

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING
AND FRANCHISES

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November 12, 2024
Start: 11:14 a.m.
Recess: 1:11 p.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: Kevin C. Riley
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Shaun Abreu
David M. Carr
Kamillah Hanks
Francisco P. Moya
Yusef Salaam
Lynn C. Schulman

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

Adam Taubam
Kramer Levin, Port Authority Counsel

Glenn Guzzi
Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

Hersh Parekh
Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

Kirsten Jones
Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

Julia Campanelli
President of Hell's Kitchen Block Association

Joan Greenfield
Building owner at 402 West 40th Street

Kate Barnhart
New Alternatives for Homeless LGBT Youth

Ian Acriche
Regional Planning Association

Joe Restuccia
Manhattan Community Board Four

Jesse Bodine
Manhattan Community Board Four

Kathleen Treat
Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Association

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

Brian Weber

Christine Berthet
Manhattan Community Board Four

Chad Purkey
ABNY

Jessica Chait
Manhattan Community Board Four

Maddie DeCerbo
Real Estate Board of New York

Tiffany Triplett Henkel
Metro Baptist Church

Megan Wylie
New York Building Congress

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES

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SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning and welcome to today's New York City Council hearing for the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. At this time, we ask that you silence all electronic devices, and at no time is anyone to approach the dais. If you would like to sign up for in-person testimony or have any other questions throughout the hearing, please see one of the Sergeant at Arms. Chair, we're ready to begin.

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Good morning everyone and welcome to a meeting of the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. I'm Council Member Kevin Riley, Chari for the Subcommittee. I am joined today remotely by Council Member Moya, Council Member Abreu, Hanks, Schulman, Zhuang, and also Bottcher. Today's meeting will include votes on items previously heard by the Subcommittee, including the Brooklyn Yards proposal in Council Member Zhuang's district and Council Member Yeger's district, and the 962 Franklin Avenue proposal in Council Member Hudson's district also in Brooklyn. Before we take those votes we will also hold a public hearing on a proposed sidewalk café application in Council Member

1 Holden's district in Queens. And lastly, also on
2 today's agenda is a public hearing concerning the
3 application for the reconstruction of the Port
4 Authority Bus Terminal in Council Member Bottcher's
5 district in Manhattan. And now, we'll review our
6 hearing procedures. This meeting is being held in a
7 hybrid format. Members of the public who wish to
8 testify may testify in-person or through Zoom. Those
9 wishing to testify remotely may register by visiting
10 the New York City Council's website at
11 www.council.nyc.gov/landuse to sign up. If you are
12 here in-person, please see one of the Sergeant at
13 Arms to prepare and submit a speaker's card. Members
14 of the public may also view a livestream broadcast of
15 this meeting at the Council's website. When you are
16 called to testify and you are online, you will remain
17 muted until recognized by myself to speak. Please
18 take a moment to check your device and confirm that
19 your mic is on before you begin speaking. We will
20 limit public testimony to two minutes per witness.
21 Members of the public may also submit written
22 testimony through email at
23 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Written testimony
24 may be submitted up to three days after the hearing
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1 is closed. Please indicate the LU number and/or the
2 project name in the subject line of your email. We
3 request that the witnesses joining us remotely remain
4 in the meeting until you are excused by myself, as
5 Council Members may have questions. Lastly, for
6 everyone attending today's meeting, this meeting is a
7 government proceeding and decorum must be observed at
8 all times. Members of the public are asked not to
9 speak during this meeting unless you are testifying.
10 The witness table is reserved for people who are
11 called to testify and no video recording or
12 photography is allowed from the witness table.
13 Further, members of the public may not present audio
14 or video recording as testimony, but may submit
15 transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant at
16 Arms for inclusion in the hearing record. We've also
17 been joined by Council Member David Carr. I now will
18 open the public hearing on LU 188 relating to the La
19 Catrina sidewalk café application in Council Member
20 Holden's district. This application seeks to operate
21 a sidewalk café with approximately six tables and 12
22 seats at an existing establishment in Maspeth,
23 Queens. Council Member Holden has confirmed that he
24 is in support of this application, and I have a
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1 statement here from the Council Member which I've
2 been asked to read into the record. "Good morning,
3 Chair Riley and members of the Subcommittee on Zoning
4 and Franchises. I submit this statement regarding
5 the Land Use call-up application for La Catrina, LU
6 188, located within my district at 52-75 65th Place
7 in Maspeth, Queens. This establishment has
8 previously been the source of quality of life issues
9 for nearby residents, particularly due to loud music
10 often playing as late as 2:00 a.m. which has
11 disrupted the peace and caused considerable
12 frustration in the community. However, I have spoken
13 with the new owners who have committed to several
14 measure to reduce these disturbances. Their
15 proactive approach and willingness to work with the
16 community signals a positive step forward in
17 addressing these concerns. Given these productive
18 discussions and the new ownership commitment to
19 improve neighborhood relations, I am prepared to
20 support the application for a sidewalk café, provided
21 they continue to uphold these commitments. Thank
22 you, Chair Riley and the excellent staff of the
23 Subcommittee for your assistance on this matter.
24 Sincerely, Robert F. Holden, Council Member from
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1 District 30.” For anyone wishing to testify on this
2 item remotely, if you have not already done so, you
3 must register online. You may do that now by
4 visiting the Council’s website at
5 council.nyc.gov/landuse. And once again, for anyone
6 with us in-person, please see one of the Sergeants to
7 prepare and submit a speaker’s card. If you would
8 prefer to submit written testimony, you can always do
9 so by emailing it to
10 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Counsel, are there
11 any members of the public who wish to testify
12 regarding this sidewalk café application remotely or
13 in-person?

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, it appears no
16 one is here to testify in-person, and we also do not
17 have anyone signed up online to testify.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: There being no
19 members of the public who wish to testify on LU 188
20 regarding the La Catrina’s application for a sidewalk
21 café, the public hearing is now closed and the item
22 is laid over. Before we go to our next public
23 hearing today, we will vote on items that have been a
24 lid over. We will vote to approve the modification
25 of LUs 164 through 172 for the Brooklyn Yards

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2 proposal which is located in Brooklyn's district of
3 Council Member Zhuang and Council Member Yeger. The
4 proposal includes a zoning map amendment, zoning text
5 amendment, and seven special permits to facilitate
6 the development of 14 buildings within the existing
7 railroad right-of-way and including approximately 270
8 dwelling units, up to 81 of which would be
9 permanently affordable. Our modification will be to
10 reduce the proposed height of the proposed commercial
11 because along New Utrecht Avenue from 10 stories to
12 nine stories to be more in keeping with the built
13 character of the surrounding area. Council Member
14 Zhuang and Yeger are in support of this proposal as
15 modified, and I would now like to give the floor to
16 Council Member Zhuang to give her remarks.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Thank you, Chair
18 Riley, for giving me the opportunity to speak about
19 the Brooklyn Yard project. This project which will
20 have a significant impact on my constituent as with
21 the large-scale development project. The City must
22 balance the desires of the developer with the needs
23 of the community. There's no denying that the City
24 needs more affordable housing. My district also no
25 different. Ever since I have been elected I always

1 speak about get more affordable housing, especially
2 for senior housing. While there's a significant
3 demand for more housing in my district, there's also
4 a demand for developers to work with the community in
5 order to bring about the best possible project for
6 all sides. After speaking with the developer and
7 also representatives from the community, I'm pleased
8 that the developer has sufficiently taken into
9 account the need of the community, and therefore, I
10 fully support the Brooklyn Yard project. Also, the
11 developer made certain commitment that will also
12 direct a benefit to the community such as provide
13 2,000 square feet of the space that it will dedicate
14 solely for community needs, and also the developer
15 also commit to support several community-based
16 organizations through my district. I would like to
17 thank Brooklyn Yard Development for making this
18 commitment and assure that the whole community can
19 benefit from this proposed project as the city tried
20 to navigate this affordable housing crisis. I hope
21 this project can set an example to other proposed
22 developments in my district and throughout the City.
23 The City and the developers need to continue working
24 together to come up with new and creative way to
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2 utilize the existing space. For example, we can
3 utilize the active railroad which is not new. This
4 project where there's a community benefit is a win
5 for all parties, and also our community boards are
6 fully supportive of this project. This is why I
7 fully support this project and urge my colleagues on
8 this committee to vote in favor of Brooklyn Yards.
9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
11 Member Zhuang, for your leadership on this proposal.
12 We will also vote to approve with modifications LUs
13 161, 162 and 163 relating to the Franklin Avenue
14 proposal also in Brooklyn in Council Member Hudson's
15 district. The proposal includes a zoning map
16 amendment, zoning text amendment, and zoning special
17 permit to facilitate the development of a 355
18 dwelling unit of which approximately 105 apartments
19 are anticipated to be permanently affordable. This
20 application has gone through multiple iterations and
21 I am pleased to say that the rezoning we are
22 approving today will achieve the community's two key
23 objectives to create affordable housing while
24 minimizing the shadows of the nearby Brooklyn
25 Botanical Gardens. To achieve this balance, we are

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2 modifying the proposal in two ways. First, we are
3 decreasing the slope of the limited plane [sic] from
4 15 to 10 degrees while adjusting the starting height
5 of the plane from 85 to 90 feet. Decreasing this
6 slope was an important aim for the Botanical Gardens,
7 and we have found a way to achieve it. Second, we
8 are including the workforce option as part of the
9 required affordable housing for this project.

10 Including the workforce option would make the project
11 financially feasible given how much the project size
12 was reduced from the applicant's proposal to address
13 the community and Garden's concerns. It will also
14 provide the increased mix of affordable units
15 accessible to teachers, nurses, firemen, and
16 etcetera, the people and families who keep this city
17 going. Council Member Hudson is in support of this
18 proposal as modified. And we will also vote to
19 approve LUs 188 relating the sidewalk café
20 application by La Catrina in Council Member Holden's
21 district in Queens which was the subject of a hearing
22 held earlier just today. La Catrina seeks to
23 continue operating outside seating, and as we heard
24 in the statement, Council Member Holden supports this
25

2 proposal. Counsel, are there any Council Members
3 with questions or remarks at this time?

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, Chair.

5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. I will now
6 call for a vote to approve with modifications LUs
7 161, 162 and 163 relating to the 962-972 Franklin
8 Avenue proposal, to approve with modifications LUs
9 164 through 172 relating to the Brooklyn Yards
10 proposal, and to approve LUs 188 relating to the La
11 Catrina application for sidewalk café. Counsel, can
12 you please call the roll?

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair Riley?

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Aye on all.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Moya?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: I vote aye.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Abreu?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Hanks?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Aye.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member

22 Schulman?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Aye on all.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Carr?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Aye on all.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, the vote--
3 sorry. The items are adopted by a vote of six in the
4 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions and
5 will be referred to the full Land Use Committee.

6 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Counsel.
7 I will now open the public hearing on LUs 185, 186
8 and 187 relating to the Port Authority application
9 for a zoning text amendment, a special permit and a
10 de-mapping action regarding its bus terminal
11 replacement project in Manhattan located in Council
12 Member Bottcher's district. The Port Authority's
13 existing bus terminal built in 1950 is outdated and
14 increasingly ill-equipped to provide the services
15 that visitor, commuters and New Yorkers deserve. I
16 look forward to hearing how the Port Authority plans
17 on redesigning the bus station. For anyone wishing
18 to testify on these items remotely, if you have not
19 already done so, you must register online and you may
20 do that now by visiting the Council's website at
21 council.nyc.gov/landuse. And once again, for anyone
22 with us in-person, please see one of the Sergeants to
23 prepare and submit a speaker's card. If you prepare
24 to submit written testimony, you can always do so by
25 emailing to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov.

