

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES

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CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND
FRANCHISES

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November 20, 2025
Start: 11:05 a.m.
Recess: 12:31 p.m.

HELD AT: COMMITTEE ROOM - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Kevin C. Riley, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shaun Abreu
Francisco P. Moya
Yusef Salaam
Lynn C. Schulman

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Sandy Nurse

A P P E A R A N C E S

Vivian Liao, Totem Brooklyn

Tucker Reed, Totem Brooklyn

Elizabeth Canela, Totem Brooklyn

Ethan Goodman, Fox Rothschild, LLP

Jakob Kendall Schneider, Senior Program Manager
for Research and Policy at the East New York
Community Land Trust

Pastor Sharmaine Byrd, Greater Mount Carmel
Cathedral and Worship Center in Brooklyn

Diane Sanders, self

Pastor James Neville, Senior Clergy of Holy
Temple of Prayer

La'Shawn Allen Muhammad, Executive Director for
Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation

Micah Sander, SEIU Local 32BJ

Hailie Kim, Lead Organizer for the East New York
Coalition for Community Advancement

Pia Palomino, Community Organizer for the East
New York Coalition for Community Advancement

Anita Ferebee-Hicks, Vice President for the
Junction Neighborhood Association

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

Bill Wilkins, Executive Director of Local
Development Corporation of East New York

Quincy Ely-Cate, Director of Industrial Business
Development at the Business Outreach Center

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a microphone check for the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises, located in the Committee Room, recorded on November 20, 2025, by Pat Kurzyna. Check.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning. Welcome to the New York City Council hybrid hearing on the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises.

At this time, please silence all electronics and do not approach the dais. I repeat, please do not approach the dais.

Any questions or concerns, please contact the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Thank you for your cooperation.

And, Chair, you may begin.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [GAVEL] Good morning, and welcome to a meeting of the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. I am Council Member Kevin Riley, Chair of this Subcommittee. This morning, I am joined by Council Member Nurse.

Today, we are holding one public hearing on Pre-Considered LU Items concerning the Zoning Map and Text Amendments related to the Herkimer-Williams Development Proposal. Although, at today's public hearing, we will discuss all the actions regarding

the Herkimer-Williams Development Proposal, a separate public hearing will be held regarding the actions related to the proposal that have not yet been introduced at the Council, which include the special permits and site selection and acquisition actions.

This meeting is being held in hybrid format. Members of the public who wish to testify may testify in person or through Zoom. Members of the public wishing to testify remotely may register by visiting the New York City Council's website at www.council.nyc.gov/landuse to sign up, or for those of you hearing in person, please see one of the Sergeant-at-Arms to prepare and submit a speaker's card.

Members of the public may also view a livestream broadcast of this meeting at the Council's website.

When you are called to testify before the Subcommittee, if you are joining us remotely, you will remain muted until recognized by myself to speak. When you are recognized, your microphone will be unmuted.

We will limit public testimony to two minutes per witness. If you have additional testimony that you would like the Subcommittee to consider, or if you have written testimony that you would like to submit instead of appearing in person, please email it to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Written testimony may be submitted up to three days after the hearing is closed. Please indicate the LU number and/or project name in the subject line of your email.

We request that witnesses joining us remotely remain in the meeting until excused by myself as Council Members may have questions.

Lastly, for everyone attending today's meeting, this is a government proceeding and decorum must be observed at all times. Members of the public are asked not to speak during the meeting unless you are testifying.

The witness table is reserved for people who are called to testify, and no video recording or photography is allowed from the witness table.

Further, members of the public may not present audio or video recording as testimony, but may submit

transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant-at-Arms for inclusion in the hearing record.

I will now open the public hearing on Pre-Considered Items regarding the zoning map and text amendments relating to the Herkimer-Williams Development Proposal. This proposal involves the redevelopment of four blocks in Broadway Junction area of East New York in Council Member Nurse's District. The development involves four buildings with over 1 million square feet that will consist of almost 1,000 residential units, commercial uses, light industrial uses, and possible community facility space. The site will also include 20,000 square feet of new publicly accessible open space.

For anyone wishing to testify regarding this proposal remotely, if you have not already done so, you must register online by visiting the Council's website at council.nyc.gov/landuse. For anyone with us in person, please see one of the Sergeant-at-Arms to submit a speaker's card. If you prefer to submit written testimony, you can always do so by emailing it to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov.

I would now like to yield the floor to Council Member Nurse for her remarks.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Thank you, Chair, and good morning, everyone. Broadway Junction sits at the nexus of three incredible neighborhoods, Brownsville, East New York, and Bushwick. It is one of the busiest transit hubs we have, serving more than 100,000 people every weekday. The surrounding neighborhood has seen major investments from the City and State over the last nine years, beginning with the East New York rezoning. These investments also came with unmet promises, however, and the City has made efforts to mend the broken relationships left in the wake of those mistakes. In the last two years, we've helped secure 500 million in public funds for ADA upgrades and improvements to Broadway Junction Station, two new public plazas, and desperately needed streetscape improvements. These investments have spurred a renewed interest in the area, and that is what partly brings us here today. The application before us will undoubtedly have a huge impact on this area. For years, the applicant has engaged with and responded to concerns raised by neighbors, the Community Board, and my office as they went through

the required review process. I have been speaking with the applicant even before getting sworn in, which is how long I've been at this, just me, and despite these good faith efforts, there are still a few outstanding issues I'd like to raise. Housing remains the top issue for families across my District, as across all New York City, and we face historically low vacancy rates. According to ANHD's Housing Risk Chart, over 55 percent of Community Board 5 residents where the project would be located are rent burdened, and about 30 percent are severely rent burdened, meaning they spend more than half of their income on rent. As proposed, this project would bring just under 1,000 permanently affordable units to this neighborhood, as well as retail, office, open space, light industrial, and provide space for an educational facility. Our community needs deeply affordable housing, and I implore the applicant to continue working with HPD to ensure this project is in fact 100 percent affordable to people who live here, and again, for the record, I commit to doing the same. The applicant has dramatically reduced the proposed office space from their initial proposal, and while I do appreciate these changes, I do want to

be clear on the record, I have very real concerns about the fundamentally speculative theory that this project will induce demand for commercial office space when the commercial office vacancy rate still hovers above 14 percent citywide. I recognize that some of my constituents are deeply skeptical or opposed to this project in its current form. I've tried to meet people's concerns and be their advocate over the years, and we still may not agree on everything, and at the same time, I acknowledge that the applicant has been consistent in good faith discussions with me and many stakeholders for years and has sat through countless meetings, town halls, check-ins, and this project is better than it was thanks to every single person who has raised their voice. It is clear that the junction will continue to see public and private investment in the coming years, and I'll continue advocating for unmet needs, such as regular street cleaning, an upgraded ADA-accessible Long Island Railroad station, and even more streetscape improvements to account for the influx of residents if this application gets passed.

So, I just want to thank the community members who have met with me and called and texted me

before and after business hours. I'm always willing to pick up the phone, and I want to thank everyone here and looking forward to the conversation. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council Member Nurse.

Just want to state for the record, we've been joined by Council Member Schulman and Abreu.

I will now call for the applicant panel for this proposal, which consists of Vivian Liao, Elizabeth Canela, Ethan Goodman, and Tucker Reed.

Counsel, can you please administer the affirmation?

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Good morning. Could you please raise your right hand and state your name for the record?

