

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING &
FRANCHISES

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January 9, 2025
Start: 11:12 a.m.
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HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Shaun Abreu
David M. Carr
Kamillah Hanks
Francisco P. Moya
Yusef Salaam
Lynn C. Schulman

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

Ben Baccash
Taconic Partners

Melissa Sarko
Ennead Architects

Ellen Lehman

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SEIU 32BJ

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Lower East Side Employment Network

Marisa Mitchell
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Elizabeth Fassberg
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Julieanne Herskowitz
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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

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CUNY

Isha Sheth
New York City Public Schools

Robert Van Pelt
Office of Chief Medical Examiner

Michael Baran

Michael Jordan
Local Union Three

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NYC District Council of Carpenters

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Local 3 IBW

Stephen Levin
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Kate McCabe

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Park Slope Civic Council

Brighid Odea

Luz Torres

Samiya Rubaiya

Matthew Wagman

Alex Rutald

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

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Ford Harris

Jay Goldberg

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Geoffrey Thomas

Eric Neilson

Olivia Gonzalez

Sean Mclaughlin

Mary Mullally

Damien Andrade

Marilyn Coppa

Kurtis Weatherford

Michael Feinberg

Rachel Lee

Samir Lavingia
Open New York

Luke Lavanway

James O'Dea

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

Madelon Gauthier

Emily Gillcrist

Bruno Grandsard

Maria Scarvalone

Roger Melzer

Scott Newmann

Susan Lunn

Diane Brand

Hafina Allen

Eric McClure
StreetsPAC

Meryl Breidbart

Gabriel Rich

Henry Love

Ralph Gatto

Alex Weinberg

Alexander Simon Fox

Elizabeth Dennys

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

Joshua Watterman

Julia Harris

Paul Tainsh

Simeon Bankoff

Betsy Klompus

Jeremy Kaplan

Marlene Boccato

Velma McKenzie

Peter Slovaska

Alex Heuer

Tony Malone

Alex Maza

Michelle de la Uz

Stefan Bujah

Dianne Hauck-Johnson

Thomas Naeem Hujih

Kathy Park Price

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

Veronica Uski

Max Davison

Matthew Dennys

Donna Schneiderman

2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning and
3 welcome to the New York City Council hearing of the
4 Committee on Zoning and Franchises. At this time,
5 can everybody please silence your cell phone? If you
6 wish to testify, please go to the back of the room to
7 fill out a testimony slip with the Sergeant at Arms,
8 and make sure that you put the project number,
9 project name. At this time going forward, no one is
10 to approach the dais. I repeat, no one is to
11 approach the dais. Chair, we are ready to begin.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [gavel] Good morning
13 everyone and happy New Year. Welcome to the first
14 meeting of the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises
15 in 2025. I hope everyone had a great holiday. I'm
16 Council Member Kevin Riley, Chair of the
17 Subcommittee. I'm joined today remotely by Council
18 Member Moya, Council Member Abreu, and in the
19 chambers by Council Member Carr, Council Member
20 Salaam, Council Member Rivera, and Council Member
21 Narcisse. Today, we are scheduled to hold six
22 hearings. These include the proposed mapping of a
23 commercial overlay related to property in Whitestone,
24 Queens, a rezoning to develop a mixed-use building in
25 Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, a rezoning to develop a

1 mixed-use because it Mott Haven section of the Bronx,
2 a rezoning of formerly commercial site in Windsor
3 Terrace, Brooklyn, a redevelopment plan by the New
4 York City Economic Development Corporation to
5 redevelop several city-owned parcels into a new life
6 science campus in Kips Bay Manhattan, and a rezoning
7 to facilitate a new commercial life-sized building
8 also in Kip's Bay and across the street from the
9 proposed EDC campus. Before opening the first
10 hearing, I will go over the hearing procedures. This
11 meeting is being held in hybrid format. Members of
12 the public who wish to testify may testify in-person
13 or through Zoom. Those wishing to testify remotely
14 may register by visiting the New York City Council's
15 website at www.council.nyc.gov/landuse to sign up.
16 If you are here in-person, please see one of the
17 Sergeant at Arms to prepare and submit a speaker's
18 card. Members of the public may also view a
19 livestream broadcast of this meeting at the Council's
20 website. We will limit public testimony to two
21 minutes per witness. Members of the public may also
22 submit written testimony through email to
23 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Written testimony
24 may be submitted up to three days after the hearing
25

