking issues, and if they work  
14 within the programmatic we certainly would take them  
15 into consideration. We will at some point in our  
16 pre-schematic stage consider those design  
17 recommendations. In addition, the site itself and  
18 the subdivision that's planned for the site does  
19 contemplate open space. So, yes, we will be having  
20 open space, and yes, we will be happy to update the  
21 community board and engage them through the process.

22 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Thank you very much.  
23 Thank you. Are there any questions from the panel at  
24 this time? Council Member Treyger.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you very  
3 much, Chair, for—for this important hearing, and as  
4 Chair of Education in the City Council, I have  
5 somewhat of a voice from these neck of the woods, and  
6 very much aware of the overcrowding really crisis  
7 that District 20 faces. This is a very much needed  
8 school construction project. This is not even about  
9 getting a wish list together. This is about a  
10 necessity for the city of New York. It's my  
11 understanding that there are over—the need for seats  
12 in District 20 exceeds over 10,000, and can you just  
13 repeat for the record—this is an elementary school.  
14 Is that correct?

15 TAMARA SMITH: Correct.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER? And how many  
17 seats?

18 TAMARA SMITH: We're anticipating  
19 approximately 676 elementary school seats.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER? And this is just  
21 one lot that is a part of this whole site? Is that  
22 correct?

23 TAMARA SMITH: It is presently one lot.  
24 It's being subdivided as I understand it into three.  
25 One will be the school lot.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER? And do you know  
3 what will be adjacent to this school project?

4 TAMARA SMITH: I do not know what the  
5 private owner is planning for, but I do know that he  
6 has been engaged with the community on his project as  
7 well.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: But have you  
9 heard anything about a potential charter school being  
10 built right next to this public school?

11 TAMARA SMITH: Actually, we've received  
12 no confirmation of that at all. I know that at one  
13 point it may have been raised, but I do not know any  
14 further information probably than anyone else in the  
15 community.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Because the  
17 reason why I asked is because in District 20 there's  
18 also a middle school seating crisis. There's a need  
19 for more middle schools in that district. Is—are  
20 there any discussions or plans to maybe acquire more  
21 space in addition to the lot to address that need?

22 TAMARA SMITH: The SCA has acquired the  
23 space that was made available for purchase.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: And are there  
25 other sites available for purchase?

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2 TAMARA SMITH: Throughout Brooklyn?

3 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: No, in that  
4 same--

5 TAMARA SMITH: [interposing] In that  
6 development?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Right.

8 TAMARA SMITH: Not to my knowledge.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Alright. I-I  
10 just-I-I mean I-I and I respect--I think my colleague  
11 is in support of the project, if that's-that's  
12 correct Council Member Menchanca. I just want to  
13 stress that that this is beyond just a wish. This is  
14 needed, beyond needed, and I would just strongly urge  
15 and support any additional efforts to try to acquire  
16 more space in that vicinity to address a 10,000-seat  
17 need. That's how serious this is. So, again, I want  
18 to thank the Chair for this important hearing, and I  
19 definitely want to offer my strong support. Thank  
20 you.

21 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Thank you, Council  
22 Member Treyger. I will echo your comments and  
23 sentiments as well. Whenever we see SCA building in  
24 our communities, we have to stress, and I'm sure  
25 we're preaching to the Choir again how important this

1 is that we look across the city because as  
2 representatives of Queens, Council Member Miller and  
3 myself, you already know the need is very, very, very  
4 substantial as well. So, I thank you very much for  
5 your time and your testimony today.  
6

7 TAMARA SMITH: Thank you very much,  
8 Chair.

9 CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Thank you. Are there  
10 any more members of the public who wish to testify on  
11 these items? Seeing, none, the public hearing on  
12 this Preconsidered LU is now closed. In accordance  
13 with the affected Council Member's recommendations we  
14 will now vote on this item. We will vote to approve  
15 this Preconsidered LU non-ULURP application No.  
16 209531 SCK for site selection of approximately 676-  
17 seat primary school facility in Community School  
18 District 20 in Brooklyn. Counsel, please call the  
19 roll.

20 LEGAL COUNSEL: Adams.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: I vote aye.

22 LEGAL COUNSEL: Koo.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I vote aye.

24 LEGAL COUNSEL: Miller.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Aye.

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LEGAL COUNSEL: Treyger.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: A very strong  
aye.

LEGAL COUNSEL: And the vote is held  
open.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: Thank you. The vote  
will be held open for 10 minutes. Thank you.

[pause]

LEGAL COUNSEL: On Preconsidered LU-Non-  
ULURP Application No. 2095311, how do vote, Council  
Member Barron?

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I vote aye, and  
thank you for holding the vote open.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: You're very welcome.

LEGAL COUNSEL: With 5 in the  
affirmative, 0 in the negative and 0 abstentions, the  
item is recommended for consideration by the full  
Land Use Committee.

CHAIRPERSON ADAMS: And that concludes  
today's business. I'd like to thank the members of  
the public, my colleagues, Counsel and Land Use staff  
for attending today's hearing. This meeting is  
hereby adjourned. [gavel]

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 that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date February 17, 2019