TUCKER REED: Tucker Reed.

VIVIAN LIAO: Vivian Liao.

ELIZABETH CANELA: Elizabeth Canela.

ETHAN GOODMAN: Ethan Goodman.

Thank you. Do you swear... oh, please keep your right hand up. Do you swear to (INAUDIBLE)

TUCKER REED: I do.

VIVIAN LIAO: I do.

ETHAN GOODMAN: I do.

ELIZABETH CANELA: I do.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. I'll just ask that the applicant speak into the mic so we can hear you clearly.

And now the applicant team may begin. I'll just ask you please restate your name and organization for the record. You may begin.

VIVIAN LIAO: Thank you, Chair Riley. Thank you, Council Member Nurse, for those thoughtful remarks and your leadership thus far. My name is Vivian Liao, and I'm one of the principals of Totem. I'm joined by my colleagues, Tucker Reed and Liz Canela, as well as a number of folks from our broader project team. Next slide.

In the interest of keeping our presentation brief, I won't take up a bunch of time introducing our company, except to say that our approach to development is one that centers community to help maximize benefits to the neighborhoods where we work. And on all our projects, this includes a legally binding community benefits agreement that serves to memorialize the commitments we make, and we are currently working on just that effort right now

with two community-based organizations to do the same here. Next slide.

This is especially important for Herkimer-Williams because of its scope and scale. This is a generational project that has the potential to turn what is currently dirt storage and parking lots into affordable housing, new open space, a potential branch of CUNY, space for new jobs and employers, while also preserving industrial jobs and providing growth opportunities for local businesses. Next slide.

These benefits would complement the more than half a billion dollars of investment, public investment, that is currently underway in one of our city's major transportation hubs at Broadway Junction, a prime area for transit-oriented development. It is also truly a junction point, bringing together seven communities that are all deserving of vital resources. Next slide.

As the findings of the racial equity report show, the need for affordable housing in this area, especially at low-income levels, is particularly acute. Our project targets housing

creation at AMI levels that meet where the majority of East New Yorkers are today. Next slide.

This shows the proposed rezoning area in more detail. You can see the footprint of our site in the pink trapezoid in there in the middle of all that is currently underway.

The next slide shows the many reports and recommendations made over the years about what should happen in this critical junction, which we drew upon, along with community feedback, to develop the first proposal we submitted to start the environmental review process. Next slide.

Since that scoping hearing nearly two years ago, we worked closely with the local Community Board, the Council Member, dozens of community organizations, residents, and stakeholders to incorporate their feedback further. This slide summarizes that feedback and also gives an emblematic list of some of the groups we have engaged with on a continuous basis throughout this process. Next slide.

The result is what you see outlined here, a ULURP proposal that directly reflects community desires and would create over the next decade up to 1,000 units of affordable housing, new commercial and

industrial space, new retail space at a variety of footprints to allow for small local businesses as well as destination retail in the final phase, new community facility space, including an option to CUNY to anchor up to 85,000 square feet, new open space, the equivalent size of five NBA basketball courts, and as underscores our approach on all our developments, local hiring and M/WBE commitments to ensure that the community benefits from the economic opportunity being created here. Next slide.

ELIZABETH CANELA: Good morning, Chair.

Good morning, Council Member. This is right here a summary of all of the land use actions before you. So as a reminder, this is a shift from M1-2 over to C6-4/M1-6, and we can talk through sort of Q and A the details of that. Next slide.

So turning to the program details, we're committed to maximizing affordable housing, as Vivian said, that meets East New Yorkers. So we've been in discussion with HPD on utilizing their Extremely Low and Low-Income Affordability program to bring over 230 units between 30 and 80 percent of AMI for the first phase of construction. So that's the building B

labeled on the right-hand side of the screen. Next slide.

To help residents like this afford to live in the neighborhood, we will continue to maximize affordable housing for the subsequent phases of development using a mix of City and State affordable term sheets and also having discussions for the community benefits agreement on what those parameters are. This slide shows a snapshot of where all of the units are and their varying sizes and income thresholds. Next slide.

Although the first phase is anchored in housing, it was important for us to ground this first phase with jobs and business opportunity in mind. That's why we've been actively working with three community-based organizations shown on the slide here to establish the East New York Green Economy Institute. This institute is envisioned as a space designed to support job seekers, strengthen existing area businesses, and make the industrial business zone directly to the south of the project even more dynamic in the future. Next slide.

The third phase in building D, so that's on the left-hand side of the screen, would be home to

both housing and a space dedicated to CUNY or other higher education programming. We've worked hard at the community's request to engage CUNY in this effort and have offered them a free option to take up to 85,000 square feet of this building, and they said that they would consider this as part of their future expansion plans. In addition to higher education, we're exploring other uses that could be housed here, such as ambulatory care and other workforce training partnerships. Next slide.

The last phase would contribute approximately 440,000 square feet of commercial space, in addition to about 100,000 square feet of light industrial space. We've already received interest from a recording studio and requests to expand current businesses that already are on site. Next slide.

Knitting all of the buildings together will be an active ground floor retail experience. After much community feedback, we've envisioned the floor plates to span anywhere from small scale, 400 to 1,000 square foot neighborhood tenants, to up to 40,000 square foot spaces in the last phase for housing destination retail. Next slide.

Enhancing that ground floor experience will be a network of open space improvements that create a more welcoming experience for pedestrians on Van Sinderen, on Herkimer, and on Fulton. In total, approximately 25,000 square feet that will complement the newly minted Callahan Kelly playground and the updated Broadway Junction train station. Next slide.

The design for Herkimer-Williams incorporates sustainability principles as do all of our projects that recognize the role greener buildings have to play in fighting climate change. We are striving for Passive House standards for the residential buildings and will also work to incorporate green building standards across the development. Next slide.

We have heard loud and clear since the beginning that any development at Herkimer-Williams be well coordinated with improvements going on at Broadway Junction train station and the timeline here at the bottom of this slide shows how our first building slated to break ground following the completion of the MTA ADA work. Next slide.

In sum, the proposal we have outlined is a result of years of community conversations as said

multiple times today and a direct reflection of community desires and concerns, not to mention what we hope is a generational opportunity to lay the foundation for equitable growth around Broadway Junction that can help address the city's housing crisis and create economic benefits for the surrounding neighborhoods. That wraps up the formal presentation.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.

I just want to state for the record we have been joined by Council Member Salaam.

I'll ask a few questions and then I'll turn it over to Council Member Nurse for her lines of question.

During the environmental scope hearing in December of 2023, you initially planned to de-map Herkimer Street. Can you elaborate on your decision not to de-map Herkimer Street and what are the implications of leaving it mapped and how did it impact your design?

TUCKER REED: Thank you, Council Member.

Tucker Reed here from the applicant team. We heard loud and clear from community feedback over the years that the de-mapping of Herkimer Street was not a

desirable outcome. A lot of folks, even though it may be not thought of as a main thoroughfare in the neighborhood, a lot of local people used it to traverse the neighborhood to alleviate traffic concerns also as parking, and so trying to be responsive to those concerns, we eliminated the de-mapping element once we were able to convince City Planning to the extent of the community pushback.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: And how did it affect your design of the building now?