1 Council Member Bottcher, do you have any remarks for
2 this project?

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4 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHER: Yes. Spread
5 the good news. We are replacing the Port Authority
6 bus terminal. If the happiest place on earth is
7 Disneyland, arguably one of the least happiest places
8 has got to be the Port Authority bus terminal. It's
9 one of the busiest bus terminals in the world serving
10 more than 7,200 buses and about 200,000 people each
11 day. It's an incredible feat that is pulled off by
12 thousands of hard-working workers of the Port
13 Authority of New York and New Jersey, but let's face
14 it, every New Yorker knows that the current bus
15 terminal is gritty, dingy, maze-like, far from what
16 we deserve in a portal, a gateway to the greatest
17 city in the world. Today, we stand on the brink of a
18 historic transformation. The new bus terminal
19 represents not just an upgrade in infrastructure, but
20 a bold vision to turn a longstanding urban blight
21 into a shining example of modern design and
22 functionality. New Yorkers are going to get a
23 terminal that is bright, clean, modern, a place with
24 soaring ceilings that inspire rather than confine.
25 The new design will also enhance the traveler

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2 experience, but it'll also include vibrant dining and
3 retail options. This new facility will help improve
4 the quality of life for the neighborhoods for Hell's
5 Kitchen and the Garment District, bringing new
6 greenspace, trees and street-level retail. It'll
7 create jobs and boost local small businesses. This
8 project is a culmination of years of hard work and
9 planning and I want to thank the team at the Port
10 Authority of New York and New Jersey for your work on
11 this. I also want to thank you for collaborating
12 closely with the community. When this process got
13 underway several years ago there was a strong
14 possibility that eminent domain would be used to
15 gobble up parts of Hell's Kitchen, and under the
16 leadership of our Congressman Jerry Nadler and my
17 colleagues and the Community Board and hundreds of
18 other community members, we were able to avoid that
19 entirely. The Port Authority has met with Community
20 Board Four dozens and dozens of times to collaborate
21 on every aspect of this terminal right down to the
22 design, to the program mix to the massing and other
23 details, but there are still some points on which we
24 need to reach agreement such as the need to provide
25 for affordable housing on Port Authority-owned

2 property and a solid plan to mitigate the effects of
3 this construction on the surrounded community. I'm
4 looking forward to discussions with the Port
5 Authority over the next couple weeks regarding these
6 issues. I want to thank all my colleagues in
7 government, Congressman Jerry Nadler, State Senator
8 Brad Hoylman-Sigal, Assembly Member Tony Simone,
9 Borough President Mark Levine, everyone at Community
10 Board Four. Let us embrace this opportunity to
11 create a terminal that reflects the vibrancy and the
12 greatness of New York City. Together, we can turn
13 this dream into a reality and make the new Port
14 Authority bus terminal a true landmark of modern
15 infrastructure.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you Council
17 Member Bottcher. I will now call the applicant panel
18 for this proposal which consists of Glenn Guzi, Adam
19 Taubman, Hersh Parekh, and Kirsten Jones. Excuse me
20 if I mispronounced your name. Counsel, can you
21 please administer the affirmation please?

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Panelists, would you
23 please raise your right hands, raise your right hands
24 and state your names for the record-- state your name
25 and answer the following the question. Do you swear

2 or affirm that the testimony you're about to give
3 will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but
4 the truth and that you will answer all Council Member
5 questions truthfully?

6 GLENN GUZI: Glenn Guzi, yes.

7 ADAM TAUBAM: Adam Taubam, yes.

8 HERSH PAREKH: Hersh Parekh, yes.

9 KIRSTEN JONES: Kirsten Jones, yes.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. For the
12 viewing public, if you need accessible version of
13 this presentation, please send an email request to
14 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. And now the
15 applicant team may begin. I'll just ask the
16 applicants to please restate your name and your
17 organization for the record before you begin. And
18 also, can you please just move the mic up to your
19 mouth when you're speaking as well. Thank you. You
20 may begin.

21 HERSH PAREKH: Good morning. Thank you,
22 Chair Riley. Thank you, Council Member Bottcher and
23 to the members of the committee, and of course to the
24 committee staff who have been tremendous partners to
25 work with on this process. My name Hersh Parekh.

2 I'm with the Port Authority of New York and New
3 Jersey, and we're here to present to you about our
4 bus terminal replacement project and the associated
5 ULURP for that project. We'll begin the presentation
6 with just a short summary of our requested land use
7 actions in the ULURP, and then we'll jump into the
8 actual details of the project. So with that, I'll
9 turn it over to my colleagues Adam.

10 ADAM TAUBAM: Thank you, Adam Taubam at
11 Kramer Levin. We're land use counsel to the Port
12 Authority. Next slide, please. I'll be discussing
13 the requested land use actions before moving on to
14 the rest of the presentation. Next, please. So, as
15 Hersh and Council Member Botcher noted, the project
16 that we're presenting today is the result of many
17 year of the site development and feedback from
18 community members and elected officials, and this is
19 a collaborative process that we expect will continue
20 through the final design and construction of the
21 project. But to set the table for today's hearing,
22 we are here today to request the Council's approval
23 of three land use actions for the bus terminal.
24 Those actions are a zoning text amendment to Section
25 74145 of the zoning resolution which already allows

2 bus stations by special permit but on terms that are
3 outdated with respect to planning considerations.
4 Second, is a special permit pursuant to Section 74145
5 to allow the proposed bus station use and to grant
6 other zoning approvals that are needed for the
7 project? And third is a change in the city map to
8 de-map various volumes of city streets that will
9 contain critical elements of the bus terminal. We
10 have time set aside at the end of the presentation to
11 describe these actions in greater detail, but first
12 Herhsh will tell you a bit more about the project
13 itself.

14 HERSH PAREKH: Great. Thank you, Adam.
15 Next slide, please. So, we'll begin with just a
16 description of the current condition of the bus
17 terminal. Chair Riley and Council Member Bottcher
18 already alluded to these. We'll go to the next
19 slide, but you can see that it is not the most
20 welcoming environment. The terminal functions in the
21 best way it can, accommodating the hundreds of
22 thousands of commuters that utilize it every day, but
23 we know we can do better. We know New York deserves
24 better, commuters deserves better and the community
25 deserves better. You can go to the next slide,

1 please. So, in terms of what exists today, you have
2 the existing bus terminal which is highlighted in
3 yellow, and you have the existing ramp structure
4 highlighted in red. The way the system currently
5 operates is approximately 850 buses per hour which is
6 actually currently about 600 buses per hour in the
7 post-COVID environment. They come in the morning.
8 They drop off customers, and then they come back in
9 the afternoon and they pick up commuters to head home
10 for the day. The ramps are relatively short.
11 They're single lane that don't allow bypass
12 capabilities. So, if there is breakdown or other
13 issue, it creates-- it causes havoc across the
14 system. If an unauthorized vehicles enters the ramp
15 network, it's not simple to get it out of the ramp
16 network. And I'll also just highlight, in blue
17 you'll see a number of surface-level parking lots
18 across the community that accommodate bus operations.
19 The current terminal simply cannot accommodate the
20 number of operations that are necessary for the
21 system to work and to get commuters and other folks
22 into and out of the city. So it creates an
23 environment where you have not only just a very
24 heavily utilized bus terminal, but surface-level lots
25

1 that create congestion in the community, have buses
2 idling in the community. It's really not a great
3 environment, and we're looking to fix that. Next
4 slide, please. So we jumped into our project
5 objectives. Next slide. And as Adam noted, there
6 were a number of objectives that we had for this
7 project, improving the trans-Hudson bus operations,
8 improving the passenger experience, really making
9 sure that we reduce the impact of the terminal on the
10 surrounding community, but all of that really boils
11 down to two key points. We needed to make sure that
12 this project met the needs of the commuters who
13 utilize the bus terminal and the community that lives
14 and works and surrounds the bus terminal. And so if
15 you go to the next slide, we can jump to what our
16 original project was. It was a build-in-place
17 proposal to really demolish the existing terminal and
18 ramp network and replace it in-kind at a cost of
19 about \$5.5 billion. We then jumped into a series of
20 community engagement, and that goes to the next
21 slide. And as the Council Member noted, there has
22 been years and years of extensive community
23 engagement. We have received significant feedback
24 about how this project can be made better. If you go
25

1 to the next slide, you can see all of the various
2 stakeholders that we have engaged with in both New
3 York and in New Jersey. This is just a selected
4 list. The list actually goes for much longer. And
5 so based on this years and years of feedback, we
6 landed on the project that we have in front of us
7 today, which is on the next slide. So this is a much
8 larger project. It is what we call the enhanced
9 build-in-place project. It is a \$10 billion project,
10 and it does meet the needs of the community. It
11 meets the needs of the commuters, and we are proud of
12 that and we are proud to have achieved that vision in
13 partnership and collaboration with the community.
14 Also, critically important as Council Member Bottcher
15 noted, there will be no eminent domain. Every piece
16 of this project will be built on Port Authority
17 property, no taking of private land. This project is
18 made with a number of different components. You
19 start with the yellow building on the far east side.
20 That's going to be the new main bus terminal. It
21 will include not just space for commuter buses, but
22 also significantly important for the community, space
23 for inter-city buses. These are your Megs and your
24 Bolts that currently operate on curbside locations.
25

1 We will be able to move many of them into the new bus
2 terminal which was a critical ask from the community.
3 West of that you see the staging and storage facility
4 in the purple blue color. That facility is important
5 because it will allow for those buses that currently
6 idle and park on local streets to be moved into this
7 terminal. It will make sure that buses are no longer
8 creating congestion, causing pollution. Instead they
9 will be able to stage in this facility while they are
10 waiting to get to their gate. They'll be able to
11 store in this facility during the mid-day hours
12 between the two rush hours. Also important is that
13 this facility will serve as a temporary terminal so
14 that when we demolish the existing bus terminal, this
15 facility will be able to maintain operations for
16 buses. To the west of that, you see the brand new
17 ramp structure which is important because it connects
18 directly into the Lincoln Tunnel, reduces the number
19 of buses that need to circulate on city streets, and
20 is a much more efficient operation. And then just
21 below the bus terminals you see what's called the
22 deck-overs and the new open space. These are--
23 initially will be constructed as decks over the Dire
24 Avenue roadway. There will be bus operations there
25

1 during the construction program, but upon the
2 conclusion of the program, the deck-overs will be
3 converted to nearly three and a half acres of much-
4 needed open space that this community does not
5 currently have. Also, an important ask from the
6 community that we are happy to be able to deliver on.
7 So again, key points here: no taking of private
8 property; all Port Authority property responsive to
9 many of the needs and requests and feedback that we
10 received from the community and the City; and a much
11 larger \$10 billion project. Go to the next slide and
12 just flip through a series of project views that show
13 the conditions today and what we anticipate will be a
14 brand new terminal, as Council Member Bottcher noted.
15 So this is Eight Avenue and 40th Street, a much
16 brighter, spacious, nicer experience, and always
17 passable. The next slide goes to the subway entrance
18 that currently exists-- low ceilings, dark, not very
19 easy to navigate. We want to make sure that even if
20 you're not taking a bus into the bus terminal that
21 your ability to access the subway system through this
22 facility is improved in a tremendous way, and that's
23 here on the next slide. It shows you what the
24 spacious, light-filled facility will look like with
25

