

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND
MARITIME USES

----- X

February 24, 2015
Start: 11:36 a.m.
Recess: 12:13 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm,
16th Fl.

B E F O R E:

PETER A. KOO
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Annabel Palma
Maria Del Carmen Arroyo
Rosie Mendez
Stephen T. Levin
Inez D. Barron
Ben Kallos
David G. Greenfield
Mathieu Eugene

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

Jenna Adams
Director
Intergovernmental Affairs
Landmarks Preservation Commission

Sarah Carroll
Executive Director
Landmarks Preservation Commission

Leslie Wright
Resident
Chester Court Block Association

Simeon Bancroft
Executive Director
The Historic Districts Council

Zoma Bogen
Resident
Ridgewood, Queens

Virginia Comber
Member of Ridgewood Community

Paul Kerzner
Counsel
Ridgewood Property Owners and
Civic Association

[background comments]

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Good morning. [gavel]

This is Council Member Peter Koo, Chair of the Subcommittee of Landmarks, Public Sitings and Maritime Uses. Today we are joined by Chairman Greenfield and Council Member Kallos, Council Member Levin, Council Member Mendez and of course, the other two Council Members are on their way. So we want to welcome all of you to this public hearing and we will start with [background comment] LU Item No.

[background comments] 0178, Application No. 20155273 HKK, in Council Member Eugene's district.

[background comments] Jenna... [background comment]

Jenna Adams will give testimony about this bill.

[background comments]

[pause]

JENNA ADAMS: Are we ready?

[background comments]

JENNA ADAMS: Good morning Council Members, including Chair Koo. I am Jenna Adams; I am the Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for the Landmarks Preservation Commission; some of you may know me as the new Jenny. [laughter] This is our Executive Director, Sarah Carroll and so I am here

1
2 today to testify on the designation of the Chester
3 Court Historic District, which is in Eugene's
4 district.

5 On November 25th, 2014, the Landmarks
6 Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the
7 proposed designation of the Chester Court Historic
8 District; seven people spoke in favor of the
9 designation, including representatives of Brooklyn
10 Borough President Eric Adams, the Chester Court Block
11 Association, Historic District Council, Lefferts
12 Manor Association and Community Board 9, and the Real
13 Estate Board of New York. The public hearing was
14 then closed and reopened to hear testimony of Council
15 Member Mathieu Eugene and a representative of the
16 Prospect Lefferts Garden Neighborhood Association,
17 both of whom spoke in favor of the designation.

18 There were no speakers in opposition to this proposed
19 designation. Last year, on December 16th, the
20 Commission voted to designate the Chester Court
21 Historic District.

22 The Chester Court Historic District
23 consists of picturesque grouping of 18 Tudor Revival
24 style houses set in two opposing rows along a cul-de-
25 sac, along with an original brick wall that

1
2 terminates the block. It was designed and built in
3 1911 by Peter Collins, who is a prominent Brooklyn
4 architect and a developer who was born and raised in
5 Brooklyn and served as the Borough's Superintendent
6 of Buildings.

7 The Chester Court Houses are likely among
8 the earliest Tudor Revival style row houses in the
9 Borough, if not the entire city. Their design was
10 inspired by the renowned timber frame, black and
11 white buildings of Chester in England, which
12 primarily date from the 16th and 17th centuries.

13 Sorry; I'm just wrapping my head around all these
14 terms as we go through this. And the Chester Court
15 Houses are faced with Flemish bond red brick at their
16 first stories and stucco with false half-timbering
17 above; they remain remarkably well-preserved, as all
18 of the houses retain their original clay tile roofs
19 and many retain their historic wooden doors. The
20 wall at the end of the Court, which is attributed to
21 Collins, screens out the adjacent Brighton subway
22 line and contributes to the sense of the district as
23 a distinctive, self-contained enclave. Accordingly,
24 the Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to
25 affirm this designation. And we have a map for

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

reference in the back, so let me know if you have any questions.

[background comments]

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you. Council Member Eugene would like to make a statement.