TUCKER REED: It allowed for the creation of more street-level pedestrian improvements, so there were more public plazas and sidewalk widenings that were created as a result of it, creating a kind of green network from the subway entrance kind of out into the campus. We did hear the other side from folks who were interested in creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment there. And I think in preliminary conversations that we've had with the Department of Transportation that there are traffic-calming measures that we can incorporate into the sidewalk designs that accomplish a lot of the pedestrian scale improvements that folks were looking

for with the street closure without having to actually close the street to vehicular traffic.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. Can you discuss any other measures that you made to potentially calm down congestion, traffic in the areas, whether you raised the streets, helping to widen the streets? Can you go into that a little bit more?

TUCKER REED: Yeah. I don't think we have a slide here today prepared to show you, but we've had a number of conversations with the Department of Transportation about ideas around crosswalk elevations, sidewalk widenings, street tree, and other pedestrian-scale improvements that, you know, for folks who traverse the area there today, it's a little disorienting with the, you know, elevated train and then the kind of rampant... there's a lot of MTA employees, not to call out our friends in government, that just park all over the sidewalk and different things. I think by rationalizing the street with the new improvements, it'll make it very difficult for people to park on sidewalks or do things like that, that it's obviously not a legal way of approaching the street today, but it's what's happening in practice. So hopefully a lot of the

streetscape improvements that we're making will make that possible moving forward.

ELIZABETH CANELA: Just wanted to add in, Chair, that in addition to all of those movement measures, there's a street light being added onto Herkimer and Williams and highlighting sort of the open space creation right across the street from Broadway Junction train station exit, where the new ADA accessibility is going to be there. There's essentially an entire block face that used to be closed off for cars is now going to be open space and accessible. Just a couple different measures, too.

ETHAN GOODMAN: Yeah, and finally to add, one of the actions that will be before you is a site selection and acquisition by the City. That's going to allow their work at the Van Sinderen Plaza, which is City work, to coordinate with our public plaza that's immediately adjacent to it. So, what that lets us do is grant them an easement to build both of them together so they're really harmonious and operate as one unified plaza so it's not just like EDC building theirs, we're building ours separately, so that whole Van Sinderen block will be built out as one public

plaza. That acquisition, that actual public action, allows you to do that as well.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Can you walk through for the viewing public the acquisition and how do you do that? Do you guys design it with EDC? Are you guys running point on that? Can you just explain that for the viewing public?

ETHAN GOODMAN: Yeah. Sure. And so our portion is a little under 5,000 square feet and Van Sinderen is a little bit larger than that, immediately adjacent to us to the north. So, what the site selection and acquisition action does is it allows the City...

TUCKER REED: Slide number 17, I think if you bring it up, we could show the map.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Can we pull up slide number 17? Thank you.

TUCKER REED: Back a few. Is that 17?

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Right there. Thank you.

TUCKER REED: Go ahead, Ethan.

ETHAN GOODMAN: Yeah. So, if you look at the upper left here, you're going to see something called EDC Plaza, Van Sinderen Plaza, right? That's

the portion that the City owns and is going to construct. The green part, the southern half of that lot, is our property, Totem's property.

I'm sorry, I think I neglected to introduce myself. Ethan Goodman with Fox Rothschild, so we're Land Use Counsel to the applicant.

So what the site selection action allows the City to do is take a construction easement from us. We're going to retain ownership of that parcel, but they are going to build it along with Van Sinderen or EDC Plaza. As part of the legal documents that will be filed in accordance to this, they have to go back to City Planning and essentially get an okay that the whole thing is going to operate harmoniously and make sense together.

TUCKER REED: And Council Member, just to finish, you mentioned design. There's a public design process that will be run by EDC. We don't play a formal role in. Our role is in essentially contributing the land to the effort, and then the public agency will run a process to arrive at a design.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Currently right now, what can be developed as-of-right presently?

TUCKER REED: The current zoning is, correct me if I'm wrong, Ethan, M1-2 across the site, so about 2 FAR of industrial manufacturing use.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Currently right now.

TUCKER REED: Currently today, yes.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: If this rezoning were not approved, how would you move forward with the redevelopment of this site?

TUCKER REED: We would not. The current uses that are there would continue to be there. Literally, Vivian mentioned dirt storage. There's a building materials company that stores gravel and dirt there. There's a one-story building that's used for mostly storage.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Do you guys currently own the site, or are you going to acquire it after this is approved?

TUCKER REED: We have an agreement with the landowner to purchase the site upon zoning approval.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. You're seeking to build a lot of commercial space. Do you have a prospective tenant? Because I'm wondering if there is a market in this part of the city for so much new

commercial space. It's very attractive with transit, I'll tell you that, and a very beautiful community. But just wondering if you guys have any projected tenants there.

TUCKER REED: On the retail side, we've seen a lot of interest already from local entrepreneurs reaching out to us about opportunities at the junction. The commercial site is actually not owned by Totem. Ethan is here today representing the ownership group. But we have done a lot of work on their behalf and with the local neighborhood over the years to try to right-size that commercial footprint. We have received, again, as we moved through the very public process here, we have received outreach from a number of companies. We mentioned a recording studio. There's something called East New York Records that is actually based in Los Angeles, because the founder is from East New York but has his recording studio complex out in LA and has talked to us multiple times about a vision for, if we're able to build commercial space here, for him to come and set up an entire campus devoted to music and maker uses. We're not even through the rezoning process yet. There is a new building across the street at 2440 Fulton Street, a

new commercial building that is obviously largely tenanted by government agencies at this point. But a lot of neighborhoods throughout Brooklyn have, once space has been created, it has attracted employers over the years and we're hopeful that that's the outcome here as well.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: And you guys currently have partners for the commercial space?

TUCKER REED: Sorry. Say again?

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Do you guys currently have partners for the commercial space?

TUCKER REED: Parties?

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Partners. Partners.

TUCKER REED: Partners. So we're not the owner of the commercial building? Ethan, I don't know if you want to talk about that.

ETHAN GOODMAN: Yeah. So, right now there's no tenant that's lined up or any sort of development plan for the commercial space. I think it's worth noting that that space, which is currently occupied by...

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: How large is the space again, Ethan?

ETHAN GOODMAN: What's that?

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: How large is the commercial space?

ETHAN GOODMAN: Yeah. The overall development plan would be over 400,000 square feet, but the lot itself, we'll get you the number on that.

TUCKER REED: The existing lot is about 40,000 square feet, and it's currently improved with a one-story building that's about two-thirds of the site and the other third is devoted to parking. And it is long-term lease to the MTA, who uses it as a machine shop right now for repairs to the MetroCard machines, actually. Which they've talked about as a legacy use that they're going to start to phase out. So for the immediate term, though, the space is leased to the MTA. The MTA may have a desire, and we've mentioned it to them, about coming and enlarging their footprint in Broadway Junction in the years to come, given how much uses they have.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: And my last question before I pass it to Council Member Nurse. Pending this gets approved, what is the construction timeline?

TUCKER REED: Liz, do you want to talk to the construction?

ELIZABETH CANELA: So, the construction timeline is about 10 years over the course of four different phases. So starting with that building B, so mainly residential, affordable housing. And then moving in alphabetical order. So building B, C, D, and E. And so full build-out, if we were to start in 2026, would be complete in 2036.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. Thank you so much.

Council Member Nurse.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Thank you, Chair.

I have about a dozen questions, because no one else is here. And we've had these conversations many times, so they will be repetitive for you, but this is about getting things on the record for my community to hear.