1 is closed. Please indicate the LU number and/or the
2 project name in the subject line of your email. We
3 request that the witnesses joining us remotely remain
4 in the meeting until you are excused by myself,
5 because Council Members may have questions. Lastly,
6 for everyone attending today's meeting, this is a
7 government proceeding and decorum must be observed at
8 all times. Members of the public are asked not to
9 speak during the meeting unless you are testifying.
10 The witness table is reserved for people who are
11 called to testify, and no video recording or
12 photography is allowed from the witness table.
13 Further, members of the public may not present audio
14 or video recordings as testimony, but may submit
15 transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant at
16 Arms for inclusion in the hearing record. I will now
17 open the public hearing on LU 214, 215, and 216
18 regarding the rezoning proposal relating to a
19 proposed new commercial life science building also in
20 the Kips Bay neighborhood, a block from the proposed
21 SPARC development, but this one being located in
22 Council Member Rivera's district. The applicant,
23 including EDC and a private developer proposed a new
24 commercial life science building of approximately
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1 359,000 square feet. For anyone wishing to testify
2 on these items remotely, you must register online
3 through the Council's website at
4 council.nyc.gov/landuse. And once again, for anyone
5 with us in-person, please see one of the Sergeants to
6 prepare and submit a speaker's card. If you prefer--
7 excuse me. If you prefer to submit written
8 testimony, you can always do so by emailing it to
9 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. And now I'd like
10 to give it Council Member Rivera, see if she has any
11 opening remarks.
12

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Thank you so
14 much. Good morning everyone. Thank you for being
15 here and for being so committed to your community and
16 to your city. I want to thank the Chair for his
17 leadership and everyone at the Council who was
18 involved with this project. 455 First Avenue
19 Innovation East which is a part of what we see as
20 this larger map of a life sciences corridor, a
21 biotech area that includes SPARC in Kips Bay which is
22 very exciting. Again, I want to thank Chair Riley
23 for the opportunity to say a few words about
24 Innovation East and the City's vision for a life
25 sciences corridor on First Avenue in Kips Bay.

1
2 Innovation East at 455 First Avenue is one piece of a
3 larger initiative to make the Kips Bay neighborhood a
4 destination for life sciences and the healthcare
5 industry. Life sciences is a dynamic and growing
6 industry that provides high-wage jobs in a variety of
7 fields including sciences, research, technology,
8 administration, healthcare, and direct service care,
9 and may I add that we ensure that the jobs to create
10 these buildings are also high-paying and of course
11 sustainable. Kips Bay is especially well-suited to
12 serve these industries with proximity to local
13 hospitals such as NYU Langone and Bellevue with
14 Health + Hospitals. This area has also attracted
15 similar investments from life science developers and
16 has become a biotech corridor that includes adjacent
17 bustling parts of my district I have been proud to
18 support. As we review the redevelopment proposal, we
19 must ensure our community and city benefits beyond
20 the project scope and that economic activity
21 continues adjacent and of course beyond the very
22 building itself. There must be investments in the
23 public realm. Housing and quality of life
24 improvements that speak to the needs of existing
25 residents ensure that neighborhood amenities such as

1 Bellevue South Park and our transit system are
2 adequately invested in and never overburdened. Our
3 community must see that this space in the building
4 serves as a meeting place for civic engagement and
5 that the development team and tenants of the building
6 make concerted efforts to partner with public high
7 schools and, of course, young people of all
8 backgrounds to provide pathways to opportunity,
9 apprenticeships, and much more. I appreciate the
10 work that EDC has done with the Community Board and
11 their Kips Bay Taskforce, and I look forward to
12 working together to ensure the public benefit of this
13 project is clear and memorialized. Thank you very
14 much, Chair.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
17 Member Rivera. I just want to say for the record
18 we've been joined by Council Member Powers. I will
19 now call the applicant panel for this panel which
20 consists of Ben Baccash and Melissa Sarko. Counsel,
21 please administer the affirmation.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Panelists, would you
23 please raise your right hands and then I will ask you
24 in order to answer the following question. Do you
25 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing

1 but the truth in your testimony before this
2 subcommittee and in answer to all Council Member
3 questions? Mr. Baccash? Melissa Sarko? Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. And for
5 the viewing public, if you need an accessible version
6 of this presentation, please send an email request to
7 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. The applicant team
8 may begin. Before you begin, I just ask that you
9 please restate your name and organization for the
10 record. You may begin.

11 BEN BACCASH: Thank you very much, Chair.
12 My name is--

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Ben, you
14 could just press the button. Thank you.

15 BEN BACCASH: Thank you very much, Chair.
16 My name is Ben Baccash from Taconic Partners joined
17 by Melissa Sarko of Ennead Architects. We're here to
18 present Innovation East, a proposed new life science
19 building at 455 First Avenue. Slide please. I'll
20 introduce the project partners, of course, the New
21 York City Economic Development Corporation.
22 Innovation East is part of EDC's broader life science
23 initiative in New York City. Taconic Partners and
24 subsidiary Elevate Research Properties, we are
25

1 experienced developers of commercial life science
2 spaces here in New York, our partners from DivcoWest,
3 developers of leading life science ecosystems across
4 the country, and the NYU Grossman School of Medicine
5 that will serve as the building's anchor tenant. So,
6 the EDC has selected this group of world-class
7 commercial life science to develop a world-class
8 commercial life science facility on this site in the
9 First Avenue health and science corridor to
10 complement their broader life science initiative.
11 Slide, please. Innovation East will advance the
12 city's goals to grow the life science sector along
13 First Avenue. It will replace the out-moded [sic]
14 public health lab that currently sits on the site.
15 That building was built in 1964 and is not
16 appropriate for commercial life science use. The new
17 building will deliver a commercial life science space
18 for companies in varying stages of development, as
19 well as for the NYU Grossman School of Medicine, all
20 the while fostering job training and creation for a
21 range of education and skill levels. We'll also be
22 providing meaningful ground floor activation with a
23 neighborhood center retail café and a life science
24 multipurpose space. Slide, please. Our team has
25

1 conducted extensive outreach to our neighbors in the
2 community, providing informational presentations and
3 answering questions.

4
5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Ben, if you could
6 just pause real quick. We have just been joined by
7 Ms. Ellen Lehman and I just would like to ask Counsel
8 to please administer the affirmation for her.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ellen, when you have
10 a moment please raise your right hand and I will ask
11 you a question. Do you swear or affirm to tell the
12 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and
13 answer to all Council Member questions-- sorry, in
14 your testimony before this subcommittee and in answer
15 to all Council Member questions? Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Ellen.
17 Sorry, Ben. Continue.

18 BEN BACCASH: Thank you. Innovation East
19 has received support from Manhattan Community Board
20 Six, from the Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine
21 and from the City Planning Commission, bringing us
22 one step closer to realizing the City's long-term
23 plan to create a new public health lab in Harlem and
24 a modern commercial life science building at 455
25 First Avenue. The public health lab will be relocated

1 to its new purpose-built [sic] facility in 2026,
2 after which demolition at 455 First Avenue can begin.
3 And construction of Innovation East would be
4 completed in approximately 2030. Slide, please.

