CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and Disposition

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February 16, 2022 Start: 10:07 A.M. Recess: 10:35 A.M.

HELD AT: Remote Hearing Room 3

B E F O R E: CHAIR FARAH LOUIS

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Farah Louis

Carmen De La Rosa

Oswald Feliz
Sandra Ung
Robert Holden
Sandy Nurse
Inna Vernikov
Christopher Marte

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

Felipe Cortes
Ross Harr
Stanley Richards
JoAnne Page
Tobie Cornejo
Rosa Kelly
Sushma Pramod

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and Disposition

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: PC recording started.

3 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Recording to Cloud

4 under way.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you. Good morning and welcome to today's New York City Council hearing on the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and Disposition. At this time, would all panelists please turn on your videos. I repeat, all panelist, please turn on your videos. Thank you. To minimize disruption, please place all electronic devices to vibrate or silent mode. Thank you. If you wish to submit testimony, you may do so at landusetestimony@council.nyc. I repeat landusetestimony@council.nyc. Thank you for your kind cooperation. Chair, we are ready to begin.

CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Good morning. I'm

Council Member Farah Louis, Chair of the Committee on

Landmarks, Public Sitings, and Dispositions. I'm

joined today by my colleagues, Council Member De La

Rosa, Feliz, Ung, Holden, and Nurse. Today, we will

begin by voting on two items we heard at our meeting

on February 9th. The landmark designation of 200

Madison Avenue, the site selection, and acquisition

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and Disposition of real property for the construction of new offices for NYPD, Bronx Special Victim Services. We will then move on to hearings on the Castle III 107-111 East 123rd Street project and the fifth amendment of the east New York Urban renewal plan. Before we begin, I recognize the subcommittee council to review today's hearing procedures.

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COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: you, Chair Louis. I am Jeffrey Campana, counsel to this subcommittee. Members of the public who wish to testify were asked to register for today's hearing. If you registered to testify and are not yet signed into Zoom, please sign in now and remain signed in until after you have testified. If you wish to testify and have not registered, please go to www.council.nyc.gov/landuse to sign up now. you're not planning to testify on today's items, please watch the hearing on the New York City Council website. All people testifying before the subcommittee will be on mute until they are recognized to testify. Please confirm that your mic is unmuted before you begin speaking. testimony will be limited to two minute per witness. If you have written testimony that you would like the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and subcommittee to consider in addition to or in lieu of appearing before the subcommittee, or if you require an accessible version of a presentation given today's meeting, please email landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Please indicate the LU number or project name in the subject line of the email. During the hearing, council members who would like to ask questions should use the Zoom raise hand function. The raise hand button should appear at the bottom of the participant panel. announce council members who have questions in the order that they raise their hands. Witnesses are reminded to remain in the meeting until they are excused by the Chair. Lastly, there may be extended pauses if we encounter technical problems. We ask that you please be patient as we work through these issues. Chair Louis will now continue with today's agenda.

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CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Thank you. I would also like to recognize Council Member Vernikov who has joined us. With the support of the affected council members, we will now vote to approve the two items we heard at our last meeting. We will vote to approve LU1, the site selection and acquisition of

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Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and
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     real property located at 188 West 230th Street in the
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     Bronx for the use as a new NYPD Bronx Special Victims
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     Services squad facility. The property is located in
     the council district represented by Council Member
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     Sanchez. We will also vote to approve LU2, the
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 7
     landmark preservation commission's designation of the
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     lobby of 200 Madison Avenue as an interior landmark.
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     The landmark site is located in the Manhattan council
     district represented by Majority Leader Powers.
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     Counsel, please call the role.
                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
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     Louis.
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                CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: I vote I.
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                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
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     Holden.
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                COUNCIL MEMBER ROBERT HOLDEN: I vote I.
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                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
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     Feliz.
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                COUNCIL MEMBER OSWALD FELIZ:
                                               I vote I.
                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
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     Rosa.
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                COUNCIL MEMBER CARMEN DE LA ROSA:
                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
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Nurse.

