

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 7, 2016  
Start: 11:26 a.m.  
Recess: 12:08 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm.  
14<sup>th</sup> Fl.

B E F O R E: Peter A. Koo  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Annabel Palma  
Deborah L. Rose  
Rosie Mendez  
Stephen T. Levin  
Inez D. Barron  
Ben Kallos

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

Lauren George, Director  
Intergovernmental & Community Affairs  
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING  
AND MARITIME USES

3

[sound check, pause]

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Good morning. I am Council Member Koo, Chair of the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses. We are joined by Council Members Palma, Mendez, Levine, Rose and also Council Member Chin. We will be holding a public hearing and voting on eight items today. First, the LPC will give a presentation on all eight items, which are proposed for designation as individual landmarks, and the public may testify on the items. The first item is LU Item No. 440, Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family in Council Member Levine's district in Manhattan. Council Member Levine has indicated that he supports the designation. The second item is Land Use Item No. 441, Saint Paul Roman Catholic Church in Speaker Mark-Viverito's district in Manhattan. The Speaker has indicated she supports this designation. The third item is Land Use Item No. 442, Firehouse Engine Company 29 in Council Member Chin's district in Manhattan. Council Member Chin indicated she supports this designation. The fourth item LU No. 443, 315 Broadway Building in Council Member Chin's district in Manhattan. Council Member Chin indicated

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING  
AND MARITIME USES

4

2 she supports the designation. The fifth item is LU  
3 Item No. 444, the George William and Anna Curtis  
4 House in Council Member Rose's district in Staten  
5 Island. Council Member Rose indicated that she  
6 supports the designation. The sixth item is LU No.  
7 445, the St. John's Episcopal Church Rectory in  
8 Council Member Rose's district in Staten Island.  
9 Council Member Rose has indicated that she supports  
10 this designation. The seventh item is No. 446, 92  
11 Harrison Street house in Council Member Rose's  
12 district in Staten Island, and Council Member Rose  
13 has indicated that she supports the designation. The  
14 eighth item is LU No. 447 the Princes Bay Lighthouse  
15 Complex in Council Member Borelli's district in  
16 Staten Island. Council Member Borelli has indicated  
17 that he is not opposed to this designation. I will  
18 now open the public hearing for Land Use Items No.  
19 440 through 447, and Council—we have Lauren George  
20 and Michael Oban from the Landmark Commission, and  
21 please identify yourselves and—and start.

22 LAUREN GEORGE: Good morning Council and  
23 Chair Koo and Council Members of the Landmarks  
24 Subcommittee. My name is Lauren George, as you said,  
25 and I'm here speak with you about these items. The

1 majority of these items, seven of the eight were  
2 backlog items related to the Landmarks Preservation  
3 Council's Backlog Initiative, and we held special  
4 hearings last fall for all 95 of those items. These  
5 are seven of them today. One of the additional items  
6 is part of the following backlog of items such as  
7 post-2010 items that were heard after 2010, and we  
8 are working those as well. The first item today is  
9 the Church of St. Joseph of the Holy Family. It's  
10 part of—part of the Backlog Initiative on November  
11 2016. The representatives of the Archdiocese of New  
12 York spoke in opposition to designation. Seven  
13 people spoke in favor the designation and the  
14 Commissioner received three written comments in  
15 support. St. Joseph is organized as a national  
16 parish by and for the German Catholic population of  
17 Manhattan. The church designed by an unknown  
18 architected was dedicated in 1860 and making it the  
19 oldest church in continuous use north of 44th Street  
20 in Manhattan. The church is located on a prominent  
21 site on the northwest corner of West 125<sup>th</sup> Street,  
22 formerly Manhattan Street, and Morningside Avenue  
23 formerly 9th Avenue. The choice of the  
24 Rundbogenstil, which is the round arched style,  
25

2 reflects the ethnic makeup of its original  
3 congregation and the rural nature of its surroundings  
4 in the early 19th Century, mid-19th Century.

5 Developed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century is an authentic  
6 German style, the Rundbogenstil characterized by a  
7 round arched opening draws through the expanses of  
8 wall surface and simple ornaments specifically  
9 concentrated around corniced windows and doors. The  
10 simple design of the circa 1860 church features a  
11 single square bell tower and round arched opening set  
12 within the framework of brick, piers and bands. (sic)  
13 During the pastorate of Reverend Anthony Kessler from  
14 1865 to 1898 a large addition to the church designed  
15 by Peter and Francis William Carter was completed in  
16 1890. This addition is a more elaborate  
17 interpretation of the rooms that have been scaled as  
18 greater dimensionality through irregular mounting.

19 The originally calendared landmark site here was the  
20 entire U-shaped lot, and you see here with a dashed  
21 line. However, the Commission designed on June 28  
22 only the church portion of the lot and given the east  
23 and west areas of the church as noted by the solid  
24 lines in here. The church remains largely unchanged.  
25 Prior to 1935, the stained glass windows were

2 replaced and the niche above the entrance was slated  
3 for a statue of St. Joseph. More recently an  
4 accessibility ramp and entrance were constructed.

