

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS

AND DISPOSITIONS

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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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August 13, 2025
Start: 10:12 a.m.
Recess: 10:34 a.m.

HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - COMMITTEE ROOM, 16TH
FLOOR

B E F O R E: Kamillah M. Hanks, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Justin L. Brannan
Amanda Farías
Christopher Marte
Yusef Salaam

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Chris Banks

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

Agata Niklicka, Senior Borough Planner at New
York City Housing Preservation and Development

Olga Jobe, development team

Margaret Herman, Director of Research at the New
York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

Jessa Ross, New York City Landmarks Preservation
Commission

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SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Testing one, two, one,
two. Today's date is August 13, 2025. Today's hearing
is on Committee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and
Dispositions, being recorded by Keith Polite.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Will the Zoom host
please start the webinar?

ZOOM HOST: Webinar started.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning, and
welcome to the New York City Council Subcommittee on
Landmarks, Public Sitings and Dispositions.

Please place your phone on silent mode or
vibrate mode.

Any time during the hearing, please do
not approach the dais.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Chair, we are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON HANKS: [GAVEL] Good morning,
everyone. Happy summer. Welcome to the meeting of the
Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and
Dispositions. I am Council Member Kamillah Hanks, and
I'm the Chair of this Subcommittee. Today, I'm joined
by my Colleagues, Council Member Brannan, Majority
Leader Fariás, Council Member Marte, Council Member
Banks, and Council Member Salaam.

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Before we begin with today's agenda, I will remind everyone that this meeting is being held in a hybrid format. For members of the public who wish to testify remotely, we ask that you first register online, and you may do so now by visiting www.council.nyc.gov/landuse to sign up and then sign into the Zoom and remain signed in until you have testified.

For anyone with us today in person wishing to testify, if you have not already done so, please see one of our Sergeants and fill out a speaker's card, and we will call your name at the appropriate time.

For anyone wishing to submit written testimony on the items being heard today, we ask that you please send it via email at landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Include the land use number and/or the project name in the subject line of your email. Video and audio testimony will not be accepted.

I will remind members of the public that this is a government proceeding and that decorum will be observed at all times, and as such, members of the

public shall remain silent unless and until called to
testify.

The witness table is reserved for people
who wish to testify. No video recording or
photography is allowed from the witness table.
Further, members of the public may not present audio
or video recordings as testimony, but can submit
transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant for
including in the hearing record.

So, I'm now opening the public hearing
for Pre-Considered Land Use Items as part of the
Lincoln-Wortman project, an application by the New
York City Department of Housing Preservation and
Development pursuant to Section 694 of the General
Municipal Law and for an amendment to a prior urban
development action area project, altogether with
related requests pursuant to Section 577 of the
Private Housing Finance Law for a 40-year real
property tax exemption. Together, these actions will
facilitate a development of 21 three-story buildings
with a total of approximately 63 affordable
cooperative homes, including a superintendent's unit.
The project will consist entirely of affordable home
ownership units with a mix of two- and three-bedroom

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units, 63 parking spaces, and recreation space
located in Council Member Banks' in Brooklyn.

Appearing on this proposal today is Agata
Naklicka, Olga Jobe.

Those wishing to testify remotely may
register online by visiting the Council Member's
website at council.nyc.gov/landuse.

Panelists, please ensure that your
microphone is on, which is indicated by the red
light.

Counsel, would you please administer the
affirmation?

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL: Panelists, would
you please raise your right hand and state your name
for the record?

OLGA JOBE: Olga Jobe.

AGATA NIKLICKA: Agata Niklicka.

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you affirm to
tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
truth in your testimony before this Subcommittee, and
in answer to all Council Member questions? Make sure
your mic is on.

AGATA NIKLICKA: I do.

OLGA JOBE: I do.

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CHAIRPERSON HANKS: Thank you, applicant
panelists.

For the viewing public once again, if you
need an accessible version of this presentation,
please send an email to request to
landuse@council.nyc.gov.

The applicant team may now begin.

AGATA NIKLICKA: I think we're just
waiting for the slides.

CHAIRPERSON HANKS: (INAUDIBLE)

AGATA NIKLICKA: Oh, sorry. We're just
waiting for the slides.

Okay. Thank you. So, good morning, Chair
Hanks and Council Members. My name is Agata Niklicka.
I'm a Senior Borough Planner at HPD, and I'm excited
to be here presenting to you the Lincoln-Wortman
Project, an affordable homeownership housing project
that will result in the construction of 62 affordable
homeownership units and one supers unit in the East
New York neighborhood in Brooklyn. I'm joined today
by my HPD colleagues and our development partners who
will introduce themselves during the presentation or
during the Q and A as needed. Next slide, please.

