

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING, AND  
MARITIME USES

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January 11, 2011

Start: 11:15am

Recess: 2:10pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E:

BRAD S. LANDER  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Council Member Maria del Carmen Arroyo  
Council Member Leroy G. Comrie, Jr.  
Council Member James F. Gennaro  
Council Member Daniel J. Halloran III  
Council Member Rosie Mendez  
Council Member Annabel Palma  
Council Member Diana Reyna  
Council Member James Sanders, Jr.  
Council Member Jumaane D. Williams

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

Jenny Fernandez  
Director of Intergovernmental and Community Relations  
Landmarks Preservation Commission

Kate Daly  
Executive Director  
Landmarks Commission

Andrea Goldwyn  
Director of Public Policy  
New York Landmarks Conservancy.

Simeon Bankoff  
Executive Director  
Historic Districts Council

Father Darryl F. James  
Priest in Charge  
Grace Episcopal Church

Amelia Everett  
Parishioner  
Grace Episcopal Church

2 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Good morning,  
3 great. Thank you. Good morning and welcome to  
4 the meeting of the Subcommittee on Landmarks,  
5 Public Siting and Maritime Uses. I'm Brad Lander,  
6 Chair of the Committee, and we're joined this  
7 morning by Committee Members Maria del Carmen  
8 Arroyo of The Bronx, Annabel Palma of The Bronx,  
9 Dan Halloran of Queens, and also by Jim Gennaro of  
10 Queens, and I think by Council Member Diana Reyna,  
11 she'll rejoin us, of Brooklyn and Queens, when we,  
12 when we get to her item. We have five items on  
13 the calendar today, four in Council Member  
14 Gennaro's district and one, the Ridgewood South  
15 Historic District proposed in Council Member  
16 Reyna's district. Before we get to them, I do  
17 want to call people's attention to the fact that  
18 this Committee also, in addition to Landmarks, is  
19 the Committee of Public Siting, and the Chair of  
20 the City Planning Commission and Department of  
21 City Planning, Amanda Burden, has submitted to the  
22 Council the annual Citywide Statement of Needs,  
23 which is their look over the next two years at  
24 public facilities that they intend to site in  
25 different places around the City. It's a Charter

2 requirement that they submit this to the Council,  
3 and this is a good moment in time for Council  
4 Members to see what's on the list, and what's not  
5 on the list, so I've brought copies of the  
6 Citywide Statement. We'll be sending them to your  
7 offices by email, as well. And if there are any  
8 questions that you have, please don't hesitate to  
9 contact me or to contact the Land Use staff. And  
10 we can speak with you about these items, and  
11 obviously it's a good time to follow up with the  
12 various administrative agencies in the  
13 administration that proposed them. I'm hoping  
14 that we, over the course of the next year, can do  
15 a little bit more of a look at some of the public  
16 siting and fair share issues that are under this  
17 Committee's jurisdiction, in addition to the  
18 Landmarks items. So, thanks very much. We will  
19 now move to our first item, we're going to do the  
20 four in Council Member Gennaro's district first,  
21 in the order that they are on our agenda for the  
22 morning. So, our first item is Land Use No. 281,  
23 the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce Building, at 89-31  
24 161st Street. And I'd like to invite Jenny  
25 Fernandez from the Landmarks Preservation

2 Commission to come and present it to us.

3 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Thank you, Chair  
4 Lander, Members of the Committee. My name is  
5 Jenny Fernandez, Director of Intergovernmental and  
6 Community Relations for the Landmarks Preservation  
7 Commission. I'm here today to testify on the  
8 Commission's designation of the former Jamaica  
9 Chamber of Commerce Building in Queens. On  
10 September 15, 2009, the Landmarks Preservation  
11 Commission held a public hearing on the proposed  
12 designation as a landmark, of the Jamaica Chamber  
13 of Commerce Building. Three people spoke in favor  
14 of designation, including representatives of the  
15 Central Queens Historical Association, New York  
16 Landmarks Conservancy, and Historic Districts  
17 Council. There were no speakers in opposition to  
18 designation. The Commission received letters of  
19 support from Queens Borough President Helen  
20 Marshall, State Senator Shirley Huntley, Council  
21 Member James Gennaro, the Hillcrest Estate Civic  
22 Association, Four Borough Neighborhood Alliance,  
23 and Queens Preservation Council. On October 26,  
24 2010, the Commission voted to designate the  
25 building a New York City individual landmark. The

2 Jamaica Chamber of Commerce Building was  
3 constructed in 1928/29, near the heart of the  
4 Jamaica Business District. Designated by  
5 architect George W. Conable, who had been  
6 responsible for the, for several prominent  
7 buildings in Jamaica, the building is a handsome  
8 example of the Georgian Revival style popular in  
9 the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Founded  
10 in 1919, as the Jamaica Board of Trade, to promote  
11 the area to businesses and residential developers,  
12 the Chamber of Commerce, by 1926, had grown to a  
13 membership of nearly 500. When Secretary Max C.  
14 Bunyan suggested that the organization would  
15 benefit from having a building of its own, part of  
16 which would be rented out to support the work of  
17 the Chamber. At the time of its dedication, the  
18 building, which remained the Chamber's home until  
19 1999, was described by the Long Island Daily Press  
20 as a decided asset to the community. The  
21 remarkably intact Jamaica Chamber of Commerce  
22 Building remains a significant example of the  
23 early 20th Century office buildings that were  
24 constructed in downtown Jamaica as the area turned  
25 into the financial center for Long Island. The

2 Commission urges you to affirm this designation.

3 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thanks very  
4 much, Ms. Fernandez. It's a lovely building. Do  
5 you, do you know who, who owns it now? Is there  
6 any still connection to the Greater Jamaica  
7 Development Corporation or the Chamber of Commerce  
8 or the Board of Trade or--?

9 [pause]

10 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Sorry, it's  
11 privately owned, I'm just informed.

12 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Okay. It's,  
13 it's lovely, it's nice to have the connection  
14 between such a nice looking building to preserve,  
15 and real estate and development interests that  
16 supported that, the development of that, that neck  
17 of the woods at the early part of the Century. Do  
18 my colleagues have any questions on this item?  
19 Council Member Gennaro?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: I--I just  
21 want to indicate that I do support this, and I  
22 indicated so with a letter, so I'm in support, I'm  
23 in support of this Application.

24 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thanks very  
25 much. We don't have anyone else signed up to

2 testify on this item, so unless someone jumps up  
3 and down, we will move, close the public hearing  
4 on the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce Building and  
5 move on to our next item on the calendar, which is  
6 Land Use No. 282, the Jamaica Savings Bank, at  
7 146-21 Jamaica Avenue, also in Council Member  
8 Gennaro's district. And we'll again ask Ms.  
9 Fernandez to offer, to present that to us.

10 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Thank you, Chair  
11 Lander, once again. For the record my name is  
12 Jenny Fernandez, Director of Intergovernmental and  
13 Community Relations for the Landmarks Preservation  
14 Commission. I'm here today to testify on the  
15 Commission's designation of the Jamaica Savings  
16 Bank in Queens. On February 9, 2010, the  
17 Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public  
18 hearing on the proposed designation of the former  
19 Jamaica Savings Bank. Four people spoke in favor  
20 of designation, including representatives of the  
21 Historic Districts Council, Queens Preservation  
22 Council and Four Borough Neighborhood Preservation  
23 Alliance. The Commission also received letters in  
24 support of designation from Queens Borough  
25 President Helen Marshall, State Senator Shirley

2 Huntley and the Greater Jamaica Development  
3 Corporation. Two representatives of the owner  
4 spoke in opposition to designation. On October  
5 26, 2010, the Commission voted to designate the  
6 building a New York City individual landmark. The  
7 Jamaica Savings Bank was constructed in 1939 for  
8 the oldest and most prestigious banking  
9 institution in Jamaica Queens. Designed by the  
10 noted architect Morrell Smith, the building is an  
11 excellent example of the Moderne Style with simple  
12 but well-designed details and dignified  
13 proportions. Incorporated in 1866, Jamaica  
14 Savings Bank was founded by a consortium of local  
15 citizens. The growth of the Jamaica Savings Bank  
16 paralleled the growth of the Borough of Queens.  
17 The bank prospered and established several  
18 branches to better serve customers. Architect  
19 Morrell Smith, celebrated for his designs of  
20 commercial bank buildings, designed this branch of  
21 the Jamaica Savings Bank in 1939. Set on a  
22 trapezoidal lot, the monumental one-story building  
23 faces the intersection with an angle façade and  
24 corner entrance. Smith utilized the most modern  
25 building design and construction methods of his

2 time for the building. The Jamaica Savings Bank  
3 still functions as a branch bank, and serves as a  
4 reminder of the growth and expansion of Jamaica  
5 during the 20th Century. The Commission urges you  
6 to affirm this designation.

7 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thanks very  
8 much. First we're going to designate the  
9 developer's building, and now the financier's  
10 buildings. Good morning. Council Member Gennaro?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Mr.  
12 Chairman, I have not, you know, really taken a  
13 solid position on this one. This is something  
14 that is supported by the Borough President,  
15 however, and many people in the community and the  
16 owner of the building did not reach out to me, in  
17 order to have me oppose it. So I don't, I don't  
18 really have much of a position on it, and I'm, and  
19 I'm fine with this going through to be designated.

20 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you very  
21 much. Are there questions from other members of  
22 the Committee on this building? Council Member  
23 Halloran?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: Yes. In  
25 the two representatives of the owner who spoke to

2 opposition to designation, did they indicate the  
3 basis of their opposition, one. Two, are there  
4 any significant financial impositions that they  
5 indicated would come to bear? I understand the,  
6 it appears that the facility is currently  
7 occupied. Are they owner occupied or is it  
8 separate? And what other issues were raised in  
9 the course of the representation?

10 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Okay, from my  
11 recollection, the, some of the concern that they  
12 had expressed at the hearing had to do with  
13 signage, the placing thereof, and they were  
14 concerned about that. Other opposition that may  
15 have been expressed at the hearing, I don't fully  
16 recollect, but I don't, if--I would like to invite  
17 Kate Daly from the Landmarks Preservation  
18 Commission, who's here with me today, and she may  
19 be able to better answer those questions.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: Thank  
21 you.

22 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: That's great,  
23 Ms. Taylor, if you can just come up and state your  
24 name for the record, that would be great. You can  
25 both stay at the table.

2 KATE DALY: My name is Kate Daly,  
3 I'm the Executive Director of the Landmarks  
4 Commission. The building is owned by Capitol One,  
5 and they operate one of their bank branches in the  
6 building. As, as Jenny stated, they were  
7 concerned about signage. They also expressed a  
8 concern that some building owners express, which  
9 is that although they had no plans to use the  
10 building for anything other than a bank, of  
11 course, the idea that in ten years or 20 years  
12 they may want to do something different with the  
13 building, they might want to demolish the  
14 building, and so it would limit their opportunity  
15 for development at that time, was one of the  
16 concerns that they expressed.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: Thank you  
18 very much.

19 KATE DALY: You're welcome.

20 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: We know from  
21 the Capitol One commercials that they have a fine  
22 appreciation of history [laughter] and that they  
23 often like to stage historical, you know,  
24 reenactments, so perhaps they can get on board  
25 with the preservationist spirit.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: Very fond  
3 of those commercials, Mr. Chairman. [laughter]

4 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: No one else  
5 has signed up to testify on, on this item, as  
6 well, so, and seeing no one here, we'll go ahead  
7 and close the public hearing on the Jamaica  
8 Savings Bank. Thank you. And move onto our third  
9 of the four items in Council Member Gennaro's  
10 district, which is Land Use No. 283, the Queens  
11 General Courthouse, at 88-11 Sutphin Boulevard.  
12 Ms. Fernandez.

13 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Thank you, once  
14 again, Chair Lander, Members of the Committee. My  
15 name is Jenny Fernandez, Director of  
16 Intergovernmental and Community Relations for the  
17 Landmarks Preservation Commission. I'm here today  
18 to testify on the Commission's designation of the  
19 Queens General Courthouse. On February 9, 2010,  
20 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a  
21 public hearing on the proposed designation as a  
22 landmark of the Queens General Courthouse. A  
23 total of five witnesses spoke in favor of  
24 designation, including representatives of the  
25 Department of Citywide Administrative Services,

2 the owner of the building, the Historic Districts  
3 Council, the Central Queens Historical Society,  
4 the Queens Borough Preservation League, and the  
5 Four Borough Neighborhood Preservation Alliance.