5
6 MELISSA SARKO: Okay. So, Innovation
7 East occupies a pivotal site in the First Avenue
8 health and sciences corridor. It's located on First
9 Avenue between 26th and 27th Streets. Some of our
10 immediate neighbors include Bellevue Hospital to the
11 east. We have residential neighbors to the north,
12 and in the CUNY Brookdale campus, future SPARC site
13 is located to the southeast across First Avenue. The
14 site is bordered to the north by 27th Street which is
15 a pedestrian way, and that terminates into Bellevue
16 South Park directly west of the site. Next. The
17 ground floor design of Innovation East prioritizes
18 transparency, activation, and accessibility. The
19 arrows on this image show pedestrian entry points on
20 three sides of the building with service access from
21 Mount Carmel Place. The main building entrance is
22 mid-block on First Avenue. A 9,000 square foot life
23 science multipurpose spaces is at the south corner
24 which includes flexible meeting, training, and
25 gathering space. A neighborhood-centered retail café

1 is at the north corner and that's directly connected
2 to the 27th Street pedestrian way. These ground
3 floor elements along with a tenant bike lobby at the
4 west side of 27th Street will activate the street
5 frontage with transparent storefronts and improve the
6 pedestrian experience. Next slide. This site
7 currently contains the 14-story public health
8 laboratory which as Ben mentioned is out-moded for
9 commercial life sciences. This is a view of the
10 existing conditions and of that building from First
11 Avenue and 27th Street. It shows some of the blank
12 facades and the extensive scaffolding that's bene
13 installed around the site which has led to community
14 concerns regarding safety, especially at the 27th
15 Street pedestrian way. Next. This is an
16 illustrative view of Innovation East from that same
17 vantage point at the corner of First Avenue and 27th
18 Street, highlighting the opportunity for a retail
19 café to activate this corner of the site. The
20 transparent, well-lit and active facades along 27th
21 Street will restore the pedestrian experience and
22 safety on the pedestrian way and strengthen the
23 connection between the First Avenue corridor and
24 Bellevue South Park. Next. These are the existing
25

1 views of the entry condition for the public health
2 lab along First Avenue. In conjunction with the
3 scaffolding, tall site walls surround the existing
4 entrance and are unwelcoming and give little
5 indication of the activity within the existing
6 building. Next. In contrast, this illustrative view
7 at the First Avenue entrance highlights the improved
8 public realm. The mid-block building entry to
9 Innovation East is flanked in this image by the life
10 science multipurpose space on the left and the café
11 on the right. The Innovation East building entrance
12 is set back from First Avenue providing space for
13 shallow stairs and gentle ramps that facilitate some
14 of the multiple entry points that we have across the
15 sloping site, and these elements along with low
16 plantings will visually expand the public realm
17 without encroaching on sidewalk dimensions or space
18 for pedestrians. Next. These existing views
19 highlight the multiple points of vehicular access in
20 loading that currently exists on 26th Street. They
21 also highlight some of the existing building and site
22 elements that encroach within the public right-of-
23 way, resulting in narrower sidewalks and less space
24 for pedestrians. Next. Innovation East will restore
25

20 feet of right-of-way to the public realm. This illustrative view of 26th Street shows the visual impact of that additional space for pedestrians. The view also highlights the dedicated entrance to the ground floor life science multipurpose space which will provide flexible meeting, training and gathering space for building tenants, nonprofit partners and the life science community. The extent of transparency and visibility supports opportunities to put science on display and will showcase the vibrant life science ecosystem of Innovation East and the First Avenue health and sciences corridor. Next slide, please. Innovation East will be a purpose-built life science facility. Life science buildings have specialized requirements including minimum floorplate planning dimensions and more robust infrastructure when compared to other buildings. We're also designing the building to support sustainability, resiliency and wellness. The project's aiming for legal certification and the building will incorporate numerous energy efficiency measures including a fully-electric central plant. All critical infrastructure will be located above a project design flood evaluation for enhanced

1
2 resiliency and to support research continuity. The
3 stacking section shows the anticipated distribution
4 of life science and mechanical space within the
5 building along with an indication of the ground floor
6 retail and amenity programming that supports a robust
7 life science ecosystem. Ellen Lehman will review
8 some of the proposed zoning actions that make
9 Innovation East possible. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Ellen, if you could
11 turn on your mic, please. Thank you.