5 Today, St. Joseph of the Holy Family serves a largely  
6 African-American and Latino congregation, and the  
7 Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm  
8 this designation today.

9           In moving to the next item, we have the  
10 Saint Paul Roman Catholic Church and pool. Actually  
11 just the church. Excuse me. So on June 28, the  
12 Landmarks Preservation Commission designated this  
13 church as part of the backlog as well. This—both the  
14 church and the school were proposed for designation  
15 on a special backlog hearing in November 2015. At  
16 that hearing, the Archdiocese again spoke against  
17 designation. Six people spoke in favor including  
18 Borough President Gale Brewer, and I'll just speak  
19 here of the other supporters who spoke at the  
20 meeting. The church is located in East Harlem on  
21 East North 17th between Park and Lexington Avenue.  
22 The building is freestanding although part of the  
23 north (sic) is above the building shown here. The  
24 proposed landmark site originally included the church  
25 and school, but the more modest school building and

1 modern playground are not part of designated landmark  
2 site. In June, the Commission designated only the  
3 church as shown by the solid red boundaries here.

4 Completed in 1908 and designed by Nevelle & Bagge,  
5 St. Paul Church is significant as an excellent of the  
6 late Romanesque Revival Style. Dominating the  
7 limestone façade are symmetrical corner palleys,  
8 large stained glass windows and a striking and  
9 unusual row of five arched portals. The church is  
10 also significant as one of the earliest Roman  
11 Catholic parishes in Manhattan. A prominent, the  
12 prominent NYC architectural firm Neville & Bagge are  
13 known for sections of row houses and apartment  
14 buildings in the Upper West Side and Harlem. This is  
15 the only known example of a church done in this  
16 style. (sic) The first church for this congregation  
17 was a simple stone structure constructed in 1835,  
18 which initially served all of Manhattan Catholics  
19 north of Houston Street. The present day church was  
20 built under the direction of Monsignor John McCork, a  
21 distinguished local cleric. Despite of an ambitious  
22 campaign to expand and improve the parish facilities,  
23 in response to the dramatic increase of Catholics in  
24 East Harlem. The tall arched window figured  
25



1 prominently in the design, and the construction is  
2 facilitated by the building with structural use of a  
3 ceiling concrete. The church combines both Medieval  
4 and classical features into its façade. Shown here  
5 are delicately carved Medieval style capitals that  
6 accent the classically smooth limestone finishes.  
7 (sic) During most of the 19th Century and into the  
8 15th, many Catholic group parishes identified their  
9 Irish heritage reflected in Saint Paul's congregation  
10 and activities. Since there were two, however, the  
11 demographics of the area changed. It then reflects  
12 the Spanish speaking Catholics. By the 1960s, the  
13 Archdiocese and parishes finally changes and  
14 sponsored many cultural and social programs for East  
15 Harlem Latinos. Saint Paul's Church is  
16 architecturally and historically significant. Today  
17 the building remains—retains a remarkable level of  
18 integrity in its historic design and materials in  
19 keeping with the diverse East Harlem community.  
20 Accordingly, we urge you to affirm this designation.

21  
22 So I am skipping to—out of order at the  
23 request of a council member who's not present. I'm  
24 moving to the George Williams and Anna Curtis House  
25 in Staten Island, and pardon because this thing is

1 not in order. On October 22, 2015, the George  
2 William and Anna Curtis was heard as part of the  
3 Landmarks Commission Backlog Initiative. At the  
4 hearing five people spoke in favor and support of  
5 designation. The recommendation moved to our  
6 District Council, the New York Landmarks Commission  
7 (sic) and the Midtown Society. (sic) No one spoke in  
8 opposition. This site has previously been heard in  
9 1964. LPC has had a positive—has had a positive  
10 working relationship with the property owners  
11 throughout the initiatives. We did not receive any  
12 formal statement concerning designation of  
13 architectural and historical that we see now. (sic)

14  
15 Built in 1859, the George William and  
16 Anna Curtis House is an excellent example of the  
17 pattern that was inspired Italianate country  
18 residence. In the tone of the notable farmer door  
19 entry. The house was built in Elliotville, an area  
20 that was developed in the 1840s by Samuel MacKenzie  
21 Elliott, a prominent eye surgeon, abolitionist and  
22 activist who attracted a notable like-minded  
23 informants of the neighborhood. (sic) Residents  
24 included the abolitionists, such as Sidney Howard  
25 Gaye, a progressive reformed leader, Josephine Shaw