6 The Commission has received letters in support of  
7 the designation from Queens Borough President  
8 Helen Marshall, State Senator Shirley Huntley and  
9 the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation.

10 There were no speakers or letters in opposition to  
11 the designation. On October 26, 2010, the  
12 Commission voted to designate the building a New  
13 York City individual landmark. The Queens General  
14 Courthouse is a grand, modern class, Depression  
15 Era, monument built between 1937 and 1939, with  
16 payments split between City funds and a federal  
17 grant from the Public Works Administration. Mayor  
18 LaGuardia laid the cornerstone in 1937 and  
19 presided over the building's dedication in 1939.

20 The new courthouse was considered a major public  
21 improvement and convenience for the Borough of  
22 Queens, consolidating various court facilities in  
23 downtown Jamaica. The building originally housed  
24 the offices of the Queens County Clerk, the City  
25 Court, the Supreme Court and the Surrogates Court,

2 and was meant to handle all the civil cases in  
3 Queens. The building's skillfully composed  
4 façades, handsome detailing, and the power of its  
5 monumental portico, make it one of the finest and  
6 most imposing public buildings in Queens. The  
7 Commission urges you to affirm this designation.

8 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thanks very  
9 much. Council Member Gennaro.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Yes, I  
11 would very much like to speak on this, this is one  
12 I'm really excited about. This is, this is a, you  
13 know, really grand building. I won't belabor all  
14 the wonderful things that have been said about it,  
15 but I'm, this is really one of the crown jewels in  
16 my district, and I think in all of Queens and all  
17 of the City. I also like the fact that, you know,  
18 when this is landmarking, when this is landmarked,  
19 the, the costs or anything that may be incurred  
20 will be incurred by the City of New York and not a  
21 private owner. I've worked with people in  
22 downtown Jamaica to make sure that we make  
23 improvements to the building. There was a big  
24 wrought iron fence that was blocking the entrance  
25 of it. There's a very nice public space right in

2 the front, and now that is open to the public.  
3 I'm doing some, you know, local capital money to  
4 make sure that this plaza is open for folks and  
5 we're going to be doing some beautification, so  
6 this is just a wonderful example of how we can  
7 make sure that this is preserved forever by doing  
8 a landmark, and I strongly urge everyone to  
9 support this, this good landmarking proposal.

10 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thanks very  
11 much. Are there any questions from Members of the  
12 Committee or other Council Members who are here?  
13 No? We also don't have anyone signed up to  
14 testify at the public hearing on this item, and so  
15 we'll go ahead and close the public hearing on  
16 Land Use Item No. 284, I mean on 283, excuse me,  
17 for the Queens General Courthouse. And move to  
18 the fourth item in Council Member Gennaro's  
19 district, which is Land Use No. 284, the Grace  
20 Episcopal Church Memorial Hall. On this one we do  
21 have a few people signed up to testify, in  
22 addition to Ms. Fernandez, three so far. Father  
23 Darryl James, Andrea Goldwyn from the Landmarks  
24 Conservancy, and Simeon Bankoff from the Historic  
25 Districts Council. If there are others here who

2 would like to testify on this matter, please go  
3 ahead and sign in with the Sergeant-of-Arms at the  
4 desk. And Ms. Fernandez, if you would present  
5 this one to us.

6 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Thank you, Chair  
7 Lander, Members of the Committee. My name is  
8 Jenny Fernandez, Director of Intergovernmental and  
9 Community Relations for the Landmarks Preservation  
10 Commission. I'm here to testify on the  
11 Commission's designation of the Grace Episcopal  
12 Church Memorial Hall in Queens. On February 9,  
13 2010, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a  
14 public hearing on the proposed designation as a  
15 landmark of the Grace Episcopal Church Memorial  
16 Hall. There were four speakers in favor of  
17 designation, including representatives of the  
18 Historic Districts Council, Four Borough  
19 Neighborhood Preservation Alliance, and Queens  
20 Preservation Council. There were no speakers in  
21 opposition to designation. The Commission  
22 received three letters in support of designation  
23 from State Senator Shirley Huntley, Queens Borough  
24 President Helen Marshall, and the Greater Jamaica  
25 Development Corporation, and one email in support

2 of the designation of a representative of the Rego  
3 Park Preservation Council. On October 26, 2010,  
4 the Commission voted to designate the building in  
5 New York City individual landmark. Grace  
6 Episcopal Church Memorial Hall is part of one of  
7 the most historical church complexes in New York  
8 City. Grace Episcopal Church was founded in 1702,  
9 and the present English Gothic Revival style  
10 church building, designed by Dudley Field, was  
11 built in 1861/62, and enlarged in 1901/02 by Cady,  
12 Berg and See. Surrounding the church is a  
13 graveyard in which are buried members of many  
14 families important to the history of the City,  
15 including Rufus King. The church and graveyard  
16 were designated a New York City landmark in 1967.  
17 Northeast of the church building, behind the  
18 graveyard, is the Memorial Hall, constructed in  
19 1912 to meet the needs of the growing congregation  
20 for a meeting place and social center. The  
21 Memorial Hall included a gymnasium, and  
22 auditorium, meeting rooms and offices. Designed  
23 by the prominent architectural firm of Upjohn and  
24 Conable in Tudor Gothic Revival style, to  
25 compliment the church building, the brick Memorial

2 Hall building's symmetrical massing and flanking  
3 wings add a picturesque element to the church  
4 complex. The Commission staff began outreach to  
5 Grace Episcopal Church concerning landmark  
6 eligibility of the Memorial Hall Building in 2007.  
7 The Commission's staff met with the church's  
8 representatives over the past three years to  
9 discuss what landmark designation would mean, and  
10 sent numerous letters explaining the various  
11 stages of the landmarking process. The Commission  
12 has a dedicated staff preservationist who has been  
13 working with Grace Episcopal Church for several  
14 years, to provide technical assistance and issue  
15 permits for landmark church building and cemetery.  
16 The church did not state their opposition to  
17 designation of Memorial Hall until after the  
18 Commission's scheduled designation vote on October  
19 26, 2010. At that time, the church's  
20 representatives expressed to LPC staff that they  
21 intended to reach out to their Council Member in  
22 the hope that the designation would be overturned.  
23 At the church's request, the Commission staff  
24 subsequently attended a meeting at the church,  
25 with members of the congregation and church

2 representatives to answer questions about the  
3 regulatory impact of designation on their  
4 building. As reflected in the designation vote,  
5 the Commission believes Memorial Hall is an  
6 important part of this significant church complex  
7 in Queens, and we would like to continue to work  
8 in partnership with the congregation to provide  
9 any technical assistance that they may need as  
10 stewards of a landmark site. The Commission urges  
11 you to affirm this designation.

12 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thanks, Ms.  
13 Fernandez, just want to, one or two quick  
14 questions before I ask Council Member Gennaro.  
15 So, just to clarify, so this, the church sort of  
16 campus, as it were, has two landmarks already, the  
17 church itself and the cemetery, are already New  
18 York City landmarks?

19 JENNY FERNANDEZ: That, that is  
20 correct.

21 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Okay, and this  
22 is the, sort of the third proposal for their  
23 campus, or their site.

24 JENNY FERNANDEZ: The two were,  
25 were done at the same time; the first, the

2 graveyard and the church.

3 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Okay. So you  
4 already have sort of an ongoing relationship with  
5 the church, and you did reach out to them prior to  
6 the, to the LPC vote.

7 JENNY FERNANDEZ: That is correct.

8 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: And they  
9 didn't express opposition prior to or, or at the  
10 public hearing for the, for the LPC consideration.  
11 But they did subsequent to that.

12 JENNY FERNANDEZ: That is correct.

13 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Okay. Okay,  
14 let me ask Council Member Gennaro to, to make his  
15 statement, and then we'll see if--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Sure,  
17 sure.

18 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: --other  
19 Members of the Committee wishes--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Thank you,  
21 Mr. Chairman, and notwithstanding what the church,  
22 you know, might have done, or might have not done  
23 at, you know, various stages of the process, this  
24 is, you know, really not a hearing about process,  
25 this is, this is a hearing about, you know,

2 whether or not this congregation, you know, wants  
3 to be landmarked, or not. And whether or not  
4 they're sufficiently familiar with the landmarking  
5 process, and what that means. And they've been  
6 involved in landmarking, as was stated earlier,  
7 going back to 1967. So they well know, you know,  
8 what this means, and you know, that fact  
9 notwithstanding, they believe that this would be a  
10 detriment and a, you know, burden, you know, for  
11 them financially. I have no choice, you know,  
12 other than to deeply respect that, you know, well  
13 informed position that they have. And, and, and  
14 to ask this Committee to pass a motion or whatever  
15 the process would be, to overturn the designation.  
16 And while people may say that, you know, folks  
17 should've spoken up at a certain point in the  
18 process, I don't think we should let these process  
19 concerns, you know, in any way, you know, take the  
20 Committee off what I think should be its goal of  
21 what is, of what is fair. And we've got a very  
22 historic compound there, it's already been twice  
23 landmarked. This is, and you know, talking to  
24 Reverend James, who I deeply respect, you know,  
25 they don't have the same congregation base in

2 terms of numbers of families now that they did  
3 back in 1967. They have talked to folks, and you  
4 know, they have made a determination, you know,  
5 that this would adversely impact their ministry,  
6 and the services that they provide to the  
7 community. And I think the Reverend will speak to  
8 that in his testimony. I, you know, certainly  
9 appreciate all, you know, the work of this  
10 Committee and of the Landmarks Preservation folks  
11 who took this through the process, and you know,  
12 the good work that they do in, you know, trying to  
13 preserve things for the future. But at the end of  
14 the day, this is a, this is a congregation, they  
15 have a spiritual mission, they have a service  
16 mission, and that should come before any kind of  
17 historic considerations. There are no plans to do  
18 anything with this property that would in any way  
19 take away its value as a, you know, being a piece  
20 of history. So I would ask you, Mr. Chairman, and  
21 the Members of this Committee, with great respect,  
22 to, to overturn this designation. Thank you, Mr.  
23 Chairman.

24 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you,  
25 thank you, Council Member Gennaro, and I, you

2 know, I will list--I'm eager to listen to the  
3 testimony of Father James and of the other folks  
4 who are signed up to testify today. And you know,  
5 I'm certainly inclined to pay very strong heed to  
6 what, you know, a historic congregation is  
7 interested in here. I will ask, you know, I do  
8 think the process issues are important, not  
9 dispositive in what we decide, you know, our job  
10 is to try to fig--but, you know, part of our job  
11 is try to figure out when it is the right place  
12 and time to use the power of landmarking, and  
13 there's a lot of work that goes into this. And if  
14 we choose not to designate this building today,  
15 the sorrow for me will be that we're not instead  
16 designating another building of the many on the  
17 long list that the City would like to be  
18 designating, that we could've used the Landmark  
19 Preservation Commission time, had we known, had we  
20 known earlier. So, I, you know, the process  
21 issues are not dispositive, but I do think they're  
22 relevant and, you know, a meaningful subject for  
23 the conversation.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: And--

25 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: So we'll--

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: --if I  
3 could, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to state my, you  
4 know, personal regret at, you know, not being more  
5 proactive, and not being more deeply involved.  
6 And I, you know, certainly regret the fact that  
7 the, you know, resources of the Landmarks  
8 Preservation Commission could've been deployed,  
9 you know, towards the landmarking of, you know,  
10 some other worthy site. And I'm, you know, and  
11 I'm sure that the congregation, you know, also  
12 feels the same way. But, you know, that being,  
13 you know, that being that, it's like, you know, we  
14 are where, where we are, and I'm very grateful to  
15 you, Mr. Chairman, for your willingness to, to,  
16 you know, not have the process questions be, as  
17 you said, in any way dispositive of what we do  
18 here today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thanks very  
20 much. We'll do questions for LPC if there are  
21 questions from the Committee now, before we then  
22 move to testimony from, from the public. And ask  
23 the LPC also to stick around and be willing to  
24 come back and answer questions if they're raised  
25 in that testimony. So we'll go from the end of

2 the table down. Council Member Williams.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank  
4 you. Thanks for the testimony. When did you,  
5 when did you reach out to the church? And when  
6 did you find out they didn't, they weren't  
7 supportive?