12 ELLEN LEHMAN: Next slide. The site is
13 currently zoned R8 with a C25 overlay along First
14 Avenue. The applicants are seeking three land use
15 actions to facilitate the project. The first is a
16 zoning map amendment to rezone to a C64 district
17 which would allow the commercial laboratory used at
18 10 FAR. The second is a zoning text amendment to map
19 the site as an MIH area, and the third is a special
20 permit pursuant to section 74.901 to modify the
21 applicable height and setback regulations as shown in
22 the hatched areas in these two sections. These
23 modifications are needed given the specialized
24 requirements of modern commercial life science
25 companies.

BEN BACCASH: Next slide, please.

Innovation East will stimulate the growth of life science companies and organizations which together will employ approximately 1,000 individuals in the building ranging in skill and education level. These jobs will include more technical jobs like faculty researchers, post-doctoral fellows, and lab technicians, and related jobs, less technical ones, business managers, administrative assistants and building service workers. We're committed to active participation with MWBE contractors during construction as well as EDC Hire NYC program, connecting job-seekers with construction and permanent jobs. Slide, please. Through partnerships with nonprofits, including the Lower Eastside Network, New York Bio, HYPOTHEkids, and Life Science Cares. The workforce development and educational programming at Innovation East will connect local residents with life sciences and related jobs, job training and construction jobs. Connect local K through 12 and college students with hands-on educational opportunities, networking and internships, and connect the life science community with the local community generally. Slide, please.

1 The 9,000 square foot ground floor life science
2 multipurpose space includes flexible meeting,
3 training, and gathering space for building tenants,
4 as well as our nonprofit partners to offer programs
5 open to the public. These will include things like
6 life science conferences, lectures and seminars,
7 networking and career exposure events for interns,
8 for students at SPARC, for other life science
9 programs across New York. There'll be job fairs and
10 training for local residents as well as programs that
11 engage K through 12 students and inspire the next
12 generation of life science graduates, things like
13 community science fairs, a demonstration lab putting
14 science on display. We'll also host volunteer-based
15 events and drives that allow the life science sector
16 to give back to the local community. Slide, please.
17 Overall, Innovation East will provide significant
18 community benefits by substantially improving the
19 public realm, fostering a vibrant life science
20 ecosystem that's interconnected with the surrounding
21 neighborhood, and creating quality jobs for a range
22 of skills. With that, we're happy to take any
23 questions you may have.
24

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much,
3 Ben, Melissa, and Ellen. I just have a few
4 questions. I'm going to see if Council Member Rivera
5 has any questions. Given the similarities, can you
6 explain why 455 First Avenue is going through a
7 separate application from the SPARC Kips Bay
8 application?

9 BEN BACCASH: Sure. So, Taconic and
10 DivcoWest are separate from the SPARC effort wholly.
11 We're not involved in that rezoning. We responded to
12 an RFEI purely with respect to 455 First Avenue, and
13 we're thankfully selected to develop a commercial
14 life science building on that side alone.

15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: On the related note,
16 SPARC is seeking a special permit for the proposed
17 UG7 laboratory use whereas you are not. Can you
18 explain the differences between the types of uses and
19 clarify why you are not seeking the same special
20 permit?

21 ELLEN LEHMAN: The-- we can't speak for
22 SPARC, but the planned commercial laboratory use at
23 455 is permitted as-of-right in the C64 district.
24 It's a use group seven laboratory. And so no use-
25 related special permits are required.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Do you have an
3 agreement with the NYU Grossman School of Medicine
4 for the space they intend to occupy, and for how much
5 space in the building?

6 BEN BACCASH: We have LOI with NYU and we
7 anticipate they will occupy between 150,000 and
8 200,000--

9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] For the
10 general public, can you explain what a LOI is,
11 please?

12 BEN BACCASH: I'm sorry. A letter of
13 intent. And we anticipate they'll occupy between
14 150,000 and 200,000 square feet which is
15 approximately 40 percent of the building

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Have you
17 entered into any agreement with any other perspective
18 tenants for the new building? If yes, what type of
19 businesses?

20 BEN BACCASH: We have not, and that's
21 purely a function of the timeline of the project.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: What information can
23 you share about the demand for these types of life
24 science tenants you are seeking for this development
25 in this location?