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    Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and
    Diannaitinn
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                COUNCIL MEMBER SANDY NURSE: I.
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                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
                                                     Ung.
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                COUNCIL MEMBER SANDRA UNG:
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                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
     Vernikov.
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                COUNCIL MEMBER INNA VERNIKOV:
                                                I vote I.
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                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
                                                     By a
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    vote of seven in the affirmative, zero in the
     negative, and zero abstentions, the items are
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     approved and referred to the full land use committee;
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     however, the vote will be held open so that; well, I
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     see that Council Member Marte is now here. Council
     Member Marte, we are voting on LUs 1 and 2. How do
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    you vote?
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                COUNCIL MEMBER CHRISTOPHER MARTE:
                                                    I vote
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     I.
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                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: By a
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    vote of eight in the affirmative, zero in the
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     negative, and with zero abstentions, the items are
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     approved and referred to the full land use committee.
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                CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Thank you counsel.
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    We move on to today's public hearings. Our first
    public hearing is on LU numbers 13 and 14, the Castle
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III 107-111 East 123rd Street project.

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Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and
applications submitted by the Department of Housing,
Preservation, and Development pursuant to Sections
197C and 201 of the New York City Charter and Article
16 of the General Municipal Law requests approval of
1 - that Urban Development Action Area designation
and Urban Development Action Area project for such
area, a disposition of such property to a developer
to be selected by HPD and the grant of a special
permit pursuant to Section 74903 of the zoning
resolution to modify the requirements of Sections 24-
     To permit allowable community facility for area
11.
ratio of Section 24-11 to apply to a non-profit
institution with sleeping accommodations in an R7-2
district. All in connection with the proposed
construction of a 15-story building on property
located at 107-111 East 123rd Street. Blocks 1772,
Lots 478 in the Manhattan council district
represented by Council Member Richardson-Jordan.
Council Member Richardson-Jordan available to provide
remarks?
           COUNCIL MEMBER KRISTIN RICHARDSON-JORDAN:
Yes, I'm (crosstalk). Hi. Good morning.
Council Member Richardson-Jordan. I am here to show
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my approval for the Council 3 project which I believe

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- 1 Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and
- 2 | is going to be a real asset to the community
- 3 providing some much-needed subsidized housing. It's
- 4 | 100 percent affordability. It's completely green
- 5 | energy, and I'm just showing my approval for the
- 6 project. Thank you.
- 7 CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Thank you Council
- 8 Member Richardson-Jordan. Testifying on behalf of
- 9 | HPD we have Felipe Cortes and Ross Harr. On behalf
- 10 of the Fortune Society, we have Stanley Richards and
- 11 JoAnne Page. From Curtis Ginsburg Architects, we
- 12 | have Tobie, forgive me if I pronounce this wrong,
- 13 Cornejo.
- 14 TOBIE CORNEJO: Cornejo.
- 15 CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: And from
- 16 Kramer Levin, we have Jeff Mulligan. Counsel, please
- 17 administer the affirmation.
- 18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
- 19  $\parallel$  Please raise your right hands and respond when I
- 20 state your names. Do you affirm to tell the truth,
- 21 | the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your
- 22 testimony before this subcommittee and to answers to
- 23 | all council members questions? Felipe Cortes.
- 24 FELIPE CORTES: I do.

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    Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and
    Diannaitinn
                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
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     Stanley Richards.
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                STANLEY RICHARDS: I do.
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                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
                                                    Tobie
     Cornejo.
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                TOBIE CORNEJO: I do.
                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
 8
                                                     Jeff
 9
    Mulligan.
                JEFF MULLIGAN: I do.
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                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
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                                                     Ross
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     Harr.
                ROSS HARR: I do.
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                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
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     JoAnne Page.
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                JOANNE PAGE: I do.
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                COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: You
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    may continue.
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                CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Thank you. You may
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    begin your presentation.
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                FELIPE CORTES: Thank you, Chair Louis.
     Good morning, everyone. Good morning, council
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    members. Good morning, Chair Louis. Thank you for
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     giving us the opportunity to present to you the
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     Castle III project today. We're very excited to be
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Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and here with you today. To start, I would like to give you just a quick summary of the background of the project. The Castle III project is located on the vacant, under-utilized city land located at 107-111 East 123rd Street between Park and Lexington Avenues in Manhattan. The proposed development will be a 15story building containing approximately 82 affordable units with onsite social services that will be used as part of the facility space. Out of the 82 affordable units, approximately 58 units or 70 percent of the units will be supportive housing units serving formerly incarcerated individuals. remaining 24 units or 30 percent of the units will be affordable to household earning up to 60 percent AMI. The proposed development will be developed under HPD's supportive housing program. Do you have the presentation? Thank you, Andrew. Can you move to the next slide please? Thank you. So, the Land Use actions required to facilitate the proposed project include (inaudible) of project approval and the disposition of the city on land. In addition, we are seeking approval of a special permit to allow an increase in the floor area for the community facility uses with sleeping accommodations. Now, I will turn