8 JENNY FERNANDEZ: We began outreach  
9 to the church in 2007. And we learned after the  
10 designation vote, immediately after the  
11 designation vote, that they were in opposition to  
12 designation.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And what  
14 was the designation, when was the designation  
15 vote?

16 JENNY FERNANDEZ: October 26, 2010.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And when  
18 did you reach out to Council Member Gennaro? And  
19 when did you find out he wasn't in favor?

20 JENNY FERNANDEZ: We wrote to  
21 Council Member Gennaro earlier in the year, in the  
22 summer of 2010, to inform him that we were  
23 interested in moving forward with the designation  
24 of this building. And that was as part of a  
25 larger request that had been submitted to us by a

2 local preservationist.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: When do  
4 you normally reach out to Council Members during  
5 the process?

6 JENNY FERNANDEZ: We begin outreach  
7 to the Council Member once we've identified a  
8 building, or a site that we'd like to move forward  
9 with, and we've begun to, to formulate how we  
10 would move forward then, and we have some  
11 information to actually share with the Council  
12 Member, we begin outreach at that time. We let  
13 them know that we're interested and if there's  
14 feedback, or if they have a position on it, in  
15 many cases when an owner reaches out directly to  
16 the Council Member and they let, and they make  
17 that known to us, we take all of that into  
18 consideration.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: It just  
20 seems that three years is a long time, so the  
21 notification for either the church or the Council  
22 Member, is that the usual timeframes that you  
23 usually work with?

24 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Yes, this pretty  
25 much went as, you know, a regular process. We

2 began outreach--and when I say "outreach," it's a  
3 long process of outreach where we begin initial  
4 contact with the property owner, we let them know  
5 that their property is of interest to the  
6 Commission, and we do certified mailings, just to  
7 make sure that they are receiving our  
8 correspondence. We ask them to please contact us  
9 so that--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: That's  
11 for the church.

12 JENNY FERNANDEZ: For the church,  
13 right.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: But I'm  
15 talk--and for the Council Member.

16 JENNY FERNANDEZ: And for the  
17 Council Member, a few months down the line from--  
18 well, let me [pause] Official notification, or  
19 written notification, was in June of this year, of  
20 2010.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So, so  
22 three years is normal?

23 JENNY FERNANDEZ: I would say--yes,  
24 that's true. Prior to calendaring a building,  
25 that's when we--See, we'd like to notify the

2 Council Member, or our process is to notify the  
3 Council Member prior to us taking that calendaring  
4 vote, which is the first administrative step in  
5 the process. You know, letting a Council Member  
6 know that a building is of interest to us, if  
7 we're not really ready to move forward, we've not  
8 made necessarily a determination on eligibility,  
9 prior to that time. So when we've, ready to move  
10 forward and calendar a building, that's when we've  
11 made a final determination of eligibility, and we,  
12 and we have some information to share with, with  
13 the Council.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I just  
15 have one last question. Does the owner's  
16 opposition, do you ever take that into  
17 consideration when you're making a decision?

18 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Well, we, we're  
19 not mandated to, to take that into consideration,  
20 so we can designate over owner opposition. But of  
21 course it is the Commission's policy, or, you  
22 know, we like to really work with the owner,  
23 because it really should be a partnership between  
24 the property owner and the Commission, as good  
25 stewards of their buildings. We certainly seek to

2 have owner support. Many times, initial  
3 opposition--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Turns.

5 JENNY FERNANDEZ: --you know, we  
6 can, right.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I  
8 understand, I just--I'm not sure, do you or you  
9 don't, do you take it under consideration? I know  
10 you're not mandated to.

11 JENNY FERNANDEZ: We're not  
12 mandated to, but it, but we do work to, to try to  
13 get owner support of landmarking.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: All  
15 right, thank you.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Thank you,  
17 Mr. Chair, good morning. Just one question,  
18 what's the reason that the church gives for not  
19 wanting this designation?

20 JENNY FERNANDEZ: That since the  
21 church--

22 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: I think the  
23 church can speak for itself, when, when it  
24 testifies. If I could sort of jump in and say  
25 that.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: I, I  
3 certainly will raise it with the, with the church.

4 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Okay, yes, so  
5 Council Member Sanders, the church didn't testify  
6 at our public hearing, for this item, so we don't  
7 have any specific reasons on record why the church  
8 is opposing the designation. And I would  
9 certainly defer to the church to state those--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Okay.

11 JENNY FERNANDEZ: --those reasons.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Council Member  
14 Mendez.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: [off mic]  
16 Can I come back?

17 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Hm?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: [off mic]  
19 Can I come back?

20 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Sure.  
21 Although I don't know if there's others who--are  
22 there other Committee Members with questions?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: I do, I do.

24 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Oh, okay, I'm  
25 sorry, Council Member Arroyo.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: So, the  
3 church is opposed, you, you know that.

4 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Yes, we know  
5 that.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: What, what  
7 have you done to bring them to the table on that  
8 issue?

9 JENNY FERNANDEZ: As I stated  
10 before, we learned of their position after the  
11 designation vote. We have since been in  
12 communication with the church representatives, and  
13 they asked us, you know, if we can actually go out  
14 and, and speak to their congregation, which we  
15 did. We set up a meeting and I personally  
16 attended the meeting with the congregation, in  
17 order to help them understand the regulatory  
18 impact of designation on this building for them.  
19 You know, and I attended the meeting and just help  
20 answered questions and, and clarify any points  
21 that they weren't sure of.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: So once the  
23 des--the vote on designation is done, there's no  
24 reversing that?

25 JENNY FERNANDEZ: No. At that

2 point, the designation is done, and it then  
3 referred over to the Council, to your Committee.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: I see.

5 JENNY FERNANDEZ: And City  
6 Planning.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: I see.

8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you.  
10 Council Member Mendez?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you,  
12 Mr. Chair. Good morning.

13 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Good morning.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Can, and  
15 I'm sorry to do this again, I'm just trying to get  
16 the timeline correct in my head. So, in 2007,  
17 what exactly happened?

18 JENNY FERNANDEZ: In, well to  
19 backtrack a little bit, the beginning of the pro--  
20 in 2006, in December of 2006, we received a list  
21 of buildings, submitted by a local  
22 preservationist, in the Queens Historical  
23 Association, of several buildings. The Commission  
24 then proceeded to survey these buildings to  
25 determine eligibility. Of that list, this was one

2 of the buildings that we determined were eligible  
3 for landmark designation. So, in Dec--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: At what  
5 time did you determine that?

6 JENNY FERNANDEZ: That was--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Shortly  
8 thereafter?

9 JENNY FERNANDEZ: No, that was  
10 throughout the span of about a year. I can't  
11 pinpoint exactly--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Mm-hmm.

13 JENNY FERNANDEZ: --you know--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay.

15 JENNY FERNANDEZ: --what month. In  
16 December of 2007, so approximately a year later,  
17 we contacted, or we sent out a letter to the  
18 church, requesting a meeting to discuss the  
19 Commission's interest in the Memorial Hall  
20 Building as an individual landmark.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: And at that  
22 time, in 2007, who else do you reach out to? I  
23 mean, I think you were--

24 JENNY FERNANDEZ: At, at that  
25 point, we're just reaching out to--

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: To the  
3 owner.

4 JENNY FERNANDEZ: --the property  
5 owner, right.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. And  
7 then, since then? Right, with just--

8 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Since then,  
9 there's been, you know--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Hearings--

11 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Various  
12 communicate prior--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: --at LPC  
14 and--

15 JENNY FERNANDEZ: --prior to the  
16 hearing at LPC there were prior communications,  
17 several certified letters, there was a conference  
18 call with their church representation. There was  
19 a meeting, that's correct, they did come into, to  
20 the Commission's offices. We had a meeting with  
21 them. And subsequent to that, there was--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: And at that  
23 meeting, was there any sense that they were not in  
24 favor? Or--

25 JENNY FERNANDEZ: No, they had not

2 stated that at that meeting.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. And  
4 then, the LPC voted, you said, in 2010?

5 JENNY FERNANDEZ: We, on October  
6 27, 2009, the Commission voted to calendar the  
7 building, place it on its calendar for a future  
8 public hearing.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: And you  
10 found out from the church exactly when that they  
11 were not in favor?

12 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Right after the  
13 designation vote, on October 26th of 2010. Oh,  
14 and I'd like to make a correction for the record.  
15 I previously stated that we had contacted the  
16 Council Member in 2010. It was in 2009, so just  
17 correction for the, for the record.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. And  
19 do you contact any other elected officials in--?

20 JENNY FERNANDEZ: At that point,  
21 it's just the Council Member that we contact,  
22 prior to our calendaring vote, since it's an  
23 administrative procedure. But after, after that,  
24 when we are ready to move forward with a public  
25 hearing and we've selected a date, we do official

2 notification as mandated by the Landmarks Law and  
3 public notice, and we contact the Community Board,  
4 state representatives, including Assembly and  
5 Senate, the local Congressperson who represents  
6 the area, Borough President and several other  
7 representatives of the area.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: And did any  
9 of them at that time say they were in favor,  
10 against or said nothing?

11 JENNY FERNANDEZ: When we do that  
12 notification, it's to, to inform them that's a  
13 public hearing--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Mm-hmm.

15 JENNY FERNANDEZ: --coming up and  
16 so, you know, they have the choice to either  
17 prepare testimony, show up and testify. And we  
18 did receive several letters of support for the  
19 designation, from the Borough President and the  
20 Senator, Huntley, I believe, and as I outlined in  
21 the testimony.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay.  
23 Thank you very much. I'm sorry to make you repeat  
24 a lot of stuff, just trying to get it--

25 JENNY FERNANDEZ: That's okay.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: --in my  
3 head. I'm going to say straight in my head, but  
4 trying to get it--

5 JENNY FERNANDEZ: [laughs]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: --correct  
7 in my head. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

8 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Very good. I  
9 was remiss before in not mentioning the other  
10 Council Members who have joined us since we  
11 opened. We've been joined by Council Member  
12 Jumaane Williams of Brooklyn, Council Member Rosie  
13 Mendez of Manhattan, Council Member James Sanders  
14 of Queens. You guys were here, and Council Member  
15 Leroy Comrie and Chair of the Land Use Committee  
16 from, from Queens. [background comment] [laughs]  
17 Who is, I think, you know, an ex officio member  
18 and always most, most welcome. Council Member  
19 Halloran.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: Thank  
21 you, Mr. Chairman. Just a little procedural, I  
22 guess, question. In the survey that you do and  
23 the evaluation that you do, in order to, to make  
24 this designation, do you feel you have a need to  
25 examine the interior of the location? To

2 determine intactness, shall we say, from a  
3 historic perspective? And if so, were you ever  
4 given access; if not, don't you think that also  
5 speaks to another flaw in how you went about this  
6 designation, seemingly without any sort of input,  
7 mysteriously, from your Council Member or the  
8 Church, given how long a period of time this was  
9 going on?

10 JENNY FERNANDEZ: When, we have two  
11 types of designations concerning buildings, which  
12 is an interior and an exterior designation.  
13 Interior designations are rare, we have very few  
14 of those. When looking at a building's condition,  
15 if there's--condition is not necessarily the  
16 deciding factor for us considering a building for  
17 eligibility. The Memorial Hall, you know, was  
18 reviewed and surveyed on its exterior, and that  
19 was what was used in determining the eligibility.  
20 I cannot speak for the researcher who actually  
21 surveyed the building, and whether or not they had  
22 looked, you know, entered the building. But the,  
23 the eligibility criteria was determined on the  
24 building's exterior.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: Okay.

