

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PLANNING, DISPOSITIONS AND  
CONCESSIONS

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September 7, 2016  
Start: 1:52 p.m.  
Recess: 2:57 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm,  
16th Fl.

B E F O R E:  
INEZ E. DICKENS  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Darlene Mealy  
Ydanis A. Rodriguez  
Andrew Cohen  
Mark Treyger  
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.

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

Aaron Koffman  
Principal  
The Hudson Companies

Meredith Marshall  
Principal  
BRP Companies

Artie Pearson  
Office of Governmental Relations  
New York City Housing Preservation and  
Development

Jonathan Buettler  
Director  
New Construction Program  
New York City Housing Preservation and  
Development

Ted Weinstein  
Director  
Bronx Planning

Bryant Brown  
Representative  
SEIU 32BJ

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3

2 [gavel]

3 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Good afternoon. I'm  
4 Council Member Inez E. Dickens, Chair of the  
5 Subcommittee on Planning, Dispositions and  
6 Concessions. I welcome everyone to today's hearing  
7 and I apologize for the lateness of the hour, but  
8 ongoing negotiations required that we be late, but I  
9 apologize.

10 I want to acknowledge and thank my  
11 Sergeant of Arms; I see Regina Sharp is here and Dane  
12 Hope. I want to also acknowledge my Land Use  
13 Director, Raju Mann, my Deputy Director Amy Levitan  
14 and of course, my great attorney, Julie Lubin.

15 We are joined today by council members  
16 that are on the Committee, Andrew Cohen and Council  
17 Member Mark Treyger. We've also been joined by  
18 Council Member Salamanca in whose district that we  
19 are holding the hearing on.

20 We have 13 items on the calendar, but at  
21 this time we will be laying over 7; they are Land Use  
22 Items 428, known as Blake Hendrix and Land Use Items  
23 453 through 457, known as Southeastern Queens Vacant  
24 Homes Clusters 1 through 5 and Land Use No. 427,

25

3 known as Hope East of Fifth Resyndication, which will  
4 also be laid over.

5 Today we will hold a hearing on 5  
6 applications, Land Use Items 448 through 452, known  
7 as La Central, in Council Member Salamanca's district  
8 in the Bronx.

9 I am now opening up the hearing for Land  
10 Use Items 448 through 452 La Central, an application  
11 submitted by HPD to facilitate La Central, a new  
12 mixed-use development composed of 5 residential  
13 buildings with 992 residential units, including  
14 community facility uses and commercial space in the  
15 Council Member's district.

16 There are five actions within the ULURP  
17 process:

18 1. Disposition of city-owned property  
19 comprising the development site and designation of  
20 the property as an Urban Development Action Area and  
21 approval of the project as an Urban Development  
22 Action Area Project. I'd like one of those in my  
23 district, by the way, y'all.

24 2. A zoning map amendment to rezone  
25 three underutilized blocks, portions of the tax  
26 blocks 2294, 2361 and 2363, also known as the project

3 area as defined herein from M1-1 and to a C4-42(c)6-2  
4 [sic].

5 3. A zoning text amendment to designate  
6 the project area as a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing  
7 area.

8 4. Large-scale general development  
9 special permit pursuant to Section 74-743(a-1 and 2)  
10 of the Zoning Resolution of the City of New York to  
11 permit distribution of floor area and required open  
12 space within the large-scale general development  
13 without regard for zoning lot lines and permit  
14 location of buildings without regard for applicable  
15 yard, court and height and setback regulations.

16 5. Large-scale general development  
17 special permit pursuant to ZR, Paragraph 74-744(b) to  
18 permit residential and nonresidential uses to be  
19 arranged on the second floor within Building B  
20 without regard for the location regulations of zoning  
21 regulation, paragraph 32-42.

22 Yesterday I met with HPD and La Central  
23 team project members, BRP Development Corporation,  
24 Hudson Companies and ELH-TKC, LLC and the nonprofit  
25 partner, Breaking Ground who will be providing

3 supportive services for homeless veterans with mental  
4 illness and for single adults with special needs.

5 La Central is a 992-unit, 5 building  
6 development project that will be done in two phases.  
7 Phase 1 will include buildings A, 215 units, B, 281  
8 units and D, 161 units with 97 reserved for  
9 supportive housing. Phase 2 will include Building C,  
10 137 units and E, 198 units. Buildings A, B and C  
11 will have income ranges from 30-120% AMI, with  
12 Building D having a range of 30-60% AMI; Building E  
13 will have a range of 30-130% AMI. The unit sizes for  
14 La Central will offer residents the option of studios  
15 up to 4-bedroom apartments. Any changes that Council  
16 Member Salamanca may have been able to negotiate on  
17 behalf of his community he will give us in his  
18 statement.

19 Since there is a supportive housing  
20 component to the project, Breaking Ground, community,  
21 HDFC, along with Comunilife, Inc. are offering 24-  
22 hour on-site services for residents with special  
23 needs. There is 40,000 sq. ft. of community facility  
24 space, with 4,000 will be housing the Bronx Cable  
25 Network rent-free while the rest of the space will  
hold retail.

2 I'm gonna ask the council member that the  
3 Bronx Net to ensure that they don't attack the  
4 Council when they have their radio show.

5 The YMCA has agreed to occupy 50,000 sq.  
6 ft. of space to offer residents and patrons access to  
7 their swimming pools, athletic courts and  
8 programmatic services.

9 Other amenities will also include grass  
10 roofs and open spaces that will help the project  
11 qualify for LEED Gold Certification.

12 Although MWBEs are representing 37.5% of  
13 ownership, I was pleased to understand the  
14 development team was still looking to increase MWBE  
15 participation, which is always going to be a question  
16 that I am going to have. This is extremely important  
17 to me, since the City has not done sufficient  
18 outreach to ensure MWBEs are made an integral part of  
19 all major development projects. Unless MWBEs are  
20 more heavily involved in such projects, communities  
21 of color will continue to suffer.

22 We've been joined by Council Member  
23 Rafael Salamanca in whose district La Central is  
24 located and I will ask him at this time to speak more  
25 about the project.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Thank you,  
4 Madame Chair.

5 This project, La Central, is an important  
6 project for the South Bronx and I'm pleased that the  
7 development team and HPD are here today to answer any  
8 questions. Both HPD and the development team have  
9 been ready and willing to work with my office and  
10 other land use teams here at City Council to address  
11 a number of concerns I've had with the project, and I  
12 have a few.

13 First I'm pleased that there has been a  
14 commitment to work with 32BJ to facilitate organizing  
15 the building's maintenance, service and security  
16 personnel; this is important and I look forward to  
17 hearing more about the agreement.

18 Secondly, this part of our community  
19 continues to see a high concentration of drug use,  
20 squatters and crime that each pose safety concerns to  
21 the residents of La Central; as a result, I'm calling  
22 for the proposed skate park to be closed during night  
23 hours. And additionally, I am pleased that there is  
24 a commitment to have manned security between  
25 Buildings C and D during nighttime hours with the



3 option for fencing to be closed if there are  
4 additional problems that arise.

5           Lastly, and most importantly, I have real  
6 concerns surrounding the depth of affordability  
7 surrounding the units and the project. My community  
8 is one of the most impoverished in the city and I'm  
9 pleased to see that there's a commitment to  
10 additional units at 30% AMI and 40% AMI and I look  
11 forward to hearing more about how this will be done  
12 also.

