



Testimony of Betsy Plum, Executive Director

343 Madison Avenue City Council Hearing

August 18, 2021

Hello, Chair and Committee Members, I am Betsy Plum, Executive Director of The Riders Alliance. We are a New York based grass-roots membership organization of subway and bus riders dedicated to building a more just and sustainable New York by holding government officials accountable for safe, reliable, and affordable public transit.

As an organization of New Yorkers committed to an equitable vision for our city, the Riders Alliance supports various projects and policies that will have a direct impact on the City's transit infrastructure. This work fits with our overall approach to organizing and advocating for a reliable, affordable, sustainable and world-class public transit system.

We believe that the redevelopment of 343 Madison - in partnership with the MTA - will unlock future transit upgrades and enhance the experience for riders and commuters in and around Grand Central. We're encouraged by the proposed changes, including enhancing pedestrian flow at the 42nd Street station for the aging 7 subway line with its hidden, confusing entrances and overcrowded platforms.

Additionally, 343 Madison will deliver a new prominent entrance on Madison Avenue with direct connection to Grand Central and the new LIRR terminal as part of East Side Access. When completed, East Side Access will serve thousands of commuters a day and a new street level entrance will allow them to avoid passing through an already cramped and congested Grand Central Station.

The enhanced entrances and improved pedestrian flow throughout will provide more physical space between passengers in one of the busiest train stations in the nation, an adjustment more necessary now than ever before. Based on conversations with our members and rider surveys, we understand that New Yorkers are quite reasonably reluctant to return to overcrowded conditions in public transit for a long time to come.

To ensure commuter comfort and access, we also support the building's proposed use for a variety of multimodal transportation options, including making the lobby of 343 Madison compatible with bike parking and storage, as well as supportive of e-bikes in the loading dock area.

As part of an equitable recovery from COVID, New York City transit riders deserve efficient and accessible transportation options. The redevelopment of 343 Madison demonstrates the City's, State's and MTA's investment in a sustainable and reliable transit infrastructure.

Thank you.

From: [Cheryl Levine](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Question re 343 mad ave
Date: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 10:44:23 AM

I would like to know how the stair expansion shown in one of the early slides impacts the station platform width.

From the rendering shown it appears that the platform will be much more narrow than it is currently. This is a safety concern considering the throngs of people going through this hub.

Has this been looked at and considered at all?

Thank you,
Cheryl Levine


Brooklyn 11215

Sent from my iPhone

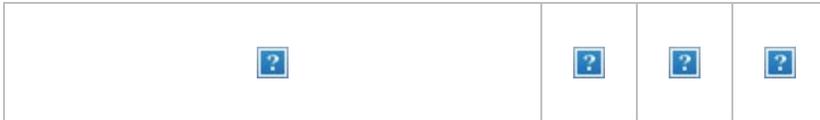
From: [Charlie Samboy](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 343 Madison Ave Testimony CEQR #21DCP020M
Date: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 9:55:00 AM
Attachments: [Council Subcommittee 343 Madison Ave 10 12 21 FINAL.pdf](#)

Hi,

Please see the attached testimony.

Best,
Charlie

Charlie Samboy | Director, Government Affairs
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October 12, 2021

TESTIMONY TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL REGARDING 343 MADISON AVE, CEQR #21DCP020M

To Chair Council Member Moya and members of the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises, the New York Building Congress is pleased to testify in support of the 343 Madison Ave proposal in Midtown Manhattan.

The Building Congress has, for 100 years, advocated for investment in infrastructure, pursued job creation and promoted preservation and growth in the New York City area. Our association is made up of over 525 organizations comprised of more than 250,000 skilled professionals and tradespeople. Through our members, events and various committees, we seek to address the critical issues of the building industry and promote the economic and social advancement of our city and its constituents.

We believe 343 Madison Avenue is a tremendous investment in New York at this moment in history. Redeveloping the vacant site will support the city's recovery and get the economy moving after the COVID-19 pandemic, upgrade transit infrastructure in the MTA network and provide necessary funding to support the agency.

