

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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May 27, 2015  
Start: 10:27 a.m.  
Recess: 11:01 p.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: JULISSA FERRERAS-COPELAND  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

COREY D. JOHNSON  
HELEN K. ROSENTHAL  
I. DANEEK MILLER  
JAMES G. VAN BRAMER  
LAURIE A. CUMBO  
MARK LEVINE  
ROBERT E. CORNEGY, JR.  
VANESSA L. GIBSON  
VINCENT IGNIZIO  
YDANIS A. RODRIGUEZ

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

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Good

morning and welcome to today's Finance Committee Hearing. I'm Council Member Julissa Ferreras-Copeland. I am the chair of the committee. We've been joined by Majority Leader Van Bramer, Council Member Rodriguez, Council Member Levine, Council Member Cornegy, and Council Member Rosenthal. Today we will, we have two items on our agenda; resolution 572 regarding a pet adoption tax break and a, and a BID item. Let's start with the resolution 572 which I sponsored calling upon the state to pass legislation which would provide a hundred dollar tax credit to anyone who adopts a dog or a cat from a shelter. The ASPCA estimates that every year millions of dogs and cats are euthanized because they are not adopted into loving homes. In New York City there are thousands of dogs and cats available for adoption from shelters. However we know the cost of adopting a dog or a cat can be a burdensome, from, can be burdensome for many families and may prevent some people willing to open their homes for doing so. A hundred dollar tax break credit would defray some of the initial

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2 cost and could incentivize people to adopt.  
3 Encouraging New Yorkers to adopt a pet is not only  
4 compassionate but also reduces the stress on the  
5 financial resources of shelters that house these  
6 adopted animals, adoptable animals. And let's not  
7 forget the many health benefits to people come from  
8 owning a pet including improved cardiovascular  
9 health, lower heart rate, and blood pressure  
10 increase exercise in helping people make and keep  
11 social connections. I urge all my colleagues to  
12 vote yes on this resolution and remember adopt,  
13 don't shop. Next we have the item relating to the  
14 lower east side BID in Council Member Chin's  
15 district on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015 the committee approve  
16 resolution 666 which sets today as a date to  
17 consider Intro 764, yeah 666 which would approve  
18 certain amendments to the lower eastside BID  
19 district plan. The lower eastside district, the  
20 lower eastside BID was first established in 1993.  
21 The majority of the BID is comprised of, of ground  
22 floor commercial units with residential units on  
23 upper floors in most buildings. At this time the  
24 BID is seeking council approval to amend its  
25 district plan. The proposed amendment would change

1  
2 the method of assessment by changing the formula by  
3 which the assessments are calculated and by  
4 creating two assessment sub-districts. One sub-  
5 district would become prize of the tax loss within  
6 the Seward Park extension urban renewal area and an  
7 area that has largely sat vacant for more than 40  
8 years and which is now being redeveloped. The other  
9 sub-district would consist of the remainder of the  
10 tax lots within the BID. The maximum amount that  
11 the BID will be permitted to assess each year  
12 stands at 974,600 dollars and will remain unchanged  
13 by this district plan amendment. The BID also, the  
14 BID would also like to modify its existing service,  
15 most notable by including economic and community  
16 development as a core service. Council Member Chin  
17 supports the amendment to the district plan. For  
18 further details on the district profile of the  
19 lower eastside BID details regarding the changes in  
20 the method of assessment and a description of the  
21 services that are and will be provided please refer  
22 to the committee report prepared by the finance  
23 division staff and the attached proposed amended  
24 district plan. Council Member Chin I'd like to open  
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1  
2 the mic up for Council Member Chin to address her  
3 BID.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Good morning.

5 Thank you Chair Ferreras and member of the Finance  
6 Committee. Thank you for having this hearing today.

7 I'm here to support Intro 764 which permits the  
8 amendment of the district plan of the lower

9 eastside business improvement district. This

10 proposal is to modify the existing service for the

11 district and to change the method of assessment

12 upon which the district charge is based. I'm

13 confident that the proposed changes will maintain

14 the level of quality service which needed for local

15 businesses and to identify effective ways for our

16 upcoming developments to contribute to this

17 prospering neighborhood. The lower eastside has

18 changed significant, significantly over the past

19 two decades and the BID has operated since 1993 to

20 accommodate the needs of the businesses in this

21 area. We want to make sure that the existing

22 business that makes up the historic and cultural

23 fabric of this neighborhood continues to operate

24 and receive the same level of services as currently

25 provided by the lower eastside BID with the

1  
2 upcoming Seward Park urban renewal area development  
3 this neighborhood will undergo significant changes  
4 as to how revenue is generated from and for the  
5 local economy. The... development will result in the  
6 loss of parking lot operation which is provided for  
7 63 percent of the lower eastside BID's operating  
8 budget. To ensure that the organization continue to  
9 provide capacity building and support for local  
10 economic development the proposed district plan  
11 amendment takes into account the loss of the  
12 parking lot revenue and incoming large scale  
13 projects including hotels and other commercial  
14 businesses. This plan also consider the recent  
15 conversion of many properties into commercial  
16 and/or residential condominiums. After meeting with  
17 the leadership of the lower eastside BID I had  
18 expressed concern about making sure that there's  
19 equitable assessment rate among existing  
20 properties, a new development that will occur  
21 within the district. In collaboration with the  
22 Small Business Services the BID was able to  
23 determine a new assessment formula that promotes  
24 advancement for existing businesses. It will also  
25 ensure that new projects are able to contribute to