13           With that said, I have always been and I  
14 am very excited about this project; I look forward to  
15 the opportunity to work with HPD and the developer to  
16 continue to move this project forward.

17           CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Thank you so much,  
18 Council Member. I see that all the applicants have  
19 already taken a seat; I didn't have to call you up,  
20 and I will ask that each of you will please give your  
21 name, since you've already... [background comments]  
22 Alright; start... please start, Mary, or whoever. Just  
23 give me your names and then you can give testimony.

24           AARON KOFFMAN: Good afternoon; we're  
25 excited to be here. My name is Aaron Koffman and I'm  
a Principal with The Hudson Companies.

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2 MEREDITH MARSHALL: Good afternoon; I'm  
3 Meredith Marshall; I'm a Principal with BRP  
4 Companies.

5 ARTIE PEARSON: I'm Artie Pearson [sp?]  
6 from HPD's Office of Governmental Relations and I'm  
7 joined by Ted Weinstein, the Director of Bronx  
8 Planning and Jonathan Buettler [sp?] from the New  
9 Construction Program.

10 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Alright, thank you  
11 so much; who wants to start?

12 [background comment]

13 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Alright, go ahead,  
14 Artie.

15 ARTIE PEARSON: Good afternoon, Chair  
16 Dickens and members of the subcommittee. As I said,  
17 my name is Artie Pearson; I'm with HPD's Office of  
18 Governmental Relations.

19 Land Use Nos. 450, 458, 459, 451, and 452  
20 are related ULURP actions seeking approval of UDAAP  
21 designation, approval of the project and  
22 dispositions, as well as some other zoning changes  
23 for five vacant city-owned parcels located at 430  
24 Westchester Avenue, 503 East 153rd Street, 559 and  
25 625 Brook Avenue, and 620 and 626 Bergen Avenue in

3 Council District 17 in the Bronx for a project known  
4 as La Central.

5 The project sites consist of the last  
6 remaining undesignated developable urban renewal  
7 sites from the now expired Bronxchester renewal plan.  
8 Under HPD's New Construction Finance Program and  
9 Supportive Housing Loan Program, Land Use No. 450  
10 will be divided into three disposition areas that  
11 will undergo redevelopment in phases.

12 The sponsors proposing to develop  
13 disposition area 1 and disposition area 2 under the  
14 New Construction Finance Program while disposition  
15 area 3 will be developed under the Supportive Housing  
16 Loan Program. In total there will be five 9- to 25-  
17 story buildings containing 987 dwelling units, less 5  
18 superintendent units and rents will be affordable,  
19 ranging from 27% AMI up to 127% and those with  
20 targeted incomes between 30-130% AMI.

21 Disposition area 1 will be conveyed to an  
22 HDFC to develop two buildings which are expected to  
23 be developed under the Mix and Match Program for a  
24 total of 494 rental units plus 2 superintendent  
25 units; in Building A there will be 282 units plus a  
super; in Building B there will be 215 units. This

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3 site also includes approximately 86,386 sq. ft. of  
4 commercial and/or community facility space, as well  
5 as approximately 41,252 sq. ft. of open space. In  
6 addition, the project will include a new YMCA, the  
7 first in the South Bronx.

8 Disposition area 2 will be conveyed to an  
9 HDFC, which is Building C and E, in order to  
10 construct the two buildings, containing approximately  
11 335 rental units plus 2 super units, approximately  
12 50,000 sq. ft. of commercial and/or community  
13 facility space, as well as approximately 24,102 sq.  
14 ft. of open space.

15 Disposition area 3 will be developed  
16 under the Supportive Housing Loan Program and will be  
17 conveyed to an HDFC to construct one building  
18 containing approximately 160 units for occupancy by  
19 formerly homeless and low-income persons, plus 1 unit  
20 for a superintendent. On-site support services for  
21 tenants may include things such as management and  
22 counseling services, care coordination and social  
23 programming. The building will also include 4500 sq.  
24 ft. of ground floor community facility space.

25 Disposition areas 1 and 2 will also seek  
tax benefits under Article 11, which will coincide

3 with a 40-year regulatory agreement and some of the  
4 amenities in the La Central complex will include a  
5 7100 sq. ft. state park to be developed on the  
6 northern end of the project and will be open to the  
7 general public, common rooms, computer rooms, fitness  
8 rooms at various locations throughout the complex, a  
9 below grade garage, which will have parking spaces  
10 with potential up to 209 spaces. A telescope will be  
11 located on the roof of the 25-story building, which  
12 is Building E; it will be controlled remotely by the  
13 Bronx Science Astronomy Department and will transmit  
14 its images to a facility at the Bronx High School of  
15 Science. We intend for it to be used by other  
16 primary and secondary educational institutions  
17 throughout the Bronx.

18 Also, as mentioned previously, Land Use  
19 448 seeks an amendment to the Zoning Map, section  
20 changing from an M1-1 and C4-4, to a C6-2 district,  
21 which will allow residential development on the site.

22 Land Use No. 449 seeks an amendment to  
23 the Zoning Text to add the project to the list of  
24 maps of Mandatory Inclusionary Housing areas.

25 Land Use No. 451 seeks a special permit  
to allow distribution of required open space within

2 the large-scale general development without regard to  
3 zoning lot lines and to permit location of buildings  
4 without regard to applicable yard, court and height  
5 restrictions.

6 And Land Use 451 seeks a special permit  
7 to allow for the residential and non-residential uses  
8 to be located on the second floor within Building B.

9 HPD is before the Council seeking  
10 approval of the above-mentioned land use actions in  
11 order to facilitate the development of the La Central  
12 project. At this time I'm gonna turn the  
13 presentation over to the developer, who's gonna  
14 provide a PowerPoint.

15 AARON KOFFMAN: Thank you very much.  
16 Good afternoon, on behalf of the entire team, we are  
17 honored to be here; we also wanna thank everyone at  
18 the City Council, Council Member Salamanca, Chair  
19 Dickens and of course the staff, as well as the  
20 housing agencies from the City of New York; I think  
21 we have an even better project than we had maybe six  
22 months ago when these discussions really got going  
23 and so I think the input together has been  
24 collaborative and we have an even better project to  
25

2 deliver to the South Bronx. [background comment]

3 Yes... Yes, ma'am.

4 My name is Aaron Koffman; I'm Principal  
5 with The Hudson Companies, one of the members of La  
6 Central owner LLC. Anyway, I will take you through  
7 the PowerPoint.

8 The first page is the imagery here. This  
9 is just an aerial rendering, looking northwest; as  
10 you can see, the 2 and 5 trains are coming out of the  
11 149th Street/3rd Avenue subway station and then it  
12 basically runs from south to north. Here's the  
13 phasing plan; again, we have identified the buildings  
14 just by letters, so you have A through E, running  
15 south to north, and Parcel C is the triangle that you  
16 see here to the far right, which is going to be, we  
17 hope will be a skate park for the community.

18 To again, our first phase we anticipate  
19 will be Buildings A, B and D and Building D is the  
20 supportive housing building, which will be owned by  
21 Breaking Ground and Comunilife. As you can see, it's  
22 767,000 sq. ft.; the pink -- yeah, it does show pink  
23 -- the pink is retail, the purple is community space  
24 and the yellow is residential.

2 Our goal in the phasing was to establish  
3 both sides of Westchester Avenue, so we wanted to  
4 extend the retail immediately; we didn't wanna have  
5 one side and then look at a construction site for  
6 2 1/2 years, so our goal was to just bring that  
7 retail from the hub, down Westchester in one fell  
8 swoop, and obviously bring more affordable housing in  
9 the process.