1 the access to the subway level. The next slide shows
2 the 40th Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenue.
3 Right now, not very activated. Very unwelcoming to
4 the community. Not what we want to see in this part
5 of the city or anywhere in the city for that matter.
6 We want to make sure that we are creating an
7 atmosphere that is welcoming for the community, that
8 is safe for the community, and that goes to the next
9 slide which shows you a transformed experience with
10 significant amounts of street-level retail that will
11 have, as the Council Member noted, retail shops,
12 cafes, and other programming that will serve to
13 benefit not just the users of the terminal, but the
14 community around the terminal. The next slide shows
15 you the Dire Plaza as it currently exists. I
16 mentioned this is the connection to the Lincoln
17 Tunnel. It currently separates the community. It is
18 something that split the community apart, and through
19 this project we're hoping to reknit the community
20 back together. and the next slide shows the end
21 state of the project which is after the deck-overs
22 have been converted into the open space, they will be
23 this open greenspace for the community to enjoy, and
24 in the backgrounds you see the new staging and
25

1 storage facility which as I mentioned is critical for
2 the operation of the new bus terminal. The next
3 slide goes to 39th Street which again is just walls.
4 We've tried to liven them up with some artwork that
5 we've been in partnership with the local community
6 and the Hudson Yard's Hell's Kitchen BID. We know it
7 could be better. And so once again, we look at the
8 next slide that show you a more zoomed in visual of
9 that on-street retail, really ensuring that it is--
10 it meets the urban design controls that the City
11 Planning Commission is interested in. It meets the
12 needs of the community with this activated retail in
13 a more welcoming environment with trees and other
14 sort of amenities. Just a more welcoming experience.
15 And finally, our last view of the morning is 39th
16 Street and 10th Avenue. This is looking north today.
17 You currently see just a single ramp that is
18 connecting to our facility. On the next page you'll
19 see the brand new facility which is the ramp
20 structure that connects the ramps and the storage and
21 staging facility to make sure the operation is as
22 efficient as it can be. But we'll also make sure
23 that below these ramps and bridging structures that
24 there is appropriate lighting and other tools to make
25

1 sure that the environment is bright and welcoming.

2 So this is just a quick run-through of what we expect
3 the bus terminal will look like. I'll turn it back
4 over to Adam to speak about the ULURP actions in more
5 specific detail.
6

7 ADAM TAUBAM: Thank you, Hersh. Next
8 slide, please. Next slide. So, as I said earlier,
9 there are three land use actions for which we're
10 seeking approval, and those are zoning text
11 amendments, a special permit and a change in the city
12 map, and I'll be taking you through those in-turn.
13 Next slide, please. So section 74-145 of the zoning
14 resolution today allows bus stations by special
15 permit, but it hasn't been amended in any substantive
16 way since the zoning resolution was adopted in 1961.
17 So the Port Authority is proposing a text amendment
18 to that provision to create a new special permit that
19 is available within the site's geographic area and
20 that authorizes the types of zoning approvals that
21 are needed for a project as complex as this one.
22 That zoning text amendment would also establish new
23 findings that reflect the city's planning goals for a
24 modern bus terminal with an emphasis not just on bus
25 circulation and vehicular traffic, but also on

1 pedestrian circulation, the public realm and quality
2 of design. The proposed special permit pursuant to
3 that amended section would then do three things.
4 First, it would approve the bus station use shown
5 here in a gray color. Second, it would approve the
6 construction of the bus station within the air spaces
7 that are proposed to be de-mapped under the second
8 mapping action. This image shows in a aqua color the
9 air spaces that will contain the facility's most
10 critical bridging elements. And third, the special
11 permit would approve zoning modifications to
12 facilitate the development of the over-build towers
13 shown here in a very faint pink color, including a
14 transfer of floor area within the bus station zoning
15 lot. The over build towers are a critical funding
16 source for the project as first pointed out a few
17 moments ago, and the massing shown here in any
18 application are not actual tower designs, but rather
19 maximum building envelopes that would govern the
20 future design and construction of the towers. Next
21 slide. Proposed mapping action would allow for the
22 de-mapping and conveyance to the Port Authority of
23 various street volumes that are needed for the
24 project. Those street volumes generally fall into
25

1 three categories. First is an at-grade portion of
2 West 41st Street that extends west from Eighth
3 Avenue. Shown here is a green volume poking out of
4 the building's frontage on Eighth Avenue. This
5 volume is situated between, above, and below-grade
6 portions of the street that were de-mapped in the
7 1970s to accommodate the pedestrian connections
8 between the existing bus terminal's north and south
9 wings. The proposed de-mapping would fill the donut
10 hole created by those priority mappings, allowing the
11 bus terminal to be built with a unified entrance and
12 central atrium on Eighth Avenue. This is the only
13 area that the Port Authority is proposing to de-map
14 that accommodates vehicular traffic today. The second
15 category are three over-street volumes which I
16 pointed out a moment ago, spanning Ninth Avenue, West
17 40th Street, and 10th Avenue shown here again in that
18 light aqua color. These over-street volumes will
19 accommodate the proposed bus level connections
20 between the main terminal, the storage and staging
21 facility and the ramp structure. These connections
22 are critical because they'll allow bus loading and
23 circulation activities to be accommodated entirely
24 within the facility keeping buses off neighboring
25

1 city streets. The third category are various at-
2 grade, above grade and below grade volumes
3 immediately adjacent to the Port Authority's property
4 which will accommodate needed building overhangs,
5 façade extends and foundation elements. With that,
6 I'll turn it back to Hersh.
7

8 HERSH PAREKH: So, to close out our
9 presentation this morning-- go to the next slide,
10 please. The next slide, please. So this is our
11 project timeline and our phasing plan. We are at the
12 end of 2024 now. We are closing out on the federal
13 environmental review process with the final EIS
14 received on October 4th, and we are anticipating the
15 record of decision that will complete the EIS NIPA
16 [sic] process in the next very short period of time.
17 We are also in the, as you know, the end of the ULURP
18 process, and with that we expect to be able to
19 commence construction on this project at the very
20 early part of 2025. The first phase of the project
21 will involve a temporary terminal and the ramps and
22 the deck overs. We've already begun preliminary
23 procurement activity for the phase one of the
24 project. That will be approximately a four-year
25 scheduled. We will then convert or use the storage

2 and staging facility as a temporary terminal while we
3 demolish the existing bus terminal during phase two,
4 and that phase two will also be approximately a four-
5 year project which will get us to the end of 2032.
6 And upon the conclusion of the phase two, when the
7 temporary terminal is converted back to the staging
8 and storage facility, it will then convert the deck-
9 overs into the greenspace and the new terminal will
10 become active as well. What's important to note here
11 is this timeline and the criticality of it. Part of
12 this project funding for phase one is a federal TIFIA
13 [sic] loan and we want to ensure that we can close on
14 that loan before the end of the year so that there
15 are no additional delays caused by the change-over in
16 Administration in Washington which typically happens
17 regardless of any transitional period. So, it is
18 our goal to close out that loan application in the
19 next very short period of time, and with that loan in
20 hand we'll be able to proceed with the phase one of
21 this project. And our final slide is just a summary
22 of this entire program. We view this project as a
23 win for the City of New York, a win for the community
24 that surrounds this bus terminal and a win for the
25 commuters who use this bus terminal. It'll be a

1 modern 21st century facility, a gateway to New York
2 that this city and this region deserves. It will
3 address and mitigate many of the challenges that the
4 existing bus terminal has created for the community
5 with the addition of the open greenspace, with the
6 removal of the buses that idle on local city streets,
7 reducing congestion, moving the inter-city buses into
8 the bus terminal, enhancing the streetscape, adding
9 retail, making it a more welcoming and friendly
10 environment for the community. So with that, Council
11 Members and Chair Riley, we appreciate the time and
12 happy to answer your questions.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much for
15 your presentation, and it's really great to hear that
16 the Port Authority will be investing in bus
17 infrastructure. A redesign of the Port Authority
18 terminal is well over-due, and we need a similar
19 focused investment on the buses in the Bronx. So I'm
20 really happy to hear about this as well. You touched
21 on most of the questions that I was going to ask, but
22 I'm just going to ask them for the record. I would
23 like to know more about how the redesign came about.
24 We had a lot of stakeholders that you put up on that
25 screen, from the Community Board all the way down to

2 MTA. Who were the key stakeholders that helped shape
3 this project and how was this proposal reflective on
4 their input?

5 ADAM TAUBAM: Sure. I'm going to ask
6 Glenn Guzi who's been on this project probably since
7 the beginning to speak to that question.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

9 GLENN GUZI: Good morning, Chairman.

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Good morning.

11 GLENN GUZI: So, to respond to your
12 question, as you've heard, this project has been
13 thought about for several years, many years. There
14 was several processes that predated our current
15 process, and through those processes we received a
16 lot of public feedback, community feedback which
17 actually prompted us to pause our thinking and
18 reformat how we're going to approach. The reformat
19 included re-engagement of the community, whether it
20 was elected officials or Community Boards Four and
21 Five at the time to stop for a moment and say okay,
22 tell us know what it is that's important to you
23 versus us telling the community what we thought they
24 needed. So, that was a critical movement in how
25 we're approaching the development of the project. We

1 had no concepts at that point in time, because it was
2 more important for us to understand what the
3 community needed out of the project. Following that,
4 we continued working with the bus carriers, New
5 Jersey transit, for instance, as the largest carrier
6 in the facility, to understand what was going to be
7 important for the carriers to have in a facility that
8 would enable the facility to stand the test of time.
9 So once it opened, it wasn't automatically obsolete
10 to understand how we're going to get 50+ years out of
11 a facility for an efficient movement of buses. Once
12 we really spent approximately two years listening, we
13 brought in our designers and our architects to start
14 creating massings of the program to be able to take
15 back to the community, the Community Boards and the
16 local elected officials to say okay, this is what
17 we've heard, this is what we understand your needs to
18 be, this is how we're going to approach massing the
19 project keeping in mind that we will be taking no
20 private property. So, from that point it became a
21 very deep discussion with all of the members of the
22 Community Boards Four and Five, prominently four, to
23 evolve the design to meet their specific needs while
24

2 also maintaining the needs of the operators and the
3 commuters, and it continues.

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. You spoke
5 about the timeline in the construction phase. Thank
6 you. It was very detailed. How is that going to be
7 communicated throughout the community with the
8 different phases? I know you said phase one is like
9 four years. Phase two will be another four years.
10 How is this going to be communicated with the
11 community?

12 HERSH PAREKH: sure. So, I think two
13 points here. One is we have been very proud of our
14 work with the community, as Glenn noted, that as has
15 led us to this project design, and the commitment
16 that we've made is even after we are passed these
17 regulatory processes, that our engagement with the
18 community will continue, that robust dialogue that we
19 have had with them will continue, and quite frankly
20 speaking, you know, the construction period is when
21 they will feel the most impact, and we recognize
22 that, and we have made--

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] That
24 goes into my next question.

2 HERSH PAREKH: I'm just reading your mind
3 here.

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: So how would the bus
5 services be impacted during construction, and will
6 there be a reduction in services?

7 HERSH PAREKH: So, I'm going to Kirsten
8 who actually is part of the operation of the bus
9 terminal to speak to that question, but just one
10 point I'll make is we recognize that this will be
11 complicated project that will create significant
12 impacts during the construction period. It is our
13 commitment to do what we can to minimize those
14 impacts, but also be overly communicative about
15 what's coming so that the community and the people
16 who live and work here are able to plan ahead and
17 know what's coming. Let me ask Kirsten to speak
18 about the impact on bus operations during the
19 project.

