

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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December 11, 2017  
Start: 10:57 a.m.  
Recess: 11:19 a.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: JAMES G. VAN BRAMER  
Acting Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Ydanis A. Rodriguez  
James G. Van Bramer  
Vanessa L. Gibson  
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.  
Laurie A. Cumbo  
Corey D. Johnson  
Mark Levine  
I. Daneek Miller  
Helen K. Rosenthal  
Steven Matteo

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

Michael Blaise Backer, Deputy Commissioner  
Neighborhood Development  
Department of Small Business Services

Lynell Lindsey, Senior Program Manager  
BID Development  
Department of Small Business Services

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2 [sound check, pause] [gavel]

3 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Good morning,  
4 and welcome to today's Finance Committee meeting. My  
5 name is Jimmy Van Bramer, and I'm chairing the  
6 committee today in the absence of Chair Ferreras-  
7 Copeland. I'd like to introduce my colleagues  
8 Council Member Vanessa Gibson, Council Member Robert  
9 Cornegy, Council Member Helen Rosenthal, Minority  
10 Leader Steve Matteo, and Council Member Mark Levine.  
11 We are all hear today to be considering and voting on  
12 four items.

13 Number one, a Preconsidered Intro to  
14 amend a definition related to the commercial rent  
15 tax, two land use items and Intro 1737, which would  
16 establish the Morris Park Business Improvement  
17 District. First, we have the Preconsidered Intro  
18 sponsored by Council Member Dan Garodnick, which  
19 would amend for greater clarity the definitions of  
20 base rent and total income for purposes of a Small  
21 Business Tax Credit against the Commercial Rent Tax,  
22 which the Council passed on November 30<sup>th</sup>. Next, we  
23 have two Land Use items. The first is Cooper Square  
24 Senior Housing in Council Member Mendez's district in  
25 Manhattan, which would provide a partial five-year

2 Article 11 tax exemption to preserve 151 units of  
3 low-income senior housing. The second is the Saint  
4 Marks Apartments in Council Member Cornegy's  
5 district. In Brooklyn, which would provide a partial  
6 30-year Article 11 tax exemption to preserve 52 units  
7 of low-income rental housing. Both Council members  
8 support these items. Last, we have Intro 1737, which  
9 would establish the Morris Park BID in Council Member  
10 Vacca's District. On October 31, the Committee held  
11 a hearing on this legislation at which we heard  
12 testimony in support of the BID's establishment from  
13 the Department of Small Business Services, and other  
14 interested parties. Following this hearing, the 30-  
15 day period began where property owners who would be  
16 impacted by the proposed BID, could formally file an  
17 objection to the BID plan with the City Clerk.  
18 According to the City Clerk, the number of objections  
19 required to prevent to BID's creation were not filed  
20 during this period. Therefore, if the Committee and  
21 the Council find in the affirmative on the following  
22 four questions today, the BID legislation may be  
23 adopted. These questions are: Were the notices for  
24 all required hearings published and mailed as  
25 required by law? Does all the real property within

2 the district's boundaries benefit from the  
3 establishment of the district except as otherwise  
4 provided by law? Is all the real property benefitted  
5 included within the limits of the proposed district,  
6 and is the establishment of the district in the  
7 public interested? Representatives from SBS are here  
8 to testify on the establishment of the BID, and to  
9 answer any questions from the committee. Before from  
10 SBS, we actually are going to go right to SBS because  
11 we can't wait to hear from Blaise Backer, and Blaise,  
12 if you would take the seat, and I believe we have to  
13 swear Blaise in.

14 LEGAL COUNSEL: Do you affirm to tell the  
15 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in  
16 your testimony before the committee today, and to  
17 respond honestly to Council Member questions?

18 BLAISE BACKER: I do.

19 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Great.

20 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: That is good  
21 hear.

22 BLAISE BACKER: Sorry.

23 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: That's good.

24 BLAISE BACKER: I know. Oh, I do no have  
25 the-yeah. You have it, right?

2 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Okay.

3 BLAISE BACKER: Yeah. Yeah, let me speak  
4 to just the objections. It's pretty straightforward.  
5 So, not too much content. [background comments]

6 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Why don't you--

7 BLAISE BACKER: [interposing] Sure.  
8 Sorry.

9 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: --start your  
10 testimony, please.

11 BLAISE BACKER: [laughs] Good morning,  
12 members of the Finance Committee, Majority Leader Van  
13 Bramer. I am Michael Blaise Backer, Deputy  
14 Commissioner of Neighborhood Development, Department  
15 of Small Business Services. I'm joined by Senior  
16 Program Manager for BID Development, Lynell Lindsey.  
17 Today, we would like to report on the result of the  
18 objections filed with City Clerk against the  
19 establishment of the Proposed Morris Park Business  
20 Improvement District. As required by law, the Morris  
21 Park Steering Committee mailed the Summary of the  
22 City Council Resolution to the following parties: To  
23 each owner of real property within the proposed  
24 district at the address shown on the latest City  
25 Assessment Roll, to such other persons as are

2 registered with the City to receive tax bills  
3 concerning real property within the district, and to  
4 tenants of each building within the proposed  
5 district. Furthermore, SBS arranged for the  
6 publication of a copy of the summary of the  
7 Resolution at least once in the City Record. At the  
8 conclusion of the objection period at 5:00 p.m. on  
9 December 1, 2017 and taking into consideration any  
10 objections postmarked by that date, one valid  
11 objection representing less than one percent of the  
12 total assessed value was filed with the City Clerk  
13 for properties within the district. Additionally,  
14 one invalid objection was filed with the City Clerk  
15 for a property outside of the district. This level  
16 of objection is within our acceptable threshold  
17 needed to advance the bill for a favorable  
18 consideration by the full City Council. The  
19 Department of Small Business Services supports the  
20 establishment of the Proposed Morris Park BID. In  
21 our judgment, the proposed BID will improve the  
22 quality of life and business conditions in the Morris  
23 Park district. With this, I'm happy to take any  
24 questions.

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2 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Thank you. Are  
3 there any questions on any of today's items from any  
4 of the members? Seeing none, I will ask the Clerk to  
5 call the roll.

6 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk,  
7 roll call vote Committee on Finance. All items are  
8 coupled. Council Member Van Bramer.

9 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: I vote aye.

10 CLERK: Gibson.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: I vote aye.

12 CLERK: Cornegy.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Aye.

14 CLERK: Levine.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Aye.

16 CLERK: Rosenthal.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Aye on all.

18 CLERK: Matteo.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Aye.

20 CLERK: By a vote of 6 in the  
21 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,  
22 all items have been adopted by the Committee.

23 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Great. We'll  
24 keep the roll open for another 15 minutes, and remind  
25 my colleagues that the Committee will be holding a



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2 hearing next Monday at 10:00 a.m. in Chambers on  
3 IBO's evaluation of the Commercial Revitalization  
4 Program. Thank you very much. [background comments,  
5 pause]

6 CLERK: The final vote in the Committee  
7 on Finance all items have been adopted by a vote of 6  
8 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative, and no  
9 abstentions. Thank you.

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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 December 26, 2017