10 Here is the financing summary and as the  
11 Chair and HPD staff have mentioned, we have a variety  
12 of income diversity here in all buildings; again, you  
13 see the 30% AMI units; we go up to 120% AMI; this is  
14 in line with the HPD/HDC mix and match program. The  
15 YMCA will be housed in Building A and I'll get to  
16 that in a second. We've also designed for 116  
17 parking spaces to be under Building B as underground  
18 parking; we are asking for the approval to go up to  
19 209 just because we've heard a lot of concern about  
20 parking, especially from the 3rd Avenue BID and  
21 Community Board 1, and then of course Building D  
22 we've already mentioned before.

23 Phase 2, again, a similar income  
24 distribution -- 335 units in Phase 2; again, mix and  
25



2 match program again, using HDC bonds, for a total of  
3 992 units in five buildings.

4 We are one of the first publicly owned  
5 sites to be going under the MIH program and our plan  
6 is that Building A be governed by option 1; Buildings  
7 B, C and E will be governed by option 2, of course  
8 that comes with the permanent affordability for those  
9 units; we exceed both of these and we're very excited  
10 to be working in this new program. Building D is not  
11 eligible because of the supportive housing.

12 Here's the affordability distribution;  
13 you can see here we have -- roughly 50% of the units  
14 are low-income, 60% AMI or below and of course we go  
15 up to 80 and then on to 130% AMI in the later phase.  
16 But again, the goal here is that every building was  
17 going to have multiple opportunities for households  
18 of different incomes to find a home in La Central.  
19 And if I'm going too fact, please tell me to stop.

20 Unit mix -- So one of the things that  
21 we're very proud of is the 4-bedroom option; we have  
22 53% of the units are family-based; 2-bedrooms are  
23 larger, and actually, the statistics do support that  
24 the Bronx -- CB1, I'm sorry, has a 20% higher rate  
25 population per household than the rest of the city

2 and 10% higher than the rest of the Bronx, and so to  
3 address that we've gone to those larger units where  
4 they otherwise would've been ineligible. So a family  
5 of 6, 7 may have been turned away for a 3-bedroom  
6 apartment; now they can find a home in La Central, so  
7 we're very excited about that as well.

8 This slide highlights the supportive  
9 housing, Building D; again, there'll be 4500 sq. ft.  
10 of community facility space; our intention is that  
11 that becomes nonprofit office space for other local  
12 nonprofits and I think that will really pick up as we  
13 move into construction. We have 97 special needs  
14 units; we are looking at single veterans with mental  
15 illnesses and I think we'll identify other special  
16 needs populations as we move closer towards closing.

17 Here's just an elevation of the YMCA on  
18 the ground floor. All ground floors are gonna have  
19 lots of glazing; we want light to come in; we wanna  
20 see and be seen; that's critical to activating the  
21 retail space on Westchester and even the small retail  
22 space we have planned for East 153rd Street.

23 As precedent, our partners Larry  
24 Hirschfield and Jerry Kretchmer of ELH TKC have  
25 actually already developed a YMCA in Coney Island in

3 partnership with HPD and HDC, so there's affordable  
4 housing on top and a YMCA below and so that is a part  
5 of our team and so we have now a very rich history  
6 with the YMCA and of course they're here today.

7 But just to give you an idea of some of  
8 the imagery that will be occurring in the La Central  
9 site; you have two pools, exercise equipment; again,  
10 lots of glazing, basketball courts; all the things  
11 that the YMCA has historically offered to the  
12 community. This our rendering of what our pools will  
13 look like; we have a lap pool, we have a more kiddie  
14 pool, family style; here are the basketball courts.

15 Moving to the courtyard, you know green  
16 space is a bit of a premium in this neighborhood, but  
17 for St. Mary's Park, which we love, but we wanted to  
18 provide more shading, more seating, more passive  
19 recreation and a playground and we believe we've  
20 achieved that; this is in-between Buildings B, C, D  
21 and E; it's almost two acres of open space. You can  
22 see we've already designed attractive and still  
23 secure fencing, and again, the goal is potentially  
24 during the daylight hours residents from Via Verde,  
25 St. Ann's or the community to the north and east can  
move through La Central while they're going to work

3 or going shopping on 3rd Avenue, and so again, it  
4 creates a nice cut which otherwise right now is  
5 actually not that attractive from a sidewalk, human  
6 scale perspective on Bergen and Brook.

7 We also have a partnership with Grow New  
8 York, who has a long tradition now in the city with  
9 doing rooftop plantings; this one however will be  
10 open to the public, so they will have a retail  
11 presence on Westchester Avenue, they'll have their  
12 own dedicated elevator and stair; they'll have a  
13 demonstration kitchen so that the goal here really is  
14 that New York City public school students will come,  
15 learn what it means to have seasonality of food, have  
16 cooks come and teach classes on cooking and then  
17 obviously show how food is harvested, whether it's  
18 tree fruits or just planting; we'll teach them about  
19 composting and again, this is all on Grown New York  
20 and we are moving towards an agreement with them now.

21 Giving you an idea of the resident  
22 amenity, this is now also on the third floor, as was  
23 the Grown New York space; this is on the roof of the  
24 YMCA in Building A. So half of it is going to Grow  
25 New York; the other half is going to green recreation  
space for the tenants only. And as you can see here,

3 we're providing a lot of lush greenery, we're  
4 providing a lot of seating; we even have a playground  
5 here, which is the yellow feature above me, and then  
6 just off to your right you can see there are some  
7 exercise equipment, so that'll be outdoor exercise  
8 equipment; parents can ride the bike while they're  
9 watching their kids; we think this is a great amenity  
10 for the residents.

11 And then taking it even a step further,  
12 we've got open space on the upper floors, so on the  
13 12th floor another resident amenity, just to get  
14 above the city, get away from the noise a little bit  
15 and come and relax; it's something that is rare in  
16 affordable housing these days, but we wanted to  
17 provide it. Our overarching goal was really to make  
18 sure we had no square foot unturned and so where we  
19 can provide programming that's of benefit to the  
20 residents or the public or both, we tried to do that.

21 Again, this is just some of the open  
22 space for Building B; this is now looking north into  
23 the courtyard; again, terrace, landscaping; here's a  
24 rendering of that.

25 Resiliency and sustainability is critical  
to us; this RFP was issued in March of 2013, which is

3 only five months after Hurricane Sandy, so resiliency  
4 was sort of informing our design as we moved through  
5 the competition.

6 As such, we have brought some of the  
7 knowledge from different development team members and  
8 brought that into La Central; we have cogeneration,  
9 we have battery backup, so that ideally, not only can  
10 the residents shelter in place in the event of a  
11 power emergency, which would be the most likely thing  
12 to occur here, but possibly other community members  
13 could come to the retail spaces or community spaces  
14 and charge their phone or sit in air conditioning or  
15 sit in the heat, whatever time of year this incident  
16 may occur and so again, where we can provide  
17 resiliency, it was really critical to us and we've  
18 maintained that.

19 As the Chair has mentioned, we are  
20 committed to LEED Gold on all buildings; we are also  
21 committed to exploring Passive House for phase 2,  
22 which is Buildings C and E. The Hudson Companies, on  
23 our own, is currently developing the largest Passive  
24 House building in the world, which is the Cornell  
25 Tech dorm on Roosevelt Island, so we will bring that

3 knowledge to La Central as we design phase 2, which  
4 we are intending to start this month on C and E.