20 KIRSTEN JONES: Hello. So, we have
21 already begun working with all the carriers. We meet
22 with New York State [sic] Transit regularly which is
23 our largest carrier. Right now, they're about 80
24 percent of our operation in the bus terminal. During
25 construction we're working very closely with the

1 construction phasing team to make sure that bus
2 operations will continue throughout the entirety of
3 construction without interruption of service. There
4 may be points at which the travel time is longer, in
5 which case we would communicate that with the
6 carriers and with customers directly. During the
7 phase one construction when the temporary terminal is
8 being constructed, passenger experience will remain
9 similar to today because they will still be leaving
10 the bus terminal from their existing gate. They will
11 be driving through construction once they leave the
12 terminal, but the access to the Lincoln Tunnel will
13 remain the same. Then, while we're in phase two of
14 construction, when the existing terminal is
15 demolished and we're operating out of the temporary
16 terminal, bus passengers will be moved. So they will
17 have to go to a new location, the temporary terminal.
18 That terminal will house the vast majority of our
19 departures and arrivals for the 260,000 people who
20 use the terminal. However, there will be operations
21 on the deck-overs and some other remote locations in
22 the vicinity. All of those locations will be
23 coordinated with the carriers and with customers. So
24 we'll be able to communicate those changes well in
25

2 advance and make as least disruptive as possible to
3 the commuter and to the carrier. And then at the end
4 of the construction of the main terminal, there will
5 be one final move back for all the passengers and
6 then they will be able to experience kind of the
7 culmination of all of the work.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. Has the
9 financing for this project been secured?

10 HERSH PAREKH: I'm sorry, repeat the
11 question, please.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Has the financing for
13 this project been secured?

14 HERSH PAREKH: Oh, sure. So, if we can
15 flip to-- we have an appendix slide on that, slide
16 72.

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Are we--

18 HERSH PAREKH: [interposing] Oh, I was
19 going to say do we want to put the slide 72 on the--

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] 72?

21 HERSH PAREKH: Yes. Oh, there it is.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay, there you go.

23 HERSH PAREKH: Perfect. So, as I noted,
24 it's a \$10 billion construction cost for the full
25 program, both phases combined. The phase one, as I

1 mentioned, which is the building of the temporary
2 terminal, the ramps, and the deck-overs, in our
3 current Port Authority capital plan we have \$3
4 billion allocated towards this project. I also
5 mention the \$1 billion in the federal TIFIA [sic]
6 loan that we are seeking from the USDOT, and I noted,
7 you know, the time sensitivity of that and trying to
8 lock that down before the end of the year to avoid
9 any further delays due to a transition in
10 administration. So, that's phase one. Phase two of
11 the project is approximately a \$6 billion cost, and
12 that will be demolishing the existing terminal and
13 rebuilding the new terminal on this same footprint.
14 For that we expect to allocate another approximately
15 \$3 billion from our next Port Authority capital plan,
16 and combined this will represent the largest
17 commitment of Port Authority capital dollars on a
18 single project between the two phases. In addition
19 to that, we reached an agreement with the City of New
20 York earlier this year whereby the pilot payments
21 from the two commercial towers that would be built
22 atop the new main terminal, we would receive those
23 payments from the-- in order to help finance this
24 project, and we also anticipate some revenue to come
25

2 from the sale of those development rights. So the
3 Port Authority itself will not be building the
4 towers. We will seek private developers to come and
5 build and operate those towers, and so that also
6 creates additional sources of funding. And then
7 finally, we will be looking for additional grants or
8 loans from the federal government for the phase two.
9 So we are working towards completing the funding
10 plan. The federal loan is critical for the phase one
11 of this project.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. Hypothetically
13 speaking, if that doesn't take place by the end of
14 this year, what happens?

15 HERSH PAREKH: I think we like to be
16 optimistic and expect that we've had very good
17 discussion with the Department of Transportation and
18 the Build America Bureau. As I noted, we are
19 anticipating the record of decision for the
20 environmental review process in the very next-- very
21 short period of time.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay.

23 HERSH PAREKH: And if all of these dates
24 close, including the conclusion of this ULURP
25 process, we are optimistic that we should be able to

2 close on the loan, you know, in a timely manner. You
3 know, if the loan does not pan out in the way that is
4 needed for this project, we will have to,
5 accessibility take a look at the funding plan, take a
6 look at the project and likely make some very hard
7 decisions about it.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. And you spoke
9 about the towers, and you came to the decision with
10 the City already. Just two more questions and then
11 I'm going to pass over Council Member Bottcher. How
12 will the bus terminal function differently with the
13 introduction of a new terminal? Aside from increased
14 capacity, how will operations improve?

15 HERSH PAREKH: So, I'm going to ask
16 Kirsten to also jump in here. But a couple of key
17 points that I'll mention. One is sustainability.
18 The new bus terminal will be equipped with electric
19 charging infrastructure so that as buses transition
20 to electric buses, they'll be able to charge in that
21 storage and staging facility while they're holding
22 over. We do anticipate that New Jersey Transit which
23 is the largest carrier that uses the bus terminal
24 will be transitioning their buses pursuant to a New
25 Jersey state law that passed very recently, and we

2 expect other bus carriers will likely follow suit as
3 well, because that is sort of something that is
4 critical in this day and age. And it will also be a
5 much more efficient operation in many ways. And we
6 can probably-- if we can flip to slide 12, I'll ask
7 Kirsten to sort of speak to some of those benefits in
8 more detail.

9 KIRSTEN JONES: Sure, so I'll start
10 talking through the buses and then I'll switch to
11 community and passengers. So, for buses themselves,
12 the development of the new ramping system will be a
13 huge improvement over today. So, our existing ramp
14 system is generally single lane. so if there's an
15 incident on the ramp, in order to get an emergency
16 response vehicle in there, we have to clear out all
17 of the vehicles behind it, or we have to stop traffic
18 going the other way to send in a contraflow response.
19 In the future ramping system we will have bypass
20 capability and so we will be able to not only get
21 buses around an incident if needed, we will also be
22 able to get an emergency response vehicles to that
23 scene, a tow truck or maintenance equipment to that
24 disabled bus, for example, to keep things moving.
25 The benefit of that is that because the ramps are so

1 connected to the Lincoln Tunnel, by keeping the ramps
2 moving, we can keep the Lincoln Tunnel moving so the
3 traffic does not stop for other vehicles trying to
4 come into the city or vehicles trying to leave the
5 city. So you're reducing the gridlock and the idling
6 vehicles that would otherwise be experienced. The
7 other benefit of the ramping system is that because
8 it directly connects to the staging storage facility,
9 we will have an ability to queue buses in a way that
10 we currently do not have. So our ramps today, while
11 they look very daunting and large when you're
12 standing in the area, they don't allow for that many
13 buses to actually queue. We can que about 25 buses,
14 but 25 buses in a bus terminal that serves 800 buses
15 an hour is not very money. And so, this larger
16 ramping system will allow buses to que both on the
17 ramping system and in the staging and storage
18 facility if there is an incident on the Lincoln
19 Tunnel or on the surrounding street grid so that
20 buses do not have to backup into the city street.
21 The benefit to the community obviously would be the
22 improvement in the traffic flow in the area. We will
23 also be eliminating bus entrances and exits that
24 currently exist in the main terminal on the street
25

1 level. So those exits and entrances will be going
2 away so buses will no longer need to drive on 40th
3 Street or Ninth Avenue at all, and we will be able to
4 make improvements to the pedestrian experience in
5 that area, widening sidewalks and creating a more
6 hospitable environment. For the bus passengers, the
7 building itself would become much intuitive. We will
8 have way-finding that's a lot clearer. Right now,
9 the building was built and over time kind of
10 Frankensteined [sic] together for lack of a better
11 word, and in doing so, the way-finding is not
12 intuitive. It's not inherently clear where you need
13 to go in order to get into the subway or in order to
14 get to certain gates. And so this design will make
15 it much more user-friendly for passengers for regular
16 commuters and also for people that are visiting the
17 city for the first time. The que space will be much
18 cleaner at the gates. So bus passengers will be able
19 to see their bus at the gate and where their line
20 needs to be. In the existing terminal lines are
21 usually not next to the bus departure gate due to a
22 lack of space. So, passengers will have an overall
23 better experience. There will be more light and more
24

2 air space for people to move around so the terminal
3 itself will function much cleaner.

4 HERSH PAREKH: And Chair Riley, I'll just
5 note, if we can flip to slide 62 briefly. Part of
6 the actions in the ULURP application allow for the
7 full facility to operate as one structure so that the
8 buses can flow easily from the main terminal into the
9 staging and storage facility into the ramp structure
10 all without having to touch city streets, and this
11 sort of diagram gives you a good view of how it will
12 operate as one unified facility, again reducing the
13 congestion and the gridlock and the pollution on
14 local streets.

15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. The last
16 question. You spoke about the buses that will be
17 moved into a new terminal. You could just answer yes
18 or no. Have the other bus companies agreed to this
19 already?

20 HERSH PAREKH: Yeah. So there's been
21 extensive coordination with all the bus carriers and
22 they're aware of the plans that will be in place.

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay, thank you.
24 I'll now turn it over to Council Member Bottcher.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Thank you so
2
3 much. I want to start by talking about construction
4 mitigation. The construction period will obviously
5 have a lot of impact on the surrounding community,
6 and one of the requests of the Community Board and
7 the elected officials is the establishment of a Port
8 Authority bus terminal construction taskforce that
9 can be modeled after the World Trade Center Taskforce
10 with representatives of various city agencies,
11 Community Board Four. Is this something that you'll
12 commit to?

13 GLENN GUZI: Council Member, the quick
14 answer is yes. We certainly, and as you know,
15 learned a lot through our work at rebuilding the
16 World Trade Center which I had been part of since
17 September 11th, 2001. So, we learned a lot of
18 lessons as a agency, what is expedient versus what is
19 right, and we have made a commitment. We are
20 establishing a construction logistics office which
21 will include internal disciplines, whether it's
22 traffic engineering, the contractors, our government
23 affairs folks, and also external relations relative
24 to stakeholder engagement on a regular basis so there
25 are no surprises.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Minimizing the
3 use of night work from midnight to 7:00 a.m., what
4 commitments will you make with respect to that?

5 GLENN GUZI: Oh, I don't know the answer
6 to that question in all honesty. What we are
7 currently doing is in the early stages of
8 procurement. So once we on-board contractors, they
9 will have to supply to us their means and methods.
10 Certainly there will be criteria put upon them,
11 whether that would be say loud and noisy work at
12 night would be prohibited. We would be always
13 looking to minimize any disruptions to the local
14 community, understanding for instance on 40th Street
15 across from the bus terminal there are hotels.
16 They're in the business of selling rooms for sleep,
17 so we'd need to be very cognizant of the type of
18 operation and what location it's taking place to be
19 able to best minimize any of the disruptions. Part
20 of the Construction Logistics Office and working with
21 local stakeholders whether it's the Community Board,
22 elected officials offices, or local businesses is to
23 understand their needs before we engage in work, to
24 be able to come up with a plan that reduces any
25 impacts.

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HERSH PAREKH: I'll just note, Council Member, I think, you know, for a project of this complexity and magnitude, there will need to be some overnight work just to make sure we can stick to a specific schedule, but we do recognize that this work would happen in an area where people live and work and that have other needs as well, and so we'll be very sensitive to that and do what we can as Glenn mentioned to listen to the community and do our best to minimize those impacts, but just suffice to say that, you know, night work would be necessary for a project of this size and magnitude.

COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: What will the Port Authority be doing with respect to public safety and social service plan to manage the project's multiyear duration and the installation of sidewalk sheds and construction fencing to ensure that these enclosures are securely maintained and that all sidewalk sheds are safe, well-lighted, monitored, and used solely for pedestrian passage? And what kind of social services will be provided for any unhoused individuals?

HERSH PAREKH: Yeah, so I think it's important that-- you know, we agree that public

2 safety is of paramount importance. We want to make
3 sure that the users of the bus terminal, the
4 residents that live around the bus terminal, the
5 businesses that operate around the bus terminal are
6 kept safe during the course of this construction
7 program. That is probably if not our number one
8 priority, really one of our top priorities, and we
9 will make sure that our contractors are staffed.
10 Everyone that's working with us on this program keep
11 to that mantra as well to ensure that conditions are
12 kept safe for everyone mentioned. In terms of the
13 social services plan, we currently work with an
14 organization called Urban Pathways that works within
15 our existing bus terminal to provide-- to support
16 those individuals that are unhoused and need to be
17 referred to social services, and we expect that that
18 type of service would continue on Port Authority
19 property during the course of this program to make
20 sure that any unhoused individuals that are part-- on
21 the property that they are referred to the
22 appropriate service providers to get them the help
23 that they need.

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COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHER: Would you commit to inviting Urban Pathways to be part of the construction taskforce?

HERSH PAREKH: Yeah. I mean, I think it's safe to say that all of our bus terminal stakeholders, including Urban Pathways, would be critical in terms of managing the impacts of the bus terminal construction project, and so I would expect that Urban Pathways would be a key component of that, and you know, we will rely on them to help with addressing that need specifically.

COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHER: What provisions are you making for the small businesses on Ninth Avenue to mitigate bus terminal interruption, manage sidewalk and street closures, sidewalk sheds, and loss of visibility due to construction?

HERSH PAREKH: So, as part of this construction program, we do not anticipate the need for any bus terminal to close for construction purposes, and we will work with our contractor to make sure that their plans follow that goal. But in the case that if any business does need to close or they have their, you know, their entrance obstructed due to construction reasons, we will work with that

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business to address that need. But you know, we've also looked at plans to, for example, increase signage so that when a business might be underneath some construction scaffolding or other construction infrastructure, the customers still know that business is still open and operational and that they can still access the business in safe manner. So, we will work with the business community on that. in fact, we've already started working with the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce to go out and do a survey of all the businesses in the vicinity to really understand their needs, what their loading scheduled-- their delivery schedule is like, their hours of operation, and to make sure that they have a point of contact within our organization to address any questions they may have. So that work will continue, but it's already started.

COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: There's a Head

Start program operated by Hudson Guild at Metro Baptist Church at 410 West 40th Street adjacent to the future construction site. Would you commit to providing a temporary relocation for that Head Start program if it is needed?

2 HERSH PAREKH: So, at this time we do not
3 anticipate the need for any relocation of any
4 business or other service or organization that exists
5 within the project area, but what's critical is,
6 again, keeping our ear to the ground and making sure
7 we are hearing from the community, hearing from the
8 students and parents that may participate in that
9 Head Start program, the folks within that church,
10 just keeping a very open line of communication and
11 addressing any issues that come up in a-- in as
12 responsive and timely way as possible.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Thank you for
14 as part of this project decking over roadways and
15 creating new greenspace for the community. Who will
16 pay for the maintenance of this greenspace after it's
17 completed?

18 HERSH PAREKH: So, we are very happy with
19 the current design of this program in terms of
20 providing, you know, three and a half acres of new
21 open greenspace for the community. We think it will
22 help reknit the community, provide a, you know, an
23 open space, a resource and amenity that this
24 community has not had access to for a very long
25 period of time. So we are excited about that aspect

1 of this project. we also expect to engage in a
2 robust engagement plan whereby the community and
3 other stakeholders, we will work with them to design
4 the open spaces and the programing and the other sort
5 of things that will exist within those deck-over open
6 spaces. In terms of the long-term maintenance of
7 these open spaces, we recognize that as an agency we
8 will play a role in supporting that, but we will
9 also-- we also expect to need the support of both the
10 city and the state and potentially private
11 stakeholders to support in the ongoing maintenance of
12 those open spaces, of those greenspaces. Ultimately,
13 we are a transportation agency, and we will do what
14 we can within our constraints to support the
15 maintenance of those open space, and we know that
16 there's interest form local organizations to manage
17 those opens spaces, but I do expect that there will
18 need to be some financial support from other
19 stakeholders to really ensure that they are
20 maintained properly.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: At what point
23 in this process do you envision these questions being
24 answered specifically? The Port Authority is
25 agreeing to make an annual fixed payment, for

2 example, for the maintenance of these. When does it
3 get determined how much that is? Who else is
4 contributing? Is it in the next two weeks? Is it in
5 the next year? Is it when the decking is complete?
6 When do you plan on having those discussion?

7 HERSH PAREKH: I think as we get into the
8 process of the design of these open spaces and we get
9 a clearer picture of what the deck-over open spaces
10 will look like upon the conclusion of the program. I
11 think that's also the appropriate time to start
12 thinking about how to pull together these various
13 sources of funding and other resources to ensure that
14 these spaces are kept in good condition. I don't
15 think it's in anyone's interest, certainly not the
16 Port Authority's interest, not the community's
17 interest, and not other surrounding stakeholders to
18 see these open spaces fall into a state of disrepair.
19 And so we will work together with your office,
20 Council Member, and with other stakeholders to pull
21 that together as we begin thinking about the design
22 of these open spaces. Glenn, is there anything you
23 want to add to that?

24 GLENN GUZI: No-- sorry. Other than
25 that as part of the planning for what the deck-overs,

2 the conversion would look like, it is important of
3 course to take into account who would be the kind of
4 daily operator and what is it that they would advise
5 us in terms of operational, like O&M that would be
6 necessary. So, we certainly-- while, I want to echo
7 what Hersh said, it will be a very collaborative
8 process. It will be important to understand who would
9 be the daily operator so that their input helps guide
10 us, you know, in terms of what the design looks like
11 and what that O&M would be like. So, right now, that
12 is a little early to determine.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHER: Thank you for
14 agreeing to a temporary location-- relocation of
15 Astro's Dog Run during the construction of the
16 terminals. When do you plan on having that location
17 up and running?

18 HERSH PAREKH: Council Member, we'll have
19 to get back to you on that question. We do know it
20 is important for the community and the users of the
21 current dog run, and as you noted, we have identified
22 a location to do a temporary relocation, but we are
23 sort of putting together the plans of that relocation
24 and we'll get back to you on the timing of that.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Your-- you are
3 in discussions with the Community Board and others
4 about additional greenspace that-- additional closure
5 of lanes that you're waiting on from the Department
6 of Transportation to get the sign-off on those plans,
7 is that correct?

8 KIRSTEN JONES: So, there's a roadway, we
9 call it ramp G that connects 34th-- sorry, 35th to 36th
10 Street, and Dyre Avenue South that connects 34th to
11 35th Street. We are currently working with Community
12 Board Four and DOT to pilot a temporary closure
13 during the p.m. rush of the northbound lanes. Once
14 that pilot goes into effect and DOT is able to
15 monitor their concern as traffic increasing on 10th
16 and 11th Avenue with the closure of those roadways,
17 then we can move forward with a 24-hour pilot of that
18 roadway. That roadway cannot be closed and greened
19 until the traffic studies have been completed in that
20 entire area, and then-- and the pilot cannot occur--
21 the 24-hour pilot cannot occur until after the
22 Holland Tunnel Sandy work is completed which is
23 currently scheduled for second quarter of 2025,
24 because the traffic that is currently rerouted from
25 the Holland Tunnel closures are coming to the Lincoln

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Tunnel through that access point. So we are in talks with looking at closing those roadways, but then the roadways would only be closed for certain hours of the day which would not allow for greening. If we can proceed with a 24-hour pilot and the traffic patterns look okay from there, then we can look into greening. Hersh, did you want to talk to greening?

HERSH PAREKH: Yeah, and I think if there is a scenario in which those roads, access roads, can be permanently closed and allowed or made usable for pedestrian use or other sort of open space use, we would like to work with community stakeholders to identify-- to develop a plan for that, identify a funding source to both do the actual greening, but also do the ongoing maintenance of it. It is sort of outside of the Port Authority's budgetary constraints in order to oversee it and manage that effort. But we've had successful partnerships with the HYHK bid, for example, in terms of other open spaces in the community and we could, you know, envision a similar arrangement under our use agreement, under our permit that allows for certain uses. It's maintained, you know, by that external partner and we can work in

2 that way, but again, there are these pre-steps that
3 need to occur before we can get to that discussion.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHER: Port Authority
5 in this-- in the footprint of the Port Authority bus
6 terminal area has property that we believe would be a
7 good location for affordable housing. On the west
8 side of Manhattan we have very few opportunities for
9 new affordable housing with respect to buildable
10 lots, and the Port Authority has three on your
11 property that we believe should be utilized for
12 affordable housing. One is on the northeast corner
13 of Dyre Avenue and West 33rd Street. Another is on
14 the northwest corner of Dyre Avenue and West 40th
15 Street, and the third is on the northeast corner of
16 Ninth Avenue and West 41st Street. Port Authority
17 has made it clear that you believe that you need
18 these spaces now. You can't build affordable housing
19 on them now, or RFP them for new affordable housing.
20 What are you-- what commitments can you make to
21 making these available in the future for affordable
22 housing when they're no longer needed?

23 HERSH PAREKH: Sure. Thanks Council
24 Member for that question. I'll just start by saying,
25 you know, I think as an agency that operates within

1 the City of New York with, you know, thousands of
2 employees that live within the City of New York, we
3 recognize that affordable housing is a critical need
4 in this city and around the region. The three lots
5 you identified as you noted will be of importance for
6 use during the course of this construction program.
7 We also anticipate that they will have ongoing use
8 for transportation purposes following the conclusion
9 of this program, especially as many of the surface-
10 level lots that I described in my presentation will
11 no longer be available for that transportation use.
12 With that being said, if we determine that those--
13 you know, any one of those lots are not necessary for
14 transportation use and to advance the mission of the
15 Port Authority, we do have a process under which we
16 would review those lots, make sure that they can be
17 declared what we call surplus, and it would go
18 through that review process if that determination is
19 made. We can make those lots available for a period
20 of time for residential development under our
21 governing statutes under the laws that we operate
22 under, but that is something that we can lay out, but
23 as I mentioned, as a transportation agency it is
24 important that the land that we have is utilized to
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advance our mission as a transportation operator of facilities, but in the event that that is not necessary in those lots, we can go through this process about making them available for development of residential and affordable housing.

COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: I understand that the surface lots are critical for your mission. I, generally speaking, don't think that there should be surface parking lots in Manhattan. Anything that you need that space for could be done-- could be incorporated into a future building, and you could arguably get even better facilities in the base of the future building. I look forward to discussing with you over the next few days what kind of-- how we can codify to the best extent possible of the provision of affordable housing in these identified lots. Metro Baptist Church on 40th Street at 410 West 40th Street is a critical community asset with-- that provide social and community service programs to approximately 13,000 persons annually, homeless meals and toiletry distribution, food pantry, clothes closet. They've got a rooftop vegetable farm and community-supported agriculture. It also houses office and meeting space for immigrant and LGBTQ

2 youth groups along with a pre-k Head Start program
3 operated by the Hudson Guild. It is going to be
4 affected by this project, both during the
5 construction, but also after having, I believe, some
6 of the lot line windows will be covered by this and
7 the rooftop will be shadowed by the new terminal.
8 What will you commit to doing for Metro Baptist
9 Church? We've requested elevator access for the
10 church. Let's-- talk to me about what you're
11 prepared to commit to today for Metro Baptist Church.