Much like the nearby One Vanderbilt, which the Building Congress also supported, 343 Madison Avenue will replace an outdated structure in the Grand Central district with a new, sustainable tower that incorporates energy-efficient design elements, wellness amenities, universal design and the latest technology to support best practices for ventilation and air filtration. 343 Madison will be a Class-A, state-of-the-art tower that will attract and retain world-class companies to New York. Given its density, and the fact that it is replacing a vacant facility, it will also be an economic generator for nearby small businesses, food establishments and cultural institutions. The design also responds to Grand Central's role as a catalyst for density following the East Midtown Rezoning and adds to the modernization of the Vanderbilt Corridor.

This project will also promote significant private investment in public infrastructure. Redeveloping 343 Madison Avenue is expected to contribute funding to ease the MTA's capital and operational needs as well as unlock private revenue that will be used to support transit upgrades and enhance connectivity and safety in the Grand Central district. Situated near the new Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) platforms as part of East Side Access, 343 Madison Avenue will provide an entrance to the new LIRR platform, a new ADA elevator, LIRR-staff back of house space and improved circulation through the expansion of several pedestrian stairs. As part of its contributions to the transit network, the project will also create off-site improvements to the 7-train platform via the creation of new center core stairs and widening of pedestrian lanes at 42nd Street.

In closing, the Building Congress proudly supports this project, and we urge you to approve their application – a key significant step in the reimagining of East Midtown.

Thank you.

Charlie Samboy
Director of Government Affairs
New York Building Congress

From: [Felicia Park-Rogers](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for 343 Madison Ave Project
Date: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 10:21:28 AM

Testimony Supporting 343 Madison Ave, Tri-State Transportation Campaign

October 12, 2021

Hello, and thank you for your time. My name is Felicia Park-Rogers, I am the Director of Regional Infrastructure Projects for Tri-State Transportation Campaign, an organization that fights for safe, fast, and fair transportation options that reduce car dependence in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut.

I'm here today as a transit advocate to express our support for the 343 Madison Avenue project to redevelop the MTA's vacant former HQ near Grand Central Terminal. Among multiple benefits, this project will help jumpstart New York's economic recovery from COVID-19. This project is located in a key business and transit hub, indeed, it is hard to find a more transit-rich development spot in the five boroughs.

As one of the transit advocacy groups that spent the last year successfully advocating for more than \$15 billion dollars in emergency funds to save our precious transit system, we are especially pleased that this project will unlock critical revenue to support the MTA's much starved Capital Plan and to fund critically needed public realm and transit improvements.

That said, our support primarily stems from the LIRR rail station entrance, enhanced subway station circulation, and the accessibility improvements that the proposed development will bring. Our review of the project leads us to conclude that it is designed in such a way to honor the historic place East Midtown and Grand Central holds in our city's transit and architectural history, as well as meaningfully responding to the needs of the modern transit user, all while addressing sustainability concerns.

Before the pandemic, overcrowding of Midtown transit hubs was a major issue, including along the 7 line. This is expected to continue to be a problem when restrictions are fully lifted and workers begin to return to Midtown businesses. This project will reduce pedestrian congestion above and below ground as well as greatly improve wayfinding and circulation space. The sidewalks in this area are notoriously congested and the proposed sidewalk widening will greatly enhance mobility and safety for transit users and area pedestrians.

This project expands the passenger flow and capacity of the 42nd Street subway station, while also providing vital connectivity to the soon-to-be-completed East Side Access terminal tracks. The transit improvements include multiple improvements to enhance pedestrian flow at the 42nd Street station for the aging 7 subway line as well as a new southern entry and exit point for the upcoming LIRR East

Side Access.

As Manhattan reopens for business this year, it is crucial that we move ahead with this project to provide a better, more efficient, and safer commuting experience. This investment in transportation infrastructure will not only encourage renewed use of public transit at one of the city's largest transit hubs, it will demonstrate that urban development projects can be successful by acting like urban development projects: recognizing the availability of public transit, developing densely to take advantage of existing infrastructure, and contributing to the community by improving transit infrastructure.