1 Lovell and George William Gray. (sic) The Curtises  
2 lived most of their life together in the house at 234  
3 Bard Avenue. George William Curtis is a  
4 distinguished author, editor, essayist and lecturer.  
5 He was a writer for Putnam's Magazine and later for  
6 various Parker Brothers publications including  
7 Harper's Weekly, Harper's Magazine and Harper's  
8 Bizarre. A progressive thinker and persuasive  
9 lecturer, he addressed major political issues of the  
10 day, which was slavery, women's suffrage and civil  
11 service reform. Anna Curtis' active and local  
12 organizations they came from a like-minded family of  
13 reformers. In addition to significant associations  
14 with George William and Anna Curtis, the house is a  
15 fine example of the vernacular free-standing  
16 Italianate style country residence. Sharing  
17 similarities with the design for an ornamental farm  
18 house in Andrew Jackson's Downing's pattern book,  
19 Cottage Residences, the house exemplifies the  
20 influence of pattern books and Downing's work on  
21 American 19th Century residential architecture.  
22 Accordingly, LPC urges you affirm this designation  
23 today.  
24  
25

1  
2                   Alright, we have St. John's Protestant  
3 Episcopal Rectory. Prominently located on Bay Street  
4 in State Island, St. John's by a group of full  
5 rectory is an excellent example of early a Grecian  
6 and Queen Anne style residence. On October 22, 2015,  
7 the rectory was heard as part of the Landmarks  
8 Preservation Commission's Backlog Initiative. At the  
9 hearing, five people spoke in support of the  
10 resolution and no one spoke in opposition, and as you  
11 can see here, it was previously heard several times  
12 in 1966. An option of St. Andrew's Church in  
13 Richmond, St. John's Church was formerly organized  
14 September 1843 at the home of William Thompson, who  
15 served the needs of Protestants churches who living  
16 in the area of Brooklyn. The current church was  
17 built in 1869 to 1871, and was designed by a  
18 prominent architect and Staten Island resident Arthur  
19 Gilman. It actually provides the church with  
20 designated New York City landmark in 1974. The  
21 rectory located to the south of the church was built  
22 in 1881-82 when the building John Winwill on land  
23 donated to the church by warden and publisher John  
24 Appleton. True to the Queen Anne style, the house,  
25 the house features an asymmetrical plan and three-

1 dimensional style achieved in combination with  
2 protruding gables, bay windows, a recessed front  
3 porch and entrance. The house's highly texturized  
4 surface is also characteristic of the Queen Anne  
5 style and consists of rough-faced ashlar stone base  
6 and upper floors that feature vertical siding, half-  
7 timbering and scalloped shingles. Today, St. John's  
8 rectory remains an excellent example of an early  
9 half-timbering Queen Anne style house. The fixture  
10 of quality of the Queen Anne style and the house's  
11 granite base, an unusual feature among Staten  
12 Island's Queen Anne housing, complement St. John's PE  
13 Church, which, as I said is a New York City landmark  
14 from 1974. Accordingly, the LPC urges you to affirm  
15 this designation today.

17           Next, we're moving to the 92 Harrison  
18 Street House, which was also heard as part of the  
19 Backlog Initiative. The owner did not express an  
20 opinion about designation. Five people spoke in  
21 favor of designation, and two others spoke in favor  
22 of designation of all buildings before the Commission  
23 as part of the backlog. Borough President James Otto  
24 wrote of his concern about the impact of designation  
25 on all Staten Island including the Backlog

1 Initiative. Let me see here. 92 Harrison Street is  
2 an exceptional example of temple form of vernacular  
3 Green Revival style. It is an outstanding example of  
4 residential development in 19th Century Staten  
5 Island. Sited on a large lot at the intersection of  
6 Harrison and Green Street, 92 Harrison was  
7 constructed around 1853. Largely unchanged since the  
8 early 20th Century when the rear porch and side  
9 entrance porch were added. The 92 Harrison Street  
10 house has retained the architectural details  
11 characteristic of the Temple form subset of Greek  
12 Revival style. The unknown architect of the building  
13 designed the house with a street facing pedimented  
14 gable repeated on the rear façade. Doric corner  
15 pilasters supporting an entablature with dentil  
16 course and heavy cornice reminiscent of Greek Revival  
17 (sic). The effect is enhanced further with a full  
18 width porch and square and direct columns later  
19 repeated in a complementary early 20th Century side  
20 board. 92 Harrison is a remarkable intact example of  
21 vernacular Greek Revival style, and forever  
22 remembered as the first period of development here as  
23 Harrison Street was transitioning into a village  
24

1  
2 enclave. Therefore, we urge that you also affirm  
3 this designation.