The applicant for this application is HPD, and our sponsor working with us is JNB Realty LLC and Restored Homes HDLC. This project will be an affordable homeownership project that requires a site assemblage of previously City-owned, now private lots and privately owned lots to develop 21 new three-story buildings containing approximately 62 affordable homeownership units plus one super's unit, affordable to individuals and families earning incomes up to 80 percent AMI under HPD's Open Door Program. And to facilitate this application, HPD is seeking an amended UDAAP project summary to allow for three-family homes to be managed by a co-op rather than single and two-family fee simple homes. The prior UDAAP disposition approval in 2007 was for the development of single and two-family fee simple homes under the new foundations program. This program was replaced by Open Door. HPD is also seeking an Article XI tax exemption. The project is to be located on Brooklyn Block 4531, on 10 lots, four of which are formerly City-owned lots and six of which are privately owned lots.

And I'll turn it over to Olga, a representative from the development team, who will speak in more detail on the proposed project.

OLGA JOBE: Good morning again. I'm here to introduce the development team, which is comprised of Shelter Rock Builders. Shelter Rock has developed over 1,000 units in Queens and Brooklyn and Staten Island. They are a family-owned development company. The sponsor of this project is JNB Realty LLC, which is an affiliate of Shelter Rock Builders, as well as Restored Homes HDLC. Rounding out the development team is Meltzer Mandel Architects, Restored Homes, as we mentioned, which will be the marketing agent for the project. They will also hold title as HDLC during construction. Diana Reyna Strategies Consulting and Ari's Consulting LLC, which is owned by Mia Principle, a State-certified M/WBE affordable housing consultant and real estate developer. Next slide, please.

As mentioned earlier, the sites are located in East New York, Community District 5, City Council District 42. The area is primarily one- to two-story, single- and two-family homes and is across the street from a public school. It is easily

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accessible by public transportation, five bus lines,
and it's within the HPD's Jewel Street Neighborhood
Plan. Next slide, please.

The proposed project will be 21 three-
story buildings under an existing R4 zoning, which
will generate 62 affordable cooperative apartments
plus one super's unit. This will be a mix of two- and
three-bedroom units, which I should say is quite
unique in an affordable homeownership project, which
typically has one- and two-bedroom units. 100 percent
of the residential units will be affordable
homeownership. Each unit will have one parking space,
so there will be 63 off-street parking spaces, and
the buildings will be designed pursuant to Enterprise
Green Communities. Features that I think are
important to note in this neighborhood in particular
is that there will be native or climate-appropriate
plantings, stormwater management, in-unit water
conserving features, and energy-efficient appliances.
So, these components help to divert water and
overload the sewer system, as well as provide energy-
efficient appliances that help to deepen the
affordability and lower the electricity use of each
unit. Next slide, please.

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This is an aerial view of the proposed design, which basically shows the outdoor recreation space, the parking, as well as the planted landscape areas. Next slide, please.

The developer is committed to meeting HPD, M/WBE, and local hiring goals, and is committed to outreach efforts to local community stakeholders, including the Community Board and the Council Member, to ensure those opportunities are made available to the community. Next slide, please.

AGATA NIKLICKA: And lastly, taking a look at the proposed affordability mix, as mentioned earlier, the proposed development will include 62 units that will be affordable to households earning approximately 70 percent AMI and up to 80 percent AMI, and will be advertised on HPD's Housing Connect 2.0. Long-term affordability will be ensured by a 40-year Article XI tax exemption, and all units will be bound by regulatory agreement. The project will include a mix of two- and three-bedrooms, the sales price ranging from 275,000 dollars to 320,000 dollars, and the minimum qualifying incomes range from approximately 101,000 dollars to 117,000 dollars.

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And that concludes our presentation.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON HANKS: Thank you so much.

I would like to ask if any of my Council
Members would have a statement.

Council Member Banks.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Thank you, Madam
Chair, and good morning to all.

