

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME
USES

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September 6, 2011
Start: 11:30 am
Recess: 12:00 pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
BRAD S. LANDER
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Maria del Carmen Arroyo
Rosie Mendez
James Sanders, Jr.
Daniel J. Halloran III

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

Paulette McCullough
Senior Associate Executive Director
Renaissance Healthcare Network

Jeremy Berman
Deputy Counsel
New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation

Jenny Fernandez
Director of Intergovernmental and Community Relations
Landmarks Preservation Commission

1 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Good morning.
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3 I'm pleased to call this meeting of the City
4 Council's Land Use Subcommittee on Landmarks,
5 Public Siting and Maritime Uses to order. I'm
6 Council Member Brad Lander joined today by Council
7 Member Maria del Carmen Arroyo, who is here first
8 and on time, let the record reflect; thank you,
9 and also, Council Member Dan Halloran and Council
10 Member Rose Mendez, who like me, were across the
11 street for a few minutes supporting our colleague,
12 Council Member Jumaane Williams, who is also a
13 member of the Committee and will hopefully be able
14 to join us by the end of the meeting.

15 We have a relatively short agenda
16 this morning—three items, but we're going to
17 couple two of them, and hear them together. So we
18 have a siting proposed by the New York City Health
19 and Hospitals Corporation. It's 20125029 HHM and
20 I am pleased to ask HHC to come up and present
21 their testimony. Good morning. Just for my
22 colleagues, this is a somewhat unusual thing for
23 us to be hearing at the Committee—it is a public
24 siting but because the Health and Hospitals
25 Corporation is covered in its siting essentially

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2 as a state agency, the unconsolidated laws of the
3 State of New York Section 7387 Part 1 provide that
4 they'll come here and present this siting proposal
5 to us. Please go ahead and just state your name
6 for the record and then give your testimony.

7 PAULETTE MCCULLOUGH: Good morning
8 everyone. My name is Paulette McCullough and I am
9 the senior associate executive director of the
10 Renaissance Healthcare Network, which is part of
11 the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation
12 (HHC). I am joined this morning by Jeremy Berman
13 [phonetic] deputy counsel for HHC. Thank you for
14 the opportunity to testify in support of the
15 transfer of a city-owned property located at 264-
16 272 West 118th Street to the New York City Health
17 and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) for the use for
18 the Renaissance Healthcare Network for the
19 operation of the Sydenham Hill Center. The
20 proposed transfer that is before you for approval
21 would allow HHC to take site control of the
22 property for the purposes of the relocation of the
23 Sydenham Hill Center. Previously HHC operated
24 under year-to-year license agreements with the
25 city of New York Department of City-Wide

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2 Administrative Services (DCAS) for use of this
3 building. HHC had operated a behavioral health
4 clinic at this location and was the sole occupant
5 of the building. Harlem Hospital Center, which
6 operates the Sydenham Health Clinic as part of the
7 Renaissance Healthcare Network, now pays
8 approximately \$1.3 million in rent and utilities
9 at the Sydenham site currently located at 215 West
10 125th Street. Operating expenses at the 118th
11 Street are estimated to be approximately 100,000
12 per year. Relocating the Sydenham clinic to the
13 118th Street site will realize significant savings
14 for the network. Harlem Hospital Center plans to
15 complete the relocation of the program to the 118th
16 Street by October 2011. This relocation has the
17 approval of the Renaissance Healthcare Network
18 community advisory board. HHC's board of
19 directors approve the transfer in February 2011.
20 Notice of the proposed transfer was published in
21 the city record on March 24th, 2011. A public
22 hearing was held by the Mayor's Office of Contract
23 Services on April 27th, 2011 with respect to the
24 proposed transfer. If approved by the Council,
25 HHC will accept the property pursuant to the June

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2 16th, 1970 operating agreement between the city of
3 New York and HHC. Thank you for your
4 consideration of this transfer. I would be happy
5 to answer any questions that you have.