So let's start with the housing. You're proposing nearly 1,000 affordable units, which will require subsidy from HPD. Can you discuss how your conversations with HPD have evolved? Specifically, do you have commitments from HPD to provide? And actually, can we put the slide up, just while we're having the conversation, if tech can?

TUCKER REED: Slide number 27.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: The last one with all the buildings, just so people have it.

That one, yeah. If we could leave that one up, I think it would be helpful as we move through the conversation.

So your buildings are B, C, and D. So for those here, the smaller, thinner ones. And E is the Mystic developer, and that's all commercial and retail. So for B, C, and D, can you talk about the conversations you've had with HPD and what commitments or where you're landing so far with them?

TUCKER REED: Yeah. We don't have a formal commitment from HPD today. I mean, generally, in our experience, their policy is not to give a commitment until a rezoning is complete, but we have had a number of conversations with them and started to trade some underwriting, particularly on the first phase of the project. They're aware. I think we have not heard from anyone that folks do not want to see 100 percent affordable housing built, particularly in this location. And we're very committed to working with them on each stage of the implementation and hopefully also reflected in the community benefits agreement that we're working on, where we're setting

pretty ambitious goals that we hope to work with HPD on implementation in the years to come.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And should, for some reason, HPD be unable to commit to helping this project achieve 100 percent affordable housing or below-market-rate housing? What are your plans in that scenario?

TUCKER REED: So, there's a number of other routes, obviously, available to try to achieve 100 percent affordable. There's the State route. There are other non-term sheet programs that we could talk about and work on together. There are NYCHA programs that are looking for sites where they could be used as new housing for NYCHA residents to free up space on NYCHA land. And so there's a number of bites at the apple that we think are out there and available to us to try to achieve our goal here.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And as we've talked about and as my Colleagues know and many of my Colleagues share the sentiment, family-sized units are the kind of the hill that I'm willing to die on. I know the Chair feels very strongly about this. And I know that there is an ask from many people in the community for more family-sized units to accommodate

our larger, multi-generational families that live particularly in this community, and so I'd love to hear your thoughts on that. Yesterday, we had a hearing with HPD, and I asked them point-blank, do they tell developers no when developers say they want to go above and beyond the term sheets for offering three bedrooms or even four bedrooms? They said on the record they remain flexible. I mean, we know that that means a lot of things off the record. But I want to hear from you your thoughts on pushing for bigger unit sizes.

TUCKER REED: Yeah. I mean, it may be hard for folks to believe, but it fits right into our ethos as a company. I mean, a lot of us come out of City government ourselves. Some of us grew up in public housing ourselves. Our goal is shared in that family-sized units is a laudable and very germane goal to this project that we look forward to work on together. You know, I will just say as a track record in our mixed-income projects that we've built to date, we no longer build studios in our mixed-income projects because we just don't think it serves the neighborhoods that we work in, and we figured out ways to make that work financially, and so we don't

offer them any further. You know, that's different with an HPD term sheet. There may be a desire to do some studios, but like I say, on the market rate side, we very rarely even consider them anymore.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Thank you for that.

I'm going to turn to just the broader kind of design of the project. The Chair asked a few of my questions, but what you're proposing, the buildings you have here have varying heights between, correct me if I'm wrong, 250 and 350 feet or 20 to 30 stories. The Community Board and other stakeholders have expressed concern over the proposed height, requesting no more than or no higher than 20 floors. You stated that you were able to reduce the heights from the initial proposal during the scoping process. Can you talk about the conversations you've had with the community on this topic and what difficulties you are reconciling with in the conversations you've had about reducing height?

TUCKER REED: Yes. Thank you, Council Member. So, this project has gone through many iterations over the years. At times, the building heights in the proposal had reached over 400 feet tall, and we had heard very clearly from neighborhood

stakeholders that that was not a height that they were willing to accept. You know, in the back and forth and dialogue over years, you don't necessarily get to specificity until like the last minute in terms of a line in the sand. We were told at the final Community Board hearing that 20 stories was their kind of proposed approach. We hadn't had time really to react to that or talk through with them the implications of that, but that ended up in their final recommendation. Since we've moved through the process, we've reduced building heights by almost 100 feet in a lot of places, come down from 400 feet to much lower. In response to concerns about heights and the impact in the neighborhood, I will say, hopefully our presentation, and I know in conversations with you, but our presentation lays out the myriad of uses that we're trying to cram into these spaces that are, you know, geometrically constrained in that, you know, one side is a triangular shape. They're not necessarily the most advantageous to development layouts. And so we've really tried to balance the push and pull between program and desires from community expressions of what the folks would like to see with the need to make it pencil financially

within the constraints of the HPD term sheets and others. And so we've pushed and pulled the buildings as far as we think we can. Even in our last iteration with City Planning two weeks ago, we actually had - well, it was a little bit, we actually had to ask for two additional feet of width. It was that close to not being able to work so that we could fit the hallway into the test fit. And so, you know, that's how granular we're getting on the push and pull on heights and widths, and we don't think we really have room to make any more adjustments without losing significant program desires here.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Thank you for that.

And just something that I've started to... we haven't really had a chance to talk about it because of everything we've been talking about so far, but one of the things that has come up is the East New York Ave. side. We haven't really had the rendering where that is kind of presented, and I know that some of that is DOT. It's a very weird area where you exit, or potentially... I don't know how the building would be. You exit, and there's this underpass, and it's a very weird space. So, are you

having any conversations, or do you have anything you can share today about that side of the complex?

TUCKER REED: I'm sorry. You said the LIRR stop to the south of Van Sinderen... (CROSS-TALK)

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Right. So, like the Williams to East New York Ave. side... you basically start on Atlantic.

TUCKER REED: Yeah. So, we have had a lot of discussions with the MTA over the years, obviously, on this project. I mean, the big point of focus for a long time was getting them to agree to move parking off of the plaza area that EDC is going to design on the northern side to create that connection between the subway station and the rest of the pedestrian improvements on the block. I'm not answering your question. I'm just saying that we've spent a lot of time talking with the MTA over the years. And we were very successful, I think, in advocating with EDC to get them to move that parking to accomplish that. I just use that as an example as we move forward. It is going to behoove us as a developer of these buildings and for the residents of these buildings to make sure that improvements to that LIRR experience take place. So, while we have

not engaged in deep conversations with the MTA about that, we'd love to work with you on that in the years to come to ensure that there are improvements there. There is going to be a significant sidewalk improvement along Van Sinderen, not only on our sides of the property line with sidewalk widenings and street tree improvements, etc., but also the EDC capital project to redo Van Sinderen that is in the works. And so I say that to say that there's a lot in the works already and I think working together, we can take that to the next level with the LIRR station.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Yeah. And it's something I'm going to be flagging to have is the East New York Ave. side specifically.

Are you all having a pedestrian exit on that side? So between Williams Ave. and Van Sinderen?

TUCKER REED: If I'm envisioning this correctly, and Ethan, please help me. There is...

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Like on the other side of building E and D. If we were to go on the other side and walk around that.