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Thank you very much, Chairman Koo. Thank you. Good morning. Good morning, Chairman Koo and the members of the Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses Committee.

I want to also take the opportunity to thank Miss Leslie Wright, who has been in the forefront of the advocacy, thank you very much, and all those from my district.

It is a pleasure to be appearing before this Committee to testify in support of the Landmarks application for Chester Court Historic District. It is good to see so many members of the Chester Court Block Association and other constituents of mine in this hearing room to voice their support for the Chester Court Historic District. I want to thank all of you for being here and for all your hard work that has resulted in all of us being in the same room at this very moment.

1
2 Let me first state that Chester Court is
3 a historical [sic] enclave, a magnificently beautiful
4 block of century-old homes in Prospect-Lefferts
5 Gardens that I truly feel privileged to have as part
6 of the 48th District in Brooklyn.

7 The aging Tudor Revival homes on Chester
8 Court are among the earliest Tudor Revival style
9 houses in Brooklyn, they are an exceptional example
10 of the architecture of the time and quite remarkably
11 they appear much as they did when they were built
12 approximately 100 years ago; in fact, many of the
13 original roofs and windows have remained in tact
14 through the course of time.

15 The Chester Court Houses were designed by
16 Peter J. Collins, a famous architect of the time, who
17 was a Brooklyn Superintendent of Buildings and
18 modeled the homes after a house in Chester, England.
19 These homes were built along a new street that was
20 constructed in Flatbush in 1911, a street that cut
21 through all the old property which once belonged to
22 the Vanderbilt family.

23 I've always firmly believed that it is
24 important for us to preserve significant places that
25 are representative of our past; Chester Court is one

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

of those places. Chester Court meets the Landmarks Preservation Commission requirements for a historic designation and that it has a sense of place and represents an architectural era in the City's history, and I am certain that it is the reason why the Commission unanimously approved its designation as a historic district late last year. In the Boerum District with similar architecture on either side of Chester Court have already been given a landmark designation.

Mr. Chair, members of the Committee, I respectfully ask that you support the Landmarks applications for the Chester Court Historic District and thank you in advance for your support. Thank you. And I want to take the opportunity also to thank Miss Jenna Adams for your testimony and thank you very much also, Miss...

SARAH CARROLL: Carroll.

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you, Council Member Eugene. Now Council Member Greenfield, Chair of the Land Use Committee wants to make remarks.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank you Mr. Chairman, I promised Meenakshi [sp?] I'd be nice to Jenna on her first meeting..

JENNA ADAMS: I appreciate it.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: so I will keep that commitment; just so you know; it only works for the first meeting..

JENNA ADAMS: Fair.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: in all fairness. I certainly wanna congratulate my colleague, Council Member Eugene; I know this has been a very important issue for him for many years that he's been pushing this particular block, Chester Court; it is a beautiful block and certainly very excited for him and the entire block. I just also wanna point out that I'm very encouraged that today all of the applications, with apologies to Ben Kallos, are outside of Manhattan, which is very exciting that the Commission has discovered the outer boroughs again and so we're very pleased by that as well, so just wanted to make note of that. Thank you.

JENNA ADAMS: Thank you.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CHAIRPERSON KOO: [background comment]
Greenfield. We want to announce that we are joined
by Council Member Arroyo and Council Member Barron.
And we have two members from the public who want to
testify -- Leslie Wright and Simeon Bancroft.
[background comments] Please identify yourself and
then start. [background comments] And turn the
thing on, turn the... yeah.

LESLIE WRIGHT: Good morning, my name is
Leslie Wright; thank you, Chairman Koo, thank you,
Councilperson Eugene and thank you, Committee for
hearing the matter of Chester Court's historic
designation today.

I'm here on behalf of the Chester Court
Block Association; I have the happy privilege of
being one of the 19 homeowners on Chester Court and
I'm here to speak on behalf of all 19 of us to thank
you very much for your consideration of the historic
designation of Chester Court, it's an incredible
block; I invite you all to come over and see it if
you haven't already; we all truly feel that we...
[interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: When is the
annual block party?