12 HERSH PAREKH: So, the request related to
13 accessibility improvements within Metro Baptist
14 Church is unfortunately not something that we can
15 commit to for a number of reasons. It is outside the
16 scope of our project. It is outside the budget of
17 our project, which as I described is already very
18 tight and does not even account for potential cost
19 overruns which are not all that uncommon on projects
20 of this size and complexity. So, with that type of
21 complex project, in terms of accessibility at a
22 historic facility like Metro Baptist Church, it is
23 not something that we are able to undertake. But
24 what we are-- what we do expect is that we will
25 require our contractors to take all precautions to

1 ensure that facility's structures like Metro Baptist
2 that are especially as in close proximity as they are
3 to our project site, that every effort is undertaken
4 to avoid any impact to not just their physical
5 structure, but also to the all the different users
6 that, you know, receive services or other programming
7 at that facility. That is of paramount importance,
8 and that is something that we will be working with
9 Metro Baptist to ensure that ongoing accessibility by
10 those users. In terms of the impact on some of the
11 stained glass windows of the church, that is
12 something that was also reviewed as part of the
13 Environmental Impact Statement, and there is a
14 commitment that we have made to ensure that there--
15 there are measures taken to mitigate the impacts on
16 those stained glass windows and there are a number of
17 different options that we are considering, and that
18 will be done in collaboration with Metro Baptist in
19 regards to those windows. In regards to the rooftop
20 farm that you mentioned, I know my colleague Glenn
21 has been up there maybe more than once, and we
22 understand that it is a vital resource for the
23 community. Based on the analysis in the EIS, while
24 there will be an impact, it was not determined to be
25

2 an impact that required any type of mitigation
3 because of the minimal impact, and so we don't
4 anticipate any specific steps to address that issue.
5 But let me also see if Glenn has anything he'd like
6 to add on this topic.

7 GLENN GUZI: Other than as we progress
8 through the project, one thing that Hersh touched on,
9 but just a little more detail prior to the
10 commencement of construction. Properties within
11 particular distance from each phase would-- we would
12 request the right-of-entry to conduct a pre-condition
13 survey in terms of looking at the foundations of the
14 building, the structural integrity of the buildings,
15 the existing conditions. Those engineer reports
16 would be shared with the property owner so that they
17 have something to look at and be able to use if they
18 feel that something occurred. So there would be a
19 resource for them to be able to say hey, this was our
20 condition prior to commencing the project and here's
21 what it looks like today. in terms of the rooftop,
22 we'll continue to work with them in terms of-- you
23 know, and this would probably be really at the end of
24 phase one when the storage and staging structure is
25 complete to look at really what is the impact to

1 shadow on the roof. While going through the Section
2 106 process, the historic preservation process, the
3 impact was considered to be minimal. We'll always,
4 you know, keep an open ear and mind to if anything,
5 you know, could be done. And as Hersh did indicate,
6 I did go up there and planted a few seeds and picked
7 a few vegetables over the years, and the good news
8 about the rooftop garden-- I actually think of myself
9 as a farmer-- is that it's not actually planted in
10 soil. You know, they're planters--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: [interposing]
13 Baby tubs.

14 GLENN GUZI: that can be moved around--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: [interposing]
16 Yeah, baby pools.

17 GLENN GUZI: which is convenient. So,
18 we'll work with them on that.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Okay, to be
20 continued, our discussion regarding Metro Baptist. I
21 would like to-- you know, I've asked in the past
22 about your plan to green the roof of the future Port
23 Authority bus terminal. I would like you to spend
24 more time fleshing out your plans for the roof. I
25 know you've sort of left a lot of that up to the

2 future, but if you look at the Javits Center, I think
3 one of the things they're most proud of is their
4 green roof, their agriculture on the roof,
5 greenhouses. I would like to further discuss that
6 with you, and my last question is regarding community
7 facility space. Community Board Four has request
8 15,000 square feet of community facility space, and
9 the Port Authority has initially offered 8,000.
10 Where are we with that?

11 HERSH PAREKH: So, Council Member, we are
12 pleased that we were able to go from eight to 10,000
13 square feet of community facility space. That will
14 be made available on the ground level with access
15 from the exterior. This space will be available upon
16 the conclusion of the replacement program, and we
17 will work with whoever the tenant would be, whether
18 it's the Community Board or the BID or some other
19 third party to work out the terms of the lease
20 arrangement for that space, but we are pleased to
21 have been able to go from eight to 10,000 square
22 feet, you know, which is a quite sizable space for
23 the community as a community facility inside the new
24 bus terminal.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
3 Member Bottcher. Counsel, are there any members of
4 the public who wish to testify regarding the three
5 related application for Port Authority proposal
6 remotely? And I'm sorry, the applicant panel, you're
7 excused. Thank you.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, Chair, we have
9 approximately 11 people signed up to testify on this
10 item, a mix of remote participants and in-person.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. We're going to
12 begin first with the remote with the first panel, and
13 then we're going to transition to in-person. So, for
14 the remote first panel, the first panel I'm going to
15 call is Julia Campanelli, Joann Greenfield, and Kate
16 Barnhart.

17 JULIA CAMPANELLI: Hello?

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Hello.

19 JULIA CAMPANELLI: Thank--

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] We can
21 begin with--

22 JULIA CAMPANELLI: [interposing] thank you
23 for this opportunity. Can I talk-- can I start?

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, go ahead Julia.
25

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2 JULIA CAMPANELLI: Okay, my name is Julia
3 Campanelli. I'm President of Hell's Kitchen Block
4 Association which incorporates West 33rd to 35th
5 Streets between Eighth and 10th Avenues, nestled in
6 the shadow of Hudson Yards in Manhattan west. On
7 behalf of my community I'd like to request the
8 formation of Community Action Committee Working Group
9 with representatives from the Port Authority of New
10 York and New Jersey, the Mayor's Office, Senator
11 Hoylman-Sigal's office, Assembly Member Tony Simone's
12 office, Council Member Eric Bottcher's Office,
13 Community Boards Four and Five, the city agencies
14 involved, the developers in this project, and
15 representatives from the affected communities to
16 establish a plan for best practices in noise
17 mitigation before the construction starts. We did
18 this eight years ago with Manhattan West and Hudson
19 Yards when the amount of and duration of so much
20 construction so negatively impacted our community.
21 We were able to establish noise mitigation hours and
22 practices without diminishing weekly work hours for
23 the developers. We would love to do this again for
24 such an immense project as the Port Authority bus
25 terminal in such a densely populated area. We would

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also like to see less retail and commercial space and more affordable housing in this new development, because it's so desperately needed. We'd like to request more pedestrian and greenspaces in the Dyre Avenue approach between West 34th and West 37th Streets that bisects our densely populated community. Currently, it is a blighted sea of concrete, and we'd like to eliminate-- we suggest eliminating one of the merges, northbound merges, to create more pedestrian greenspace in that location instead of shutting down all of the northbound tunnel approaches. We did put in-- we were able to put in place-- I personally came up with a plan to change the night work hours--

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time expired.

JULIA CAMPANELLI: [inaudible] DOT and DOB issued their after-hours work permits. That plan has been in place for two years, and it has been very effective and has helped the-- benefitted the health and wellbeing of our community. Thank you so much for your time.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Ms. Julia. Next we're going to hear from Joan Greenfield.

2 JOAN GREENFIELD: Hi, I'm Joan
3 Greenfield, and I am a building owner and resident at
4 402 West 40th Street which is just in that little
5 crook between the new terminal and the staging and
6 storage area, so between Ninth and Dyre Avenues. And
7 I want to speak to two things. One, we've already
8 heard there will be preconditioned survey going on to
9 protect some of these older buildings which are
10 rickety little tenements built in the 1800s and I
11 think very vulnerable, especially to the subgrade
12 work that is per the plan for this immense public
13 work, and you had said that work would begin at the
14 start of 2025. That is mere months away. Nobody has
15 contacted us about an inspection to get our baseline
16 assessment, and I want to know how to get on that
17 list or to assure me and other owners like me that we
18 are included in that. That's extremely important
19 because we're very vulnerable to the scale of this
20 project. My second point is that when you talk about
21 impact on the local businesses, you should not have a
22 thought limited to just retail operations, food,
23 restaurant, and so forth. Other businesses include
24 residences, residential landlords, and people who are
25 going to be sleeping and living in the middle of this

2 construction site are undoubtedly going to have an
3 impact on the income for the building owners. In our
4 case, we have mall commercial office space--

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
6 is expired.

7 JOAN GREENFIELD: [inaudible] What's that?

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Your time expired,
9 but you can start wrapping up, Ms. Greenfield.

10 JOAN GREENFIELD: I'll wrap up. Just to
11 say there is more to it than just retail spaces. And
12 for starts, the Department of Finance Assessment of
13 the market value of my building is currently double
14 what a broker will offer. So, this is going to have
15 a long-term impact on everyone in the neighborhood,
16 and I don't think you should have a narrow vision of
17 what that will be consisting of. That's it.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. The last
19 person on this panel we'll hear from is Kate
20 Barnhart.

21 KATE BARNHART: Hello, I'm the Executive
22 Director of New Alternatives for Homeless LGBT Youth.
23 We are located in the Metro Baptist building at the
24 front of the building behind the stained glass
25 windows. We have a number of concerns. One is the

1 air quality in the area. we have clients living with
2 HIV, with asthma, various other health concerns where
3 inhaling particulate matter would be problematic, and
4 so we really not only want to urge close monitoring
5 of the air quality, but also assistance with
6 maintaining the air quality inside the buildings.
7 We're a very small program and we can't afford a lot
8 of technology to filter out particulate matter.
9 We're also pretty concerned about access. A lot of
10 our young people walk here from the 42nd Street train
11 stations, and they need to be able to get here
12 safely. Because they're LGBT people, they're
13 particularly vulnerable to various types of crime,
14 hate crimes in particular, and so it's really
15 important to us that it's well-lit, accessible,
16 especially for those who may be using walkers, canes,
17 etcetera, and also that personnel working on the
18 project-- construction workers sometimes have
19 tendencies to make comments towards LGBTQ people and
20 we would like some recourse in case that happens. I'm
21 hoping it won't, but I'd like to be prepared. And
22 the final thing is we are concerned about sound
23 pollution. A lot of what we do is counseling,
24 therapy, etcetera, and obviously we need to hear the
25

2 clients, and we will need assistance reducing the
3 impact of the sound inside the building. And the
4 final thing-- this is more personal than about the
5 program, but I--

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
7 is expired.

8 KATE BARNHART: walked through-- I walk
9 through Port Authority every day on my commute, and
10 I'm just concerned that the lower income people tend
11 to use the buses as transportation, and if the new
12 building and the retail included is anything like
13 what's happened to the Moynihan Station, the
14 availability of affordable food will be an issue, and
15 I'd like to encourage you to make sure to include in
16 the options in the new building some type of
17 affordable food availability. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Ms.
19 Barnhart. Questions?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Just want to
21 thank all the panelists. Julia, thank you for
22 testifying. You have a lot of experience with
23 overnight construction and mitigation. So we'll be
24 needing your expertise. And Kate, with New
25 Alternatives, I can't speak highly enough of New

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Alternatives which is truly serving the most vulnerable young people in our city, and we want you at the table to ensure that they are not adversely affected, and I think there's so many opportunities for the young people with this future terminal, with employment and mentorship and internship and job opportunities. So really looking forward to working with you, and I also co-signed the need for affordable food and amenities at the new terminal.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.

