

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC
SITINGS, AND DISPOSITIONS

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July 20, 2023
Start: 10:18 A.M.
Recess: 10:30 A.M.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Room,
14th Floor

B E F O R E: ` Farah N. Louis,
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Carmen N. De La Rosa
Oswald Feliz
Christopher Marte
Sandy Nurse
Sandra Ung
Inna Vernikov
Lynn Schulman

A P P E A R A N C E S

Andrea Bender
Vice President of External Affairs

Kelly Murphy
Senior Director of Real Estate

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1 signed in until after you have testified. If you
2 have written testimony you would like the
3 Subcommittee to consider in addition to or instead of
4 appearing before the Subcommittee, please send it via
5 email to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Land use
6 testimony all one word @council.nyc.gov. Please
7 indicate the LU number or the project name in the
8 subject line of your email.
9

10 Chair Louis will now continue with today's
11 agenda.

12 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. I will now open
13 the public hearing on Preconsidered Application
14 Number G 230029 SCQ, a site selection submission from
15 the New York City School Construction Authority,
16 pursuant to Section 1732 of the New York City School
17 Construction Authority Act for a new approximately
18 696 seat primary school facility located at 120-08
19 Jamaica Avenue in Queens within Community School
20 District 29, Community District 9, and in Council
21 Member Lynn Schulman's District.

22 Presenting this item on behalf of the SCA will be
23 the Vice President of External Affairs Andrea Bender
24 and Senior Director of Real Estate Kelly Murphy. I
25 will remind anyone wishing to testify remotely, if

1
2 you have not already done so, you must register
3 online or you may do that now by visiting Council's
4 website at council.nyc.gov/landuse. Can Council
5 Member Schulman – oh should she do that after her
6 statements? Yeah, if you could give your opening
7 statement, thank you.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Thank you. Good
9 morning and thank you Chair Louis for the opportunity
10 to make remarks on this proposed project. Today, we
11 will be discussing a proposal that holds great
12 significance for my district and the Richmond Hill
13 community. The establishment of a new elementary
14 school at 120-08 Jamaica Avenue.

15 Our children only get one shot at a good
16 education. It is the cornerstone of any thriving
17 community. Through education, we nurture the minds
18 of our youth, preparing them for a future that is yet
19 to be written, therefore, the proposal to construct a
20 new elementary school in our district is of utmost
21 importance to our shared vision of progress and
22 opportunity to for all.

23 In addition, the new school will have a much-
24 needed D75 component to enable children with special
25 needs to fulfill their potential. At the heart of

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1
2 this proposal lays the recognition that our existing
3 educational infrastructure is under immense strain.
4 As our community continues to grow and flourish, it
5 is incumbent upon us to ensure that our children have
6 access to high quality education. The construction
7 of this new elementary school will alleviate
8 overcrowding in existing schools, allowing for
9 smaller class sizes and more personalized detention
10 for our students.

11 I want to acknowledge that during the process
12 parents from the Richmond Hill community, along with
13 Community Board 9 members very strongly advocated for
14 a middle school in place of the proposed elementary
15 school. In meeting and speaking with these parents,
16 it became clear that their desire for middle school
17 was largely based on the long commutes for many of
18 their kids to the school zone for them.

19 In discussions with the Department of Education,
20 Local School Superintendents and Community Education
21 Council Representatives, an agreement was made for
22 all of us to work together to find creative,
23 strategic ways to alleviate the concerns raised,
24 which include zoning and transportation options.
25 This proposed school will be equipped with state-of-

1
2 the-art facilities, cutting-edge technology and ample
3 spaces for both academic and extracurricular
4 activities. It will foster an environment that
5 encourages curiosity, creativity and critical
6 thinking, empowering our students to become lifelong
7 learners and leaders in their own right.

8 In conclusion, the Proposal for a new elementary
9 school at 120-08 Jamaica Avenue, presents us with an
10 opportunity to enhance educational advancement,
11 alleviate overcrowding and provide our children with
12 a nurturing and inspiring learning environment.

13 Thank you for your time and attention. Let us move
14 forward together united in our commitment to the
15 future of our kids in our city. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you Council Member
17 Schulman. Counsel, would you please administer the
18 affirmation?

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Would you please raise your
20 right hand and state your name for the record?

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And do you affirm to tell the
22 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in
23 your testimony before the Subcommittee and in answer
24 to all Council Member questions?

25 KELLY MURPHY: Yes.

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1
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. You may begin.
4 Whenever you are ready to have a presentation shown
5 on the screen, please say so and our staff will
6 display it.

7 KELLY MURPHY: Yeah, that would be great if it
8 could go up on the screen.

9 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you.

10 KELLY MURPHY: Good morning Chair Louis and
11 members of the Committee. As you said, I'm Kelly
12 Murphy. I'm the Real Estate at the School
13 Construction Authority and I'm joined by Andrea
14 Bender, our Vice President of External Affairs.
15 We're very pleased to be here to present the proposed
16 site selection for approximately 696-seat Primary
17 School in Richmond Hill.

18 We are especially thankful to Council Member
19 Schulman for her dedicated and diligent support of
20 the project, thank you.