6 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you very
7 much for your testimony. I just want to let my
8 colleagues know Councilwoman Dickens' whose
9 district this is in is supportive of this
10 transfer. I am just trying to understand--so right
11 now HHC has been operating a behavioral health
12 clinic on 118th Street in the building that would
13 be transferred to become the Sydenham--

14 PAULETTE MCCULLOUGH: [Interposing]
15 They were. Yes. It's no longer operating there
16 right now. We're in renovation process right now.
17 They're not there now.

18 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: That
19 behavioral health center was closed or was--

20 PAULETTE MCCULLOUGH: [Interposing]
21 It's transferred to Harlem Hospital.

22 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Okay. Do my
23 colleagues have any questions. Council Member
24 Arroyo?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: A technical

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2 one and I guess it's for us. If HHC is operating
3 a program at the site, why are we hearing this
4 application here, if they already have site
5 control?

6 JEREMY BERMAN: Well, as Paulette
7 explained—I'm Jeremy Berman, deputy counsel—

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO:
9 [Interposing] I mean I'm always happy to hear from
10 HHC. I just don't see the need for it.

11 JEREMY BERMAN: So HHC has been at
12 this site for many, many years as the sole
13 occupant of the site with full maintenance
14 responsibilities, full custody and control of the
15 site. However, at this moment when we're
16 relocating this Renaissance clinic from 125th
17 Street to this site at 118th Street, we are in
18 investing considerable money in the site, and the
19 question was raised: Does it make sense for HHC as
20 an organization to invest these resources in the
21 site when it's available to us only on a revocable
22 year-to-year basis from DCAS, so we spoke to our
23 colleagues at DCAS and said, "Could we have
24 something more secure than that to justify the
25 considerable money being invested in the site?"

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2 And it was actually DCAS' suggestion that we take
3 control of the site on a long-term basis.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: The
5 sergeant's playing with the mic. Just make sure
6 you're paying attention.

7 [laughter]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: So, what's
9 the investment in getting the site ready for the
10 health center operation?

11 PAULETTE MCCULLOUGH: Well,
12 basically it's about three million. Thank you,
13 Diana—about three million.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: So you're
15 saving 1.2 million in expense—is this going back
16 to the facility? Is HHC taking it as the overall
17 savings? I would hope that moving forward, HHC
18 would allow the center to keep its revenue, so
19 they can beef up... See? They do it to us too.

20 PAULETTE MCCULLOUGH: Well, one of
21 the things is this—

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO:
23 [Interposing] You may not be able to answer that.
24 I'm sorry. I don't mean to put you on the spot,
25 but the folks sitting over there know what I mean.

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2 PAULETTE MCCULLOUGH: Yeah, the
3 rental is definitely going to be a savings, which
4 will enable Renaissance to offset our operating
5 deficit without reducing our levels of services.

6 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Any other
7 questions? Okay - - thank you very much for
8 coming and presenting this to us. Interesting to
9 hear about both good efforts to save money and
10 also see a new type of transfer we hadn't seen
11 before, at least in my tenure as chair of the
12 Committee. Thanks very much for your time. No
13 one is signed up to testify from the public on
14 this matter, so this will conclude the public
15 hearing.

16 PAULETTE MCCULLOUGH: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Alright, now
18 we will move on to the other two items that we
19 have, but they are both the exterior and interior
20 of the same building, so I'm going to call them
21 together. It's the Cities Service Building
22 located at 70 Pine Street in Manhattan in
23 Councilwoman Chin's district. Land Use is number
24 458 and 459, 20125023 HKM and 20125024 HKM, and
25 we'll invite Jenny Fernandez from the Landmarks

2 Preservation Commission to come present them to
3 us.

4 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Thank you, Chair
5 Lander, members of the Landmarks Committee. My
6 name is Jenny Fernandez, director of
7 intergovernmental and community relations for the
8 Landmarks Preservation Commission. I'm here today
9 to testify on the Commission's designation of the
10 Cities Service Building and the first floor
11 interior in Manhattan. Chair Lander, I'm going to
12 combine the testimonies for both.