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Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and Disposition the presentation over to the development team that will give us further details on the proposed project. Thank you.

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ROSS HARR: Thank you Felipe, next slide This is the project team as Felipe describe, please. HPD, Fortune Society, Curtis Ginsburg is our lead architect. Amy Larovere Consulting is our development consultant, and our land use attorney is Kramer Levin. We really put together a team that can help us envision a building that could add to the community, provide affordable, safe, and environmentally friendly housing. Next slide please. As Felipe described, this is quality affordable housing. When we first went and met with the community board, what we heard is that they needed deeply affordable housing, and so, what we're proposing is deeply affordable and supportive housing in the East Harlem community. It's 82 units for New Yorkers earning up to 60 percent AMI. We have a specific breakdown of how many units fall into what category. Fifty-eight of the units are reserve for homeless, formerly incarcerated individuals. Society's 54-year history, we serve about 9000 people a year. Over 50 percent of our staff are people with

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and Dienneition lived experienced. Over 30 percent of our executive team, people with lived experience show, our mission and our commitment are to help build safer communities by helping people rebuild their lives and reclaim independence through housing, economic development, and a host of services. Twenty-four units, as we heard from the community are committed to affordable New Yorkers with a set-aside for community board of Levin, in particular. We are going to have on-site comprehensive services like we have Castle Gardens in West Harlem, where we will be providing case management and other services to help people stabilize and continue to build productive lives. Next slide.

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TOBIE CORNEJO: Hi, everyone. Thanks for having us here. This is a view of the building from the north. It abuts three vacant lots on the north side of the block and it's adjacent to the East Harlem corridor. So, you can see our building is taller than the adjacent buildings now, but we expect, soon in the future, along Park Avenue, there will be much taller buildings next to it. The north facade is comprised of light-colored material to bring needed reflective light down into the rear

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and yard. I'm going to go to the next slide to talk about the program, but I'll just review it here first. Down in the cellar, we're building out the entire lot and there will be some supportive offices down in the cellar, and a bike room, and all the utility spaces. On the ground floor, you can see, there's an entrance courtyard to the building and you can see the, sort of, tip of the rear yards. going to be a landscaped entrance courtyard, a landscaped rear yard to provide needed outdoor space and a nice presence on the street, both in the day and at night. All of the windows on the ground floor that face the front will have views into the space. There will be a teaching kitchen and a community facility on the ground floor that will have programming geared towards the community and geared towards the residents of the building, and then there will be the lobby, and both sides will be 24-hour attended, but the other thing this diagram is really showing is all the sustainable design and this is going to be a tall, very sustainable building following passive house principles with a very tight envelope. You can see a traced in the red line. the top, there's just a (inaudible) that will bring

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Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and Disposition some sustainable energy to the building, and the entire building is going to be an all-electric building, so all the heating, cooling, and domestic hot water will be supported by electric power. The only gas coming into the building will be for a required generator. Next slide.

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RICHARD HARR: Thank you, Tobie. want to add, the concept about the community space is really to build community and invite community in like we did in community board IX at Castle Gardens. Community board IX has their community board meetings in our space, we have the social service space. meet there monthly. We do food distribution for seniors in community board IX, something we want to bring to the East Harlem project. We are a polling place. So, we've really become an asset to the community on the west side and we want to do the same thing on the east side and would invite council members to come and take a look at what we've done with Castle Gardens. It's a real asset to the community, and here's the breakdown of all of the units. Fifty-eight of the units are going to be really low income, 30 percent of income. anticipate that most of those units will be paying