2 And, and are you able to determine simply from as  
3 cursory external survey, the actual, call it for  
4 lack of a better word, "architectural soundness,"  
5 of the building you're designating, understanding  
6 that a façade can sometimes be that, a façade?  
7 Doesn't that impact, or shouldn't that impact, at  
8 least, LPC's decision as they move forward on  
9 landmarking a building?

10 JENNY FERNANDEZ: A preliminary  
11 determination of eligibility is based on the  
12 building's history, architectural merit and such,  
13 and these sorts of things--building's condition,  
14 structural stability--those sorts of things  
15 usually come out during our interaction with the  
16 owner. They would bring that to our attention.  
17 It's the sort of thing that would then be  
18 discussed at meetings. Whoever's working on the  
19 project would certainly be taking a look at this  
20 sort of information, as we move along in the  
21 process.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: Right,  
23 but in this case, you acknowledge that you had  
24 neither contact or dialogue with the church  
25 itself, nor the Council Member for the district.

2 And doesn't that present, I guess sort of like a  
3 question in terms of moving forward with it, that  
4 you hadn't gotten any sort of response from the  
5 landowner. What I'm suggesting is perhaps there  
6 needs to be something more done other than maybe  
7 even a certified mail, which I'm sure you did, and  
8 whatever sort of public disclosure announcements,  
9 of the hearing. It just seems to me when you have  
10 an intact, functioning religious organization, and  
11 you're clearly able to determine ownership, that  
12 if you have a void of communication as you're  
13 attempting to landmark their property, I don't  
14 know, maybe service of process sounds like  
15 something you should be doing. Where you actually  
16 have a process serve come to them and say, "Hey,  
17 guys, guess what we're doing?" 'Cause for all  
18 other legal proceedings, in which you impair  
19 property, in the City of New York, it's vested in  
20 the State Supreme Court, and therefore requires a  
21 due process element. And regardless of who may  
22 have dropped the ball, as Councilman Gennaro  
23 indicated in his testimony, we're here now. So  
24 maybe this is something that LPC could look at for  
25 the future, so that you never have to come to us

2 with a situation like this, where all of the  
3 sudden the owners have woken up. Maybe you could  
4 wake them up a year into the process by serving  
5 them a notice, a formal proceeding notice, and  
6 somehow, as my legal mind turns, it sounds to me  
7 like we should be doing that anyway, because we  
8 are impairing property rights. But I'll leave  
9 that for another hearing, and just mention it to  
10 the Chair in passing.

11 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: So, thank you.

12 You know, I do think that there are some process  
13 issues here that bear consideration going forward,  
14 whether in a, in an oversight hearing, you know,  
15 as I made clear in my initial comments, and I will  
16 to the church, as well, I think, you know, some  
17 responsibility is, is born for, for paying  
18 attention, and I wish it had been raised earlier  
19 so we could've spent the time, you know, we could  
20 today be designating a different building. But I  
21 do think that there are issues, and this is just a  
22 personal observation, in the, in the indeterminate  
23 nature of the current Land Use process, that leave  
24 us kind of open to some confusion. And the  
25 indeterminate and sometimes lengthy time it takes

2 between nomination and decision to proceed,  
3 between that decision and proceeding calendaring,  
4 and between calendaring and an LPC vote, I think  
5 don't provide the urgency or clarity to advocates,  
6 to Council Members, to owners, you know, that you  
7 have, say, in the ULURP process where, you know,  
8 you got your 60 days and you better register your  
9 opinion during that period of time, or it's not  
10 going to be heard. So, that's a broader set of  
11 issues that I think bear looking at. But not, but  
12 at obviously not today's issues. Though the one  
13 last question I have about this building, is just  
14 a, you know, a matter of curiosity. When the,  
15 when the two original, and this is before your  
16 time, and mine, so I don't know if you'll, if  
17 you'll have an answer, but back when the church  
18 and the cemetery were designated, do you know  
19 whether the Memorial Hall was considered for  
20 designation at that time? And there was a  
21 decision to include or not include it as part of  
22 the campus--

23 JENNY FERNANDEZ: I, I don't know.

24 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Before you and  
25 I were born.

2 JENNY FERNANDEZ: [laughs] I don't  
3 know if it was part of the original consideration,  
4 but it's an, what we would say, you know, like an  
5 ancillary building, or a later building. So at  
6 that time, the church itself was the focus of, of  
7 that designation, and the surrounding graveyard.  
8 So, I don't know if it was considered, you know,  
9 within the survey or when it was being looked at,  
10 but it wasn't part of it, obviously.

11 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you very  
12 much for your free testimony. If you guys would,  
13 would stick around, so if there are--

14 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Sure.

15 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: --questions  
16 that are raised by the testimony, that, that would  
17 bear calling you back.

18 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Okay.

19 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: That would be  
20 great. Thank you. We're going to first, we'll do  
21 this in two panels, and we'll first call up  
22 [background comment] let's do this one first.  
23 [pause] Yeah. [background comments] [laughs]  
24 All right, on the advice of counsel, we'll go  
25 first with the advocates in favor of designation

2 on a panel, the two together; and then after that,  
3 Father James from the church. So, I'd like to  
4 call up Simeon Bankoff, from Historic Districts  
5 Council, and Andrea Goldwyn from the New York  
6 Landmarks Conservancy. You know, and even though  
7 the Council Members yesterday were all on a three  
8 minute clock, as you saw in our hearing across the  
9 street, if you guys will just be mindful of time,  
10 I don't think we need to, we don't need to start  
11 the clock for you.

12 ANDREA GOLDWYN: Good day, Chair  
13 Lander, and members of the City Council. I'm  
14 Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the New York  
15 Landmarks Conservancy. Despite reports that the  
16 Council might have already reached a decision, the  
17 Conservancy is still pleased to support  
18 designation of the Grace Episcopal Church Memorial  
19 Hall as an individual landmark. This designation  
20 would complete the landmarking of the church  
21 complex, which includes--

22 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Go ahead, I'm,  
23 we're listening.

24 ANDREA GOLDWYN: --the 1861 church  
25 building and adjacent cemetery. This complex

2 houses one of the oldest churches in New York  
3 City, established in 1702, while the picturesque  
4 graveyard is the final resting place of several  
5 New York families prominent in the City's early  
6 history, such as the Kings and the Van  
7 Rensselaers. The Tudor Gothic Revival style  
8 Memorial Hall, which compliments the English  
9 Gothic Revival style church, is largely intact,  
10 with some alterations which do not diminish its  
11 significance. It is our understanding that the  
12 Landmarks Preservation Commission made all  
13 required notices to the church regarding this  
14 designation, in addition to the community outreach  
15 that LPC staff typically performs, that the church  
16 was given the opportunity to testify in public  
17 regarding the designation, but that no opposition  
18 was raised until after the LPC vote. We hope that  
19 you will not support this late call to reverse the  
20 designation. We sympathize with congregations  
21 such as this one. We've worked with hundreds of  
22 modest congregations across the City and State,  
23 and seen them do amazing things, often over many  
24 years, to bring back their buildings and  
25 revitalize their membership. Because we're

2 familiar with historic, religious properties, and  
3 the challenges their congregations face, we hope  
4 to continue to work with the Landmarks Commission,  
5 members of the Subcommittee, and the Land Use  
6 Committee to help find solutions to the problems  
7 that can sometimes seem intractable. We'd also  
8 like to remind the church and the Council of some  
9 of the benefits of designation. Grace Episcopal  
10 Church itself has a history benefiting from  
11 landmark status. Our sacred sites program  
12 authorized two grants, totaling over \$10,000, in  
13 1987 and 2001. And we hope that church leadership  
14 would once again take advantage of the financial  
15 and technical assistance available to landmarked  
16 buildings, from sacred sites, from our technical  
17 services staff, and from our historic properties  
18 fund, which provides low interest loans for  
19 restoration work, as well as the substantial  
20 environmental protection fund grants offered by  
21 New York State. We urge you to designate the  
22 Grace Episcopal Hall, excuse me, Grace Episcopal  
23 Church Memorial Hall. Like so many other  
24 buildings in New York, it's a living symbol of our  
25 culture, our community, and our history. Thank

2 you for the opportunity to express the  
3 conservancy's views.

4 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you.

5 SIMEON BANKOFF: Good morning,  
6 Council Members, I'm Simeon Bankoff, Executive  
7 Director of the Historic Districts Council. Happy  
8 New Year. First of all, I'd like to apologize for  
9 not having been here more often. It's one of my  
10 New Year's resolutions to stand in front of you.  
11 I'd also like to go on the record that the  
12 Historic Districts Council is in support of the  
13 other items on this agenda, as we had testified at  
14 the Landmarks Preservation Commission back in  
15 February, and we would like to thank Council  
16 Member Gennaro, both for his support of those  
17 items, and also for having met with local  
18 advocates such as Jeff Gottlieb who apologizes for  
19 not being able to be here today. When forwarding  
20 the list of items to the Landmarks Commission,  
21 we've been working with Jeff at the Central Queens  
22 Historical Association, and members of Council  
23 Member Gennaro's staff, as well as other people in  
24 the area, and King Manor Association, for a number  
25 of years developing this list. We really feel

2 that this particular list of designations is the  
3 proper way to do preservation planning. That kind  
4 of co-adjacent with the Greater Jamaica rezoning  
5 that happened, there was a real honest look at the  
6 historic properties within the area that deserve  
7 to be preserved, and could really compliment these  
8 sort of plans for growth in the area. My feelings  
9 are on the record. I do feel that this building  
10 is worthwhile, and very meritorious of landmarks  
11 designation. I think that, and both Andrea and  
12 Jenny have discussed that, as well as process  
13 issues. I just would like to take this moment, my  
14 moment, to sort of say that I think it's important  
15 when making decisions like this, that the Council,  
16 in addition to sort of looking within themselves,  
17 also think about it on a citywide basis. That on  
18 a Land Use basis, while we look to the, both the  
19 local community and the representatives of that  
20 community, there, as for their expertise and for  
21 their awareness of what's going on, on the ground,  
22 there also is, this is a citywide issue, and there  
23 needs to be a look at the broader perspective.  
24 Yesterday, for example, you had a blizzard report  
25 on the whole City, and I thank you very much for

2 that. And you'd reported on the whole City  
3 response, not just the individual districts.  
4 That's really my statement, and I'm happy to  
5 answer questions.

6 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thanks very  
7 much. I see so far that Council Member Williams  
8 and Council Member Sanders have questions, and  
9 Council Member Halloran, we'll go from there.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you  
11 both for your testimony. Ms. Goldwyn?

12 ANDREA GOLDWYN: [off mic] Yes?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Which  
14 reports have said that the Council has already  
15 made a decision?

16 ANDREA GOLDWYN: We had seen  
17 internet reports, late last night.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Was there  
19 any official reports that you--

20 ANDREA GOLDWYN: Not that I'm aware  
21 of, no. That's why I say despite reports, we, the  
22 vote's a vote.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Just in  
24 terms of possibly endearing yourself with the  
25 Council to make a decision, perhaps you might not

2 want to start off with that particular statement.

3 ANDREA GOLDWYN: Okay.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank  
5 you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Well, I,  
7 speaking for myself, I haven't made a decision  
8 yet. And each person can only speak for  
9 themselves. But why wasn't this designated when  
10 the first two parts were designated? Why wasn't  
11 this part designated then?

12 ANDREA GOLDWYN: I wish I could  
13 say. I was not aware of that, that was back in  
14 1967. And the records that I have don't indicate  
15 one way or another.