TUCKER REED: So if we go to, can we go back to slide 17, I believe? Okay. Yeah. On the right

side of the screen is what you're talking about, right? The East New York side. Okay. So there is actually a significant improvement plan to the pedestrian experience there through a sidewalk widening and a public plaza creation that would also include street improvements and traffic-calming measures so that traffic that is kind of coming off of Herkimer and onto East New York Avenue is not just whizzing through there like they do now. We've also talked to DOT about their bus stops that are there and creating a more accessible experience for, or more pleasant experience for people waiting for the bus to incorporate into the plaza design better bus stops and along with the traffic-calming measures and street plantings that we talked about. So, there is a significant, you know, the main pedestrian improvement is obviously on the west side in that it's just the sheer number of square footage that's associated with it. But on the eastern corner there, there is a pedestrian plaza improvement plan.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Yeah. I just think that's going to be... if you're planning to have an exit or parking exit or, you know, a parking lot

exit, come on to East New York Ave. I think that needs a lot of attention.

Okay. It'll be great to work together with DOT on like a bigger visioning for that space. I mean, a thousand units plus all the people coming there. Like, it's going to be heavily used.

TUCKER REED: Happy to.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: I will move a little bit faster.

One of the things that I've really tried to stress is that there's a lot of construction going on over there, and to create like consistent coordination among the different entities that are planning or currently are planning to do construction there so that we are not ripping up streets three times, we are not inconveniencing the folks who are living just on the other side of Van Sinderen for, you know, more than is absolutely necessary for getting these projects done, so can you talk a little bit how you will be working with these agencies and how you're going to minimize friction and be communicators with the folks in the area?

TUCKER REED: Liz, you want to talk a little bit through our community engagement with our construction?

ELIZABETH CANELA: Thank you for the question. So, there are a number of ways we can coordinate across the agencies, right. So, as you mentioned, the MTA essentially to right above where it says EDC Plaza, they're improving that train station with ADA accessibility. That's supposed to be completed in and around 2027. Obviously, dates change as things progress. And then EDC, so they're doing all the streetscape improvements along Van Sinderen and directly to the north. It's like a block up from Fulton on Broadway. And there are a couple things happening there. So obviously, once we've gotten further down design and secured financing on building B along Van Sinderen, and so we have a time stamp for Department of Buildings and permitting, etc. The Department of Buildings is very, very keen on making sure that we're all coordinated and looking at the infrastructure improvements with DEP, making sure that all the new infrastructure or enhancements are all coordinated. And that'll be because of the MTA improvements, that'll sort of lead the way and make

sure that we're not impacting it negatively. But in practice, what that looks like often on the size of this project is every month, every quarter, there's like a coordination meeting across the agencies, across the developers to make sure that the timelines are being held to, if they're shifting, how that impacts things. Whether or not that, so the City is very, very adamant on making sure that there's sidewalk protection for folks that are traversing. So obviously, we know that the Long Island Railroad Stop and Broadway Junction is a huge transfer point there so making sure that pedestrians have enough lighting, making sure that pedestrians have sort of sheds or sidewalk sheds that are safe and well lit, and so there's a couple different ways to do it. It usually is triggered in and around Department of Buildings permitting, and then there's often a monthly or quarterly meeting looking at building plans, sidewalk plans, making sure that the interim conditions and what will eventually be the sort of permanent conditions as construction goes is coordinated.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. I appreciate that. And we have a regular monthly stakeholders

meeting for Broadway Junction with the MTA, and so we look forward at some point to, you know.

TUCKER REED: Yeah, if we can join this, we'd be happy to.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Be a part of that conversation.

I want to talk about jobs. Oh, and sorry, I'm hearing from... one moment.

In terms of local hire, you know, when I got into office, one of the biggest things that I was confronted with was this broken promise that people felt from the East New York Rezoning about the number of jobs that would be provided and the local dollars that would be circulated here. So if approved, can you talk about how M/WBE organizations and diversity practices will be implemented during the construction and post-construction phase of this development? What conversations have you had on local hiring practices for before, during, and after construction? Have you engaged with any unions? And what is your plan to ensure that residents can have access to permanent employment opportunities in your proposed development for the buildings that you have control in? And then for building E as well?

TUCKER REED: Why don't I start, Liz? So we tend to set pretty ambitious local hiring and M/WBE participation goals for ourselves in our own private developments. You know, targets as high as 35 percent when we're not receiving government subsidy or other programs. You know, here, we know this is a little specialized and that we would be looking for HPD support or other government agencies. And Council Member has been very clear with us about her desires to see local hiring incorporated at ambitious levels, and so we have been talking to a number of local hiring partners in the neighborhood, some of whom I think you'll hear from today, and we have no problem setting local hiring goals that are ambitious here.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Sorry. I'm listening, but there was somebody who was trying to get in so thank you.

And then just one of the other things is I think that there's always talk about local hire and how many people get employed. Do you all have any proposals or practices of where you are able to show that in a public way regularly to community members to know, like, this is how many people from this neighborhood are working or have worked on here so

that, you know, we can tell that story at some point, which we weren't really able to tell from the East New York Rezoning because there wasn't any tracker or any way to quantify this?

TUCKER REED: Yeah. So in this case, you know, there are a number of very strong groups in the neighborhood with workforce development experience. You know, one of whom that we've been talking to is the Central Brooklyn EDC, who has a very robust local hiring program and reporting program that we hope to plug into this opportunity and should be able to produce regular reports with updates. And more importantly, I think, rather than the kind of after the fact reporting, but really getting the word out about job opportunities as they're coming up and making sure that long in advance of the hiring event, that folks are prepared and know what's coming.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Thank you.

My last couple of questions are related to the commercial space. You know, as I said in my opening remarks, I just I don't believe that's something that's going to be filled. I think it's a lot of speculation, but here we are. I don't know if

anybody can speak. Are you here to speak to Building E?

ETHAN GOODMAN: Yeah, we represent them as well so I can certainly tackle questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. I've never met the owner, so I'm just I've never been able to have a conversation. Are you confident that there is a sufficient market for the amount of office space that you are proposing for this project? And what are the grounds in which you are claiming that?

ETHAN GOODMAN: Right. So first of all, I think the history is relevant here in that, you know, initially this was sort of put together as a sort of commercial hub for the area. I think everybody heard loud and clear that that's not the direction people wanted to go. But there was also a little bit of a push pull in that they didn't want this to become 100 percent residential, right, so we went back and forth and ended up in this balance you see here today, which I think, you know, both sides might want to see a little bit more of this, a little bit less of that.

As far as the buildout of this project, we see and the owner of Parcel E sees that, you know, they're envisioning a 10-year buildout of the project

with Parcel E likely coming toward the tail end of that 10 years. Right now, we understand everybody appreciates the challenging retail or challenging office environment, especially in this neighborhood, and there's no tenant lined up, right, for this construction. I think, though, people are optimistic that that will change as things do and cycles change that in the future, you know, seven, eight years down the road, that environment shifts and there's much more significant demand so, you know, for now, we're just being optimistic and we think eventually in the future there will be demand. We don't envision that building will break ground in the next couple of years, though.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. I think those are more or less my questions.

I did just want to, because somebody had mentioned 2440 Fulton. I mean, there's only three tenants that are going to be in that building. It is a destination like entertainment and 3,000 employees from HRA and then there's going to be one other smaller tenant so that is not a comparable that I think is helpful in the conversation. And, you know, I'm really looking forward to hearing more from

Mystic on, you know, what are the what is the fallout plan if the market does not create a viable project here and what are you able to communicate publicly to this community because that is like a huge gamble right there in our neighborhood and on our on our community's backs.