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

LESLIE WRIGHT: We'll give you the date,
sir... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay.

LESLIE WRIGHT: we throw a mean one; last
year it was in... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Great, we'll
be there.

LESLIE WRIGHT: early September.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Excellent.
Excellent.

LESLIE WRIGHT: We all know that we live
in a very, very, very special place; we love our
homes and we take great pride in taking care of them
and preserving all the historic features that have
been highlighted today, so thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Okay. Thank you. Mr...

SIMEON BANCROFT: Good morning Council
Members; I'm Simeon Bancroft, Executive Director of
the Historic Districts Council.

HDC is the citywide advocate for New
York's historic neighborhoods; we are in strong
support of the designation of the Chester Court
Historic District. I would like especially thank
Council Member Eugene for his strong support and it's

1
2 a pleasure to be seeing all of the Council Members as
3 well.

4 Chester Court, as has been described, is
5 a beautiful and very unified historic district, we've
6 been working with them for a number of years; the
7 community is very much in favor of this and we think
8 it's delightful. This is, just as a point of
9 history, the first historic district of the de Blasio
10 Administration in the sense that it truly came
11 through the de Blasio Administration completely, both
12 in its calendaring and its designation; we think that
13 this is a great first step; we look forward to many
14 other designations that might be slightly larger
15 perhaps or perhaps even slightly more controversial,
16 but this is wonderful, it is unified, both in
17 architecture, history and community support. Thank
18 you very much.

19 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you very much.
20 [background comments] Any members have questions for
21 the participants? Yeah.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I don't have any
23 question, I just want to take the opportunity also to
24 commend and thank the Commissioner of Landmarks also
25 and all the members for voting positively on this

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

remarkable designation and to all of you who have come today to testify, thank you very much. And I want to take the opportunity to thank also Council Member Chair Greenfield and Chair Mark Weprin also. Thank you very much. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you. So no more questions? [background comments] Any members of the public want to testify? No? So this case is closed. [background comments]

The next item we're gonna call is LU No. 0171, Application No. 20155265 HKQ, Hawthorne Court Apartments, in Council Member Vallone's district. Would Jenna Adams of the LPC come to testify on this item?

JENNA ADAMS: Hello, for the record again, my name is Jenna Adams; I am the Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for the Landmarks Preservation Commission and I'm testifying on the Commission's designation of the Hawthorne Court Apartments in Bayside, Queens.

On March 22nd, 2011, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a landmark of the Hawthorne Court Apartments, five people spoke in favor of the

1 designation, including representatives of the
2 Historic Districts Council, Queens Preservation
3 Council, Central Queens Historical Association;
4 Bayside Historical Society. A letter in favor of the
5 designation was received from Paul Graziano; he's a
6 principal of the Associated Cultural Resource
7 Consultants, we received a letter of support from
8 Assembly Member Edward Braunstein as well and email
9 from Michael Perlman, who is from the Rego-Forest
10 Preservation Council. The owner was the sole speaker
11 against the designation.
12

13 The first hearing was left open for
14 additional comments and the second hearing was duly
15 advertised and held on October 28th, 2014.
16 Representatives of the Bayside Historical Society and
17 Historic District Council reiterated their support
18 for the designation. The owner and her
19 representative spoke in opposition to the designation
20 again. The Commission received a letter from Council
21 Member Paul Vallone and an email from the Rego-Forest
22 Preservation Council, both in favor of the
23 designation.
24
25

1
2 On September 30th, 2014, the Commission
3 voted to designate the apartment complex a New York
4 City individual landmark.

5 For context, Bayside became a commuter
6 suburb with the completion of a railroad tunnel to
7 Manhattan in 1910; by the late 1920s and early 1930s,
8 low-rise suburban garden apartments appeared,
9 incorporating ideas from the British Garden city
10 movement and those of the model tenement movement in
11 New York.