16 SIMEON BANKOFF: If I may, Council  
17 Member also, at the time, the building was only 55  
18 years old. In the initial flush of landmarking  
19 that happened when the law had passed in '65, they  
20 were looking at buildings of deep antiquity. And  
21 our appreciation of buildings of the Colonial  
22 Revival and the Tudor Revival have changed in the  
23 past 45 years.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: So this  
25 building is roughly 95 years-ish--

2 SIMEON BANKOFF: I believe it's  
3 about 100, like 99 years or--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Okay, we,  
5 we will split the difference. [laughter] All  
6 right, thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Council Member  
8 Halloran.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: First, I  
10 would reiterate what both my colleagues said is  
11 this is a fresh issue to me. Yeah, I know I'm the  
12 junior Republican member on the Committee, so I  
13 guess I don't know anything anyway. But as far as  
14 I was aware, I hadn't made a decision on this  
15 vote. I would say that I do get the Historic  
16 District Council newsletter, and I am very much in  
17 favor of landmarking things that need to be  
18 landmarked, and in particular, you know, I've  
19 pushed in my district for the Flushing, Broadway  
20 Flushing Historic District. I've held feet to the  
21 fire to the LPC to try to do that. And I've, I  
22 will support wherever I can. Obviously, over the  
23 objection of an owner is something we always  
24 should take into consideration. Because property  
25 rights are an enumerated right in the

2 constitution, and I will wear my constitutional  
3 lawyer hat and say, "That matters to me." And I  
4 will also say that in a particular, this is a  
5 parish, and therefore a religious organization,  
6 which implicates also that little clause called  
7 the First Amendment, which is important to all of  
8 us. I would just make one suggestion, in reading  
9 your latest newsletter, you disparaged a colleague  
10 of mine. And I didn't find that appropriate. And  
11 whatever you may think of an individual decision,  
12 I know that my colleague from Queens, from the  
13 south part of my, you know, in the south of my  
14 district, does tremendous things for this City.  
15 His work in the environmental field is  
16 unparalleled. I have deep respect for him, he's a  
17 man who's across the aisle from me, who ran  
18 against my mentor last Senate term, and I still  
19 think he's a hell of a guy. I think it would've  
20 done the HDC a lot better if you had picked up the  
21 phone and called him before you put in your  
22 newsletter what you did about him. And I think  
23 you owe him an apology, and I think he's somebody  
24 who, who was deeply concerned about this, and when  
25 I spoke to him this morning, I know he expressed

2 to me the fact that he felt he dropped the ball.  
3 And that the Grace Episcopal Church dropped the  
4 ball. And he was not happy to be in the position  
5 he was in today. So, I think there are more than  
6 one consideration, when we look at these packages,  
7 and I think it's very important that before we  
8 send out emails to thousands of people who don't  
9 understand context, sometimes it pays us to pick  
10 up the phone and make a phone call. And I say  
11 that to a colleague who I'll disagree on 50  
12 percent of the issues with, but I will say he's a  
13 man of integrity. And I think he's owed an  
14 apology.

15 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: You want to  
16 respond or not respond?

17 SIMEON BANKOFF: Thank you very  
18 much, Council Member, for your comments, and  
19 actually before I respond I do want to pick up on  
20 something you had just said earlier, which is I  
21 think that, you know, your statement about the  
22 process serving is very interesting. I think it's  
23 also very expensive for the agency to do that.  
24 So, I hope that you keep that in mind during the  
25 budget negotiations. Just for the record, I would

2 like to state that my office has reached, did  
3 reach out to Council Member Gennaro's office last  
4 week, as well as Council Member Comrie's, as well  
5 as Council Member Lander's office. We also had, I  
6 had conversations with Reverend James yesterday.  
7 So, before anything happened, so I just want to  
8 put that on the record, that, that outreach was,  
9 was attempted.

10 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: I think  
11 Council Member Gennaro's next on the, next on the  
12 list.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Thank you,  
14 Mr. Chairman. Seated behind me is David Choice  
15 [phonetic], he's my Chief of Staff. We have no  
16 record of HDC reaching out to us. So, if someone  
17 did reach out to us, David, you know, runs a  
18 pretty tight shop. So we have no record of that.  
19 And, and like Reverend James told me the first  
20 time he was reached out to by HDC was yesterday.  
21 This was presumably after the very disparaging  
22 comments had already been written in your  
23 newsletter and sent out to the entire City. So I  
24 don't really have any more to say to you. And I,  
25 I don't think you serve your mission well by

2 making insulting comments regarding pastors or  
3 Council Members. And that's all I have to say at  
4 this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you,  
6 Council Member. Unless there's other--

7 SIMEON BANKOFF: I don't want - -

8 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: You know, I  
9 don't want to get into a personal back and forth  
10 here. I think what, what needs to be said has  
11 been said, and let's, let's close this part of  
12 the, of the hearing down. If there's no other  
13 questions from the Council for the panelists, I'll  
14 thank you for your, for your time and your  
15 testimony. And we'll call up the final  
16 testimonial on this item. Father Darryl James  
17 from the Grace Episcopal Church. [pause] Yes, I  
18 mean, she's filling out the form, so great, let  
19 her finish filling that out and then she can come  
20 join you at the table and testify together with  
21 you. [pause] Okay, great, so Father James will  
22 be joined by Amelia--Oh, I'm not going to say this  
23 right, Everett?

24 DARRYL JAMES: Everett.

25 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Oh, that's not

2 even that hard. From Grace Church, and if the two  
3 of you will ... take your places and begin when  
4 you're ready. Please begin by stating your name  
5 for the record.

6 [pause]

7 DARRYL JAMES: Good morning, Mr.  
8 Chair, and Members of the Committee, my name is  
9 Father Darryl F. James, I'm the Priest in Charge  
10 at Grace Episcopal Church. I've been there for  
11 three-and-a-half years. And I'd like to begin by,  
12 you know, just stating that we are really  
13 delighted to be here, and to give public testimony  
14 on this day. Our church has been indicated by Ms.  
15 Fernandez and members who have given public  
16 testimony, prior to us coming here, have indicated  
17 that we are the, one of the oldest episcopal  
18 churches in the State of New York; in fact we're  
19 the second oldest, and we're the oldest episcopal  
20 church in the diocese of Long Island. I come here  
21 today to speak on behalf of the vestry, which is  
22 the governing board of our parish, indicating that  
23 we are in opposition to the designation of  
24 landmarking that has taken place on October the  
25 26th of 2010. And I'd like to, to just simply

2 state that from, for the record, and from the  
3 outset, that one of the reasons why we did not  
4 come to the table at the time of February the 9th,  
5 when public testimony should have been given at,  
6 at that particular juncture, was due to the fact  
7 that we were going through a transitional period  
8 at our, at our parish, and what happens from year-  
9 to-year, we, we have changes in leadership. And  
10 sometimes in changes of leadership, things get  
11 lost in, in the cog, and we also had to streamline  
12 our, streamline our operations and our personnel.  
13 And from that vantage point, the, the response to  
14 coming to the Landmarks Commission on February 9th  
15 to give public testimony, was really, it was  
16 really the ball that we dropped. And we, and we  
17 will admit to that. Because we are people of  
18 faith, and we're people of truth. I might add  
19 that no one ever came to us to indicate that they  
20 were supporting the landmark of our, our Memorial  
21 Hall being landmarked. We never heard from the  
22 Historic District Council until yesterday. Now,  
23 here we have, it's a three year period, and I have  
24 to give certain, certainly have to give homage to  
25 Kate Daly and Megan Schmidt and Jenny Fernandez,

2 for reaching out to us and as a result of doing  
3 our due diligence, just to, to get the information  
4 about landmarking, and of course this is something  
5 that was new to me, even though we were landmarked  
6 in 1967, but of course I was not there at the  
7 time. But the reality is, is that as we had come  
8 together, it was during a time when we were going  
9 through that, that transitional period. And we  
10 were not at the table. But we are like the  
11 phoenix who is rising from the ashes, and we are  
12 speaking to vehemently oppose the designation for  
13 three reason. Number one, we want to oppose the  
14 designation due to the fact that over the last,  
15 since 1967, our congregation has diminished in a  
16 very, in terms of the number of people who have  
17 been a part of our congregation, we've, we've  
18 diminished from a congregation of being 1,200 now  
19 to a congregation of 300. So, that means that  
20 the, the resources which we once had in order to  
21 support the ongoing opportunities to provide for  
22 the benefit of our building, we just do not have  
23 any longer. So, that poses a burden, and it's  
24 intolerable to us to, to continue at the, the pace  
25 and the space, when we were designated back in

2 1967. And as I said, to date we have about 300  
3 members. The second matter is that we have, back  
4 in 2001, I was not here at the time, but back in  
5 2001, as the young woman had, had mentioned from  
6 the conservancy, we were given the opportunity to,  
7 to receive some resources in order to repair the  
8 blue stone walkway in our, in the exterior of our,  
9 of our parish building. In order to repair that  
10 blue stone walkway, it came to the tune of about  
11 \$30,000, which meant that the parish ended up  
12 paying about, out of that, I think, believe the  
13 conservancy gave us about \$7,000, which meant that  
14 the parish had the brunt of responsibility of  
15 \$23,000. Once again, we are a diminishing, a  
16 declining, even though I believe that we are, we  
17 have developed some new memberships and we are in,  
18 we're back in the upswing, and we're, we're trying  
19 to, to grow our membership. But the reality is,  
20 is that whenever we take money away from, we use  
21 our resources, that should be used for mission and  
22 ministry, that goes into buildings and edifices,  
23 then what happens is that, it, it does not allow  
24 us to do our work. We are not in the business of,  
25 of real estate development. We're in the, we're

2 in the business of saving souls. That's our  
3 business. And so, from that vantage point, we, we  
4 feel as though that it's, that it's, it's a burden  
5 upon the parish, and because the resources are not  
6 necessarily there for, for sacred sites, as they  
7 are sometimes for other public institutions, it  
8 would be, the burden would be heavily placed upon  
9 us. The third reason why we feel that it's  
10 important for us not to be landmarked, or for this  
11 designation to be overturned, stems from the fact  
12 that as we're looking ahead to the future of our  
13 congregation, one of the things that, that needs  
14 to happen is that if we have an aging  
15 congregation, then of course we're, we certainly  
16 are grandfathered toward not having to meet all  
17 the requirements of the American Disabilities Act.  
18 But yet, it's not good for the people of our  
19 congregation. Having an aging congregation, we  
20 need to do some things in order to make provisions  
21 for that. Secondly, we need to have varying  
22 streams of revenue in order to maintain our, not  
23 only to maintain our properties, but in order to  
24 continue our mission and our ministries. And one  
25 of the things that we're, we're looking at in the

2 future, is that there is a fourth floor of our  
3 building. And having that fourth floor renovated  
4 would require to a large degree making some, some  
5 considerations to the, to the exterior of the  
6 building, especially in terms of insulation and  
7 the possibility of putting in an elevator. If  
8 you, if you're talking about putting an elevator  
9 in any kind of building, it requires exterior  
10 work. And so, from that particular point, and  
11 looking at how we could use the building in order  
12 to provide for office space, for community space,  
13 for the community, we've just engaged in a  
14 partnership with two high schools in our  
15 community, whereby we could have the students to  
16 come in order to use some of the, the property,  
17 some of the, the rooms which are there. In  
18 addition to the fact that the possibly of, of  
19 using it since we're in the area, where there are  
20 some of the court system is, is certainly heavily  
21 located--Supreme Court is on Sutphin Boulevard,  
22 and then we have a court system which is on  
23 Jamaica Avenue, which is right down the street  
24 from us, there's a possibility that maybe there  
25 could be some attorneys and others who might want

2 to use that space for, for doing their business.  
3 Which again, would, would bring residual income to  
4 the parish, it would help us. So, I might add  
5 that we have, we are looking forward to this  
6 Committee considering the opposition of the  
7 designation. And I submit to you that we will do  
8 everything in our power, if you do so, to maintain  
9 the integrity, the historicity, and the  
10 architectural functions of, of the building as it  
11 currently stands. So I want to thank you very  
12 much for public testimony today.

13 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you,  
14 Father James. Is Ms. Everett going to testify, or  
15 is she here to help you answer--

16 DARRYL JAMES: I believe she is, I  
17 believe she's going to make a point or two.

18 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Oh, oaky, all  
19 right.

20 AMELIA EVERETT: Yes, I just wanted  
21 to support--

22 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Please state  
23 your name for the, for the record.