5 We'll also have a half-million watts of  
6 photovoltaic solar generation, we'll have water  
7 recycling, bike storage and then finally, what we're  
8 very excited about is another amenity that kind of  
9 goes unnoticed, but that's silence. We want people  
10 to come in, shut the door and have silence, get away  
11 from the city a little bit; because of that, we will  
12 not have air conditioners in the windows, there will  
13 be no air conditioner penetration in the wall; the  
14 air conditioners are going to be in the living room  
15 and in the bedroom. I was looking around here hoping  
16 this room could help me out, but that's not the case.  
17 But every tenant, regardless of their income, will  
18 have this amenity; it's also an incredible energy  
19 efficiency amenity, but they'll be able to control  
20 their thermometer all year round, cooling and heating  
21 and again, with triple pane windows you will have  
22 silence, and that is critical to the tenant; we were  
23 shaping these apartments based on respect for the  
24 tenants, first and foremost. Every unit will also  
25 have a dishwasher, oak wood floors, no vinyl, no VOC  
paint; there will be no new apartment smell, 'cause

3 that smell is actually not that good for you;  
4 there'll be no smell at all, which is the best thing  
5 possible, especially in areas like the South Bronx,  
6 which has a high asthma rate, especially among  
7 children.

8 Here's a quick rundown of our community  
9 educational summary. Again, going back to this no  
10 square foot left unturned, we have the YMCA, we have  
11 the office space; you see the Grown New York City  
12 farm; we actually have a day care, which was critical  
13 in the CD1 district statement of needs; they wanted  
14 to have a day care; we'll have one in Building E. In  
15 Building C this Music Has No Enemies program is a  
16 music education program for kids of all ages, 0-130,  
17 and then of course the Bronx Net TV station; this  
18 will be the second TV station to open; they are not  
19 closing the Lehman College location, they're just  
20 expanding, but it'll be a Today Show, SNY kind of  
21 feel where you'll have broadcasts that can be seen  
22 from the street; it'll be right on the corner; you  
23 can see people behind you as they're broadcasting and  
24 I think most importantly, they will be highlighting  
25 the South Bronx, they will be filming from that area



3 and we think that is wonderful to start shining more  
4 light on the South Bronx.

5 In terms of neighborhood benefits, we  
6 have committed to 35% of the construction force will  
7 be from the Bronx and in partnership with all sorts  
8 of City agencies and Council Member Salamanca's  
9 office; Community Board 1, we will be identifying  
10 them by hiring a community liaison starting this fall  
11 and continuing on through the duration of the entire  
12 construction process. Of course, to the Chair's  
13 point, we will be contracting a minimum of 30% of all  
14 work to MWBE firms, and to give you an idea of the  
15 size of that, phase 1 we're estimating to be \$350  
16 million in total development cost, so that's at least  
17 \$105 million from the first phase alone, minimum,  
18 going towards MWBE firms, so we're very excited about  
19 that; we will be committing to that and actually we  
20 committed to it at the CB1 hearing, we said we would  
21 have our feet held to the fire every three months,  
22 starting in January of '17, if we break ground this  
23 December, as we hope to do, and we will read through  
24 the numbers and if we are failing in our goals we  
25 will hear it, but the point is, we're not just gonna

3 make these goals and then walk away, we really want  
4 to be held accountable.

5 We'll also be holding monthly training  
6 seminars for the residential lottery process. As  
7 many of you may know, this is a paper-heavy process,  
8 even through of course to the City's benefit, they  
9 have digitized some aspects of it and I think that's  
10 great, but tenants who are looking for affordable  
11 housing don't know how much paperwork they have to  
12 bring and multiple interviews, it's hard on  
13 everybody; you have to cancel work, you have to maybe  
14 change a day care appointment, whatever it might be;  
15 we wanna be able to tell people -- one year after we  
16 start construction, we're gonna have monthly seminars  
17 on what it means to apply for affordable housing, so  
18 that when that 60-day period comes out, we believe we  
19 will have done the best effort possible to educate  
20 anyone and everyone in applying for La Central.

21 This is the final -- just going back to  
22 the imagery here -- and we thank you again for your  
23 time and we're happy to answer any questions you may  
24 have.

25 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Thank you so much;  
that was a great presentation. Mr. Marshall, I'd

3 like to hear something from you, and I'm very happy  
4 by the way, I'd like the developers to know, that  
5 there is a what, 37.5%...

6 MEREDITH MARSHALL: Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: MWBE ownership?

8 MEREDITH MARSHALL: Uhm-hm. Uhm-hm.

9 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: That, uhm very  
10 good, because the equity-building is what's  
11 necessary, so I'm very happy that you were inclusive  
12 of that, so **(inaudible)**... [crosstalk]

13 MEREDITH MARSHALL: Right. So again, I'm  
14 Meredith Marshall, Partner and founding member of BRP  
15 Companies. We're a fully integrated firm, so we have  
16 development, construction, property management and  
17 some financing units. But our interaction with this  
18 project was from the beginning; some key points that  
19 Aaron mentioned was the sustainability services,  
20 including the cogeneration plant, so our firm was the  
21 first to develop a cogeneration plant in Central  
22 Brooklyn and Bed-Stuy in the Bradford development; we  
23 also are in Flushing Commons with Macedonia Plaza,  
24 and Chair, we're in Central Harlem at the former  
25 Lafayette site with a cogeneration plant, so we  
provide green options to low-income residents,

3 meaning that we provide electricity, cooling and  
4 heating at a reduced rate to the tenants; we in fact  
5 could charge the PUC rate, which what Con Edison  
6 charges or Keyspan, but we charge a 5% reduction in  
7 that, so it's passed on to the tenant.

8 In addition to that, we've helped  
9 negotiate a 32BJ agreements in our Brooklyn site,  
10 your site, the Lafayette site, and in this site; we  
11 have a good relationship with Cal Bragg, who's our  
12 point person, so the maintenance staff, the porters,  
13 supers and security all will be 32BJ, and that  
14 agreement should've been signed this morning or this  
15 afternoon, but we were negotiating into late last  
16 night, but we're in good stead with 32BJ.

17 And the final point is the MWBE plan.  
18 Our firm is an MWBE plan; I'm a 50% owner; the other  
19 owner is an African American as well and we will be  
20 constructing Building B; we have a construction group  
21 called BRP Construction Group; we will be  
22 constructing Building B. In addition to that, we've  
23 helped develop and are developing MWBE plans with  
24 both HPD, EDC and various economic development groups  
25 throughout the city, including Greater Jamaica  
Development Corp. in Jamaica, where we have a large

3 development that will be coming before... well it may  
4 not be coming before you, but will be closing in  
5 December. And so we help develop MWBEs from not only  
6 a contract perspective, but also a capacity-building  
7 perspective, because what we find is a lot of MWBE  
8 firms don't have the sustainability to actually take  
9 on larger projects, so we wanna work with smaller  
10 firms in terms of subcontracting some of the larger  
11 trades, so in case -- in one instance in the project  
12 in your area, Madame Chair, we've had an electrical  
13 contractor that may provide the low voltage to an  
14 MWBE or contract the fire alarm system and we will  
15 employ those methods for this project.

16 In addition to that, you know, we commit  
17 to 30%, but why not 50%, so we'll be in earnest  
18 trying to move those numbers up, but we have to find  
19 competent MWBEs that can complete the job and that's  
20 easier in some cases; in larger projects, quite  
21 frankly, it's more of a challenge, but we're  
22 committed to the 30%.