ETHAN GOODMAN: Yeah. The only thing other thing to add is that, you know, all the analysis we've done in the plan you see and the environmental review that was done. You know, it analyzes what's a reasonable sort of worst case scenario, just worse in the terms of the bulk of the building and the square footage that could come in the traffic. The building doesn't necessarily have to be that big, right? If there's a market, but not for quite that size of building, maybe there's something of smaller size occurs here in the end. We just want to make sure we disclosed and studied, you know, what could possibly happen here under the zoning. But the special permit in the zoning doesn't mandate its construction to the full the full maximum extent. It might there might be, you know, a smaller building there built if necessary.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And for Building E - sorry, I forgot to ask - what is your vision for the size of retail space and the size of commercial space that would be leasable there? As you know, the Community Board and many residents had been very clear. They don't want big box stores that will squash out the thriving small business community on Fulton Street and surrounding areas. So, can you talk a little bit about that?

ETHAN GOODMAN: Sure. So from the beginning, the desire of ownership of that parcel was to maintain as much flexibility as possible so we have included in the actions that are before you a special permit for large retail that could go up to approximately 75,000 square feet. Now, that could be on the first and second floors of this building. But again, I think you would be hard pressed to find retailers that are even close to that size if you looked around the market now. The general trend in retail is that it's smaller retail establishments that are more locally oriented. You know, things like even Target have smaller local stores now. So while the permit would allow the construction of up to 75,000 square feet, that is likely to occur in the

form of probably multiple smaller retailers rather than one large retailer of that size. Or the retail could be shrunk altogether, and that other space could be occupied as a smaller building or as commercial office space.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. Thank you so much, and I look forward to continuing the conversation.

Thank you, Chair. Those are my questions.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much, Council Member Nurse.

Just two questions. So there's no studios?

TUCKER REED: No, no, no. Sorry, Council Member. I was saying in our market rate development, our mixed-income developments, we no longer build studios.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay.

TUCKER REED: You know, here, you know, we would be following the term sheet from the housing agency, and there would likely be some component of studios.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay.

And, Ethan, Site E, this is a massive site. Is there any reason why the Council Member has not met the owner of the site yet and why the owner wasn't here today?

ETHAN GOODMAN: Yeah. I haven't been heavily involved in those conversations, but I can certainly investigate, and we can make something happen.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yeah. I think it's important, because this is a very massive site, and it's going to be built in the District, so they should have some form of relationship with the community. Appreciate it.

All right. With that being said, thank you so much for your testimony. Truly appreciate it, and your excused. Thank you.

TUCKER REED: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: I just want to state for the record, we've been joined by Council Member Moya.

We're going to transition to in-person testimony and then transition to online testimony after.

So, members of the public, you will be given two minutes to testify. There will be no video recording or audio from the witness table, but you may present that recording to the Sergeant-at-Arms for inclusion of the records.

The first panel I'm going to call in person, and excuse me if I butcher your name, is Jakob Schneider, Craig Wright, Sharmaine Byrd, and Diane Sanders.

Is this you? Somebody in here? Very beautiful handwriting, but I can't read it. It starts with an S, and the address, I won't say the street, but it's 268. Thank you. I'm sorry.

PASTOR SHARMAINE BYRD: It's okay.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: First, we'll begin with Jakob.

JACOB SCHNEIDER: So, thank you, Chair Riley, Council Member Nurse, and Members of the Subcommittee. So, my name is Jakob Kendall Schneider, and I am the Senior Program Manager for Research and Policy at the East New York Community Land Trust. The East New York CLT is a membership-based organization that works to prevent displacement and real estate speculation in the neighborhoods of East New York and

Brownsville. We do this through community organizing, providing permanently affordable CLT housing on community-owned and democratically governed land. We are against this rezoning unless the developers and the City take significant steps to meet the demands we outlined below, which will ensure that the project meets the needs and desires of East New York and Brownsville residents. Our written testimony provides greater detail on some of what I'll talk about here. In our membership meetings and other events, we heard that there are real fears that this rezoning, coupled with recent and forthcoming public and private investment, in addition to the prospect of the Interborough Express, will displace many long-time residents of East New York and Brownsville. Like the 2016 rezoning, we anticipate that we will see a wave of predatory real estate speculation that will displace residents and continue to drive up property values, making the neighborhoods unaffordable.

Regarding the project, we need to see the developers address the following concerns. Affordable housing must be affordable to area residents. 60 percent of units must be below 50 percent AMI, with affordability reaching to 20 percent AMI, where

possible. 40 percent of units must be between 50 percent and 80 percent AMI. There should be no market rate units included in the project. Affordable housing units must be sized for families. At least 75 percent of housing units must be one- to three- bedrooms, and some larger units should be provided. Affordable home ownership units must be part of the project. The amount of commercial office space must be reduced. There should be no more than 300,000 square feet of office space. Building heights must be lowered. Building heights should not exceed 20 stories, ideally less. (TIMER CHIME)

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: You may continue.

JAKOB SCHNEIDER: Thank you. Below market rate rental space must be provided for small businesses. The developers must commit to providing smaller retail spaces at below market rents to small local businesses.

If this rezoning is approved, we are asking the City and developers to ensure that the project does not contribute to displacement. This can be achieved through the following measures. The developers and the City must create an anti-displacement fund and commit sufficient resources to

it. Funding should be directed to local CBOs that provide permanently affordable housing so they can purchase homes from property owners looking to cash in. The City must increase funding for partners in preservation and the homeowner help desk. These programs will address some of the problems the project will produce, including tenant harassment and predatory real estate scams targeting homeowners. Provide rent relief to tenants. Investors and landlords will try to capitalize on the influx of investment in the area by raising rents on tenants in unregulated units. A rent relief program should be created by the City to ensure tenants are not displaced. And then property tax relief for homeowners. Many homeowners in the area have lower incomes, are on fixed incomes or otherwise financially strained. The City must work with Albany to provide homeowners in one- to three-family homes with a partial tax exemption that offsets increased tax bills. And finally, commitments made by the developers must be memorialized in a restrictive declaration on the site. The rezoning request before the Subcommittee will exacerbate displacement pressures in East New York and Brownsville. It should

not be approved unless the City and developers commit to offsetting the impacts it will have. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next we'll hear from Sharmaine. All right, Sharmaine. Sharmaine, just ask that you speak into the mic, please. Thank you.

PASTOR SHARMAINE BYRD: Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Pastor Sharmaine Byrd, and I serve as a leader at the Greater Mount Carmel Cathedral and Worship Center in Brooklyn. I've witnessed firsthand the issues our parishioners face every day, and one of our top priorities is the economic well-being and security of our flock and the surrounding community. Herkimer-Williams and the benefits it would bring in the way of affordable housing, job creation, new open space, and training opportunities helps directly address these issues. The developers at Totem have a genuine commitment to our community's needs, demonstrated by their plans for local hiring and meaningful partnerships with minority and women-owned businesses. The planned inclusion of educational spaces directly addresses our community's call for greater access to essential services, training, and support. The project's

emphasis on creating pedestrian-friendly, accessible spaces will significantly improve daily life for everyone. By bringing new businesses, this development will not only help the economic growth of our community, but will provide convenience for residents and a powerful opportunity to transform the area into a welcoming, vibrant neighborhood. I strongly support this development and am confident that it will serve as a catalyst for positive change and lasting community growth. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Pastor.

Diane.