24 AMELIA EVERETT: Thank you. My  
25 name is Amelia Everett, I am a parishioner at

2 Grace Episcopal Church. And I just wanted to  
3 address the panel, to support pretty much what  
4 Father James has said, but to also just to  
5 reiterate that the point of our mission as a  
6 church is to serve the community. And we cannot  
7 afford to put funds that we need to put in service  
8 of the community into buildings that need to be  
9 maintained in a certain historical fashion. The  
10 other issue I'd like to bring up, and I think  
11 you've already addressed it, among your panel, is  
12 that the outreach to us was really, from the  
13 Preservation Commission, was certainly maintained.  
14 However, we really feel it was significant for the  
15 Preservationists, who also supported this effort,  
16 to also reach out to us. And that was not done.  
17 I think as a congregation we came to Father James  
18 and made him aware of our interest, in opposing  
19 the, the designation. And I think it would've  
20 been important for the preservationists in the  
21 area to at least have reached out to the church  
22 members, as well. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thanks very  
24 much for your testimony. I'm going to go first to  
25 the Chairman of our full Committee, to the Land

2 Use Committee, Council Member Leroy Comrie of  
3 Queens, and then to Council Member Gennaro. Oh,  
4 well, go first, Council Member Gennaro, and then  
5 to--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Well,  
7 thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I'll take this  
8 opportunity to thank Chairman Comrie, with whom  
9 I've had many discussions about this designation.  
10 And he, he was very gracious and very kind, as he  
11 always is, and I'm very, very sympathetic to the,  
12 you know, needs of this very good congregation.  
13 So, I, I'll take the opportunity as he sits next  
14 to me, to thank him for, you know, being so  
15 gracious. And also you Chairman Lander, for  
16 working with me in a very kind way.  
17 Notwithstanding the fact that I've, should've been  
18 working on this harder myself earlier, and that  
19 would've saved you a headache. So, I owe you one.  
20 And I just have a question for the, for the  
21 church. Father James, you made reference to a  
22 repair of like a flagstone walk or whatever, and  
23 the total amount was \$30,000, or you know,  
24 whatever it was.

25 DARRYL JAMES: Yes, the total, the

2 total amount was \$30,000.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: But, one  
4 thing we don't know is that how much would that  
5 repair have been were you not bound by the, you  
6 know, landmark rules and regulations. Like how  
7 much could that repair have been made for?

8 DARRYL JAMES: It, it could've been  
9 reduced substantially. I would, I would say  
10 probably by more than half.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: I see.  
12 Okay, because you indicated that there was a  
13 repair and you did get a small amount of money  
14 towards that repair, but your point is that even  
15 with that money that came in from the preservation  
16 people, you know, what it cost you out of pocket  
17 was much more than it would have under other  
18 circumstances, and this is what you fear going  
19 forward, with this.

20 DARRYL JAMES: I, I fear, my fear,  
21 Councilman Gennaro, is that having a third  
22 property, as I mentioned before, this will be the  
23 third property, we have seven properties  
24 altogether. So, we're talking about almost, close  
25 to, you know, nearly 50 percent of our properties

2 being landmarked. And, for example, if we had to,  
3 to have repairs on each of the properties  
4 simultaneously, that would close our church.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Well,  
6 certainly after having been in business in the  
7 service of people of Queens for 109 years, we  
8 certainly wouldn't want to see that happen. And  
9 I'm very grateful to you, Father James, and all of  
10 your good congregation for the wonderful work that  
11 you do. And I'm grateful that you're here today  
12 to make your case and very grateful that you're in  
13 my district and I, I get the opportunity to serve  
14 your wonderful congregation. And with that, I'll  
15 just, I'll thank the Chairman and thank Chairman  
16 Comrie, also, who I understand is going to make  
17 some remarks or ask a few questions, whatever, and  
18 with that, that's really all I have, Mr. Chairman,  
19 other than to ask the Members of this Committee to  
20 support the Grace Church in their desire not to be  
21 designated. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you,  
23 Council Member. Council Member Comrie.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thank you,  
25 Chair Lander. Thank you, Councilman Gennaro. And

2 want to just thank all of the Members for their  
3 attentiveness in having an open mind towards this.

4 I'm an Episcopalian, I grew up in the episcopal  
5 church. I am still a chalice administrator and a  
6 lay reader. I didn't make to church on Sunday, I  
7 was supposed to read, I'll apologize, but you

8 know, I still serve on a regular schedule. I've  
9 been to Grace Church many times. They were

10 scratching the bottom of the barrel one year, they  
11 even asked me to speak at their Men's Day once.

12 So I've been to Grace Church many times over the  
13 course of my life, and especially since been  
14 elected. The Episcopal Church is losing

15 membership at a rapid rate. Grace Church is, is  
16 also falling into that abyss, and if you look at  
17 the diocese of Long Island, which I am a member  
18 of, I'm a member of St. Alban's the Martyr

19 Episcopal Church. We are also losing membership.

20 It is imperative that in the real world that we,  
21 that we look at, we look at an ability of a parish  
22 to continue this mission to serve and to allow it  
23 to continue to focus on saving souls. And to

24 continue to try to focus on holding onto their

25 membership. Father James has been at the church

2 for three years, he's actually increased the  
3 membership. They maybe had 200 members or less  
4 when he first got there, and he's been able to  
5 work hard to bring the membership back there.

6 And, and I say all of this in terms of  
7 designation, it's, it's difficult for us to  
8 understand that the separation and the need, and I  
9 know that the, the, the folks that are focused on  
10 making preservation and holding onto preservation,  
11 which is important, it's important that we  
12 maintain history and protect history whenever  
13 possible. But there has to be a practical reality  
14 side of an ability of a parish, ability of a  
15 owner, to maintain the property. The church has  
16 two sites that they are working hard, struggling  
17 to maintain. As you've heard, they had not been  
18 outreached to before, they were, even though they  
19 were outreached by Landmarks, without knowing that  
20 there was an absolute deadline, they vacillated.  
21 They've agreed that mistakes were made.

22 Councilman Gennaro has been very gracious and said  
23 that, you know, he wasn't, he didn't hit the ball  
24 when it was time to hit the ball. And we would  
25 like to be designating something else today.

2 There are other properties in downtown Jamaica and  
3 in Queens that we'd like to designate. But we  
4 have to live in the real world. And it would be  
5 very difficult for the church to hold onto three  
6 different designations on a property. They have a  
7 gravesite, which I would invite you to come and  
8 look at. It's a historical gravesite, it's a  
9 beautiful area. It's very difficult to maintain.  
10 If anybody knows the downtown Jamaica area, the  
11 church is on Parsons Boulevard on Jamaica Avenue.  
12 There are over 15,000 children that move up and  
13 down Parsons Boulevard in the course of the day.  
14 It's near Hillcrest High School, Jamaica High  
15 School, Thomas Edison High School. If you're a  
16 high school kid going back and forth in southeast  
17 Queens. You're accessing Parsons/Archer, which is  
18 the last stop for the E train, and the J train,  
19 and the Z train. And with all of those, that  
20 movement, that graveyard is constantly bombarded  
21 with trash, constantly bombarded with children  
22 doing things in the, in that area, and it's just  
23 very difficult for the church to maintain the  
24 property with a dwindling congregation. Now, the  
25 additional historians and landmarking commission

2 would say, well, the ability of a church to  
3 maintain a property shouldn't be the reason to  
4 deal with a designation or not. I, I don't  
5 believe that. The ability of a City to maintain  
6 its history is really predicated on the ability of  
7 the individual owner to maintain a property, and  
8 there's no point in having an eyesore. They're  
9 not tear--they're not looking to tear down the  
10 building and build a high rise. They're looking  
11 to improve their fourth floor with elevator access  
12 that would require an extensive discussion with  
13 Landmarks, on how to try to figure out how to put  
14 in an elevator. And it can be done a lot cheaper,  
15 and they can be able to maintain that building,  
16 develop a small rental income so that they can  
17 maintain their other properties. So that's why  
18 we're asking for non-designation, so that there's  
19 a practical reality. And at the end of the day,  
20 we have to be practical. At the end of the day,  
21 we have to allow the church to be able to maintain  
22 itself and allow the church to be able to grow and  
23 maintain their mission, which is to try to help  
24 people make it to a better place when they move  
25 on. And I hope to get there. You know?

2 [laughter] I hope to get there.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Not soon.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Not soon,  
5 not any time soon. But, you know, and so I  
6 support Councilman Gennaro, I think he's been more  
7 than gracious and more than humble. You know, I  
8 think that there's been some issues of process  
9 also that have been brought, but because we should  
10 not have anyone fearing the process that they're  
11 afraid to speak up at any point of the process.  
12 They should be in, within the process, outreached  
13 to, given their options early. And, you know, in  
14 this time of email and, and you know, speaking to  
15 whether, an absolute deadline should be given,  
16 that can be made very clear to people. So that  
17 they should not have to waste Landmarks' time. We  
18 can send "This is an absolute deadline, we need to  
19 know your position." That things can be done  
20 either verbally or through email, to make sure  
21 that the people know what their absolute deadlines  
22 are. And I think Members should be notified much  
23 earlier in the process, as well. And I think that  
24 all, that all can be done without too much  
25 trouble, or too much budget expense. So, I would

2 appeal to the Members to turndown this designation  
3 for this property because of the unique  
4 circumstances regarding Grace Church. Thank you,  
5 Mr. Chair.

6 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you, Mr.  
7 Chairman. I see we have a few other folks who are  
8 interested in, in asking questions. Let me just  
9 ask people that we're not putting folks back on  
10 the, on the clock after the snow hearing  
11 yesterday, let me ask people to be mindful of the  
12 clock. We do have one more item, the Ridgewood  
13 Historic District that we still need to hear and  
14 we would like to finish that and, and vote before  
15 the end of the day. So, Council Member Halloran?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: Just  
17 briefly, two, two things. Father, I appreciate  
18 your candor and your admissions that there were  
19 things that fell through the crack here. Just a  
20 little piece of advice, though, I mean, there,  
21 churches will always have a continuum of, of  
22 parish councils that change.

23 DARRYL JAMES: Right.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: And  
25 something like this could have been a disaster for

2 you and your parish. I think it would be wise if,  
3 I don't know if you have a parish counsel, but a  
4 counsel, C-O-U-N-S-E-L, not the C-I-L one. But  
5 things like this designation should have been  
6 given to your attorneys to look at. And even if  
7 it costs you a couple bucks to do it, it might've  
8 saved you a whole lot of heartache had this moved  
9 forward any quicker. And fortunately, you know,  
10 your Council Member was willing to stand up and  
11 admit there was issues with his office, you know,  
12 being on top of this. And so we're all here today  
13 listening intently to, to the consequences for  
14 you. But it could have gone differently and you  
15 know, fortunately we're not there. So, just from  
16 that perspective, it's something to keep in mind.  
17 And I would also ask you, having had two  
18 properties designated and having expended funds  
19 for renovations at a much higher level to, to  
20 comply, just going forward at this point, the  
21 renovations that you're intending to do in this  
22 center, which where they're asking not to  
23 designate now, several members, you don't have any  
24 intention to substantially alter the exterior of  
25 this facility. It will for all intents and

2 purposes remain similar in outward appearance, is  
3 that correct?

4 DARRYL JAMES: Right. As I  
5 mentioned in my, in my, the end of kind of my, my  
6 presentation, that our intention is, is to  
7 maintain the integrity, the architectural design  
8 of the building, and not to do anything such as,  
9 you know, put 24 stories on top of our, our  
10 building.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: I  
12 appreciate. Thank you very much, Father.

13 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Council Member  
14 Williams.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Sorry to  
16 put, how many stories? [laughter]

17 DARRYL JAMES: 24.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: That's a  
19 lot of stories.

20 DARRYL JAMES: I said not to put  
21 24.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Oh, not  
23 to put, okay. [laughter] Sorry. I thought he  
24 said--

25 DARRYL JAMES: I said not to put 24

2 stories.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Oh, okay,  
4 I heard it wrong, I'm sorry. Now, did you, were  
5 you ever able to receive an assist--funding  
6 assistance, financial assistance, in dealing with  
7 the other properties that were landmarked?

8 DARRYL JAMES: It--once again, I've  
9 only been here three-and-a-half years, but for,  
10 yes, from my, from my--from what I understand, the  
11 conservancy was able to, and I think the young  
12 lady mentioned it earlier, it probably has been in  
13 the area of like \$10,000, which has been, been  
14 given. For, I think for two, I think there was  
15 some roofing issue, and the other one was the blue  
16 stone. From what I understand.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So, have  
18 you experienced financial hardship? Or you  
19 received the money that you needed to deal with  
20 the properties?