23 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Thank you so much.  
24 Artie; do you have anything you wanna add? Alright.  
25 The MWBE, although sometimes can be challenging, you  
being one yourself, if you do not begin to assist the

2 MWBEs in increasing their capacity, then they will  
3 never qualify and that's been my argument  
4 historically, from 11 years in the City Council and  
5 since I am an MWBE for 20 years prior to getting  
6 elected, and so I commend this development for  
7 participating and yes, I do see that that has always  
8 been done.

9 Now Council Member Salamanca has some  
10 questions that he wants to pose to you, but before he  
11 does that, there's one clarity point I would like to  
12 know. The HDFC, Artie; is that the 97 units for the  
13 special needs? Is that the HDFC component?

14 ARTIE PEARSON: Yes, each of the  
15 disposition areas are gonna be conveyed to an HDFC.

16 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Alright. And is  
17 this PTAC [sic] units.. do I understand that these  
18 are... What are these units?

19 AARON KOFFMAN: These are variable  
20 refrigerant units; they're called VRFs or sometimes  
21 called VRVs. I'm trying to.. they're probably about,  
22 maybe 3 feet long; they install into the wall and  
23 then they have two vertical lines that run up to the  
24 roof, let's say and that's where the condensers are..

3 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: So from each unit  
4 you'll... each unit will have the condensers on the  
5 roof?

6 AARON KOFFMAN: Yes or we can pull a  
7 number of them into one condenser so you don't have  
8 this gigantic farm, but yeah [sic]... [crosstalk]

9 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: And since you  
10 talked about the utilities, the residents will be  
11 contracting with Con Edison?

12 AARON KOFFMAN: For their electric...  
13 [crosstalk]

14 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Do they pay their  
15 own utilities, let me ask that first?

16 AARON KOFFMAN: They pay only their own  
17 electricity.

18 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Only their own  
19 electricity.

20 AARON KOFFMAN: And since the VRF unit is  
21 electric, we will be providing the heat, so there is  
22 a system that's already been installed in several  
23 other affordable housing developments where the  
24 monitor basically clicks over in the heating season  
25 and every time it heats the bill goes to the owner,  
so...

2 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: So it's central  
3 heating in effect.

4 AARON KOFFMAN: It is central heating and  
5 central cooling; there's an air conditioner unit in  
6 every room.

7 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: But it's  
8 electrical.

9 AARON KOFFMAN: It's electric, but  
10 there's a meter switch that basically if it's air  
11 conditioning, which it'll most likely be in the  
12 summer months...

13 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Yes.

14 AARON KOFFMAN: they pay for that; if  
15 it's heating, it comes to us; we pay for that.

16 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Alright. So then  
17 when they're paying for it, and I heard something  
18 that I believe you said or Meredith said about the...  
19 that they have their own thermostat...

20 AARON KOFFMAN: That's right.

21 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: in their unit. Now  
22 are their different zones within the apartment or is  
23 it just the apartment they can set the temperature  
24 for or can they do it -- if there is four bedrooms,  
25 can it be done by bedroom?



3 AARON KOFFMAN: Yes, if there are four  
4 bedrooms, there'll be five units, right; there'll be  
5 one unit in every bedroom and they're all  
6 independently run, plus the one in the living room.

7 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: 'Cause that saves a  
8 little money.

9 AARON KOFFMAN: Sure does, yeah, of  
10 course.

11 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Uhm-hm. Uhm-hm  
12 **[inaudible]**. And what type of outreach will be done  
13 and will there be local preference for community  
14 board -- those who reside within the local community  
15 board?

16 AARON KOFFMAN: And you're saying  
17 Community Board 1 preference for residents, for...  
18 [crosstalk]

19 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Whatever ward it  
20 is; will there be a preference for two things -- one,  
21 to get jobs... that's number one, construction  
22 opportunities; two, is there going to an educational  
23 component, a training component and three, will there  
24 be a community board preference for application  
25 process through the lottery system?

2 AARON KOFFMAN: So maybe I'll take your  
3 last... [crosstalk]

4 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: In other words,  
5 some of them require that 15% within that community  
6 board; is there such a thing in this one?

7 AARON KOFFMAN: Yeah. So I'll send it  
8 over to HPD for the residential lottery portion...  
9 [crosstalk]

10 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Okay.

11 AARON KOFFMAN: but for the workers -- So  
12 I think first and foremost we will have a community  
13 liaison similar to what was done at Yankee Stadium,  
14 in fact we're looking at that firm, so that they will  
15 identify local businesses, both in CB1 and in the  
16 Bronx more generally, and then B, they're on-site so  
17 that they can come in and be interviewed..

18 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Is there a training  
19 component attached to that, one, and are purchases  
20 going to be done with the local businesses in the  
21 area? In other words, are you gonna buy your  
22 supplies from the local businesses in the area so  
23 that they can increase their capacity?

24

25

2 AARON KOFFMAN: That's our preference.  
3 We need to identify how many firms are actually in  
4 CB1, but yes... [crosstalk]

5 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Well I would  
6 suggest you ask Council Member Salamanca's office to  
7 assist you with that.

8 AARON KOFFMAN: That's a great  
9 suggestion. No, I think it's just evolving and so of  
10 course that's what we plan on doing; we also want to  
11 identify the community liaison as well and get that  
12 firm in place. But of course, if we can buy locally  
13 and hire locally, we will do that. Even if there  
14 might be a bit of a premium, our goal is to empower  
15 the South Bronx.

16 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: And is there a  
17 training component; that you haven't answered yet?

18 AARON KOFFMAN: We've been talking about  
19 a training, as we totally can [sic] and we haven't  
20 come up with a formal plan, but I think that's our  
21 goal this fall is to come up with one; we're happy to  
22 present that back to the Council.

23 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: I would like to see  
24 **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

25 AARON KOFFMAN: Of course.

2 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: to Council Member  
3 Salamanca.

4 AARON KOFFMAN: We've kicked around one  
5 idea of having a project management, like  
6 apprenticeship program through the construction,  
7 possibly with Hostos College and...

8 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: That's a great  
9 idea.

10 AARON KOFFMAN: Yeah and to really see  
11 what it means to be a project manager on the job for  
12 those who are really interested and so we're going to  
13 explore that, but I think we all agree that's a great  
14 idea.

15 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: 'Cause I like  
16 training components to be a part of developments and  
17 construction sites.

18 AARON KOFFMAN: Of course.

19 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Alright. Artie,  
20 you were gonna tell me about the lottery system,  
21 please.

22 [background comments]

23 ARTIE PEARSON: Okay. Or Ted will  
24 answer.

2 TED WEINSTEIN: Okay. As with all  
3 projects that are done through our programs, this  
4 will be subject to...

5 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Ted, you wanna give  
6 your name **(inaudible)**?

7 TED WEINSTEIN: Sure. Ted Weinstein; I'm  
8 Director of Bronx Planning for HPD.

9 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Thank you.

10 TED WEINSTEIN: As with all projects that  
11 go through our programs, this will be subject to our  
12 marketing requirements and HDC's; in this particular  
13 case, it would be actually supervised by the HDC  
14 marketing office working with us; just basically,  
15 what happens, when the project is about -- and in  
16 this case it will be by phases -- approximately two-  
17 thirds done, they have to submit a marketing plan to  
18 the office that's supervising it, including where  
19 it'll be advertised; they will be notifying the  
20 community board, they'll advertise in some  
21 newspapers, but one of the requirements is that  
22 there'll be 50%, at least 50% of the units,  
23 preferences given to people from within that  
24 community district, Community District 1.