4           Next we Princes Bay Lighthouse. This is  
5 located at 6204 Hylan Boulevard in Staten Island.  
6 Princes Bay Lighthouse Complex is part of the backlog  
7 heard on October 22, 2015. Six people spoke in favor  
8 of designation at this hearing, and the Commissioner  
9 received several letters from the public in support  
10 of designation. The Princes Bay Lighthouse Complex  
11 historically known as the resident lighthouse is  
12 located on the Shore of Princes Bay near the southern  
13 tip of Staten Island, and stands along the highest  
14 bluff on the southern shoreline. The complex  
15 consists of the lighthouse, the keeper's house and  
16 the carriage house. When the Princes Bay Lighthouse  
17 Complex was originally heard, the landmark that was  
18 the entire lot, which is 194 acres. LPC chose to  
19 designate a lot in part, which consisted only of the  
20 land and the two buildings, just the three of them.  
21 The Princes Bay Lighthouse Complex is one of the few  
22 intact surviving lighthouse complexes that serves a  
23 critical role of guiding ships sailing along the  
24 coast of State Island. Bounds for ports for New York  
25 and New Jersey for over 100 years, Princes Bay

1 Lighthouse, the Keeper's House is distinctive. It's  
2 the only lighthouse complex in the five boroughs  
3 constructed of brownstone. Princes Bay Lighthouse  
4 Complex is built as part of the federal government's  
5 efforts to provide an integrated system of  
6 navigational aids throughout the country and to  
7 provide safe maritime transportation in New York  
8 Harbor, a leading national port from the early 19th  
9 or the early 20th Century. The lighthouse served as  
10 the primary navigational aid for local maritime  
11 traffic. Fishermen and oystermen primarily working  
12 the oyster beds and are still there today. (sic)

14           The current brownstone and Princes  
15 Lighthouse is commissioned by the Federal Lighthouse  
16 Board in 1893 acting on its recommendation of \$30,000  
17 they appropriated to replace the wooden lighthouse  
18 that was being dumped. It's one of the eight  
19 excellent lighthouses in light houses in Staten  
20 Island and the second oldest in the world. The  
21 Keeper's House is vernacular with Italianate style  
22 elements a 2-1/2 story rusticated brownstone building  
23 with an attached one-story, 15-foot long connecting  
24 passageway, and it was built in 1868 next to the 1864  
25 lighthouse. An additional one-story fieldstone



1 carriage house was built in 1869 just left of the  
2 Keeper's House. As with all lighthouses, it is  
3 maintained by a lighthouse keep. One of which is  
4 shown here is the winded (sic)-

5  
6 The lighthouse was decommissioned in  
7 1922, and was purchased in 1926 by the Mount Loretto  
8 Mission of the Immaculate Virgin. The institution,  
9 which started out as an orphanage for street boys  
10 maintains the lighthouse and surrounding land near  
11 the cliff. They removed the lantern and replaced it  
12 with a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was  
13 used as a summer retreat for the Archbishop of New  
14 York, Cardinal John O'Connor, from 1988 until his  
15 death in 2000 an dedicated in his honor in '07. In  
16 '99-1999, the Trust of Public Land purchased the  
17 lighthouse property and its 194 acres on the land  
18 based by Hylan (sic) Boulevard. The New York State  
19 Department of Environment and Conservation now  
20 manages the property as a nature preserve and that is  
21 calls the Mount Loretto Unique Area. The current  
22 brownstone circular lighthouse was commissioned by  
23 the Federal Lighthouse Board in 1863 acting on its  
24 recommendation. Oh, I read that. Princes Bay  
25 Lighthouse is a prominent and dramatic feature in

1 Staten Island overlooking the Raritan Bay, and  
2 represents American history that once thrived on  
3 Staten Island. Accordingly, we urge that you affirm  
4 this designation today.  
5

6           So, we'll we're going back to 160  
7 Chambers Street, the former firehouse, Engine Company  
8 29. This building was heard on February 11, 2014.  
9 Three people testified in support of designation  
10 including representatives of the Tribeca Trust and  
11 Historic District Council. No one spoke in  
12 opposition. Located on the south part of Chambers  
13 Street between West Broadway and Greenwich Street,  
14 the former firehouse Engine Company 29 is one of the  
15 city's earliest surviving police stations, and it's  
16 an early and important reminder of the development of  
17 Chambers Street in Southern Tribeca. While the  
18 relatively narrow width of the building recalls the  
19 early residential character, the height and design of  
20 the façade removes the building's greater civic uses.  
21 It was a built as a brief resident by Samuel  
22 Thompson, a noted building, circa. 18-1832. In 1836,  
23 David Osmond, a prominent lawyer, purchased the house  
24 and lived there until about 1848. The building  
25 attained its present appearance as was up to several

1 alterations. New York City purchased the building in  
2 in 1862 to serve as the Third Police Precinct  
3 Station. It was raised to five stories including a  
4 mansard roof, and altering Second Empire style in  
5 1868 by Nathaniel Bush, the official architect of the  
6 New York City Police Department. The building was  
7 then occupied by the House of Relief, a hospital  
8 under the charge of New York Hospital from 1875 until  
9 1894. The building was further altered at the first  
10 story to house the New York Fire Department's Engine  
11 Company 29, which occupied the building from 1897 to  
12 1947. The City retained ownership until 1962, and  
13 from 1947 to 1962, the Uniformed Fire Officers  
14 Association occupied the building. It was converted  
15 to commercial use in '57 and since then in the mid  
16 '80s it has had commercial use of the ground floor  
17 and residential use above. The building remains  
18 mostly intact since 1868, and the 1896 alterations.  
19 It contributed a layered history of Chambers Street  
20 in Southern Tribeca. Therefore, we ask that you  
21 affirm this designation today.