21 DARRYL JAMES: The two that I know  
22 of, we had the, the, we bear the brunt of the  
23 responsibility of, of ensuring that the work was  
24 completed and done.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So, yes,

2 you did receiving financial hardship or you did  
3 not, and you received the funding that you needed?

4 DARRYL JAMES: Oh, no, when you say  
5 financial, I'm misunderstanding your, your  
6 question.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: To upkeep  
8 the properties that are already landmarked, were  
9 you able to do so with the assistance of the money  
10 that you were given, or did you still have some  
11 financial hardship to upkeep those properties?

12 DARRYL JAMES: Well, what, the  
13 point I'm trying to make is that the, the burden  
14 of maintaining the properties is upon our  
15 shoulders. And what happens is that you have, you  
16 have to--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: When you  
18 say "burden," can you--

19 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Can I  
20 interrupt you? 'Cause I think we, this was, let  
21 me make sure I understanding the situation--

22 DARRYL JAMES: Yeah, right.

23 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: And I can try  
24 to characterize it.

25 DARRYL JAMES: Right.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay.

3 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Particularly  
4 on the blue stone sidewalks.

5 DARRYL JAMES: Right.

6 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: In, in your  
7 opinion, the cost of doing that was essentially  
8 raised as a result of the landmarks process-

9 DARRYL JAMES: Right.

10 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: --to around  
11 \$30,000. You think it may have been half that but  
12 for. You did receive a \$10,000 grant from the  
13 City Landmarks Conservancy, but the church was  
14 still required to put out around \$20,000.

15 DARRYL JAMES: Right.

16 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Is that  
17 roughly correct?

18 DARRYL JAMES: Right, I think it  
19 was just \$7,000 for that project.

20 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Oh, \$7,000 for  
21 that and \$3,000 for another.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay.

23 DARRYL JAMES: Right.

24 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: So.

25 DARRYL JAMES: Right, \$3,000 for

2 another.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Yes,  
4 okay.

5 DARRYL JAMES: So, so the, so the  
6 answer is yes, the burden is the responsibility--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay.  
8 And the reason you said you weren't able to do  
9 the, the time, address this earlier, was because  
10 of the change in leadership, and you weren't  
11 notified that there was an absolute deadline?

12 DARRYL JAMES: No, I didn't say  
13 that. No, what I, what I said was that, we were  
14 going through a transitional period, we were  
15 streamlining our operations and our personal. We,  
16 we had cut our, in fact what we've done is we, we  
17 cut our, our days down to like four days out of  
18 the week as opposed to normally the five days.  
19 And it just, it really slipped through the cracks,  
20 you know, for us. So, I mean, so we bear the  
21 responsibility of saying, yes, you know, we did  
22 not come to the table at the time in which we, we  
23 probably should have. But like anything else,  
24 we're here.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay,

2 thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you,  
4 Council Member. Other Council Members with, with  
5 questions. Council Member Sanders.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Good  
7 afternoon, Father James. I, you already got me,  
8 well, on part of it, with the same name, I like  
9 that one. [laughter] I walk past the church  
10 often. I, I go by there often, so I know this,  
11 this neighborhood very well. I also come out of  
12 the fundamentalist tradition of Pentecostal and so  
13 I, I can understand some of those. I have, let me  
14 commend you for wise partnerships, the  
15 partnerships that you're, you're speaking about in  
16 the future, are very smart. The universities,  
17 the--using the, the civil courts, those are smart  
18 partnerships. And, and would be useful. What  
19 downside, let's go more into that one for a  
20 moment, what downside do you see coming out of  
21 this designation?

22 DARRYL JAMES: Well, the, the  
23 downside, and I, I just tried to articulate this  
24 in our, in my initial presentation, is, is that  
25 the burden of, of trying to provide the financial

2 responsibilities in order to, to meet, for  
3 example, like right now, we, we have a, we have a  
4 leak in, in our sanctuary. Which means that in  
5 order to, in order to meet that, that  
6 responsibility--we have a leak in the sanctuary,  
7 and we have a leak also in our, our parish hall  
8 right now. So, what I'm saying is that, to be  
9 able to, to fix both of those, that, the cost  
10 would just be prohibitive. You know, for us, if  
11 we have to do it according to using a certain  
12 grade or amount of materials, or something like  
13 that. But for the church, we, there's nothing we  
14 can do about, because that's, that's already  
15 designated. But for the, but for the parish hall,  
16 yes. And then looking for the future, if we,  
17 wanted to choose to do something in terms of the  
18 exterior, not taking away totally from the  
19 exterior of our building, but, but you know,  
20 making some modifications where it would require  
21 exterior building permits, I think that that would  
22 just be burdensome to us, as well.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Just as a,  
24 a point of information, the Landmarks Preservation  
25 Commission claims that they work with folk to, to

2 do, to do modern things and that you, that you're  
3 not handcuffed. As a historian by training, I,  
4 I'm very interested, especially the, the slave  
5 background of the church. When we speak of  
6 building pews in, in certain areas, that, those  
7 are code words for "you have a large, black,  
8 probably slave population" at that time. And, and  
9 certainly this, this area needs to be, to be  
10 maintained. However, your statement of, that you  
11 have a commitment to this, also, is, is  
12 interesting. I, if you do have a, my last point,  
13 sir, is, if you don't have a, a nonprofit  
14 501(c)(3), may I encourage you. If you do, I  
15 would encourage you to go to your Council Member  
16 and others, for funding, to see what you can do  
17 about these issues that you're, you're speaking  
18 about. Thank you very much.

19 DARRYL JAMES: Well, thank you, and  
20 that's, we've really embarked upon a great  
21 relationship between Councilman Gennaro and  
22 Comrie, and we've, we've kind of--Councilman  
23 Gennaro and I, and we've already, we've talked  
24 about ways in which we can access future funding  
25 and, and resources, in order to develop the

2 church.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: May you be  
4 blessed in your endeavor, and may those who help  
5 you be a blessing, also.

6 DARRYL JAMES: Thank you. I  
7 receive that, as you would say in the fundamental  
8 tradition.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: [laughs]

10 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: All right, I'm  
11 over my head here in the [laughter] but that said,  
12 let me try to move us along. If there are other--

13 DARRYL JAMES: We under--we  
14 understand.

15 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: All due  
16 respect, I mean, believe me, I'm not--

17 DARRYL JAMES: [laughs]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: [off mic]  
19 I stand corrected, sir.

20 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: [laughs]

21 DARRYL JAMES: We understand.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: We have to  
23 bring me back to earth. [laughter]

24 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Are there  
25 other members of the Committee who have questions

2 for this panel? All right, seeing none, I'll  
3 thank you very much for your time and your  
4 testimony. And we are going to close the public  
5 hearing on this item, Land Use No. 284. We have  
6 one remaining item on the calendar, for which we  
7 have one member of the public signed up to  
8 testify. Though it completes the four in Council  
9 Member Gennaro's district. The final item is a  
10 district and not an individual landmark, Land Use  
11 No. 285, the Ridgewood South Historic District, in  
12 Council Member Reyna's district. And I would like  
13 to invite Jenny Fernandez from the Landmarks  
14 Preservation Commission up to present to us.

15 JENNY FERNANDEZ: Thank you, Chair  
16 Lander. Before I continue with this, just want to  
17 thank Council Member Gennaro for all his support  
18 on our other designations that we did here today.  
19 And, and for everyone for their, for their  
20 support, as well. My name is Jenny Fernandez,  
21 Director of Intergovernmental and Community  
22 Relations for the Landmarks Preservation  
23 Commission. I'm here today to testify on the  
24 Commission's designation of the Ridgewood South  
25 Historic District in Queens. On September 15,

2 2009, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a  
3 public hearing on the proposed designation of the  
4 Ridgewood South Historic District. Five people  
5 spoke in favor of designation, including  
6 representatives of State Senator Joseph Addabbo,  
7 the Ridgewood Local Development Corporation,  
8 Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District, the  
9 Ridgewood Property Owners and Civic Association,  
10 the Historic Districts Council, and the New York  
11 Landmarks Conservancy. Also, a letter of support  
12 was received from Queens Borough President Helen  
13 Marshall. On October 26, 2010, the Commission  
14 voted to designate Ridgewood South a New York City  
15 Historic District. The Ridgewood South Historic  
16 District is significant as a large, intact  
17 grouping of fully developed model tenements that  
18 reflect the development of Ridgewood in the early  
19 20th Century. A contiguous district in both  
20 topology and style, it is composed of over 210  
21 buildings, primarily three-story, brick tenements,  
22 and the St. Mathias Roman Catholic Church complex.  
23 The tenements were constructed between 1911 and  
24 1912, by the G. X. Mathews Company, and were  
25 designed by architect Louis Allmendinger. Known

2 as Mathews Model Flats, these new law tenements  
3 had larger rooms and more adequate sanitary  
4 facilities than their 19th Century predecessors.  
5 Built in long rows of repeated designs that  
6 creates a sense of place, the façades retain a  
7 high degree of integrity and are distinguished by  
8 their buff and amber colored brick façades, cast  
9 stone details, ornate pressed metal cornices, and  
10 stoop and area way ironwork. As testament to  
11 their improved design, the Mathews Model Flats  
12 were exhibited by the New York City Tenement House  
13 Department at the Panama Pacific Fair in San  
14 Francisco in 1915, and became standards for later  
15 tenement house construction. The Commission urges  
16 you to affirm this designation.

17 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you very  
18 much. Council Member Reyna, would you like to  
19 speak on this resolution?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you so  
21 much, Mr. Chair, I just wanted to say a few words.  
22 I wanted to first off thank Jenny Fernandez from  
23 the Department of Intergovernmental and Community  
24 Relations, who has been an extraordinary  
25 communicator in reference to the steps of this

2 designation. And with the help of Chairman  
3 Tierney making sure that there was the most  
4 transparent process, so that all property owners,  
5 with the exception of a few perhaps, new  
6 homeowners who were not aware that they had been  
7 in the process of a designation. This particular  
8 district has already received in Ridgewood a  
9 federal and state designation, and it gives me  
10 great pleasure and satisfaction to know that this  
11 portion of the district which is in my district,  
12 has been finally calendared and designated, and  
13 today this is the last remaining step. I want to  
14 thank you, Chair Lander, as well as the  
15 Subcommittee Member on Landmarks, Public Siting  
16 and Maritime Members, for holding this important  
17 public hearing, regarding the designation of  
18 Ridgewood South Historic District. Today's  
19 hearing comes with strong support in favor of  
20 designation. With the folks like State Senator  
21 Joseph Addabbo, Queens Borough President Helen  
22 Marshall, the Ridgewood Local Development  
23 Corporation, Myrtle Avenue BID, the Ridgewood  
24 Property Owners and Civic Association, the  
25 Historic District Council and the New York

2 Landmarks Conservation. Much like today, in the  
3 late 19th Century, Ridgewood was subjected to an  
4 eastward expansion of a growing New York City,  
5 located next to Brooklyn's Eastern District,  
6 Ridgewood became an ideal location for German-  
7 Americans to relocate away from the overcrowding  
8 and more recent immigrants inhabiting Bushwick and  
9 Williamsburg, as well as Manhattan's Lower East  
10 Side. Ridgewood created a sustainable model of  
11 affordability for families with modest incomes by  
12 controlling costs and improving living quarters.  
13 The buildings in the proposed Ridgewood South  
14 Historic District are mostly intact; however, some  
15 alterations are needed. The District includes a  
16 cohesive collection of urban architecture. The  
17 tenements have retained an extremely high level of  
18 architectural integrity and represent an important  
19 part of the development of housing in New York  
20 City. The proposed district also includes the St.  
21 Mathias Roman Catholic Church complex, which is  
22 comprised of a cathedral, rectory, school and  
23 convent, faces Catalpa Avenue at the eastern edge  
24 of the district. Unlike many churches in the City  
25 of New York, which are closing, this is one of the

2 strongest parishes I have seen and witnessed,  
3 facing many challenges but overcoming most of  
4 them. Constructed of pale yellow and amber brick,  
5 these four buildings are architecturally congruous  
6 with the rest of the district, and are significant  
7 in the telling of Ridgewood's history and  
8 development. The Ridgewood South Historic  
9 District has a rich history, distinct and  
10 congruous architecture, as well as other  
11 compelling features that Landmarks Preservation  
12 Commission believes establishes a notable section  
13 of the City. Ridgewood South has a diverse and  
14 valuable aesthetic that must be protected for  
15 future generations. As the Council Member for the  
16 34th District, I strongly support this designation  
17 of the Ridgewood South Historic District, and I  
18 welcome the members of this Committee to just take  
19 a second to look at the Ridgewood South Historic  
20 District designation report, because it has a  
21 wonderful background to read the combination of  
22 how history repeats itself and how immigration  
23 waves have been in the turn of the centuries given  
24 so much contribution to certain sections of our  
25 city. And on page 133, the original ad that

2 proposes 250 houses sold and 200 more going up was  
3 what middle class Americans were looking for,  
4 especially those in the immigrant community, who  
5 were just rising up to the level of middle class.  
6 Thank you so much.