12 The Tudor Revival style Hawthorne Court
13 Apartments is a significant example of architecture
14 of this period. The respected architect, Benjamin
15 Braunstein arranged the units in two groups of
16 varying sizes around the courtyard with meandering
17 paths set back from the streets. The buildings, with
18 their complex massing of rooflines, dormers and
19 entrances, as well as a proportion of the façade
20 materials create a glimpse into that area.

21 The Hawthorne Court Apartments was
22 awarded for its design by the Queens Chamber of
23 Commerce in 1931. Accordingly, the Landmarks
24 Preservation Commission urges you to affirm the
25 designation. Thank you.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you, Miss Adams.
Any members have questions for Miss Adams?
[background comments] Council Member Barron.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yes. What were
the specific reasons that the owner gave for
objecting to the landmarking?

JENNA ADAMS: I'm going to defer to Sarah
Carroll, our Executive Director.

SARAH CARROLL: Sarah Carroll, Executive
Director. The owner's concerns largely had to do
with the cost of some major improvements that she
wanted to make and so the Commission was very
flexible in the timing of this; we calendared it in
2009 and at the first hearing, the owner talked about
a window replacement project [background comment]
that she wanted to undertake and so we deferred our
actions to give her time to complete that project
prior to acting on designation, and that project has
largely been completed. But her concerns were
primarily about the cost of doing work in the future
and the Commission has, you know, we work very
closely with homeowners to approve work that is
appropriate but also reasonable and we approve

1 substituted materials and other changes to try to
2 make these changes not exorbitant for homeowners.

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON KOO: So now we have...

6 [background comments] one member of the public wants
7 to testify, Simeon Bancroft. [background comments]
8 Yeah, you can just sit there.

9 [background comments]

10 SIMEON BANCROFT: Good morning Council
11 Members, Simeon Bancroft, Historic Districts Council.
12 Welcome to neo Tudor day at City Council. We just
13 would like to reiterate our strong support of this
14 remarkable neo Tudor collection. Part of it's
15 effectiveness is based on the fact that the site
16 fills up a large corner lot that allows a group of
17 good-sized enhanced [sic] apartment buildings to
18 enclose a small network of seemingly random but
19 carefully arranged group of picturesque buildings
20 accessed by artfully winding paths leading to a
21 central courtyard partially bounded by large brick-
22 walled units topped with steeply-pitched slat roofs.
23 Once in the grouping, the visitor feels strongly
24 enclosed by roofs and walls variegated with various
25 motifs and materials, but all artfully deposed. The

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

windows are an array of shapes and materials that further vary the experience, even with the replacement windows.

Small as the development is, it is cleverly enclosed and the welcoming ungated paths lead the visitors so ingeniously through well-maintained trees and plantings of various sizes and age; the striking unity of character creates a remarkable experience that one hates to leave. I do recommend everyone go visit it; it's quite beautiful.

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you. Any questions from the members? Okay. [background comment] Anyone from the public want to testify? [background comments] The application is closed. Thank you.

Okay, we have final item final item today; LU item No. 0177, Application No. 20155270 HKQ, Central Ridgewood Historic District, under Council Member Crowley's district, where Miss Evans from the LPC [background comment] wants to testify. Thank you.

JENNA ADAMS: Thank you. One more time, for the record, I am Jenna Adams, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for the Landmarks

1
2 Preservation Commission and I am now going to testify
3 on the designation of the Central Ridgewood Historic
4 District in Ridgewood, Queens.

5 On March 22, 2011, the Landmarks
6 Preservation Commission held a public hearing of the
7 proposed Central Ridgewood Historic District; six
8 people spoke in favor of the designation, including a
9 representative of Council Member Diana Reyna's
10 office, as well as representatives of the Ridgewood
11 Property Owners and Civic Association, the Historic
12 Districts Council, the Central Queens Historical
13 Association, the Queens Preservation Council and New
14 York Landmarks Conservancy. Three speakers expressed
15 concern about the proposed designation. In addition,
16 the Commission received four letters in support,
17 including correspondence from Council Members Crowley
18 and Antonio Reynoso and the Ridgewood Local
19 Development Corporation. We also got two emails in
20 support of the designation and one in opposition, and
21 last year, on December 9th, the Commission voted to
22 designate the Central Ridgewood Historic District.