2 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: And what about the  
3 commercial space; will that also have a minimum  
4 percentage to allow local small businesses to be able  
5 to rent commercial space there?

6 TED WEINSTEIN: There isn't a requirement  
7 for that, but we certainly encourage them to do that,  
8 to reach out, you know work with the local business  
9 improvement district, and any other sources in terms  
10 of finding businesses that are looking for space.

11 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: And you're  
12 budgeting a part of the underwriting; have you set an  
13 approximation for what the per square footage costs  
14 would be; that's number one? Will it be just a wall  
15 that will be provided and will there be an assistance  
16 for allowance for build-out?

17 TED WEINSTEIN: Do you **(inaudible)**? [sic]

18 JONATHAN BUETTLER: My name is Jonathan  
19 Buettler; I'm the Director of Mixed Income Programs  
20 at HPD. In the current underwriting that we've been  
21 working on with the development team, there are costs  
22 associated with the core and shell of those  
23 commercial spaces that hasn't been proposed yet; that  
24 would be subject to the development team's agreement  
25 with those local tenants. During the RFP process we

3 have worked with the development team to design the  
4 project in a way where the ground floor plan will  
5 include smaller spaces, which will be more attractive  
6 to local or smaller businesses as opposed to some of  
7 the more big box retail that could be found on a site  
8 of this size.

9 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Will there be --  
10 for those small businesses, even though they have a  
11 smaller per square footage; in order to.. because when  
12 they get the core and shell, sometimes it's a  
13 hardship for them to do build-out; will there be an  
14 allowance made where maybe they -- one month rent is  
15 forgiven, etc.; are you willing to entertain anything  
16 like that on behalf of Council Member Salamanca? To  
17 allow the small businesses to really partic..

18 AARON KOFFMAN: Yes, ma'am.

19 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: because when  
20 they're given a core and shell, sometimes it's very  
21 difficult for them to do the build-out.

22 AARON KOFFMAN: We agree. We actually  
23 already have that in the budget; we have a tenant  
24 improvement, sort of landlord work; it's in the  
25 budget now; I cannot remember what the number is; I  
wanna say it might be \$30 per foot, which is in

2 accordance with what we see in the marketplace; we  
3 wanna bring it to a vanilla box so you'll have some  
4 -- depending on who it is, 'cause every user is a  
5 little bit different, so there will be obviously a  
6 bathroom already installed, 'cause that's required  
7 for TCO, HVAC systems will already be preinstalled,  
8 security system will be preinstalled and it's just a  
9 matter of devising walls, just based on who those  
10 tenants are. We won't really see those tenants come  
11 to fruition I think until we're in construction and  
12 there's some interest there. But we get it that you  
13 can't just leave people hanging. I will say, just  
14 real quickly, I'm sorry, is that you know the retail  
15 space is critical, no question about it; the success  
16 of the underwriting does not depend on getting every  
17 last dollar and so where we can do mom and pop,  
18 that's what we're looking for; we're looking to  
19 extend -- although there are a number of **(inaudible)**  
20 tenants at 3rd Avenue, we want to extend that  
21 locally-owned business down Westchester and if it  
22 means that we have to be flexible on rent, we will do  
23 it. We think that's critical to the success  
24 **(inaudible)**... [crosstalk]



2 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Now when you say  
3 security; does that include the gates?

4 AARON KOFFMAN: We haven't gotten into  
5 the minutia, but I will say Hudson, on all their  
6 other affordable housing jobs, we actually provide  
7 rolling gates on the inside of the window; not the  
8 outside, 'cause no one wants that steel wall. So it  
9 would be on the inside and we always provide that at  
10 our cost and then we turn it over to the landlord.

11 MEREDITH MARSHALL: Yeah, I'm gonna talk  
12 about some of the local tenants. What we've done in  
13 Harlem, in particular, with Noble Strategy, Harlem  
14 Gynecology, Hundred Black Men [sic], Franz Florist; a  
15 lot of these firms have additional build-out  
16 requirements beyond say \$30, maybe \$70 or \$100, so we  
17 invest in the tenant, so we built out the space and  
18 we added... we amortize it in the lease over 10-15  
19 years, so we sort of share the risk; if they blow up  
20 and you know, do well **(inaudible)**... [crosstalk]

21 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Then you share in  
22 the loss.

23 MEREDITH MARSHALL: but if they... we share  
24 in the loss, but you know, we've lost probably Noble,  
25 but then another group took it over, so it's really

2 an investment in the community and it's proven to be  
3 successful because again, they can pay the rent, they  
4 just can't pay the capital build-out costs.

5 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: What's it  
6 approximately, percentage, in amortization on the  
7 lease when you do that?

8 MEREDITH MARSHALL: So instead of say \$30  
9 rents, you're at \$34 for a 10-15 year lease; nothing  
10 outrageous, but it provides... it's a back door way to  
11 finance small businesses.

12 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Yes. Alright.  
13 Thank you so much; I'm gonna ask Council Member  
14 Salamanca before I throw it open to my colleagues.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Thank you,  
16 Madame Chair. First I would like to thank the land  
17 use team here in Council; they were very diligent in  
18 helping us get to some type of agreement here. When  
19 I came onboard and I met with your team, I don't  
20 believe there was any 30% AMI as part of this project  
21 and that was something that I was very adamant about.

22 Just wanna go over the numbers so we can  
23 just be on the record in terms of the 30% AMI for the  
24 buildings. We agreed that Buildings A and B will  
25 have 10% of the units would be at 30% AMI, which my

2 understanding, if my math serves me right, that's 50  
3 units?

4 AARON KOFFMAN: We'll give you that extra  
5 unit, but yeah, 49, but we'll take **(inaudible)**...

6 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: **(inaudible)**,  
7 yeah.

8 AARON KOFFMAN: Yes, 10%, absolutely.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Alright. I  
10 just don't see a breakdown here in terms of how many  
11 units will be at 30% AMI for Building A and Building  
12 B.

13 AARON KOFFMAN: I think just because  
14 everything happened so fast, honestly since  
15 yesterday, and we have to just coordinate with HPD; I  
16 think you'll have that probably by the end of the day  
17 or early tomorrow.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Awesome. And  
19 then in Building C and Building D we agreed that 26  
20 units will be at 30% AMI and 7 units will be at 40%  
21 AMI.

22 AARON KOFFMAN: Building C and E will be  
23 at 26... yes, that's right, C... [crosstalk]

24

25

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON PLANNING, DISPOSITIONS AND  
CONCESSIONS

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: C... I'm sorry,  
3 yeah, C and E. Okay. So that gives us a total of 83  
4 buildings at 30 and 40% AMI. Yes.

5 AARON KOFFMAN: Yes.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Okay. My  
7 other question, in terms of Building D; just wanna  
8 confirm that the construction of that building will  
9 be at prevailing wages?

10 AARON KOFFMAN: Yes.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Yes. Alright.  
12 Awesome. And then my last concern that I had is  
13 security; I'm working with the Mayor's Office, I'm  
14 working with the local community residents and  
15 community leaders; not to far from you I'm having  
16 issues of heroin and opioid use; it's spilling out to  
17 the streets; I'm working with my local police  
18 department, but I'm concerned in terms of the open  
19 space that you have there; I'm concerned that that  
20 would be used as a hangout spot, so I just wanna get  
21 a commitment that you will have 24-hour manned  
22 security there; not to mention the surveillance  
23 cameras; that you'll have staff, in the building in  
24 this facility.