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and Dienosition \$215 which is the public assistance rent. For the affordables, we'll have two at 30 percent AMI, we'll have two at 40 percent AMI, eight at 50 percent, and 11 at 60 percent with one for the super, and you can see the rents that we're anticipating. These are really affordable rents, something that we've heard from community board XI, and something that we wanted to make sure we were able to do with the size of the building, the financing of the building, and the structure of the units. Next slide. Fortune Society is an economic organization that helps people rebuild their lives through economic opportunities. committed to continuing to do that. We have launched relationships with a couple of organizations in the East Harlem area. Strive, we have worked with for a couple of decades and Exodus. We know Exodus very well and would be working with Exodus. We'll be working with community board XI to ensure that we are doing local hiring, so that the community board XI community board can benefit multiple ways from this Castle III by providing affordable housing, by providing a sustainable building with resources and community service supports, and by hiring local community members to provide economic stability to

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Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and
Disposition
The community. We will use the Hire New York City

portal and Home Builders who is a partner, will help
to ensure that we connect with people in the local
community for hiring. So, we're committed to the

MWBE percentages with just a concept MWBE overall to
ensure that minority and women-owned businesses have
access to the development and buildings that are
happening in New York City. So, we're really excited
...

CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: I think he went on

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CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: I think he went on mute, got cut off.

ROSS HARR: Oh. We are open for any questions. Did you hear me for the presentation?

CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: The last 10 seconds, we didn't hear.

ROSS HARR: Okay. I was just saying that we are committed to MWBE to ensure minority and women-owned businesses are part of the fabric of what we're doing as an organization, and we're open for any questions.

CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Is that everybody presenting today? All right, thank you. I'm now going to open it up to any council member that has questions.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: If

3 there are any other council members who have

COUNCIL MEMBER CHRISTOPHER MARTE: I

don't have a question. I just want to say this

project looks amazing, and I think it should be the

model of developments in all our districts. So,

congratulation on setting this up.

questions, please use the raise hand button now.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: There are no other council member questions.

CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: All right. Thank you, everyone for your testimony. There will be no more (crosstalk) ...

COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: There is a question from Council Member Vernikov.

COUNCIL MEMBER INNA VERNIKOV: Just a question about schools in the area. Are there any schools in that neighborhood, and how far are schools located from that facility or building?

ROSS HARR: I'm not sure of the school distance. I believe there are schools in that area.

I'm not sure what's the distance and the school locations.

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COUNCIL MEMBER INNA VERNIKOV: Okay,

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COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: Are there any other council member questions? I see no other council member questions.

CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Counsel, is there any public witnesses that want to ask questions?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: Well, the public will not be asking questions, but there are no members of the public signed up to testify to this item.

CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Thank you.

JOANNE PAGE: What I would like to do though is respond to the school question. We can come back to you with the locations of schools, but we've been operating housing in West Harlem for 20 years, and proximity to schools is abundant and we made a commitment to make the neighborhood safer by our presence, and we're making the same commitment for this facility with 24/7 security, with intensive services, and our reference is community board IX because we made a promise that the neighborhood would be safer because of our presence, and I think we've kept that promise. So, we are assuring you that the

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and Disposition schools in the neighborhood will be benefitted by

3 presence and not negatively impacted.

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COUNCIL MEMBER INNA VERNIKOV: Thank you.

I appreciate it. If you could still get back to me, thanks.

CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Are there any other questions?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: There are no other council member questions.

CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: All right. Seeing no other members of the public or council members that wish to testify on LUs 13 and 14, Castle III 107-111

East 123rd project, the public hearing on these items are now closed. Our next public hearing will be on LU 15, a proposed fifth amendment of the East New York Urban Renewal Plan submitted by the Department of Preservation and Development pursuant to Section 505 of Article 15 of the New York State General Municipal Law and Section 197C of the New York City Charter. The application requests approval of an amendment of the East New York Urban Renewal Plan to allow residential development on a site previously designated as open space. The site is located in the Brooklyn council district represented by Council

- 1 Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and
- 2 Member Barron. Is Council Member Barron available
- 3 for remarks?
- 4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: I do
- 5 | not see Council Member Barron here.
- 6 CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Okay, we'll move on.
- 7 For HPD, we have Sushma Pramod and Rosa Kelly
- 8 testifying on this application. Counsel, please
- 9 administer the affirmation.
- 10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
- 11 Please raise your right hands and respond when I call
- 12 your name. Do you affirm to the tell the truth, the
- 13 | whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your
- 14 testimony before this subcommittee and answers to all
- 15 | council member questions? Sushma Pramod.
- 16 SUSHMA PRAMOD: I do.
- 17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: Rosa
- 18 Kelly.
- 19 ROSA KELLY: I do.
- 20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: Thank
- 21 you.
- 22 CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Thank you. You may
- 23 | begin your presentation, and if you need to put
- 24 | anything on display, please do let us know.