23 This district is significant as an intact
24 grouping of approximately 990 buildings, most of
25 which are brick row houses, representing one of the

1
2 most harmonious and architecturally distinguished
3 enclaves of working-class dwellings build in New York
4 City during the early 20th century.

5 This district is located near the
6 previously designated Ridgewood South and Ridgewood
7 North Historic Districts, which are comprised mainly
8 of small apartment houses. Most of the houses in
9 this district were constructed between 1906 and the
10 first World War by German-Americans and immigrants
11 from Germany who were produced by the architectural
12 firm Louis Berger & Company and a small group of
13 local builders. In addition, most of the bricks used
14 in the construction came from Staten Island.

15 The architects Louis Berger & Company
16 were the architect of record for 5,000 buildings in
17 the Ridgewood-Bushwick area between 1895 and 1930; he
18 studied at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn and served as
19 an apprentice with the firm Carrere and Hastings
20 before establishing his own business in Bushwick in
21 1895.

22 Paul Stier, Ridgewood's biggest builder,
23 built over 2,000 houses in the area, including about
24 half of the houses in the Central Ridgewood Historic
25 District. And accordingly, the Landmarks

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

Preservation Commission urges you to affirm this designation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you, Miss Adams. Any questions from Committee members? [background comments] No? [background comment] Any members from the public... [interpose, background comment] Yeah, okay.

Now we have Zoma [sp?] Bogen [sp?]. [background comment] Would you come up to testify? Yeah, thank you. [interpose, background comments]

ZOMA BOGEN: Ladies and gentlemen, [background comments] I've watched you on the TV a lot, wonderful; [background comment] I can't believe I'm here. So... [background comments] Right here. [background comments] I'm Zo... I'm Zoma Bogen; I'm from... [interpose, background comments] Oh, okay. New at this game. [background comments] Thanks. I'm Zoma Bogen from Ridgewood, Queens and I'm glad to see you all here -- pro, con -- I'm con; not because I want anybody else to lose their tremendous status, which I think is great originally, however I've been left out of the mix and I've gotta give you the families of Mrs. Marie Young, Tommy Young, Patty Young and the three children at their address; also

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

they've been left out of the mix and that's 60th Lane, 6612, 6614 and 6616; I'm from Kluepfel Court and this is the deal, and the case of Mrs. Rodriguez and her family, whole host of children and husband, the Bioling [sp?] family, an Asian family with children also; they've been left out of the mix and I'm... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I'm sorry, ma'am; when you say left out of the mix, you're upset that your neighborhood is not part of the designation...? [crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: No, no, my neighborhood... No, no... No, no, the young... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: What does it mean; left out of the mix?

ZOMA BOGEN: The young lady just spoke about it, the Central Ridgewood, it's not left out of the mix; our home has been left out of the mix, but there is a problem here, for years, when I purchased my house in 1993, the realtor, and I have no conflict to tell me who is Bank [sic] Realty left us out, suggesting that the Jews and the Spics did not belong there. When we moved in, on the day we were moving in, we had 50 of our neighbors come out to literally

1
2 knock us out; for the longest time we went to the
3 community board; they had nothing to do with it;
4 that's a, you know, personal, private, you have to
5 sue, blah, blah, blah, blah. Later on, our son, who
6 had payos -- he's Jewish like me and my husband -- he
7 was spit on and his payos was pulled, and I can show
8 you pictures of the swastikas and the Stars of David
9 on Kluepfel Court and the anschluss [sic] that we --
10 by the way, Kluepfel Court is a one way in and one
11 way out; that's the only way -- we have to pass these
12 swastikas and the Stars of David, okay, so... and the
13 community board sat on their hands; we had to call in
14 the police and the human rights; that's the only way
15 we got resolution. Five of the boys that were
16 involved went to Catholic schools, St. Matthias,
17 three went to public school and one of those children
18 today is a police officer; it's frightening to think
19 that his anti-Semitic family. Today we have had our
20 garbage ripped; community board sat on their hands
21 and I have to say it because I'm sure you all know
22 who this person is; his name -- he's from the
23 Ridgewood Restoration Corporation, Mr. Kerzner; he
24 made every attempt to have us wedged out of our
25 house, by first and foremost having -- the Lutheran