25

2 AARON KOFFMAN: Yeah. So we understand  
3 that that's an issue and we certainly don't want it  
4 to develop in La Central, so yes, we have committed  
5 to 24-hour on-site staffing for security; we also  
6 have the ability to close gates that we've already  
7 designed to seal off the courtyard and when we do  
8 that, I believe there's some flexibility there; if  
9 we've secured the facility, then I think there's some  
10 flexibility on that on-site staffing, but there is  
11 24-hour on-site staffing planned for the courtyard.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Alright.  
13 Also, there's gonna be a skateboard park; I want to  
14 ensure that it's gonna be open and closed, very  
15 similar to the way Parks Department operates..

16 AARON KOFFMAN: Yeah.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: sunrise and  
18 sundown.

19 AARON KOFFMAN: Confirmed.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Awesome.  
21 Alright. Awesome. Well thank you, Madame Chair.

22 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Thank you so much,  
23 Council Member. I'm now going to ask my colleagues,  
24 Council Member Treyger.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you, Chair  
3 Dickens. And I also wanna commend my colleague,  
4 Council Member Salamanca; I think it really shows how  
5 his great experience as a community board district  
6 manager and being a very vocal and active presence in  
7 his community has really paid dividends moving this  
8 project along and improving it along the way, so I  
9 wanna give a tremendous shout-out to my colleague  
10 Council Member Salamanca for his outstanding work and  
11 of course the Chair and her support and the land use  
12 staff and to all the people involved.

13 I just have a couple of questions I  
14 wanted to make sure I... I represent the neighborhood  
15 of Coney Island and we have some similar discussions  
16 underway with regards to what the future of Coney  
17 Island's gonna look like and the South Bronx has some  
18 similarities **(inaudible)** the neighborhoods we serve.

19 First off, I'm very glad to hear that  
20 32BJ is a part of this project, that's critical; I  
21 myself am a proud former union member and I truly  
22 support... big supporter of unions. The question I had  
23 is that you mentioned the maintenance staff, the  
24 porters, everyone will be 32BJ; is there a commitment  
25 to have a job fair or a job recruitment effort to

2 hire local residents from the South Bronx to join  
3 32BJ?

4 AARON KOFFMAN: Yeah, it's our preference  
5 to actually hire from the South Bronx and then  
6 basically open it up to 32BJ for their memberships.  
7 So yes, we will have those job fairs; we think a  
8 building is actually better run when the staff in the  
9 building are from the neighborhoods, so if something  
10 does go wrong; let's say the porters can rush over  
11 and get there quickly, and also they already know the  
12 neighborhood. So yes, in absolute terms, we will  
13 have a fair available.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Right; I think  
15 that would be a great event, Councilman Salamanca, to  
16 have with your office; I'm sure it's already planned  
17 already to make sure that those residents are not  
18 just witnesses to this project, but active  
19 participants in it as well and we did hear that there  
20 is a commitment to hire locally; is that correct as  
21 well; will there be local residents, as far as the  
22 construction of the project or?

23 AARON KOFFMAN: Yeah. Yeah, of course.  
24 Yeah. Again, where we can do local we will do local  
25 and we will have our feed held to the fire at the

3 community board level and obviously with Council  
4 Member Salamanca. So yes, of course.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: 'Cause I'm sure  
6 there's many skilled, qualified residents in the  
7 South Bronx that would love to be a part of this  
8 project.

9 With regards to the YMCA, I want you to  
10 know off the bat I'm truly grateful for the Y; the Y  
11 is a great institution; one of the areas of concern  
12 that I've had, just speaking personally from my  
13 community, is making sure that the affordability  
14 scale actually reaches the residents of the South  
15 Bronx that live there today. Sometimes we see  
16 projects in the City of New York that are done to  
17 somehow accommodate a community that it will be 20  
18 years from now or 30 years from now, but our job as  
19 elected officials is to represent the people that are  
20 there today. So how do we make sure that the  
21 residents of the South Bronx today, those people who  
22 live here right now, will have access and will be  
23 able to afford the YMCA, because there was a  
24 misconception in the Coney Island project; some  
25 residents -- and this happened before my arrival; I  
was not the councilman at the time when this was



3 negotiated, but my colleague, you should just be  
4 aware that there was a perception in the Coney Island  
5 community that the YMCA is completely free and that  
6 is not the case; there is a fee to join and in many...  
7 some of my residents particularly who live in NYCHA,  
8 they have complained and expressed their concerns  
9 repeatedly about affordability. So what does the  
10 affordability scale look like for this YMCA and how  
11 do we make sure that all residents will have  
12 affordable access to this site?

13 AARON KOFFMAN: Our partner, Paul Custer  
14 is here actually, if he can raise his hand; although  
15 he's not testifying, he's a Senior Vice President at  
16 the YMCA of Greater New York. So the YMCA has been a  
17 partner with us since we started designing in the  
18 competition 3 1/2 years ago and have stated  
19 repeatedly that nobody will be denied membership  
20 based on income. Now I've never heard it being free,  
21 so I don't know where that misconception came in  
22 Coney Island, but we've always been operating under  
23 some amount of fee for every person; however, that  
24 fee would be a sliding scale; I don't know if that's  
25 the right term, but it would be I think proportionate  
to their income and I think if it's beneficial, maybe

2 perhaps the YMCA cold draft I think what the plan is,  
3 because I don't have it written down here, but the  
4 goal is that no one will be denied, regardless of  
5 their income.

6 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Council Member, I'm  
7 just gonna inter...

8 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Yeah.

9 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: interrupt; that's  
10 an excellent question and I would like Council Member  
11 Salamanca to get something in writing from the Y that  
12 so states it, because the fees are high at the Y and  
13 so I would like him to have something in writing that  
14 says it'll be on -- if sliding scale is not the  
15 correct term -- whatever it is, based upon maybe the  
16 AMI that they're residing at or how is it gonna be  
17 done for the area residents? I apologize, Council  
18 Member.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Sure. Look,  
20 this is a very important... This is a major achievement  
21 on the part of the councilman; I just wanna make sure  
22 that we learn from each other best practices, because  
23 here again, I wasn't the councilman at the time when  
24 it was negotiated for Coney Island, but I have to be  
25 honest with you; I've heard a number of concerns

3 raised by my constituents about affordability and  
4 again, we were told it's gonna be a community center  
5 and so some folks think that you walk in, it's a free  
6 service; it's not, especially when you have the Parks  
7 Department recreational centers that charge \$25 for  
8 the whole year compared to some centers that charge  
9 \$60 a month and for a family that maybe has \$9,000 a  
10 year or \$10,000 a year of income, that's either, you  
11 know, paying for a critical service in their home or  
12 paying a fee for a community center. I will tell you  
13 that some people were told they couldn't go in  
14 because they couldn't afford to pay the fee and so I  
15 just wanna make sure that this is a resource to the  
16 South Bronx that's affordable, accessible to all and  
17 I would certainly urge, recommend -- by the way, I do  
18 wanna note that in reviewing the notes of the HPD  
19 hearing when it did concern Coney Island, there were  
20 things in writing with regards to children having  
21 these cards that they could get free access, and I do  
22 know that the YMCA in some neighborhoods has certain  
23 hours; it's called the "Strong Kids Program" where  
24 certain hours after school are for free, but it's not  
25 all day and it's for certain ages. But when you have  
someone who is maybe 25, 30 years old looking to

2 maybe after work use the Y services, you know they're  
3 asked to pay. So I just wanna again just make sure  
4 that this is a great resource that's affordable and  
5 accessible to all and I think that something in  
6 writing to my colleague I think will be very helpful.