1 BEN BACCASH: So, relative to other
2
3 active life science markets, New York City is
4 drastically undersized in terms of available,
5 suitable space for life science companies. EDC has a
6 fantastic initiative to grow the market here in New
7 York City, and even once that's fulfilled when, you
8 know, an additional-- I believe it's 10 million
9 square feet are brought to market, we'll still be
10 only 25 percent of comparable life science markets as
11 is the case in say Boston. So, I think we as a city
12 have a lot of catching up to, and we're happy to be
13 part of that effort.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: What experience does
15 this development team have with building, marketing,
16 and tenanting this type of special purpose
17 development?

18 BEN BACCASH: So, Taconic and DivcoWest
19 have vast experience in the life science sector
20 specifically. Separately, we have a lot of experience
21 working with EDC successfully on projects. Speaking
22 for the development partners, DivcoWest developed
23 Cambridge Crossing which is a massive life science
24 development in the Boston area. Taconic has West End
25 Labs which is on West End and 65th Street, the Hudson

1
2 Research Center which is on 54th Street and 10th
3 Avenue, and is planning others as well.

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: In particular, can
5 you tell us about the lease up [sic] experience with
6 that, those other sites that you just named?

7 BEN BACCASH: Sure. We have some really
8 exciting tenants including the New York Stem Cell
9 Foundation which does very exciting work developing
10 therapeutics to treat varying diseases and ailments,
11 and then there's other companies like for example we
12 have a tenant called C16 which develops a synthetic
13 palm oil product which is great in that palm oil is
14 used in a lot of consumer goods and is largely
15 sourced from deforestation efforts, but they have a
16 product where they can develop it synthetically. And
17 there are other tenants as well, but those are two of
18 the noteworthy ones.

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: You spoke about that
20 LOI. Was the LOI with the city?

21 BEN BACCASH: The letter of intent is
22 between-- I'll have to confirm. I believe it's
23 between the development partners and NYU.

24
25

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. Alright. I'll
3 defer to Council Member Rivera to see if she has any
4 questions. Thank you.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Thank you. Thank
6 you, Chair Riley. Alright, I have a few questions
7 for you. I have a couple questions for-- that might
8 take the expertise of EDC, but let's see how we do.
9 Okay? Thank you for your testimony. Thank you for
10 being here and for the presentation. Let's start
11 with-- can you explain the necessity of the special
12 permit you're requesting and did you consider other
13 design alternatives to achieve the space requirements
14 you need?

15 BEN BACCASH: Sure. Melissa, you--

16 MELISSA SARKO: Sure. I can take that
17 one. So, life science buildings do have certain kind
18 of minimum planning dimensions and requirements for
19 the space to be efficiently and effectively deployed
20 from a life science standpoint, from a planning
21 standpoint, and so one of the challenges of a
22 building that has kind of a typical sky exposure
23 plane, which the C64 zoning would have, is that the
24 building gets narrower as you get higher up in the
25 building, and therefore as we looked at it-- and we

1 did study multiple options. The upper floor place
2 just becomes so small that you don't get the
3 appropriate minimum dimensions between the core of
4 the building and the perimeter support laboratory
5 uses. And then coupled with that , you know, there's
6 a significant mechanical plant that's typically at
7 the top of the building that kind of drives all the
8 airflow through the building, and then as the
9 building gets narrower at the top of the building,
10 the footprint that you have available for that
11 mechanical system is just insufficient. So, it was
12 kind of the combination of those two things that
13 really drove us to request the height and setback
14 waivers that we've applied for.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Okay, thank you.
17 I appreciate that. Community Board Six, as you know,
18 you've been working with and there's a taskforce, and
19 I'm grateful for that, because, you know, we're all
20 experts in our neighborhoods. We walk them every
21 single day. Just want to know if any of the requests
22 that they made are being met, specifically
23 improvements and protections for Bellevue Park South,
24 and then Mount Carmel Place which is that small
25 street adjacent to the building, just a design that