7 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Council Member  
8 Reyna, thank you very much for your enthusiasm,  
9 and for calling our attention to the report, and  
10 also for your patience in coming and staying for  
11 our, for your item which was last on the, on the  
12 calendar. Do any other community members have  
13 comments or questions for LPC on this item?  
14 Seeing none, we do have one member of the public  
15 signed up to testify on this matter, Simeon  
16 Bankoff from the Historic Districts Council who's  
17 signed up to speak in favor of this item, Land Use  
18 No. 285.

19 SIMEON BANKOFF: Good afternoon,  
20 Council Members, Simeon Bankoff, Historic  
21 Districts Council. I was just following up on my  
22 earlier resolution to come before you more often.  
23 We're in strong support of the Ridgewood Historic  
24 District. We'd like to thank Council Member Reyna  
25 for her support, the Council Members for their

2 support, as well. I recommend strongly that  
3 everyone go visit Ridgewood, it's absolutely  
4 beautiful, particularly St. Mathias Church. And  
5 we'd also like to thank the Landmarks Commission  
6 for focusing more on Landmarks in the underserved  
7 outer boroughs.

8 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you very  
9 much. Seeing no one else signed up to testify, we  
10 will close the public hearing [gavel] on this item  
11 and all, all items on today's calendar. I think  
12 what we're going to do, as we proceed to a vote,  
13 is, is separate the items. And we'll bundle  
14 together Land Uses No. 281, 282, 283 and 285, that  
15 is the Jamaica Building, Chamber of Commerce  
16 Building, Jamaica Savings Bank, and the Queens  
17 General Courthouse, together with the Ridgewood  
18 South Historic District. And we'll first move to  
19 vote on those four items. And the Chair  
20 recommends a vote of aye.

21 CLERK: Chair Lander.

22 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Aye.

23 CLERK: Council Member Sanders.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Aye.

25 CLERK: Council Member Palma.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: [off mic]

3 Aye.

4 CLERK: Council Member Arroyo.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [off mic]

6 Yes.

7 CLERK: Council Member Mendez.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: [off mic]

9 Yes.

10 CLERK: Council Member Williams.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I just  
12 wanted to point out that Mathews Model Flats,  
13 according to them, has held the record of never  
14 having had a foreclosure. That's very impressive.  
15 I don't know if they still exist, but I vote aye.  
16 [laughter]

17 CLERK: Council Member Halloran.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER: Aye. [laughs]

19 CLERK: By a vote of seven in the  
20 affirmative, none in the negative, and no  
21 abstentions, the aforementioned motions to approve  
22 are approved.

23 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you very  
24 much. We will now turn to Land Use No. 284, the  
25 Grace Episcopal Church Memorial Hall. We

2 obviously heard quite a lot of testimony on that  
3 today, and had quite a lot of questions and back  
4 and forth about it. You know, I will point out  
5 that the, the job of the Landmarks Preservation  
6 Commission, when they, when they, when an item  
7 comes to them for a vote to be considered, is to  
8 weigh in on the, the nature of the building. Is  
9 it meritorious? Does it meet the Landmarks  
10 requirements? Is it worthy of designation? The  
11 job of the City Council is to take that into  
12 consideration, but also consider essentially our  
13 democratic responsibilities. Is this an  
14 appropriate place and time in our estimation to  
15 use the power that's vested in the City to put  
16 this regulatory power in? And we aren't given, in  
17 the same way the Landmarks Preservation is,  
18 Commission is, very specific guidance on what that  
19 is what we have to take into consideration is the  
20 voice of the community, the voice of the owners,  
21 the voice of the local representatives, in  
22 determining whether this is an appropriate place  
23 to use that power. And so, in this instance, I'm  
24 glad that in Council Member Gennaro's district,  
25 where we've just voted to use that power in three

2 of the four items that were brought before us  
3 today, on this one, I'm going to make a motion  
4 that we decline the, specifically we--a motion to  
5 disapprove the designation by the Landmarks  
6 Preservation Commission. [background comments]  
7 So the motion is a motion to disapprove and  
8 members of the Committee, if they agree with that  
9 motion to disapprove, on the recommendation of the  
10 Chair or on their own recommendation, will vote  
11 aye; and if you, if you vote depending on--So, and  
12 I ask the Clerk to call the roll.

13 COUNSEL: Carol Shine, Counsel to  
14 the Committee. Chair Lander.

15 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Aye.

16 COUNSEL: Council Member Sanders.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Permission  
18 to explain my, my vote?

19 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Of course.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: As a  
21 historian, there are some things that were very  
22 important in this, that were mentioned.  
23 Especially as reading the material, I read of the  
24 slave involvement. However, the, the involvement  
25 has more to do with the church itself and not so

2 much with the Memorial Hall. And as a, as a man  
3 of faith, I have faith that the, that Father James  
4 has, has said that he is going to help maintain  
5 the structure and the, the integrity of the  
6 structure. And I also have faith that my  
7 colleagues are going to aid him in that process.  
8 So, with those, with that information, I vote aye,  
9 which disapproves of this measure.

10 COUNSEL: Council Member Palma.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: [off mic] I  
12 vote aye.

13 COUNSEL: Council Member Arroyo.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Permission  
15 to explain my vote.

16 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Something I  
18 rarely do. First, I want to congratulate Council  
19 Member Gennaro for his, winning on all fronts  
20 here, on every item that's on the agenda today. I  
21 thought we were doing a Gennaro Committee hearing  
22 only today. I, I heard once too many times that,  
23 you know, they dropped the ball. I think, you  
24 know, given the fact that we are human, it happens  
25 to all of us at some point, and thank God that we

2 have an opportunity to correct and, and kind of  
3 bring it to, to a summation. Council Member  
4 Gennaro is an incredible professional. And, and a  
5 person who is deeply committed to doing the right  
6 thing for his district. And his strong opposition  
7 is what got my attention to, to listen to the  
8 details. And Mr. Chair, I have often expressed my  
9 frustration with the process of the Landmarks  
10 Commission, follows how properties are identified  
11 for designation, what the timeframe after that  
12 property's identified, and how long it should  
13 take, or how long before something gets put  
14 somewhere on a calendar, are we notified as  
15 Council Members, communities. Often community  
16 boards are not even included in the process, which  
17 I find very, very frustrating. Because we work in  
18 partnerships with our community boards all the  
19 time. So, I'm, I urge us to have a conversation  
20 about fine tuning the process, so that we're all  
21 clear and we don't drop the ball. And I vote aye.

22 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you.

23 COUNSEL: Council Member Mendez.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Permission  
25 to explain my vote.

2 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Of course.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: I will  
4 unfortunately be voting against this. I think  
5 process is important and whether the process is  
6 flawed, it's the process we have. And we can  
7 certainly work to make the process better. But  
8 it's the process we've been using, and it's the  
9 process that was followed. You know, a lot of the  
10 comments, and I, and I hear it, and I understand  
11 it, but it's a lot of the, the same comments--  
12 financial hardship or owner not being in favor--  
13 but I think by the time the LPC reviews all this,  
14 they're looking not just at the history, at the  
15 architectural integrity, they're looking at  
16 various thing and they make their designation. I  
17 wish the church a lot of luck, and to my  
18 colleagues, I, you know, apologize that I cannot  
19 vote with you and on what you're recommending. I  
20 vote no on this measure.

21 COUNSEL: Council Member Williams.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I know  
23 it's shocking, but I'd like permission to explain  
24 my vote. [laughter]

25 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Go--

2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank  
3 you. I did, I also listened very carefully to our  
4 testimony. It seems that, obviously people  
5 should've jumped in a little sooner. I'm not  
6 convinced that the Landmarks Preservation could  
7 not have reached out to the Council Member a  
8 little sooner, as well. And I think we do need  
9 process, but I've always tried to point out that I  
10 think there is a last check to make sure things  
11 happen the way they should be, and I think that's  
12 the, the Council. What I hope that Council  
13 Members here remember that next time we have this  
14 conversation, and we're trying to prevent  
15 something from happening, and we bring up a whole  
16 bunch of other issues, we do have an opportunity  
17 to make sure we check and balance the process to  
18 make sure everything turns out correctly. Because  
19 of that, I'm going to support my colleague, and  
20 vote aye.

21 COUNSEL: Council Member Halloran.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN:

23 Permission to explain my vote?

24 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Uh-huh.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: First of

2 all, let me just thank everyone for a wonderful  
3 airing of some of these issues. I think we've  
4 discovered that there are some areas where we  
5 could look to perhaps even legislate. Community  
6 board involvement was mentioned, the setting of  
7 timetables and parameters, process service and  
8 designation, and a more active involvement of, of  
9 us as a Council. And I think Council Member  
10 Williams is correct when he says we are always  
11 going to be the last stop. But hopefully maybe we  
12 could get off the train earlier if, if possible.  
13 In this particular instance, this institution  
14 would be jeopardized by the designation. And I  
15 think that we can always work to preserve it, to  
16 preserve history, but we should never do so at the  
17 expense of the living. And I think a very wise  
18 man said that once. So, and it wasn't me. So, I  
19 will, I will say that I am going to vote aye on,  
20 on this; however, I would admonish those who get  
21 these notifications that they really need to pay  
22 attention to them, and we should be doing this the  
23 last minute here at dialogue with the LPC in  
24 advance could have possibly forestalled this.

25 COUNSEL: By a vote of six in the

2 affirmative, one in the negative and no  
3 abstentions, the aforementioned motion to  
4 disapprove is approved. [laughter]

5 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thanks very  
6 much. Just want to say thank you to the, to the  
7 staff for your work on this to everyone who came  
8 out today to testify, to Council Members Comrie  
9 and Gennaro and Reyna for joining us. And I  
10 invite the Chairman to make a closing comment.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Just point  
12 of, point of information, there will be no Land  
13 Use meeting tomorrow. There will be no Land Use  
14 meeting because of the impending snowstorm.

15 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: [laughs]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: We're going  
17 to err on the side of caution. So--[background  
18 comments, laughter] unless you really just want to  
19 come to 250 Broadway, you Manhattan folks can make  
20 it, but us Queen, us Queens folks--

21 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: We resisted  
22 asking he Landmarks Preservation Commission  
23 whether they were included in the emergency  
24 cabinet at the [laughter, background comments] at  
25 OEM, but--

1 SUBCOMM ON LANDMARKS,PUBLIC SITING,MARIT USES101

2 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: The meeting  
3 will be held on Tuesday, at 10:00 a.m. Tuesday,  
4 10:00 a.m. Thank you.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: By the  
6 powers invested in me, I am declaring a snow  
7 emergency tomorrow. [laughter]

8 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: And with that,  
9 this hearing of the Subcommittee is adjourned.

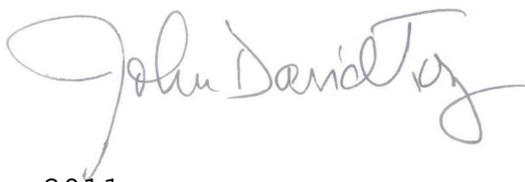
10 [gavel]

11 [background comments]

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, JOHN DAVID TONG certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John David Tong". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the printed word "Signature".

Date January 28, 2011