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SUSHMA PRAMOD: Thank you. Yeah, can we pull up the presentation? Thank you. All right, good morning, everyone, Chair Louis, council members. As mentioned before, my name is Sushma Pramod, Senior Planner at HPD, and I'm going to be presenting the 5th amendment to the East New York I Urban Renewal Application. Thank you again for having us here today. Next slide please. HPD is seeking an amendment to the East New York I Urban Renewal Plan to change the use restrictions on site 122 located at 303 Hinesdale Street from open space to residential use. Approval will (inaudible) in the Urban Renewal Plan where site 122 was initially designated for open space uses. Approval of the requested action would permit residential uses on the site with the development of a small 3-story new construction building with affordable rental units. Next slide The development site is an ideal location please. for residential development as seen on this aerial view. It is adjacent to one and two-family buildings and across the street from a former shelter that is being redeveloped into affordable housing. transit in the area includes the L-train at

(inaudible) Avenue two blocks to the west, and the

- 1 Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting, and
- 2 | trains at (inaudible) Avenue to the south.
- 3 Businesses service in the area includes the B14, B20,
- 4 and B83 lines. Next slide please. In consideration
- 5 of the sites immediate neighboring context, the
- 6 proposed establishment is a small 3-story residential
- 7 | building with four affordable rental units developed
- 8 under HPD's Neighborhood Construction Program or NCP.
- 9 This building is part of a previously approved UDAP
- 10 | called (inaudible) II Project which was approved in
- 11 April of 2021. Next slide please, and finally, we're
- 12 | at the tail end of the (inaudible) process here and
- 13 | anticipating completion in spring of 2022. Next
- 14 | slide please, and that concludes my presentation, and
- 15 open to any questions that you may have.
- 16 CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Thank you for your
- 17 | presentation and testimony. Are there any council
- 18 members that have questions?
- 19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA:
- 20 | Council Member Nurse, I believe, had a question.
- 21 Yes, Council Member Nurse.
- 22 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDY NURSE: Hi. Good
- 23 morning. I'm sorry if I missed it in the
- 24 presentation. How many units will be in this
- 25 | building?

SUSHMA PRAMOD: There will be four units.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANDY NURSE: I'm sorry, just to add on to that. Because it's less than six, are there any rent regulations attached to this new development or what is the affordability level?

SUSHMA PRAMOD: Yes, it is a 100 percent affordable building. Two of the units in this building are affordable at 40 percent AMI, and two of them are affordable at 60 percent AMI.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANDY NURSE: Sorry Chair, one last question. Are there any other public subsidies being utilized for this project?

SUSHMA PRAMOD: This will go through 9 percent applications once they do have approval, but I can get back to you if there are any additional subsidies beyond that.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANDY NURSE: Thank you.

SUSHMA PRAMOD: Thanks.

CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: Are there any other council member questions. If so, please raise your hands. I see no other council member questions on this item.

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CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Are there any members of the public who wish to testify on the East New York Urban Renewal Plan amendment?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL JEFFREY CAMPANA: There are no members of the public signed up to testify on this item.

CHAIR FARAH LOUIS: Seeing no other council members who are asking questions or wish to testify on LU 15, the proposed 5th amendment of the East New York Urban Renewal Plan, the public hearing on this item is now closed.

That concludes today's business. I would like to remind you that if you have written testimony on today's items, you may submit it to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Please indicate the LU number or the project name in the subject heading. I would like to thank the applicants, members of the public, and my colleagues from the subcommittee, council, Land Use staff, and the Sergeant-At-Arms for participating in today's hearing. This meeting is now adjourned.

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



Date March 5, 2022