I'm proud to be here today to talk about
this particular project that will have a lasting and
positive impact on the 42nd Council District, the
Lincoln-Wortman Project. The New York State
Department of Housing Preservation, HPD, has approved
the development of 20 three-story buildings, bringing
63 affordable co-op homes right here in our
community. This is a big win. This is not just about
building housing, but it's about building stability
and opportunity. One of my main goals when I took
office was to ensure that we had more homeownership
opportunities that came to the 42nd Council District,
and today that goal is possibly becoming a reality.
Every single one of these units will be affordable
homeownership units, and let me repeat that,
affordable homeownership units, with a mix of two- to

three-bedroom homes designed for individuals and working families. They will be priced for households earning between 70 percent to 80 percent of the area medium income, making homeownership more attainable to our residents.

Another element I'm proud to have championed and made very clear is the inclusion of 63 parking spots. As you do know, parking is a necessity in my District, and this will definitely take the pressure off of that surrounding area that has a need for parking. Parts of my district are known as parking deserts, and incorporating parking into this project is a much-needed improvement.

This development will also feature recreational space for tenants and will be built to meet Enterprise Green Community standards, ensuring these homes are environmentally sustainable and energy efficient.

These homes will be marketed through HPD's Housing Connect 2.0, giving eligible families in our District a real shot at owning a home and planting roots here for the long term. This is what investment in the District looks like, housing that is affordable, sustainable, and built to last. And

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it's another step towards ensuring the 42nd Council District continues on its path on becoming bigger, brighter, and better together so thank you.

CHAIRPERSON HANKS: Thank you so much, Council Member. Great project.

Thank you. You are excused.

Counsel, are there any members of the public who wish to testify on this item?

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, there are not.

CHAIRPERSON HANKS: Okay. Seeing none.

Are there any remote public participants who wish to testify and have not already done so, please raise the raise hand button now.

If you are here with us in person, please see one of the Sergeant-at-Arms to first fill out a speaker card.

There being no members of the public who wish to testify regarding the two Pre-Considered Land Use Items for Lincoln-Wortman, this public hearing is now closed, and these items are laid over.

I am now going to open a joint public hearing for the Pre-Considered Land Use Items for the former Whitney Museum of Art, Individual, and Interior, two applications submitted by the New York

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City Landmarks Preservation Commission for the
designation of an Individual and Interior Historic
Landmark in Council Member Powers' District in
Manhattan.

Appearing with us today in proposal is
Margaret Herman and Jessa Ross.

Those who wish to testify must register
online. Visit the Council's website at
council.nyc.gov/landuse.

Panelists, please ensure that your
microphone is on, which is indicated by the red
light.

Counsel, will you please administer the
affirmation?

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL: Panelists, would
you please raise your right hand and state your name
for the record?

MARGARET HERMAN: Margaret Herman.

JESSA ROSS: Jessa Ross.

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you affirm to
tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
truth in your testimony before this Subcommittee and
in answer to all Council Member questions?

MARGARET HERMAN: I do.

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JESSA ROSS: I do.

CHAIRPERSON HANKS: Thank you so much,
applicant panelists.

Again, for the viewing public, if you
need an accessible version of this presentation,
please send an email request to
landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov.

Now, the applicant team may now begin.
Thank you.

MARGARET HERMAN: Good morning, Chair
Hanks and Subcommittee Members. My name is Margaret
Herman, Director of Research at the Landmarks
Preservation Commission. Thank you for the
opportunity to present our recent designations of the
former Whitney Museum of American Art as both an
Individual and Interior Landmark. Next slide.

945 Madison Avenue was home to the
Whitney Museum of American Art from its construction
in 1966 until 2014. It's a Brutalist-style inverted
step pyramid clad in granite and raw concrete on the
Upper East Side of Manhattan, contrasting starkly
with the surrounding 19th-century row houses. The
building's interior juxtaposes polished and rough-
faced surfaces with an emphasis on concrete as well

as natural materials such as stone and wood. On March 11, 2025, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the museum as a New York City Individual and Interior Landmark. Nine people spoke in support of designation, including representatives of Sotheby's, which is now the building owner, Friends of Upper East Side Historic Districts, Docomo U.S. New York Tri-State, Docomo U.S., the New York Landmarks Conservancy, Historic Districts Council, and the Victorian Society, and two individuals. No one spoke in opposition. The Commission also received one written submission in support of the designation.

Council Members, I will present the Individual Landmark proposal first, and then move on to present the Interior Landmark. Next slide, please.

The building is located at the corner of Madison Avenue and East 75th Street within the Upper East Side Historic District, designated a New York City Historic District in 1981. The Individual Landmark site is the tax lot. Next slide.