22  
23 And finally, we have 315 Broadway, which  
24 is also in Council Member Chin's district. On  
25 November 5, 2015, 315 Broadway was heard as part of

1 the Landmarks Preservation Commission Backlog  
2 Initiative. After hearing the ton of people who  
3 spoke in support of designation and no one spoke in  
4 opposition. Additionally, the Commission received  
5 three letters of support for designation and one in  
6 opposition. The building had previously been heard  
7 in 1989 and 1990. 315 Broadway with Palazzo inspired  
8 commercial store and loft building, architecture that  
9 once lined Broadway and shaped the streetscape with  
10 Antebellum New York. Constructed a speculative  
11 investment by the retired linen merchant Thomas  
12 Suffer in 1861, 315 Broadway is a fine example of the  
13 commercial palaces built from 1840 to 1850 throughout  
14 the wholesale and dry goods district now known as  
15 Tribeca. Located on the west side of Broadway  
16 between Thomas' (sic) Road, 315 Broadway is  
17 distinguished by a structural clarity, invented  
18 detailing and subtle ornaments. The five-story  
19 buildings features a marble façade with rusticated  
20 corners that appears in bracketed cornices, cast iron  
21 on pedestal bases and a cast iron store front that is  
22 currently partially concealed. The position of the  
23 piers inset from the building is a design feature  
24 perhaps intended to give the impression that 315  
25

1 Broadway was a stand-free-standing building when it  
2 was built. When it was built, 315 abutted the garden  
3 and entrance of the first public hospital in  
4 Manhattan as seen in drawings from 1865 above. Here.  
5 In Manhattan Palazzo inside door in the office first  
6 brought to New York by Architects Joseph Trench and  
7 John Butler-Smith for the A.T. Stewart Store in 1845,  
8 which set a precedent for stone clad stores and lofts  
9 in Tribeca. The Italian Renaissance Palazzo was  
10 thought to be a particularly appropriate model for  
11 commercial building under the Association of Merchant  
12 policies.(sic) Two of these commercial policies  
13 still exist on Broadway south of Franklin Street.  
14 315 Broadway has been leased by dozens of tenants in  
15 construction including Bartley Graham Arms and Ammo  
16 and a subsidiary running some arms company from 1892  
17 to 1912 and Hagstrom Company, a cartography and  
18 publishing firm from 1948 to 1969. Hagstrom designed  
19 and published the official New York City Subway Map  
20 during the periods from '43 to '56. This building  
21 indicates the commencement period in Tribeca's  
22 history. Accordingly, the Landmarks Preservation  
23 Commission urges you to affirm this designation  
24

2 today. Thank you and that concludes the  
3 presentation.

4 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you very much.  
5 Now, Council Member Margaret Chin would like to make  
6 a statement.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. Good  
8 morning. I would like to thank Chairman Koo and  
9 members of the Landmarks Subcommittee for their  
10 consideration of two historic designations in my  
11 district. The first is the former Firehouse of  
12 Engine Company 29 in Tribeca. That was originally  
13 was a resident in 1836. This building has served for  
14 three—in a variety of public and private uses. It is  
15 one of the earliest survivors, surviving police  
16 stations. It served as a hospital and finally as the  
17 New York City Fire Department Engine Company 29.  
18 This five-story building serves today as an important  
19 marker of the earliest history of Chambers Street and  
20 the Tribeca neighborhood. As someone who cares  
21 deeply about preserving this neighborhood's historic  
22 character, I would like to thank members of the  
23 Tribeca 12th (sic) for their advocacy with regards to  
24 this designation. The second item the 315 Broadway  
25 building is also moving forward today as a result of

2 the LPC Backlog Initiative. I would like to thank  
3 the PC for recognizing the contribution of 315  
4 Broadway as an example of the commercial palatial  
5 building that once lined this iconic corridor, and  
6 it's a surviving reminder of the mercantile history  
7 of New York City. I would also like to thank the  
8 Tribeca Trust, the Municipal Art Society, the  
9 Historic District Council as well as my colleagues,  
10 Borough President Gale Brewer, Assembly Member  
11 Deborah Glick, Community Board 1, the Victorian  
12 Society and the Landmarks Conservancy for their  
13 support of this designation, and I encourage my  
14 colleagues to vote in support of these two well  
15 deserved designations. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you. Any  
17 questions from our members? When it comes for a  
18 vote.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [off mic] I just  
20 wanted to speak to [on mic] Just a-a brief, just  
21 brief remarks. I-I want to thank Council Member Koo,  
22 Chair Koo and our Landmarks Committee for recognizing  
23 the wonderful works of art, and actually for  
24 landmarking. You know, the George and Anna Curtis  
25 House is a surviving vestige of the Abolitionists