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

right of way is -- we're adjacent to the train line and he attempted to have that area underneath the train line to purchase -- the TA [sic] to purchase or have people purchase spots to park under the Lutheran right of way; we had to go to the human ri... no, we had to go to City Planning; it was unheard of; this is a residential area; we had to fight everybody in town. I have letters from Mrs. Noven [sp?], who says this is an outrage tryin' to put a parking facility under the train adjacent to these people's houses. This is an outrage. We have Senator Maltese -- all of these letters, and do you believe, even Mr. Sango [sp?]; he was the president of the TA and now then came Mr. Keeper I think his name was... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Can I ask you... Can I ask you a question, ma'am, uh I... [crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: it sounds obvious like you've been through a lot and I'm certainly sorry... [interpose]

ZOMA BOGEN: Oh, you cannot believe.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I'm certainly sorry to hear that, but let me ask you a question.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

We're focused today specifically on a question of the Central Ridgewood Historic District; there's a proposal... [interpose]

ZOMA BOGEN: I know.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: to designate parts of Central Ridgewood as a historic district; there's a map; I'm happy to share it with you... [crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: I... I know, I've received it.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: you don't... if you don't already have it, so my question is; are you opposed to this proposal... [interpose]

ZOMA BOGEN: When you first proposed it, absolutely, who wouldn't wanna be... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: So you're... you're opposed... I just wanna be clear...

ZOMA BOGEN: Oh, excuse me; I'm... I thought it was... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: are you opposed to this... [crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: I'm opposed now because we... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: You're opposed to this proposal?

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

ZOMA BOGEN: Yes and there is rumor

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay. Why are you opposed to this proposal...? [crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: There was a rumor raised that eminent domain is gonna take away our houses and we have right... [crosstalk]

[background comments]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: 'Kay, are... do you live... do you live... do live within this district?

ZOMA BOGEN: Yes. Listen, I can show... I'm in this... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Well so see it's quite the oppo... so you should know the good news about... [crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: in the middle; you can't...

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: historic designation...

ZOMA BOGEN: I can't understand how... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: is that it actually makes it more difficult for someone to take away...

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

ZOMA BOGEN: Listen, but look...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Yeah.

ZOMA BOGEN: if you look at the map from
the City Planner... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Uh-huh.

ZOMA BOGEN: we're right in the middle of
the mix; how is it that they pulled us out of the
mix? We're... we're... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: So you're in
or... I don't understand that point; are you in the
designation or you're not in the designation...?

[crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: Yes. Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: What's your
address?

ZOMA BOGEN: 2 Kluepfel Court and we
received the letters from your... I don't know the
gentleman, the lady that initially started this, but
I imagine it's Paul Kerzner [bell] and the Historical
Society [background comment] and we received the
letter... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: So you're in...
So you're in. So why do you object... [crosstalk]

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

ZOMA BOGEN: Because now, when they sent us a letter, [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Yeah.

ZOMA BOGEN: we're no longer in. The Rodriguez family also is adjacent to mine, the Young... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: You're not in?

ZOMA BOGEN: the Young family's not there, the Bioling family's not there and we have already been -- rumor has it that this area, which is adjacent to the train... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Yeah.

ZOMA BOGEN: is gonna be sucked up and eminent domain will take over and look, you know what; as a Jewish woman, over my dead body, never again, never... we've suffered... as a Jewish family, we have suffered, my neighbors, [background comment] I mean there's Asian family, an Italian family, Hispanic from... a Dominican family; myself, my... my father was from Spain; he's Jewish -- I'm a Hispanic Jew; my husband a Russian Jew, from White Russia, his... [interpose]

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Alright. So ma'am, we understand your objection. Your objection is essentially you're upset because you originally believed that you would be in the historic designation but currently you are not in the historic designation... [crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: Right and... yes, sir...