With no questions for this panel, this panel is excused. We're going to transition to in-person, and then we're going to transition back to those online. So the first in-person panel I'm going to call consists of Ian Acriche, Joe Restuccia, Jesse Bodine, and Kathleen Treat. If I just called your name, if you could please just come up to the dais. Okay, each panelist will be given two minutes. The Sergeant at Arms will let you know when your time is up. We will begin first with Ian. And the time is over there if you want to keep time.

IAN ACRICHE: [inaudible]

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Hold on, Ian. Before you begin, you just have to push the button on the microphone. There you go.

IAN ACRICHE: Good afternoon Council. My name is Ian Acriche, Associate to Regional Plan Associations President Tom Wright [sp?]. I'm here to register RPA's strong support for the rehabilitation of the Port Authority bus terminal. This transformative project aligns with RPA's longstanding vision for a 21st Century Midtown bus terminal that better serves commuters and communities while promoting transit-based economic growth. The transportation networks connecting New Jersey and New York are essential to both state's economies. However, these connections which currently serve nearly 450,000 commuters from northern New Jersey are facing significant challenges. Bus commuters account for 31 percent of all travelers across the Hudson River, surpassing those using commuter rail, path or driving. With continued population growth in New Jersey, this number is projected to rise from approximately 208,000 daily riders to an estimated 337,000 by 2040. At 70 years old, the bus terminal is undersized and outdated. In 2019 and 2021, RPA

1 recommended various design alternatives focused on
2 two primary goals, enhancing pedestrian connections
3 and the overall environment while also serving as a
4 civic destination and urban hub. Among the plans
5 proposals that align with our vision are the
6 construction of a central entrance and an increase in
7 street-level retail aimed at better integrating the
8 terminal into Midtown. The removal of curbside
9 inter-city buses and idling vehicles along with the
10 closure of Port Authority First Street between Eighth
11 and Ninth Avenues will reduce congestion and enhance
12 the community experience. Additionally, improved way-
13 finding to mass transit connections will position the
14 terminal as an urban hub, boosting ridership and
15 connectivity. We commend the current approach which
16 incorporates both our insights and significant input
17 from the community. This design will greatly improve
18 access between the city and its suburbs while
19 accommodating growth through 2050. RPA strongly
20 supports the proposal in full and encourages the
21 subcommittee and City Council to do the same. Thank
22 you.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next, we
25 will hear from Joe.

1 JESSE BODINE: If it's alright, I'll go--
2
3 if that's alright, I'll go next and Joe will follow
4 me if that's alright. Jesse Bodine.

5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Oh, go ahead Jesse.

6 JESSE BODINE: Thank you. Good morning,
7 my name is Jesse Bodine. I'm the District Manager of
8 Manhattan Community Board Four. I have been asked to
9 read the following testimony by Jean Daniel Noland,
10 the Co-Chair of Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee for
11 Community Board Four. "Good morning. I'm sure you are
12 all too young to remember the Federal Highway Act in
13 the 1950s. The goal was to build roads to connect
14 the emerging suburbs to downtown city centers.
15 Highways cut through dense often poor city
16 neighborhoods. Communities lost churches, businesses
17 and homes. More than a million people nationwide were
18 displaced. The completion of the Lincoln Tunnel, the
19 Lincoln Tunnel access roads and the Port Authority
20 bus terminal and ramps destroyed much of Hell's
21 Kitchen south of 41st Street. Tenements were
22 demolished, thousands lost their homes. Imagine
23 demolishing affordable housing today to make roads
24 for cars and buses. On April 18th, 2016, the Port
25 Authority came to the Metro Baptist Church on West

1
2 40th Street to propose building a new bus terminal at
3 the cost of more demolition of Hell's Kitchen. The
4 hundreds of community members gathered on West 40th
5 Street that night spoke with one voice. This will not
6 happen again. No imminent domain. No demolition of
7 homes. No displacement of residents. To their
8 credit, the Port Authority agreed. The community
9 also said this could be an opportunity to knit the
10 neighborhood back together, east to west, north to
11 south. Again, to their credit, the Port Authority
12 listened and agreed to work with the Community Board
13 to make the development fit into the fabric of the
14 neighborhood through contextual design, environmental
15 responsibility, pedestrian safety and community
16 engagement. We support this project, but we must not
17 lose sight of the immense scale and impact on the
18 community. It will span four city blocks. It will
19 disrupt the community for a decade or more. We
20 cannot undo the harm inflicted on the community a
21 mere two generations ago, but we can ensure that this
22 time by fulfilling the mitigation CB4 is calling for,
23 the harm will be less and the community will be made
24 better. So when the generations in the future look
25

2 back, they can say this time they got it right.
3 Thank you."

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Joe?

5 JOE RESTUCCIA: My name is Joe Restuccia.
6 I'm the Co-Chair of the Housing Committee Community
7 Board Four, a member of Land Use, Executive Director
8 of Clinton Housing that builds affordable housing in
9 the district, and a 44-year resident of Hell's
10 Kitchen. The project is much better than we started.
11 I commend the Port Authority for working with the
12 Community Board on major design changes. There is no
13 imminent domain. However, we have to pin things down.
14 Never has the City Council passed something creating
15 open space without commitments for funding, both
16 capital and for operations. It is a 2.1 million
17 square foot project. I am very pleased the Port
18 Authority's increased the community facility from
19 8,000 to 10,000. They need to go further. In a 2.1
20 million square feet, it is laughable to say you
21 cannot find a few more thousand square feet for
22 community facility. It is important for us to pin
23 down this funding issue, because we must. To say
24 that we defer affordable housing 10 years after the
25 project happens is not acceptable. We must work with

2 the City Council to get specific time frames, because
3 a location for a snow plow is no importance compared
4 to location for affordable housing. I believe we can
5 work this through with the Port Authority, but to say
6 that every benefit, both greenspace and affordable
7 housing, is deferred for 10 years will say that this
8 community gets nothing up front, and that is a
9 serious, serious issue politically. Thank you very
10 much.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. And last,
12 Katlin [sic]?

13 KATHLEEN TREAT: Kathleen.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Kathleen.

15 KATHLEEN TREAT: Thank you. Eric, can you
16 hear me?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: The Kathleen
18 Treat.

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Oh, no, we need that,
20 Kathleen. You have to talk into the mic.

21 KATHLEEN TREAT: Okay.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

23 KATHLEEN TREAT: I'm from the Hell's
24 Kitchen Neighborhood Association. Hell's Kitchen's
25 geography reflects our humble history as a

2 neighborhood of the working poor, for the most part
3 utterly neglected by our city father. You will not
4 find multiple playgrounds here, let alone a public
5 swimming pool. First and foremost Hell's Kitchen is
6 a community and our population is booming. We all
7 require a haven of open greenspace from this colossal
8 mind-boggling project, and we want to see that open
9 greenspace become number one on the Port's list asap,
10 before the big dig begins. And we want the Port
11 Authority to pay for it. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Council
13 Member Bottcher, you have any questions for this
14 panel?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: I really want
16 to thank everyone on the panel for their partnership
17 and their work and really help making this a much,
18 much better project than when it started. I believe
19 that as we work through these last issues and really
20 land in a really good place and see this project
21 through, we're going to look back collectively all of
22 us and be so proud of what we did for not just our
23 neighborhood but the whole city and the entire east
24 coast, and we'll be able to say that we did that
25 together. Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.

This panel is excused. The next-- the last in-person panel we'll call is Brian Weber, Chad Purkey, and Berthel [sp?], Berthel? Berthet? Berthet, sorry. We will begin first with Brian Weber.

BRIAN WEBER: Sorry, the mic wasn't on.

Passed Zoom and now I can't get the mic on. Hi. I'm Brian Weber. I'm a community resident and among other things I serve as the President of the Midtown South Precinct Community Council, a public member of Community Board Four, the Chair of the West 36th Street Block Association, and also was a part of the Hell's Kitchen South Neighborhood Coalition which worked extensively in parallel to Community Board Four. It informed much of the request that Community Board Four put in terms of what this project will do to the surrounding community and our neighborhood. Now, bearing all that in mind, I'm here to testify behalf of myself, not behalf of these individual entities, but it informs everything I have to say and it informs how I look at this project through the lens of the wellbeing, safety, and health of the community this project is going to occur within. I've grown quite affectionate for this community and

1 I want to see that the outcome of this project in the
2 course in which we take to get there does not disrupt
3 the lives of everyone who lives around it. At the
4 end of the project in 10 years we will have public
5 open greenspace which is fantastic, but what are we
6 going to do in the interim? What are we going to do
7 in the interim when we have a temporary bus terminal
8 between Ninth and 10th Avenue? How are we dealing
9 with the pedestrian flow through there? And what
10 about the must-- desperately needed greenspaces that
11 this community came forth and asked for in the course
12 of this project? Air quality was a chief concern.
13 It informed the design of the bus terminal, but we're
14 also concerned about air quality over the course of
15 this project. So to that end, we're hoping part of
16 the mitigation as Kathleen discussed would contribute
17 to greenspaces that the Port could commit to in
18 advance of the two deck-overs at Dyre Avenue. Thank
19 you for your time.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next,
22 we'll hear from Berthet.

23 CHRISTINE BERTHET: Still on? Yes.
24 Thank you so much. My name is Christine Berthet. I
25 am the Co-Chair of Transportation Planning Committee

1 of Manhattan CB4. Thank you for the opportunity to
2 speak, and first I want to recognize that the Port
3 Authority team has been an exceptional partner today.
4 They have gone way beyond the call of duty to
5 communicate and to solicit input from the community
6 and they've been very responsive to it. So this has
7 been just an extraordinary partnership. But as the
8 Port admits earlier, the construction phase is going
9 to be very, very taxing on our residents. It will
10 last 10 years. It will affect four avenues and
11 probably 10 streets, and it's not your usual real
12 estate project. It's going to be-- the whole
13 neighborhood is going to be a construction zone. The
14 traffic disruption will be massive with street
15 closure, with many, many bus gates on the streets,
16 250,000 commuters on the sidewalk to reach the
17 subway. All of this conflicting with daily chaos of
18 the Lincoln Tunnel traffic which is already existing
19 today. So, I don't think anybody can anticipate how
20 bad it's going to be, and we're going to be ready to
21 take it in and be flexible with it. But our
22 residential community cannot be made to suffer from
23 more traffic, gridlock, honking, related idling and
24 worsening air quality. Our district has the third
25

1 worst air quality in the city. so, the solution
2 exists, but it seems that the port is not ready to
3 spend a very small 0.5 percent of their budget on
4 those mitigation, and the port should provide relief
5 to the community with some greenspace at the
6 beginning of the project after the pilot which has
7 been discussed which would be about one year from
8 now, and commit to its funding before the Council
9 approve the project. Thank you.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next we'll
12 hear from Chad.

13 CHAD PURKEY: Hello. Thank you for the
14 opportunity to testify on behalf the Association for
15 a Better New York in support of the Port Authority
16 bus terminal replacement application. My name is
17 Chad Purkey, the interim Executive Director at ABNY,
18 an organization with the mission of fostering
19 dialogue in connections between the public and
20 private sectors to move New York City forward. The
21 current Port Authority bus terminal has for too long
22 been an unacceptable gateway into our city. It's too
23 small, outdated, inefficient, and unwelcoming, and
24 it's overdue for a replacement. But replacing a
25 seven decades old structure that annually serves 65

1 million passengers is nearly and impossible feat.