2 Movement on Staten Island, and it's been rumored that  
3 in that area it was one of the Underground Railroad  
4 stops in-in that community. So, this is really a  
5 coup I think not only for landmarks, but for  
6 historical preservation, and St. John's PE Church  
7 directors. It's just a beautiful-it's just a  
8 beautiful building, and I'm-I'm so thankful that we  
9 were able to finally after all of these years get-get  
10 it landmarked, and-and 92 Harrison Street I know that  
11 we had quite a stormy history with Harrison Street.  
12 I'm sorry that that was not-the entire street was not  
13 able to be given a historical designation, but by the  
14 same token 92 Harrison Street is an excellent example  
15 of that time period. So, I am thankful that we were  
16 able to get that landmarked. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you, and we are  
18 also joined by Council Member Kallos. [off mic] and  
19 by you, and do you have-and do you have any  
20 questions? No. We will take a short pause and those  
21 will be treated as usual on the slate, and if any  
22 anyone is asking questions. We should be here in a  
23 minute, any moment now. Okay. Thank you. Okay, go  
24 ahead.



2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you very  
3 much, Mr. Chair. I'm just wondering when—I—I noticed  
4 that there wasn't any Brooklyn properties that were  
5 on the backlog on this—in this—in this tranche, and I  
6 was wondering is—are—are any Brooklyn properties on  
7 their—on their way? Alright.

8 LAUREN GEORGE: Councilman, we have one  
9 coming next down the pipeline that we just designated  
10 in July I believe, the—a company building at South  
11 Fifth, on South Fifth in Council Member Reynoso's  
12 district--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: [interposing]  
14 Okay.

15 LAUREN GEORGE: Right next to your  
16 district, which will becoming part of that. It's a  
17 maybe thing.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Excellent.

19 LAUREN GEORGE: We also have another  
20 several—a few buildings on the backlog indefinitely,  
21 which will be coming.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Excellent.

23 LAUREN GEORGE: We--we missed a few  
24 coming up meeting with them, but don't worry, we're  
25 covering all of that.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Great. Thank you,  
3 Chair.

4 [pause]

5 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Council Member  
6 Greenfield, you have some questions, don't you?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I do, Mr.  
8 Chairman. I thank you very much. First, I want to  
9 recognize that I'm very excited that most of these  
10 buildings, in fact, that we are discussing today are  
11 once again, as a direct result of the legislation  
12 that was passed by Chair Koo and myself, which, in  
13 fact, has now forced the Landmarks Preservation  
14 Commission to go through their 50-year backlog and,  
15 in fact, the opposite of what some of the advocates  
16 have been concerned about is happening, which is we  
17 are now seeing more landmarks than ever before  
18 because the Commission is now designating these  
19 landmarks because they have to and, of course, we  
20 know that you've been working hand-in-hand with us.  
21 So, once again, I want to take this opportunity to  
22 congratulate Chair Koo for his forward thinking and  
23 insightful legislation, and I was proud co-sponsor.  
24 Which has so improved the situation in New York City  
25 where we're seeing more landmarks than ever before.

2 So you're welcome. Now, that being said, I do want  
3 to chat about a couple of these items with you that I  
4 sort of found curious perhaps. And really just  
5 trying to understand sort of the thinking behind  
6 them. The first—the first that I'd like to chat  
7 about is the—the Firehouse Engine Company 29. Can  
8 you just give me a little bit more background on the  
9 decision in this particular case to landmark this  
10 property, and I believe, in fact, that there is a—a  
11 similar property down the road that you guys have  
12 actually chosen not to landmark. Can you give me a  
13 little bit of detail about that?

14 LAUREN GEORGE: Well, certainly,  
15 Councilman. As we stated in our conditions, this is  
16 significant.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: [interposing]  
18 I wasn't here for the presentation. Full disclosure,  
19 we have a neat trick where we hold several  
20 subcommittees at the same time, and we have a Zoning  
21 Subcommittee across the street, and as Chair of Land  
22 Use I have to be there as well. So, if you wouldn't  
23 mind just repeating it because my--

24 LAUREN GEORGE: [interposing] I'm glad.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: --hearing is  
3 not so superior that I can hearing what's going on  
4 all the way from the City Hall Chambers to here.  
5 Thank you.

6 LAUREN GEORGE: So, you do you have super  
7 powers. So it's significant for--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: [interposing]  
9 I do but not in the hearing department. We'll  
10 discuss my super powers later.

11 LAUREN GEORGE: Okay. Sorry. So it's  
12 significant historically and culturally as far as the  
13 civic associations with New York City. It was--well,  
14 it was a Firehouse as well as the police station for  
15 many years as well as a hospital, which there would  
16 be Lower Manhattan Hospital Solutions. (sic) So the  
17 use of this building has gone from residential to  
18 civic with the police station to a hospital to a  
19 firehouse and then back to commercial and residential  
20 as it currently stands. So it's--it's significant  
21 architecturally and culturally. If you would like me  
22 to repeat other details, I can tell you--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: [interposing]  
24 No, I'm--I'm curious for example. It was 143 Chambers  
25 just down the block was actually moved on the

2 calendar. So many-many preservationists actually  
3 consider this to be an even better example of an  
4 architecturally significant building site. I'm just  
5 trying to sort of understand why it is that 160 is  
6 going to be landmarked but 143 is not.