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: and that's why you're unhappy.

ZOMA BOGEN: Yeah and what it is...

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: So what you oppose to... what you're opposed... let's just be clear -- I'm trying to help you; I just wanna clarify the record... [interpose]

ZOMA BOGEN: I want all my neighbors to be happy... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: What you oppose... what you oppose to is not the district; it's that the district does not include you...

ZOMA BOGEN: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: and some of your neighbors?

ZOMA BOGEN: And being... I... my... [crosstalk]

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay.

ZOMA BOGEN: my neighbors' homes are beautiful, they're immaculate; mine... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Right.

ZOMA BOGEN: doesn't look the... the best, it do... [background comments] oh by the way... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay.

ZOMA BOGEN: my house has historical value, it's the only house... two houses on Kluepfel -- Kluepfel Court is the narrowest street in... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Is your street spelled C a l u p... [interpose]

ZOMA BOGEN: K l e u p f e l -- and I've received that information... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Alright, we're gonna take a look at it, we... [crosstalk] [background comments]

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: So... [crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: But... but... but...

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: so your... your address is in the historic district?

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

ZOMA BOGEN: Right... I'm in the... how could you get us out, we're covered...? [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: You're in it, you will be in it, if we vote in favor of it, you will be in it... [crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: But... but... but let me... but... but... but now while I'm here, let me please get your hear, because this is important; I've been saying it for year, I wrote to everybody. Claire Shulman, God bless her, helped us, and this venue with the parking facility, she stopped it, she killed it and City Planning. This is the deal, sir; my house...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Alright. So... so your address once again is 2...

ZOMA BOGEN: 2 Kluepfel Court -- here, you can have all the letters from... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay, good news, ma'am; you're... you're in the designation; we appreciate your testimony today; this is fantastic...

[crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: But before... but please let me just tell you... [crosstalk]

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Let... let the record reflect... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Oh no, the time... the time has already expired... [crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: Oh my God.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: but you've got it covered. This is a big success, you should be very pleased... [crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: Please look at... but we've had trouble and in... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: That's a separate issue; let's... we could talk... [crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: I know, that's what everybody tells me...

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: offline with the NYPD, but no... but for what you came her today, you were successful, so this is government at work. Congratulations, you are in the historic designation; that is wonderful news... [interpose]

ZOMA BOGEN: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: No one can touch your property; you're part of the community and everyone is... is part of... [crosstalk]

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

ZOMA BOGEN: But Mrs. Young also, Mrs. Young wants to know what's goin' on... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: We have to ask you to end your testimony now. Thank you very much... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Okay, Zoma Bogen...

ZOMA BOGEN: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON KOO: your time is up, yeah. So we thank you for your information... [crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: Alright, I'm... I'm sorry to overdose you. I could've given you more information that will...

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Yeah.

ZOMA BOGEN: anybody who's gone through this would flinch and scream... [crosstalk, background comments] and thank you so much and by the way, this is gonna be showin' on TV; right, so... [crosstalk]

[background comments]

ZOMA BOGEN: When? When?

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Congratulations.

ZOMA BOGEN: Not that I'm cute, but I'm 65 years old and I've suffered and my son... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: You... you can...

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you very much.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: You'll be able to watch online on the City Council website and..

[crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: Okay, Channel 31..

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: and.. and it'll also be online, and take it from the gentleman..

[crosstalk]

ZOMA BOGEN: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: to my left, he is now actually a YouTube celebrity with over a million views.

[laughter, background comments]

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Okay, now we have three more members of the public who want to testify -- Virginia Comber, Simeon Bancroft and Paul Kerzner.

[background comments] Just please identify yourself and start, yeah.

VIRGINIA COMBER: Yes, good morning. My name is.. [interpose]

MALE VOICE: Alright, please.. quiet, please.