2 However, we find ourselves today with such a

3 transformative project possible thanks to the years'

4 long work by the Port Authority with community

5 members and vested stakeholders. The proposal before

6 you today has been [inaudible] by unprecedented

7 public engagement and review, resulting in a \$10

8 billion public investment that will meet the needs of

9 a growing number of commuters while mitigating and

10 improving the terminal's impacts on the surround

11 neighborhoods. Once approved, the project's

12 construction phase will create a nearly 6,000 union

13 jobs for almost a decade. Following construction,

14 the resulting new terminal will be that of the 21st

15 Century, offering a nearly 180 degree turn to the

16 site's current commuter experience thanks to improved

17 concessions and environmentally conscious facility,

18 enhanced public ground improvements, more direct

19 connections between tunnel and terminal, along with

20 other benefits. As the Port Authority says, it'll go

21 from an eyesore to eye-popping. In other words, it

22 will get that La Guardia treatment and we're excited

23 to see that type of investment come to our city's bus

24 facilities. Inciting [sic] and echoing the prior

2 recommendations for approval by Community Board Four,
3 City Planning Commission, Borough President, and
4 local Council Member, we encourage the Committee to
5 do the same and vote in favor of the replacement
6 project's applications and encourage the Port
7 Authority to keep dialogue and collaboration with
8 those stakeholders to address any ongoing concerns.
9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. There
11 being no questions for this panel-- Council Member
12 Bottcher?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: With respect to
14 the green-- when we talk about getting greenspace
15 upfront, are we chiefly talking about the Dyre Avenue
16 stretch involving the pilot?

17 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

18 BRIAN WEBER: I would also just like to--

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] speak
20 into the mic if you can, please.

21 BRIAN WEBER: Sorry, also just like to
22 refer back to the Hell's Kitchen South Coalition Plan
23 which discussed decking over the Dyre Avenue cuts,
24 the below-grade cuts that lead all the way to 33rd
25 Street. Those cuts are not a part of this plan and

2 not intended for staging. This would be an
3 opportunity in addition to the work being done at-
4 grade at Dyre Avenue North, this would be an
5 opportunity to deck over those spaces as well.
6 Again, it's air quality and desperately needed public
7 open space would be very appreciated.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. This
9 panel is excused. We'll be calling the last panel
10 which is on remote which consists of Jessica Chait,
11 Maddie DeCerbo, and Tiffany Henkel. She's online.
12 Thank you. We'll begin first with Jessica.

13 JESSICA CHAIT: Hi, and thank you. I'm
14 Jessica Chait, Chair of Manhattan Community Board
15 Four. Thank you to the Council Member Bottcher and
16 the City Council. I echo what others who testified
17 today have said and will add that as you know our
18 neighborhood has long been overwhelmed by commuter
19 and long-distance buses and is home to a terminal
20 that for far too long haven't met the needs of
21 commuters, tourists, residents and area businesses.
22 We are encouraged and grateful that the Port
23 Authority has been an ongoing dialogue with the
24 community, not just CB4, but in listening session and
25 alike to arrive at an operations plan and structure

1 that is more fitting than what was originally
2 proposed. However, the combination of the
3 significant, dare I say massive, size and scope and
4 duration of this project means that there will be
5 countless, unpredictable and deeply-challenging
6 impacts to all who experience this area for many
7 years to come. We need to make sure and we ask for
8 your help that the Port Authority is not only
9 committed to delivering the state-of-the-art
10 facility, but also to ensuring that the people who
11 live, work and receive support from providers in the
12 district who will see their lives greatly disrupted
13 during construction are not overlooked or discounted
14 in this process. This can be accomplished by having
15 the Port Authority commit to an active construction
16 taskforce delivering on much-needed greening space
17 that you've heard about, not when the project is done
18 but before so as to provide respite and mitigation
19 for the congestion and challenges faced by all who
20 spend time there. This would also include organizing
21 detailed plans and commitments for social services
22 and businesses and traffic mitigation before a shovel
23 is even in the ground. We thank you for your support
24
25

1 and look forward to continuing a partnership with the
2 Port Authority and to seeing this project realized.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
5 we'll hear from Maddie DeCerbo.

6 MADDIE DECERBO: Hi, my name is Maddie
7 DeCerbo, and I'm here on behalf of the Real Estate
8 Board of New York. We are pleased to support the
9 Port Authority bus terminal replacement project. We
10 commend the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
11 for taking essential steps to enhance this critical
12 regional transit hub which is vital for accommodating
13 increasing ridership. The proposed project involves
14 several land use actions to facilitate the
15 development of the existing Midtown bus terminal
16 alongside adjacent properties resulting in a modern
17 bus terminal, bus storage and staging facilities and
18 new ramp system. Furthermore, the project includes
19 plans for two private commercial office buildings
20 above the terminal, a critical component necessary
21 for the financial health of the project. As bus
22 ridership is projected to grow in the coming years,
23 the need for a new facility becomes increasingly
24 urgent. The current terminal, a 73-year-old structure
25 is no longer adequate for today's larger buses and

1 lacks the infrastructure necessary for electric bus
2 operations. The new facility will be designed to
3 meet net-zero emissions standards, support all
4 electric buses, and enhance capacity to meet rising
5 demand. Importantly, the project will also create an
6 additional three and a half acres of publicly
7 accessible greenspace, enhancing the urban
8 environment. REBNY recognizes the significance of
9 this initiative for New York City's economy, commends
10 the city and state for committing future tax revenue
11 from the three new commercial developments toward the
12 \$10 billion project. Improving our regional transit
13 hub is imperative and we appreciate the ongoing
14 engagement with local community property owners, as a
15 project of this scale and scope moves forward. Thank
16 you.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. And
19 lastly, we'll hear from Tiffany Henkel.

20 TIFFANY TRIPLETT HENKEL: Good afternoon.
21 My name is Reverend Tiffany Triplett Henkel and I'm
22 the Pastor of Metro Baptist Church and the Chair of
23 the Hell's Kitchen South Coalition. Metro Baptist is
24 located at 410 West 40th Street which is directly
25 next door to where the proposed staging and storage

1 facility will be built, and which I understand will
2 be equivalent to 12 standard stories. While I
3 acknowledge that a new facility is needed and I am
4 encouraged that the proposed project appears to
5 address some very important issues with the current
6 terminal, I want to speak to a few concerns related
7 to the immense impact that this project will have on
8 Metro Baptist Church and other vital community
9 service agencies in our community. And I appreciate
10 that some of these concerns have already been brought
11 up earlier in this meeting by Council Member Bottcher
12 and others in our community, and has been addressed a
13 bit by Port Authority, but I think it's important for
14 these and others to be reiterated. My first concern
15 is that Metro and several other historical properties
16 in the neighborhood will lose significant sunlight
17 with the development of this project, specifically
18 Metro will ultimately lose six hours of sunlight per
19 day. We are concerned about this for several reasons,
20 including the fact that we have a year-round
21 universal pre-k and Head Start program in our
22 building with the majority of the windows for that
23 program on the west side of our building which will
24 be facing this staging facility. And as has already
25

2 been noted, we also host a community urban farm on
3 the roof of our building which is only four stories.
4 The loss of six hours of light, with all due respect,
5 will not be minimal, but in fact will be detrimental
6 to that program and greenspace which has served and
7 been a refuge for the community for nearly 15 years.
8 And of course, the loss of light will severely impact
9 the historic stained glass windows of our 110-year-
10 old building. Related, we're also concerned about
11 the impact of the actual construction on those
12 windows and the wider integrity of our structure.
13 Additionally, Metro and our on-site nonprofit--

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
15 is expired.

16 TIFFANY TRIPLETT HENKEL: partners who
17 have already spoken today provide essential social
18 services to over 13,000 vulnerable New Yorkers per
19 year through programs such as food pantry, clothing
20 closet, LGBTQ youth programs, asylum services and
21 other direct and educational programs. And while we
22 believe the final project may better serve our
23 community, we are concerned that during the next 10
24 years it would be extremely difficult for people to
25 easily and safely access our services, and

2 construction for several years can make providing
3 those services challenging. While we remain grateful
4 for the ongoing conversation and openness to the
5 community needs by the Port Authority during this
6 process, we continue to advocate for substantive
7 mitigation for Metro Baptist Church as well as other
8 historical facilities and community service agencies
9 who will be greatly impacted by this massive project.
10 Specifically, some of the mitigation that we--

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Thank
12 you, Reverend.

13 TIFFANY TRIPLETT HENKEL: advocate for is
14 light and air access, noise mitigation--

15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Thank
16 you, Reverend.

17 TIFFANY TRIPLETT HENKEL: ensuring safe
18 and full access to the building and security on our
19 block. We appreciate the support of the New York
20 City Council and these matters so that we can best
21 manage our new realities and that we can continue--

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Thank
23 you, Reverend.

24 TIFFANY TRIPLETT HENKEL: and even
25 improve our essential--

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] You can
3 submit the rest of your testimony online. We really
4 appreciate it. There being no questions for this
5 panel, this panel is excused. The last in-person to
6 testify is Megan Wylie. Megan, you can press the
7 button. Thank you.

8 MEGAN WYLIE: Good afternoon, Chair
9 Riley and Council Members, and thank you for the
10 opportunity to speak to the Subcommittee on Zoning
11 and Franchises today. My name is Megan Wylie and I'm
12 the Director of Government Relations at the New York
13 Building Congress. The Building Congress comprises
14 500 constituent organizations and represents 250,000
15 skilled trades people and professionals across the
16 industry, all dedicated to the growth and prosperity
17 of our city. We strongly express our support for the
18 Port Authority's Midtown bus terminal replacement
19 program, a groundbreaking plan that will transform
20 our city. The current Port Authority bus terminal
21 opened more than 70 years ago on a west side that
22 longer exists. The neighborhood and surrounding area
23 has exploded and the terminal has reached the end of
24 its useful structural life, in addition to being the
25 butt of countless jokes for far too long. Our new

1 New York demands modern terminal built for the
2 future, state-of-the-art sustainable LED-certified,
3 and future-proofed for projected commuter growth.
4 This proposal will not only beautify the current
5 blight but also reduce congestion by removing
6 curbside inter-city and idling buses. The new ramp
7 structure connecting to the Lincoln Tunnel will take
8 buses off our local streets, and decking over Dyre
9 Avenue will create 3.5 acres of community greenspace
10 where once traffic was all anyone could see. From the
11 Building Congress' perspective, the creation of 6,000
12 good-paying union construction jobs over the eight
13 years and the hundreds of millions in contracting
14 opportunities for MWBEs is a win/win. Finally, the
15 most important factor in all of this is that unlike
16 many public projects of this size, the community and
17 commuters were enlisted as partners in the planning.
18 In fact, it was approved unanimously by the Community
19 Board Four. We urge you to support this bold
20 initiative to reimagine mass transit in Manhattan.
21 Let's lead the way in community-driven sustainably-
22 built commuter-friendly mass transit infrastructure
23 and let's start by approving a new Port Authority bus
24 terminal.
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CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.
With there being no questions, this panel is excused.
Thank you so much. Counsel, are there any more
members that wish to testify on LUs 185, 186 and 187?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If there's anyone
with us in the room today who would like testify in-
person, please see the Sergeant and fill out a
speaker card. Okay, it appears that no one else is
here to testify and we don't have anyone left online.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. there
being no members of the public who wish testify on
LUs 185, 186, and 187 regarding the Port Authority
bus terminal replacement, the proposal and the public
hearing is now closed, and the items are laid over.
That concludes today's business. I would like to
thank the members of the public, my colleagues,
Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use and other Council
staff, and the Sergeant at Arms for participating in
today's meeting. This meeting is hereby adjourned.
Thank you.

[gavel]

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES

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 November 18, 2024