7 LAUREN GEORGE: Right. So 143 Chambers  
8 is actually part of the Backlog Initiative where we  
9 look 95 properties that have been heard before 2010.  
10 So this is actually a separate initiative, which is  
11 post-2010's backlog of items, and we weren't looking  
12 at this directly in the context of 143. It's sort of  
13 an expected (sic) initiative, if you will.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Oh, I  
15 understand, but they're in their same neighborhood  
16 right down the block.

17 LAUREN GEORGE: Yes, I know that.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: So I'm--

19 LAUREN GEORGE: So 143 I understand yes  
20 people also were very interested in not being  
21 landmarked. So we had to make difficult choices, and  
22 this building particularly was taken part in civic  
23 and cultural areas. Because sometimes we look at  
24 more than just architectural signs of the buildings  
25

2 to determine if historically it's the same building  
3 and city landmark.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay, so just  
5 to be clear, the reason that you've chosen this  
6 instead of 143 is because this more significant  
7 because of the--because of--

8 LAUREN GEORGE: [interposing] Because of  
9 their cultural history and civic history.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Socio-culture  
11 has--can you define that, that one? It's a big word.

12 LAUREN GEORGE: It's social and cultural  
13 history that surrounds--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: [interposing]  
15 Yes.

16 LAUREN GEORGE: --a building but also  
17 just to clarify--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: [interposing]  
19 No, no, I mean can you define that as--as it reflects  
20 to 160 Broadway? What is it about the socio-cultural  
21 aspects of this building that distinguish it from  
22 143?

23 LAUREN GEORGE: Well, first of all, I  
24 don't have information all for 143 in front of me.  
25 So I can't actually give you a comparison at this

2 moment. I'll have to get back to you on that, and  
3 also--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: [interposing]  
5 To be fair, you just told me that 160 was more  
6 important than 143 because it had these socio-  
7 cultural aspects. I'm—I'm not trying to be  
8 difficult. I'm just genuinely curious. That's all.

9 LAUREN GEORGE: We weren't looking at 143  
10 in comparison to 160 Chambers. Just so you know. It  
11 wasn't—that wasn't the way that it took place.  
12 Again, this is part of the Backlog and this—this—133  
13 was part of the Backlog on East Side, but decisions  
14 were made about that in February. Decisions were  
15 made about this property later, a couple months  
16 later. So it wasn't direct from there.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay. Once  
18 again, you don't have the information today. That's  
19 okay. If you wouldn't mind getting back to me and  
20 sort of trying to explain to me. I—I think it's just  
21 fair. I have no problem with designation of  
22 landmarks, but I think it's fair for the public to  
23 understand why it is that one property gets  
24 landmarked and another property doesn't get  
25 landmarked, and we want folks to understand that

1 these are not arbitrary and capricious decisions—  
2 decisions, which I'm sure they are not obviously.  
3 And so if you can just get back to us and explain to  
4 us why is it that 160 is deserving of landmarking,  
5 but 143 was not more than just a technical response.  
6 So we don't look at the same time. It would be  
7 helpful for the public to know because many folks are  
8 just curious as to why it is that 143 was not  
9 designated and 160, in fact, was designated. The  
10 other question I have is regarding the 315 Broadway  
11 building. I have to say, this one actually perplexes  
12 me a tad as well. It is perhaps one of the uglier  
13 landmarks that we are designating. Maybe the old  
14 picture is nice, but not the recent picture. Right,  
15 yes? It's nice of you to show the picture of how it  
16 looked 100 years ago, but it doesn't look that way—it  
17 doesn't quite look that way any more, as I think you  
18 can acknowledge. It's been significantly altered and  
19 so I'm just trying to sort of understand the—the  
20 thinking on—on that property as well especially in  
21 consideration of if you look at the broader map, most  
22 of Tribeca is already landmarked. So is this sort of  
23 like an attempt to landmark everything in Tribeca?  
24 Is Tribeca super special that everything gets  
25



2 landmarked? Which is—could be okay as well. Once  
3 again, my only purpose over here is trying to  
4 understand the rationale so the public can understand  
5 why certain things get landmarked and other things do  
6 not?

7 LAUREN GEORGE: Certainly. This building  
8 is special for it's Palazzo. So it would Palazzo  
9 style, commercial loft building, which there are very  
10 few surviving examples of south of Franklin Street.  
11 It's important also because it's one of the--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: [interposing]  
13 And there are quite a few in the neighborhood that  
14 are already landmarked right? Just to be fair.

15 LAUREN GEORGE: Right, correct.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay, so it's  
17 not back to you, right?

18 LAUREN GEORGE: We have determined that  
19 this individual landmark, and the expertise of the  
20 body, the Landmark Preservation Commission looked at  
21 the testimony, reviewed the vast public support of  
22 this, and in their expertise chose to landmark this.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: It doesn't  
24 really answer the question. No, I understand that.  
25 So, I understand that there is some support for this.