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the economic needs of the community. With the amended district plan in place it will preserve mom and pop shops that continue to operate within the confine of the lower east side BID. I urge my colleagues today to vote in support of this proposed amendment district plan. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you Council Member Chin. Those are today's items. I will first open the floor up for questions or testimony on resolution 572. Okay. And then we will hear... if we have additional questions on the BID SBS is here to ask any questions. They're going to forego their opening statement I'm sure. Unless you all want to hear the opening state... okay, alright, excellent. We'll give you a copy Council Member Chin. And anyone else who wishes to speak on the lower eastside BID? No? Oh, okay. You want to speak during your vote? Yeah okay. Okay. Before I have Billy Martin the committee clerk call the roll I want to remind my colleagues that the Finance Committee will resume executive budget hearings tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. in the chambers. Tomorrow's hearing will be held jointly with the Committee on Education. And we will hear from the Department of



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Education and the School Construction Authority.  
And now I would like Billy to call the roll.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: William Martin,  
Committee Clerk. Roll call vote; Committee on  
Finance. Chair Ferreras-Copeland.

CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: I vote  
aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Rodriguez. Oh.  
Van Bramer.

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Gibson.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Cornegy.

COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: I'd like to  
explain my vote. So I, I always take this occasion  
when there are new BIDs introduced to ask them to  
look at the Bed-Stuy gateway BID as a shiny example  
and its director Michael Lambert. We are very proud  
of the work that they've done especially around the  
protection of small businesses through  
gentrification and through displacement. They've  
done a wonderful job of protecting those businesses  
and I just want to offer them as a shining example  
to all new BIDs. So please check them out. Well I

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mean BIDs that are, are, are getting new opportunity so... So check them out. I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Rodriguez.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Johnson.

COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Before I vote aye I want to thank the chair for this resolution 572. I think many of you know I adopted, I'm like the, the cat person on Facebook and Twitter now. I adopted a cat about five weeks ago from AC&C and I really am glad that we are voting on this resolution and I hope the state legislature does allow this to move forward. The numbers are in here but last year 30 thousand animals ended up in our shelter system in New York City. And about 7,000 of them were put down most of whom were healthy but they were euthanized because they didn't get adopted by a loving home. So I'm really grateful that we're doing this and I proudly vote aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Levine.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: With congratulations to the sponsors I vote aye on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Rosenthal.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: With  
3 congratulations to the sponsors... and Council Member  
4 Johnson I'm so pleased for you. Your twitter has  
5 exploded. I love seeing your cat but can I just say  
6 stay away from me. I'm so deathly allergic to cats  
7 and this is exactly why I've been breaking out for  
8 the last three days. But congratulations. And  
9 Council Member Chin congratulations on your new  
10 BID. It's a really big deal. I vote aye on all.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: By a vote of  
12 eight in the affirmative, zero in the negative, and  
13 no abstentions both items have been adopted.

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: So I  
15 just wanted to make sure that we know that the  
16 SBS's testimony will be submitted in writing for  
17 the, in the official record with all the details  
18 necessary we will keep the role open for another 15  
19 minutes. Okay thank you.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Council Member  
21 Ignizio.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: I vote aye.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Vote now stands  
24 at nine in the affirmative. Committee on Finance.  
25 Council Member Cumbo.

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COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I vote aye on all and I adjourn this meeting. Oh we're still waiting for one more member. Isn't that amazing. Well I will hold the vote open for one more member.

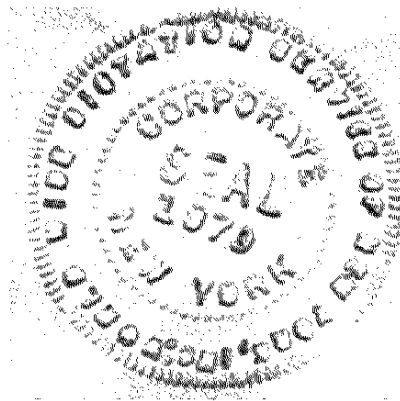
COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Current vote now stands at 10. Final vote Committee on Finance stands at 10 in the affirmative, zero in the negative, and no abstentions.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I adjourn this meeting.

[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 May 29, 2015