7 Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

8 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Excellent question,  
9 considering that the Harlem Y, which charges about  
10 \$800 a year when I went in because I wanted to use it  
11 for exercise for weight reduction; in order to get it  
12 for \$650 a year I had to coerce six of my friends to  
13 come in and join at \$650 a year in order so I could  
14 get it to \$650 myself, so I think it's a great  
15 question. Council Member Cohen.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Thank you, Chair  
17 Dickens. You know first I wanna say; it is my  
18 understanding, I believe, that this lot has been  
19 vacant in excess of 30 years, Councilman Salamanca's  
20 been in office for 10 minutes and suddenly we're  
21 getting 900 units of affordable housing, so my hat is  
22 off to him; I think that -- and I really don't think  
23 it would be but for his commitment, so that's great.

24 My questions I think are really related  
25 to HPD as opposed to the specifics of this project,

3 but I -- like this sheet here I think is very  
4 helpful, the affordable, but I'm wondering if, in  
5 terms of... is there a chart or do you have the data --  
6 and I think it would be helpful in the future just a  
7 general like -- in Building A, 19 units are gonna be  
8 at 30% of AMI, but like 30% of units... 30%, if they're  
9 all studios versus four bedrooms, that's significant;  
10 is there like a... like do you... is there data like on  
11 the square footage at the 30% and the square footage  
12 that's at...

13 [background comments]

14 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: ...negotiated and got  
15 that increased. So I just wanted to note that the  
16 affordability distribution page that you're looking  
17 at, those numbers have changes significantly based  
18 upon his tenacious spirit to get these numbers  
19 increased.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Yeah, absolutely;  
21 I think from the testimony there was no 30%  
22 affordability before... yes. And again, it's not  
23 really specific to this project, so that's why I'm  
24 kinda directing it at HPD, but 30% of the units are  
25 not... not all units are created equal and that's why  
it would be helpful I think for us to know in

3 general, if that data's available if it could be  
4 produced.

5 AARON KOFFMAN: Sure. So we've been  
6 working with the development team to accommodate the  
7 request for the 30% of AMI units and as with all of  
8 our projects, when there's multiple income tiers we  
9 try to have the bedroom distribution be  
10 representative of the entire project so that not one  
11 income tier is scaled towards one type of unit size,  
12 etc.; that they're reflective of all the unit sizes  
13 within the building.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: So in this  
15 particular case, in Building A, of the 19 units, some  
16 are studios, some are 1-bedroom, some are 2-bedrooms;  
17 the whole...

18 AARON KOFFMAN: Yes.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: That's great.  
20 Again, I would just say to HPD that I think it would  
21 be helpful in the future if... you know we have two  
22 good pages; if we had one more page that either  
23 reflected like the affordability by square footage or  
24 maybe by bedrooms, I think that that would give us a  
25 great, you know, just a more accurate sense of the  
distribution of affordable units. Thank you.

2 AARON KOFFMAN: Yeah, sure. And just to  
3 go quickly to answer the size question is roughly  
4 about 550 sq. ft. for a studio, 750 for a one; 950  
5 for a two, 1150 for a three and 1350 for a four, on  
6 average, we've got some awkward units there, but... and  
7 of course meeting HPD's new design standards as well,  
8 so I think they're generously laid out.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: That's great.  
10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Are there any other  
12 questions from my colleagues? Are there any members  
13 of the public wishing to give testimony? Bryant  
14 Brown... hi Bryant; how are you; would you like to come  
15 up and say a few words? Please approach the table  
16 and give your name.

17 [background comments]

18 BRYANT BROWN: Good afternoon Council  
19 Members. My name is Bryant Brown and I am here  
20 testifying on behalf of SEIU 32BJ. I would like to  
21 first begin by also commending Council Member  
22 Salamanca as well as Chairperson Dickens; thank you  
23 all again for the opportunity to testify before you.

24 32BJ is the largest property service  
25 union, representing 7,000 building service workers

3 across the city and 145,000 nationwide. 32BJ members  
4 maintain, clean and provide security services in  
5 schools, commercial and residential, both market rate  
6 and affordable buildings all across the five  
7 boroughs, including at projects like La Central.

8 I am here today to speak in support of  
9 this project because the development team has  
10 committed to providing the community with good  
11 quality, permanent building service jobs and much-  
12 needed affordable housing. The city has an  
13 affordable housing crisis; SEIU 32BJ has always had  
14 the position that we cannot simply build our way out  
15 of this problem, as long as there are hardworking  
16 people earning too little to afford the rising  
17 housing costs, families are going to continue getting  
18 priced out of their homes and this crisis will  
19 continue. Considering the fact that the poverty rate  
20 in the Bronx is over 30%, the highest of any borough  
21 in the city, it is essential that we encourage  
22 developers to provide affordable housing and high  
23 quality jobs; projects like La Central can provide  
24 both; this is why we support the La Central  
25 development; this is a well-rounded project that  
includes over 900 units of affordable housing,



3 including supportive housing as well as community and  
4 retail space. Also, and importantly, the developers  
5 are committed to creating good building service jobs  
6 that pay families sustaining wages and benefits;  
7 these are the types of jobs that have allowed  
8 building service workers to support their families in  
9 the Bronx and to continue calling New York City home.  
10 For these reasons we urge the City Council to support  
11 this project; it is not only good for the local  
12 community and all New Yorkers in need of good jobs  
13 and affordable housing, but it also sets a strong  
14 precedent for new developments across the city by  
15 demonstrating that good jobs and affordable housing  
16 are not mutually exclusive and must in fact go hand  
17 in hand. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Thank you so much,  
19 Mr. Brown and I'm very happy that Council Member  
20 Salamanca was able to negotiate that in, so when you  
21 speak to Kyle and the membership, let them know that  
22 you had a very strong advocate in Council Member  
23 Salamanca.

24 Are there any other members of the public  
25 wishing to give testimony? Seeing none, I will now  
close the public portion of this hearing; I will now

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON PLANNING, DISPOSITIONS AND  
CONCESSIONS

58

2 couple Land Use Items 448 through 452 for a vote to  
3 approve. I note for the record that the applications  
4 we are voting on today have the full support of  
5 Council Member Salamanca and my support as well. I  
6 will now call on my counsel to call the roll on a  
7 vote to approve.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Vote to approve Land  
9 Use Items 448, 449, 450, 451, and 452. Chair  
10 Dickens.

11 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Aye on all.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Cohen.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member  
15 Treyger.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Aye.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The vote on Land Use  
18 Items 448, 449, 450, 451, and 452 is approved by a  
19 vote of 3 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and 0  
20 abstentions.

21 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Thank you. I would  
22 like to thank the members of the public, my  
23 colleagues, my counsel and land use staff for  
24 attending today's hearing and I want to say  
25 congratulations to Council Member Salamanca on such a

3 phenomenal, phenomenal development and I wanna thank  
4 the development team for putting together such a  
5 project, and of course I wanna thank HPD, who  
6 sometimes doesn't have such a great relationship with  
7 the Council Members. This meeting is hereby  
8 adjourned.

9 [gavel]

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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 September 12, 1970