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I am not questioning that. I'm just understanding-  
trying to understand from a landmarking perspective.  
You said it was unique, but then you also recognized  
my point, which was that there are quite a few other  
building with a similar style that are already  
landmarked in the neighborhood. So what makes this  
building special, or is it simply that you decided  
that every building that looks like is going to be  
landmarked?

LAUREN GEORGE: Again, this is part of  
the Backlog Initiative. So we're looking at items  
that have been heard many years ago, and this is one  
of those items proposed for designation chosen from  
the 95 as the particularly special among the  
selections we did with that.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: What about it  
made it particularly special?

LAUREN GEORGE: Well, I can back to see.  
Who knows. Again, it's a commercial palace building.  
It has a very unique structure in the front. So the  
tiers and the way that the articulation, the façade  
is designed.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: [interposing]  
3 Which has been significantly altered since the day.  
4 It's a pretty garish pizza shop I think.

5 LAUREN GEORGE: Actually it's not been  
6 significantly altered. There are some storefront  
7 changes, and we can look behind the storefront.  
8 There is still interesting sort of fabric with the  
9 cast iron storefront and cast iron palazzos still  
10 remaining through there at the lower level in  
11 Tribeca. Yes, it does have an unfortunate sign there  
12 now, but there is original historic fabric behind  
13 that.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Behind the  
15 sign?

16 LAUREN GEORGE: That's correct.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: So if one  
18 were to stick their head under the sign, they could  
19 see some historic fabric is what—is what you're  
20 saying?

21 LAUREN GEORGE: Well, what—what we want--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: [interposing]  
23 I have no—once again, I have no problem with any of  
24 this. I'm just trying to understand. I just think  
25 that we get a lot of calls from folks who—who are

2 sort trying to understand sort of why it is that  
3 certain buildings get landmarked and certain don't,  
4 right?

5 LAUREN GEORGE: [interposing] Uh-huh.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: And some  
7 people like my colleague Council Member Kallos will  
8 tell you in a few minutes that from his perspective  
9 everything should be landmarked. I don't necessarily  
10 agree with that contention, and so I'm simply trying  
11 to understand why it is that you make certain  
12 decision so that there is just more transparency, and  
13 quite frankly, of all the landmarked items today,  
14 these two jumped out as somewhat curious. In the  
15 first case with the firehouse because the building on  
16 the block that was similar did not get landmarked,  
17 and in this case because many of the buildings that  
18 were similar already were landmarked, and this one  
19 was not. And then this one seems to be significantly  
20 altered in terms of the condition. And so I'm just  
21 simply trying to have the public understand why one  
22 thing gets landmarked and something else does not.

23 LAUREN GEORGE: Well, I mean in this case  
24 again, we don't consider this to be significantly  
25 altered. We consider this building to be highly

2 intact, and choices are made on individual landmarks  
3 based on the integrity of that individual landmark,  
4 not necessarily--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: [interposing]  
6 Have you been inside the building? I'm told that you  
7 folks have been inside the building and it's  
8 essentially falling apart.

9 LAUREN GEORGE: I have not personally  
10 been inside the building.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay. So just  
12 FYI. I don't know if you guys are. So I'm not so  
13 sure about the intent piece of it. But okay, I-I  
14 certainly hear you on that, but I-I would love to get  
15 some more information if you can on the Chambers  
16 Street as well--

17 LAUREN GEORGE: [interposing] Uh-huh.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: --the  
19 distinction between the two, and obviously I support  
20 the local council member in her application and her  
21 support of these projects, and certainly we'll be  
22 voting in favor as per the council member's request.  
23 I'm just simply trying to understand the logic behind  
24 it so that the public has a better understanding of  
25 how these decisions are made. Thank you.

2 LAUREN GEORGE: Thank you, than you.

3 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you, Chair

4 Greenfield. [background comments] Okay. So are  
5 there any more members of the public who wish to  
6 testify? Seeing none, I will now close the public  
7 hearing on all of these items. Thank you. I am now  
8 going to couple all these items for a vote to approve  
9 all items on Land Use Items No. 440 through 447.  
10 Counsel, please call the roll.

11 LEGAL COUNSEL: Chair Koo.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I vote aye.

13 LEGAL COUNSEL: Council Member Palma.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Aye.

15 LEGAL COUNSEL: Council Member Mendez.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Aye.

17 LEGAL COUNSEL: Council Member Levin.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Aye.

19 LEGAL COUNSEL: Council Member Rose.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye.

21 LEGAL COUNSEL: Council Member Kallos.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Aye.

23 LEGAL COUNSEL: The vote to approve Land  
24 Use Item 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446 and 447 is  
25 approved by a vote of 6 in the affirmative, no

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING  
AND MARITIME USES

39

2 abstentions and no negative votes. [background  
3 comments]

4 CHAIRPERSON KOO: The meeting is  
5 adjourned. [gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date September 12, 2016