The museum was founded as the Whitney Studio in 1929 by sculptor Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney to showcase contemporary American artists,

including John Sloan and Reginald Marsh. Located in a row of buildings in Greenwich Village and later in a building adjacent to the Museum of Modern Art, by the 1950s, the Whitney Museum needed a permanent home. The Museum's trustees acquired property on Manhattan's Upper East Side and engaged Marcel Breuer and associates to design a new museum. Completed in 1966, it was the first museum in New York City devoted exclusively to American art. Next slide.

Marcel Breuer trained as a carpenter at the Bauhaus in Weimar, Germany, between the World Wars, where he designed iconic furniture, including the still-popular Vassily chair, and subsequently served as a master of the school's carpentry program in Dessau. Breuer immigrated to the United States in 1937. As an instructor at Harvard and in a creative partnership with Walter Gropius, Breuer greatly influenced a group of young architects, and by extension, the course of modern American architecture. Next slide.

After breaking with Gropius, Breuer went on to design notable buildings in the 1950s and 1960s, such as the individual landmark Beggar's Hall at the former NYU campus in the Bronx, now Bronx

Community College, the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, and the Armstrong Rubber Pirelli tire building in New Haven. Breuer embraced the emerging brutalist style in this period, characterized by exposed raw concrete with few decorative elements. Breuer explored the versatility of concrete as a building material, yielding unlikely shapes. Next slide.

The Whitney Museum site originally contained six row houses, which were demolished before the Whitney acquired the parcel. At 100 feet by 125 feet, the relatively small lot required an innovative approach to space planning. Breuer joined the project after the site was selected and settled on an inverted pyramid form with each level slightly larger than the one it rests upon, creating a stepped cantilever on the primary façade. Next slide.

The heavy masonry building projects permanence and solidity while simultaneously appearing to float above a transparent glass ground floor. Windows on the upper stories are placed seemingly randomly across the East 75th Street façade, and a singular trapezoidal window crowns the topmost overhang of the primary façade. Next slide.

I will now move to the interior landmark designation. The landmark site includes portions of the lower level facing Madison Avenue, first floor lobby coat check and entrance vestibule, and the main stairwell from the lower level through the fifth floor. Next slide.

Breuer's approach to interior design was underpinned by his philosophy that a building should be functional. He applied this approach to the many interiors he undertook, including his own residences and the interior of the UNESCO headquarters. Next slide.

In the case of the Whitney's interior spaces, this is expressed in the open floor plans and in its unembellished concrete, wood, and stone materials palette. The museum's interior features rough-faced stone floors and distinctive overhead lights, and the walls and built-in furnishings are bush-hammered and board-formed concrete, typical of the Brutalist style. Next slide.

The lower level features a dramatic double-height space divided by the exposed concrete entrance bridge above. The west elevation facing Madison Avenue is primarily glass, beyond which sits

an outdoor sculpture court sunken below the level of
the sidewalk. Next slide.

Having outgrown its space, the Whitney
Museum relocated to a new building in 2014. After the
departure of the Whitney, 945 Madison Avenue
temporarily housed collections of the Metropolitan
Museum of Art and subsequently the Frick Museum,
while their facilities underwent renovation. The
auction house, Sotheby's, acquired the building in
2024 to use for galleries and showrooms open to the
public. We are pleased that visitors will continue to
be able to access these magnificent spaces. Next
slide.

The former Whitney Museum of American Art
was one of pioneering architect Marcel Breuer's most
prestigious commissions and is his only built work in
Manhattan. The bold inverted pyramid with dramatic
interior spaces broke with expected museum design and
established the identity of the Whitney Museum of
American Art as one of the most significant and
forward-thinking arts institutions in New York. It's
an enduring emblem of modern architecture inside and
out. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON HANKS: Thank you so much.

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I'd like to recognize any of my
Colleagues who have any questions or remarks.

Thank you so much. This applicant panel
is now excused.

Are there any remote public participants
who wish to testify and that have not already done
so, please press the raise hand button now.

If you are here with us today in person,
see one of the Sergeant-at-Arms to fill out a card.

Do we have any online?

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL: No.

CHAIRPERSON HANKS: Okay. With there being
no members of the public who wish to testify at the
joint hearings of these Pre-Consented Land-Use Items
for the Whitney Museum, American Art, Individual, and
Interior Historic Landmark. This public hearing is
now closed, and the items are laid over.

And that concludes today's business. I
would like to thank members of the public, my
Colleagues, Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use Staff, and
the Sergeant-at-Arms for your participation today.

This hearing is 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 September 2, 2025