DIANE SANDERS: Good morning. My name is Diane Sanders, and I've been proud to call East New York home for more than 30 years. I'm here today to support the Herkimer-Williams Project because this is our moment to build an East New York that works for all generations. This proposal brings something we've needed for a long time, deeply affordable housing that's built for the people in the neighborhood. By creating more affordable apartments in East New York, it will give seniors like myself a real chance to stay in my neighborhood. Community involvement is critical for continual progress, and it's encouraging

to see a proposed development from people who are taking community input to help keep residents here in East New York and East Brooklyn. This plan also includes new open space to make our streets safer and more walkable, especially around Broadway Junction. I've walked by the vacant lots in this area for years. It's time to put that space to good use and to build something that benefits all of us. Thank you for hearing me, and I urge you to support this project for our seniors, for our families, and for our future. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much, Diane.

Lastly, we'll hear from Craig.

CRAIG WRIGHT: My name is Craig Wright, and I've been proud..

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Craig, you have a great voice. Can you just talk more into the mic, please?

CRAIG WRIGHT: Okay. Sorry about that.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, sir. That's better.

CRAIG WRIGHT: Okay. I've been proud to call East New York my home for a few years now. I

have followed with great interest the proposed development for Herkimer-Williams because I believe more housing needs to be built in this area that is affordable and accessible to seniors like myself. I have met with the development team, Totem, which has been a continuous presence at neighborhood meetings over the past several years gathering community feedback. I am excited to hear the Herkimer-Williams plan to create affordable housing, local job opportunities, and places to shop for people in the area. It is about time that there are new opportunities being planned. Beyond jobs and housing, this project will transform parking lots into new open space where families can gather and help create accessible spaces that will significantly improve daily life for everyone. Okay. I urge you to support the Herkimer-Williams project and help us build a future that truly honors the people of East New York. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much for your testimony.

Councilwoman, do you have any questions?

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: I do not.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: All right. Thank you so much for your testimony. You're excused.

Next, we'll hear from Pastor James Neville, Jacob, last name starts with a D., La'Shawn Allen Muhammad, and Micah Sander.

Okay, so it's just going to be La'Shawn, Pastor James, and Micah.

We'll start first with Pastor James.

PASTOR JAMES NEVILLE: Hello. Can you hear me? All right. My name is Pastor James Neville, Senior Clergy of Holy Temple of Prayer located a short distance from the Broadway junction. A number of my congregation live in the area and pass through the junction on a daily basis. I care deeply about the dignity and future of our community, and one of our top priorities is the economic development and security of our flock and the surrounding neighborhood. This is why I'm here to support the Herkimer-Williams project, which represents a direct response to the housing insecurity that burdens so many of our families. Herkimer-Williams also invests in opportunity, creating pathways to economic development through local hiring, job training, and support for neighborhood entrepreneurs. The

developers have been engaging with church and tenant leaders across Central and East Brooklyn on a regular basis, bringing us to the table to help shape this project. I believe that this plan reflects the values that we hold dear, including dignity, equity, and the call to serve others. I urge you to support Herkimer-Williams project and help us build a future that will strengthen the community of East New York. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Pastor.

Next, we'll hear from La'Shawn.

LA'SHAWN ALLEN MUHAMMAD: Good afternoon.

Thank you, Chairman, Council Member Nurse, Council Member Moya. Good afternoon. My name is La'Shawn Allen Muhammad. I serve as the Executive Director for Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation. In its 36-year history, CBEDC has been a leader in community development in Brownsville and is also a founding member of the New York City Equity and Environmental Justice Center. Because of our proximity to Broadway Junction, we have been actively involved for the past few years working with Totem on the Herkimer-Williams project. One of the projects that we're working on is to create a Green Economy Institute to be located in East New York. We see this

planning as a long-term economic development strategy that would create linked environmental justice hubs. The first one we are currently building in Brownsville at the forthcoming Brownsville Hub, and the second will be hopefully housed at Broadway Junction. The Green Economy Institute will support local job seekers, industrial businesses, and the broader East Brooklyn community through a combination of workforce development training, supply chain development and capacity building, networking and mentorship opportunities, professional programming, and access to affordable workspace. In service of this vision, the development team has acted as a catalyst for CBEDC and other community-based organizations to collaborate to maximize synergies and enhance the support we can provide to our local job seekers and small businesses. This kind of diligence is rare from a developer, and it speaks to the character of the team behind the Herkimer-Williams project. We truly believe the Herkimer-Williams project heralds a potential transformative shift that extends well beyond Broadway Junction and will help ensure the community directly benefits from economic development on par (TIMER CHIME) with the

prosperity enjoyed by wealthier neighborhoods in the borough. I urge you all to support Herkimer-Williams and aid our efforts to lay the groundwork for a more inclusive and prosperous Brooklyn for all. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, La'Shawn.

Lastly, Micah.

MICAH SANDER: Thank you. Good afternoon, Chair Riley, Council Member Nurse, and Members of the Subcommittee. My name is Micah Sander, and I am here today representing SEIU Local 32BJ. 32BJ is the largest union of property service workers in the country, representing over 175,000 members across 13 states, including tens of thousands of commercial property service workers, security officers, and residential building staff in New York City. 32BJ supports responsible developers who invest in the communities where they build. I am happy to report that developers of this proposed project, Totem Brooklyn, have made a credible commitment to creating good jobs for the workers who will permanently staff the buildings. We estimate that between the residential and commercial components, this project will produce over 30 property service jobs. Good jobs like these mean prevailing wages, meaningful

benefits, and a pathway to the middle class for local community members who tend to fill such positions. Moreover, we need more housing to be built in every neighborhood in New York City to ensure that working families are not displaced by dwindling supply and skyrocketing rents. As the cost of living rises and working New Yorkers struggle to stay in their homes, it is more important now than ever to create affordable housing and good jobs which uphold the industry standard in this city. For all these reasons, 32BJ is in strong support of the Herkimer-Williams rezoning. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

There being no questions, this panel is excused.

The last panel will hear in person before we transition to online testimony will consist of Hailie Kim and Pia Palomino.

After this panel, we'll hear from Anita Ferebee, Lucas G., Inez Federica.

First, we'll hear from Hailie.

HAILIE KIM: Hi. Good afternoon. My name is Hailie Kim, and I'm the Lead Organizer for the East New York Coalition for Community Advancement,

and I would like to testify on the lack of market space in the proposed Herkimer-Williams development. Anyone familiar with the history of East New York and what has built the middle class of this community understands that we need jobs in health care, education, transportation, and manufacturing. Broadway Junction has been a strong transit hub for 125 years, and we should be investing in the generation of good transit jobs with the MTA, with the Transit Authority, and with the IBX, and the Long Island Railroad, and in electrification of buses, and the repair and maintenance of the new Light Rail Line. Furthermore, there is little to no market demand for office space at the present moment in Brooklyn, and while Totem reduced their square footage for office space, there's still a proposal for 440 (sic) square feet of it. According to a memo composed by Prout Center, prior developments that promised a lot of office space ended up not being able to build as much office space. Furthermore, the Comptroller's Office released a report on the state of the market for office space, which directly states that in the aftermath of the pandemic and the seismic shift toward work from home, New York City's office

market remains slack. Office vacancy rates have doubled to 12.8 percent since the pandemic. We ask you to vote no on the Herkimer-Williams development with the following recommendations. 50 percent of the construction and permanent jobs generated should be reserved for local residents. This includes all construction and permanent jobs; a reduction in office space by a quarter or 110 square feet; a vocational training school or engineering sciences college should be located at the junction; exploring with the New York City Department of Education (TIMER CHIME) locating a Brooklyn STEAM center at the junction similar to the one in the Navy Yard. We need a robust and sustainable economic development plan for Broadway Junction. Provide the already promised 3,900 jobs prior to the new development and local hire at 50 percent in construction and permanent jobs of Totem and commercial tenants. Thank you for your time.