21 Pursuant to Section 1731 of the New York Public
22 State - the New York State Public Authorities Law,
23 the New York City School Construction Authority has
24 undertaken the site selection process for a new
25 approximately 696 Seat Primary School located at 120-

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1
2 08 Jamaica Avenue, Block 9330, Lots 1, 8, 10, and 12
3 in the Borough of Queens. The site is approximately
4 34,774 square feet about a 0.8 acres and the property
5 contains two vacant buildings, one two story and one
6 four stories and on a parking lot. The site is
7 located within Community Board Number 9 and in
8 Community Education Council Member 27.

9 The purpose of the proposed site plan for new
10 primary schools to provide additional permanent
11 school capacity that has been identified in the DOE's
12 five-year capital plan for 2020-2024. During the
13 2021-2022 school year, Community Education Council's
14 Elementary Schools operated collectively at 103
15 percent of their targeted capacity.

16 So, if you can go to the next slide please. So,
17 this is just an overview. It gives you the location
18 and the red bullseyes kind of in the middle of the
19 site and you can see the Long Island Railroad Tracks
20 kind of run Southeast of the site.

21 The next slide please. This is just showing the
22 exact block and lots that are the subject of the site
23 selection. Next slide please.

24 And this is more of a blown-up view. You could
25 see on Jamaica Avenue; you could see the L and the

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1 two buildings in the parking lot of the site. Next
2 slide please. This is our official notice of filing,
3 which I need to read into the record.
4

5 This is a notice of filing for the site plan. It
6 was published in AM New York and the City Record on
7 January 17, 2023, at which time Community Education
8 Council Number 27, Queens Community Board Number 9,
9 and City Planning Commission were also notified along
10 with elected officials. Community Education Council
11 Number 27 held a public hearing on January 30, 2023
12 and Queens Community Board Number 9 held a public
13 hearing on February 13, 2023.

14 All public comments received on the site were
15 considered as part of the site selection process.
16 The FCA affirms the site plan pursuant to 1731 of the
17 New York Public Authorities Law and in accordance
18 with Section 1732 of the PIL. The SCA submitted the
19 proposed site plan to the Mayor and City Council in a
20 letter dated July 18, 2023.

21 Next slide please. So, this next three slides is
22 just kind of more photographs of the site. So, this
23 is the first two story building on the left with the
24 red and you could see the entrance to the J&Z line is
25 literally right in front of the school. Next slide.

1
2 You can see the L on these pictures and then the
3 four-story industrial building that's on the site.
4 Next slide. And then just more pictures of the site
5 and the parking lot and the building that will be
6 demolished in order to accommodate construction of
7 the site.

8 Should the FCA receive approval to acquire the
9 property, the existing buildings will be demolished
10 in order to construct the new primary school. It's
11 anticipated that school will open in 2027 and will
12 include classrooms for prekindergarten to grade five.
13 As the Council Member said, District 75 classrooms,
14 music and art classrooms, a science resource room, a
15 library reading and speech resource rooms, kitchen
16 cafeteria, administrative space, medical suite and
17 play yard.

18 We look forward to the Subcommittee's favorable
19 consideration of the Proposed Site Plan and we're
20 pleased to answer any questions you may have. Thank
21 you.

22 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I just want to share we've
23 been joined by Council Member De La Rosa. Thank you
24 for your presentation. I'd like to now recognize
25 Council Member Schulman if you have any questions.

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1 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: No, none at this time.

2 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Do any of our colleagues have
3 questions? Great. If there are no further
4 questions, the applicant panel is excused. Counsel,
5 are there any members of the public wishing to
6 testify?
7

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: A reminder for anyone with us
9 here today in the room who would like to testify on
10 this item, please see the Sergeant to complete a
11 speaker card. And I will just confirm Madam Chair
12 that there's no one registered remotely. It appears
13 we have no one signed up to testify in the room.
14 Okay, and we're not seeing any online witnesses
15 either.

16 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Being there are no members of
17 the public who wish to testify regarding
18 Preconsidered Application G 2300029 SCQ, the public
19 hearing is now closed.

20 Next, we will vote on the Application we just
21 heard but before we vote, I'd like to take this time
22 again to recognize any of my colleagues who may have
23 questions or remarks regarding this item we heard
24 today, which again has the support of Council Member
25

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1 Schulman. Going once, going twice, great. I now
2 call for a vote to approve.

3
4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: To approve Preconsidered
5 Application Number G 230029 SCQ. Chair Louis?

6 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I vote aye. Congratulations.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member De La Rosa?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DE LA ROSA: Aye.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Nurse?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Ung?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Aye.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Vernikov?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I vote aye.

15 Congratulations.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, the vote is currently
17 five in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no
18 abstentions. The item is adopted and will be
19 recommended to the full Land Use Committee.

20 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Again, congratulations to
21 all. That concludes today's business. I would like
22 to thank the members of the public, my colleagues,
23 Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use Staff and Sergeant at
24 Arms for your participation today. This meeting is
25 hereby adjourned. [GAVEL].

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date July 25, 2023