VIRGINIA COMBER: My name is Virginia Comber and I thank the Committee for hearing us

1
2 today; I'd like to give my support to this request
3 for historic district designation for Ridgewood; I
4 have been a lifelong member of the community; I was
5 born and brought home to the house I live in on
6 Putnam Avenue and I am third generation; my daughter
7 is fourth generation living in this house; it's a
8 wonderful, wonderful neighborhood and it's been kept
9 up over the years and while we are very diverse in
10 the nationalities that live in our community,
11 everybody has kept their property up and we owe a
12 great deal of gratitude to the Ridgewood Property
13 Owners and Civic Association, who has always had our
14 back and brought the issues of our community to the
15 forefront of the Council as well as local, state and
16 federal committees. So we appreciate it and we do
17 appreciate your consideration of this bill. Thank
18 you.

19 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you. Yeah.
20 Next. Yeah, please.

21 PAUL KERZNER: My name is Paul Kerzner;
22 I'm now counsel to the Ridgewood Property Owners and
23 Civic Association.

24 We began this process of landmarking with
25 federal and state designation, and our first

1 designation of the 2,982 buildings that make up the
2 Ridgewood Historic District we have federal and state
3 designation; we got that on December the 6th of 1983.
4 And after we got that, we worked on the city
5 designation and we're about halfway through the
6 process; the Central Ridgewood Historic District will
7 bring us almost to 1,500 buildings, which is not bad
8 and we thank you for approving this and hopefully you
9 will vote in favor it at the Full Council.
10

11 I myself am a lifelong resident, like
12 Virginia Comber of Ridgewood, and I live on 69th
13 Avenue; I am directly affected by the designation,
14 happily so. I am a lifelong resident of 64 years of
15 Ridgewood; I have lived on the same block in the same
16 building all my life, as my parent and I'm fourth
17 generation also.

18 So there are many, many -- not
19 predominantly, but many, many people, homeowners in
20 Ridgewood in the district who are like Virginia and
21 myself, longtime residents, 2nd, 3rd; 4th generation,
22 and we all look forward to this designation to
23 continue to help preserve the neighborhood so that
24 for the next hundred years or so it will look as good
25 to our successor generations as it has been for the

1
2 last hundred years that we've had in Ridgewood. So
3 thank you very much; we appreciate your support.

4 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Yeah. Simeon.

5 SIMEON BANCROFT: Good afternoon Council
6 Members; Simeon Bancroft, Historic District Council.

7 We are in strong support of this historic
8 district. It's an important historic thing to note
9 that at the time that Ridgewood was being built,
10 about a hundred years ago, more than a hundred years
11 ago, they were still building large mansions for the
12 wealthy on 5th Avenue; all of those are now gone;
13 Ridgewood still remains, so this is truly, truly a
14 treasure, it has been home to generations of people,
15 working people, regular New Yorkers. I think that
16 the community is in very strong support, I've gone to
17 several meetings; this has taken a little longer than
18 we wished and as Paul said, this is only about 50
19 percent done and I think that you even saw from the
20 earlier community member that people are very happy
21 about the protections that this historic district and
22 future historic districts in this area will give it.
23 Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you. Any
25 questions from our members? [background comment]

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

No? [background comment] Anymore members want to testify? [background comment] Yeah, we close the public hearing on this item.

We are going to couple on the vote to approve the following: LU Item No. 0171, Hawthorne Court Apartments in Council Member Vallone's district [background comment] and LU 0177, Central Ridgewood Historic District in Council Member Crowley's district [background comment] and LU Item No. 0178, Chester Court Historic District in Council Member Eugene's district. The counsel will call the roll and the Chair will command a yes vote.

[background comments]

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair Koo.

CHAIRPERSON KOO: Yes.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Arroyo.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Yes.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Mendez.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Yes.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Barron.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I vote aye.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member
Kallos.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Aye on all.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Land Use Nos. 0171,
0177 and 0178 are approved, with 5 votes in the
affirmative, 0 in negative and 0 abstentions.

[background comments]

CHAIRPERSON KOO: 'Kay, we're gonna
adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned. Thank you.

[gavel]

[background comments]

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 March 6, 2015