13 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Great. Thank
14 you.

15 JENNY FERNANDEZ: On May 10th, 2011,
16 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held
17 hearings on the proposed designation as a landmark
18 of the Cities Services Building and its first
19 floor interior. Six people spoke in favor of
20 designation, including representatives of the
21 owners, Manhattan Community Board 1, the Historic
22 Districts Council and the New York Landmarks
23 Conservancy. On June 21st, 2011, the Commission
24 voted to designate the building a New York City
25 individual landmark and its interior. The former

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2 Cities Service Building at 70 Pine Street is a 66
3 story skyscraper. Rising from a trapezoidal site
4 bounded by Pine Street, Cedar Street and Pearl
5 Street. An icon of the lower Manhattan skyline,
6 the building's shaft terminates in a slender
7 pinnacle crowned by an illuminated lantern and
8 stainless steel spire. At the time of completion
9 in 1932, this art deco style tower was the tallest
10 structure in lower Manhattan, and at 952 feet, the
11 third tallest structure in the world. Thomas
12 George is thought to be have been the lead
13 designer, enriching the lower floors with stylized
14 reliefs that rival any architectural ornamentation
15 created during the art deco period in New York
16 City. Of particular interest is the company's
17 triangular logo as well as sunflowers, sunbursts
18 and stepped pyramids, which direct the eye upward
19 and recall the shape of the spire. The first
20 floor of the 66-story building Cities Service
21 Building contains one of the most impressive
22 office building lobbies in New York City. A
23 respectful renovation of the first floor lobby was
24 undertaken during the 1990s. Many noteworthy art
25 deco style skyscrapers were built during the late

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2 1920s and early 1930s, but relatively few
3 buildings from this era can boast such a large,
4 ornate and well-preserved public interior. The
5 Commission urges you to affirm this designation.

6 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you very
7 much. As you know the owners are in full support
8 of an individual building designation; it makes
9 our job much easier here. I understand that
10 Councilwoman Chin does not have any issues with
11 the designation, so do my colleagues have any
12 questions about it? Either about the exterior or
13 the first floor interior. No? Alright. Seeing
14 none, thank you very much for your time and your
15 presentation. No one is signed up to testify in
16 the public session, so we'll close the public
17 hearing on this matter as well, and move forward
18 to vote on all items on today's Committee
19 calendar.

20 COUNSEL: Christian Hilton, counsel
21 to the Committee, Chair Lander?

22 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Aye on all.

23 COUNSEL: Council Member Arroyo?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Aye.

25 COUNSEL: Council Member Mendez?

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Aye.

3 COUNSEL: Council Member Halloran?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: Mr.

5 Chairman, permission to make a statement on the
6 record?

7 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Absolutely.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: I am very
9 happy with the work of the Committee to this
10 point, but I'm still very disappointed in the
11 Landmarks Preservation Commission. We are now two
12 years into my term of office, and I have
13 repeatedly requested movement on the historic
14 districts in my council district. I have sat here
15 and watched other communities have their council
16 historic districts designated and I am still
17 waiting for Broadway Flushing to receive some sort
18 of treatment from the Landmarks Preservation
19 Commission. While I am supportive of this
20 Committee's work, if I don't see some action, I am
21 going to start taking negative positions to any
22 community's designation as a historic district, if
23 I don't get some attention from LPC.

24 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you for
25 your statement. Did you want to vote on the

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items?

COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: I'll vote
aye on all.

COUNSEL: By a vote of four in the
affirmative, none in the negative and no
abstentions, pre-considered 2012529 HHM and LU 458
and 459 are approved and referred to the full Land
Use Committee.

CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you very
much. This meeting of this Subcommittee is
adjourned. We'll hold the vote open for a couple
of minutes, but... yes, ten minutes. I suspect that
Council Member Williams will not be able to make-

COUNSEL: Council Member Sanders?

COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: I vote aye
and this meeting is hereby adjourned.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Kimberley Uhlig certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature Kimberley Uhlig

Date September 20, 2011