More broadly Tri-State encourages dense development near transit hubs like this one. The Department of City Planning projects that New York City's population will grow to 9.1 million by 2030. Even if this number is not reached until 2040 due to COVID slowdowns, planning now for the future just makes sense. With our city's population projected to rise, we need to encourage people to live and to work near transit in order to reduce road congestion and related emissions.

If we fail to transform our transit system to appropriately handle future demand, we will fail to bring back riders and we will add to the congestion that is choking our streets and, according to the Partnership for New York City, costing our region \$20 billion a year in lost revenue. In a time where we need to encourage people to use mass transit, not cars, we should be bold about developing densely--but thoughtfully--around transit hubs. This proposed project is a good example of both.

Thank you very much for your time.

Felicia Park-Rogers, Director of Regional Infrastructure Projects

Tri-State Transportation Campaign

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www.tstc.org

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Stay up to date with the latest in regional transit and transportation on our blog, Mobilizing the Region: <http://blog.tstc.org/>



**WRITTEN TESTIMONY FROM THE ASSOCIATION FOR A BETTER NEW YORK (ABNY)
SUBMITTED TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES
IN SUPPORT OF 343 MADISON AVENUE – MTA/HQ**

October 12, 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the Association for a Better New York (ABNY). My name is Melva M. Miller, and I am the Chief Executive Officer. ABNY is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the healthy growth and renewal of New York City's people, businesses, and communities. We are a 50-year-old civic organization representing corporations, nonprofits, unions, government authorities, and educational, cultural, and health institutions. We strive to promote connections between the public and private sectors to make New York City a better place to live, work, and visit for all.

I am writing in support of the redevelopment of 343 Madison Avenue in the East Midtown neighborhood of Manhattan. The application before the Subcommittee is a prime example of how the public and private sector, working together, not only can achieve economic growth, but also bolster the City's vital transit network. To ensure that New York will continue to be the world's leading economic and cultural hub, we must support projects that will help jumpstart an equitable recovery from COVID-19, put people back to work, and deliver much needed improvements to the City's transit system. This project is ready to start and can make an immediate impact.

In addition to the public transit improvements, the building design incorporates new sustainability measures and wellness features, enhances the pedestrian experience with wider sidewalks, accommodates cyclists and delivery people, and incorporates a host of accessibility measures designed to make New Yorkers of all abilities feel welcome and invited.

The partnership between the MTA and Boston Properties will not only transform this half block site and create new Class-A office space, as well activate ground floor retail along Madison Avenue, but it also will bring about substantial improvements to the MTA's transit network at Grand Central Station by linking directly to the East Side Access (ESA) concourse. The connection to ESA will ensure the system can accommodate tens of thousands of riders, bring online new ADA accessibility, and allow people to come back to Midtown to work, contributing to local small businesses and aiding in NYC's recovery along the way. As important for the MTA will be meaningful offsite enhancements to the 7-line and 4/5/6 platforms. This application represents the kind of partnership and public realm enhancements envisioned in the East Midtown Rezoning and will provide critical capital support to the MTA.

This project will not only help put New Yorkers back to work in the construction industry, but also will attract a range of new permanent jobs back to Midtown. To guarantee this happens, we need to support projects like 343 Madison Avenue. I urge the City Council to support this application.

Thank you so much.

From: [Ryan Pukos](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony on 343 Madison Avenue
Date: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 12:08:54 PM
Attachments: [343 Madison City Council Zoning Subcommittee Testimony_10-12-2021.pdf](#)

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I'm writing on behalf of the Grand Central Partnership to submit our testimony on 343 Madison Avenue. The testimony is attached.

Thank you,
Ryan Pukos

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Ryan Pukos
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**Testimony of the Grand Central Partnership, Inc. on 343 Madison Avenue before
the New York City Council Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises**

October 12, 2021

The Grand Central Partnership (GCP) is a Business Improvement District (BID) serving an approximately 70 square block area in Midtown East surrounding Grand Central Terminal.

As one of the world's largest BIDs serving a district with 73 million square-feet of commercial, residential, and retail building space, our goal is to keep our Midtown East neighborhood clean, safe, and thriving. We believe that the redevelopment of 343 Madison supports this goal in several important ways.