PIA PALOMINO: Good afternoon, everyone.

My name is Pia Palomino. I am a Brooklyn resident and Community Organizer for the East New York Coalition for Community Advancement, and I ask that the City Council includes displacement prevention measures

within the Herkimer-Williams rezoning. As we can all see, a project of this magnitude will deeply impact the surrounding community. After 2018, the Black population of East New York fell from 50 percent to 44 percent. The average rent has gone up to a median of 2,200 dollars a month for a studio apartment in the area and 2,700 dollars a month for a two-bedroom apartment. These rents are already too high for East New Yorkers who earn around 40 percent of the area median income. Downtown Brooklyn and Gowanus saw their residential property taxes increase exponentially after rezonings. A residential property tax freeze should be implemented for a minimum of 10 years post-construction for properties within a quarter-mile radius of the study area. In order to mitigate the impact that the displacement will have as a result of a development of this magnitude, we urge the City Council to vote no on the Herkimer-Williams development with the following recommendations. Prohibit market rate housing of any kind; maximize regulatory periods of the housing to be built; align the income bands in the developer's financing plans to match the income bands of the local residents; include 200 units of low-mid-income

homeownership opportunities in the mix of housing to be built; to create an anti-displacement fund which will include resources and benefits to defend and protect tenants and homeowners; and a unit mix must be a mixture of one-, two-, three-, and four-bedrooms with studios no less than 450 square feet and a focus on family-sized units which include one to three bedrooms. I ask that you listen to the community that actually lives and will be directly impacted by this project who provided strong recommendations under the Community Board 5 for this project. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you for your testimony. You're now excused.

We're going to transition to online testimony and we're going to hear first from Anita Ferribee.

Anita, if you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Anita, if you can hear me, please unmute.

ANITA FEREBEE-HICKS: I think I did. Can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can.

ANITA FEREBEE-HICKS: Hi. My name is Anita Ferebee-Hicks, and I am a part of East New York City Land and Trust, and I am also the Vice President for the Junction Neighborhood Association that will be directly impacted by this rezoning and rebuilding in our neighborhood. I literally live on Herkimer Street about three blocks away from (INAUDIBLE). These changes that are coming are very beneficial to our neighborhood. However, it will impact every single person in this residential neighborhood dramatically. The foot traffic of more people coming around, more sanitation, more ambulances, more firetrucks, just more of everything and it's already so congested over here. It will not be beneficial to our neighbors if we have all of this high traffic coming into our neighborhood. Like I stated, I literally live up the block from the proposed area. I just believe that we are against this rezoning unless Totem and the City take significant (TIMER CHIME) steps to meet our demands.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you. Time expired.

ANITA FEREBEE-HICKS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.

Next, we're going to hear from... one second.

Okay. Next, we're going to hear from Lucas Gogoliewiczki (phonetic).

Lucas, if you can hear me, please unmute.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin.

Okay. I believe we lost Lucas, so I'm going to call the next panel which consists of Bill Wilkins and Quincy Ely-Cate.

We'll begin first with Bill Wilkins.

Bill, if you can hear me, please unmute.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin.

BILL WILKINS: Yes, I can hear you, Chair. As stated today (INAUDIBLE) East New York and across the world, it is Zoom time. Zoom time is a geographically measured time across all time zones. My name is Bill Wilkins. I've lived in East New York for the past 25 years and I'm the Executive Director for four non-profits in East Brooklyn. One is LDC (INAUDIBLE)

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: One second. It's kind of muffled with your speaker.

BILL WILKINS: I'm sorry. Let's see.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yeah. I think you're touching something as you're speaking. Okay. I don't hear anything now. Go ahead.

BILL WILKINS: Now it's better? Okay. So as stated, our mission for my four non-profits is to grow businesses, change lives, and strengthen communities. Today's application fits perfectly in those three buckets. For the past 25 years, I have worked four blocks from the proposed site, which is distressed and also blighted. But today, with your support, we can move from a dream deferred to a dream realized. This application is a game changer that will anchor the East Brooklyn community with opportunities and resources. We have the rare opportunity to create an urban masterpiece that is for us and by us and create a circular economy made up of area residents and businesses that in turn will move us (INAUDIBLE). Totem's approach is bottom-up development and intentional. Over the past six years, they have incorporated, digested, listened, and synthesized the opinions and recommendations from the community, various agencies, and elected representatives into this project. In closing, together, yes, we can create the impossible from an

often ignored but truly deserving community, and urban renewal does not have to mean Black and Latino removal when done right. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

Next, we'll hear from Quincy Ely-Cate.

Quincy, if you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin.

QUINCY ELY-CATE: Hello, Chair Riley, Council Member Nurse, and Committee Members. My name is Quincy Ely-Cate, and I serve as the Director of Industrial Business Development at the Business Outreach Center, BOC Network. In this role, I work closely with industrial and manufacturing businesses across New York City, including in East New York and Flatlands Fairfield industrial business zones, supporting their ability to remain competitive and grow in place. It is because of this work that we support the vision for a Green Economy Institute at Herkimer-Williams, a 5,000-square-foot space which will empower entrepreneurs, support industrial development, bolster a green local workforce pipeline, and create space that supports the growth of industrial businesses in East New York. Over the past several years, we have been working alongside

Totem, Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation, the LDC of East New York, to co-create and co-venture incubator space to provide training opportunities, develop a green workforce pipeline, and provide affordable workspace to grow local businesses. Industrial and manufacturing businesses are critical to meeting the needs of this new green economy, and Broadway Junction's transit-oriented location adjacent to the East New York industrial business zone can help strengthen linkages, enabling small businesses to start there and grow into larger industrial space within the East New York IBZ in the future. The BOC Network is working with our partners to connect local businesses to supply chain opportunities in the green economy through programs such as WeSourceNYC, Growing Green, and Wind Connections. This institute is conceptualized to build upon and catalyze our work and commitment in East New York to further support local job seekers and industrial and manufacturing businesses through a combination of workforce development, supply chain development, and capacity building, networking and mentorship opportunities, access to affordable

workspace, and a strategy that supports growth in place for (TIMER CHIME) East New York industrial and...

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you. Your time is expired.

QUINCY ELY-CATE: Manufacturing businesses. Thank you for your attention and appreciate the opportunity today.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.

Next, we're going to call on Manny.

Manny, if you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin. Manny, if you can hear me, you can begin.

Okay. I'm going to do a last call for in-person and online. If you want to testify on this project, please use the raise hand function online to testify. If you are in the room and want to testify, please see one of the Sergeants-at-Arms for a speakers card.

We'll stand at ease for 30 seconds.

Manny, if you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin. Manny, if you can hear me, you can begin.

You can also submit testimony to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov if you want to submit testimony.

There being no other members of the public who wish to testify on Pre-Considered LU Items regarding the zoning text and map amendment relating to the Herkimer-Williams Development Project, the public hearing is now closed and the items are laid over.

That concludes today's business.

I would like to thank the members of the public, my Colleagues, Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use Council Staff, and the Sergeant-at-Arms for participating in today's meeting.

The meeting is hereby adjourned. Thank you. [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 December 9, 2025