First, the redevelopment will unlock privately-generated revenue that can be used to make transit upgrades to enhance connectivity and safety in the district, including improvements to the 7 line platform in the Grand Central-42nd Street subway station. The redevelopment will also enable a new, state-of-the-art transit entrance on Madison Avenue with direct connection to Grand Central Terminal and the new East Side Access Long Island Railroad terminal.

Second, 343 Madison addresses a long-term challenge for our district by replacing aging commercial infrastructure with a modern, efficient, and sustainable Class-A office building – one of the most critical goals of the 2017 Greater East Midtown Rezoning. The new building will help attract and retain world-class talent and businesses that seek new construction and flexible office space.

Finally, 343 Madison represents a critical investment in the economic health of Midtown East and the city at large. In the short term, this investment will support the city's economic recovery by creating thousands of well-paying jobs and

bringing more workers to the district to support our restaurants, retailers, and other businesses. In the long term, it will boost tax revenue and help ensure that Midtown East remains a premier central business district and vibrant destination for New Yorkers and visitors alike.

For these reasons, we urge the subcommittee and the Council to approve 343 Madison Avenue.

Thank you.

From: [Santos Rodriguez](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony in Support of 343 Madison Avenue 10/12/2021
Date: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 11:02:55 AM
Attachments: [343 Madison Avenue 10 12 2021.pdf](#)

Good morning,

Please see the attached testimony in support of 343 Madison Avenue on behalf of Gary LaBarbera, President of the Building & Construction Trades Council of Greater New York.

Thank you

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Director of Community Affairs & Strategic Initiatives
Building & Construction Trades Council of Greater New York
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BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL OF GREATER NEW YORK

GARY LaBARBERA
PRESIDENT

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BUILDING CONSTRUCTION TRADES DEPARTMENT
OF WASHINGTON, DC
—
BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL
OF NEW YORK STATE
—
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR OF CONGRESS
OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION

TESTIMONY
On behalf
BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL OF GREATER NEW YORK
AND VICINITY
In Support of 343 Madison Avenue
October 12, 2021

Good afternoon. I am Santos Rodriguez, I am here to testify on behalf of Gary LaBarbera, President of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York & Vicinity. In September of 2020, May 2021, and August 2021, the Building and Construction trades Council testified in support of this project. We continue to support the 343 Madison Avenue Project today.

The Building and Construction Trades Council is an organization of local building and construction trade unions that are affiliated with 15 International Unions in the North American Building Trades Union. Our local union affiliates represent approximately 100,000 union construction workers. The Building Trades mission is to raise the standard of living for all workers, to advocate for safe work conditions and to collectively advance working conditions for our affiliates' members, as well as all workers in New York City.

Boston Properties' 343 Madison project is a significant investment in Midtown Manhattan that sends a strong message that New York City will recover and rebound from the pandemic. The project consists of 753,120 square feet and rises 1,050 feet tall, with Class A office space above ground-floor retail. The building itself is designed to increase sustainability, accessibility, and wellness by maximizing energy use reduction, enhancing indoor air quality with ventilation, and utilizing other green technologies, material, and equipment. Notably, the project will develop a new East Side Access entrance and other upgrades to stairs and passageways that will improve access to, and circulation through, various transportation facilities including the NYC Transit 7-line and 4/5/6-line. These upgrades to our City's transportation infrastructure will assist commuters navigating through midtown Manhattan as well as increase tax revenue for the MTA, City, State.

This project is an opportunity to create hundreds, if not thousands, of new union construction jobs that will support a middle-class lifestyle; providing area standard wages and benefits to support workers and their families. The project will provide important stability in the years to come as construction will span several years providing job opportunities throughout demolition, construction, and post-construction. It is an opportunity to welcome people back to the office and revitalize the midtown neighborhood and surrounding businesses, while also creating new jobs

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The Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York and Vicinity supports 343 Madison as it will improve the lives of many New Yorkers, modernize our City, and create middle class jobs for our members in the process.

We thank you again for this opportunity to testify in support of this project.