1 reflects the mixed-use character of the neighborhood.
2 They're also concerned about that space and ensuring
3 that the community can utilize it for other uses. Can
4 you speak a little to their concerns and some of
5 their recommendations and how far you are along the
6 process and meeting them?
7

8 BEN BACCASH: Sure. So, with respect to
9 Bellevue South Park, you know, the team as part of
10 the environmental analysis did an in-depth look at
11 the vegetation, the utilization, and the effect of
12 the building's massing on it, and the outcome of that
13 was that the building had no significant adverse
14 impact on the park or its use or enjoyment. In terms
15 of Mount Carmel Place, you know, right now it's very
16 much home to double-parked vehicles. In that, the
17 27th Street corridor is going to be-- which is the
18 pedestrian way which links First Avenue to Mount
19 Carmel and is kind of a connector to Bellevue South
20 Park, and that that will be significantly more
21 activated than it is today. We anticipate that is
22 going to also help activate Mount Carmel Place, and
23 are certainly happy to work more with the Community
24 Board to better understand their concerns on Mount
25 Carmel. And then lastly, on the multipurpose space,

1 we're very much willing to host the Community Board
2 for, you know, the ten times a year for their use to
3 use that, as well as to the extent there's appetite
4 from other groups to use that space to offer at a
5 discounted rate.
6

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I appreciate
8 that. May I ask one more question, Mr. Chair? Okay,
9 so, well the community groups, a lot of them are--
10 they're not for-profit, so I hope that this count is
11 like free, you know? That would be most helpful.
12 We're starved for space. We're even starved for open
13 space. That's why the protection and investments in
14 Bellevue South Park are so important, and so I hope
15 that we can come to that conclusion, because that is
16 incredibly important. My last question is just
17 about-- and I'm sure Council Member Powers is going
18 to get to ask EDC about looking at the adjacent areas
19 for housing since this site we were looking at for
20 housing, it didn't become that. That is not the RFP,
21 but we have--

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Council
23 Member Rivera, I have to call up EDC to come up for
24 that question.
25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Oh, I don't--
3 alright, but I don't want to ask them this, but
4 they're going to answer it when they get up there I'm
5 sure.

6 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I want to ask you
8 all when do you begin applying for the RFEI, the RFP,
9 a little bit about the development process, and just
10 go back to the construction time line and completion?
11 Thank you very much.

12 BEN BACCASH: Sure.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Thank you, Mr.
14 Chair.

15 BEN BACCASH: I was not personally
16 involved in the RFEI process and response timeline,
17 so I'm going to have to get back to you on that. I
18 don't have those dates. In terms of the demolition
19 and construction timeline, upon vacancy of the
20 existing building and when the public health lab
21 moves to Harlem, we would then start the demolition
22 process. That would take between six and 12 months.
23 Demolition now we're at is more like dismantling.
24 It's done in a careful way. Our intent is to be as
25 least disruptive as we can to our neighbors. And then

1 subsequently, we'll build the building which we
2 anticipate will be about three years.

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Okay, thank you
5 very much, and I look forward to you coming back
6 around with the answers to that. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
8 Member Rivera. Are there any other colleagues that
9 have questions for this panel? Thank you. There
10 being no questions, this applicant panel is excused.
11 Counsel, are there any members of the public who wish
12 to testify regarding this rezoning proposal remotely
13 or in-person?

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, we do have a
15 number of online witnesses to testify, but first we
16 want to see if Kaitlyn Schuster is available in the
17 room to testify.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: There are
19 approximately-- oh, sorry. For members of the public
20 here to testify, please note that witnesses will
21 generally be called in panels of three. If you are a
22 member of the public signed up to testify on the
23 proposal, please stand by when you hear your name
24 being called and prepare to speak when I say that you
25 may begin. Please note that once all panelists in

1 your group have completed their testimony if
2 remotely, you'll be removed from the meeting as a
3 group, and the next group of speakers will be
4 introduced. Once removed, participants may continue
5 to view the livestream broadcast of this hearing on
6 the council's website. Members of the public will be
7 given two minutes to speak. Please do not begin
8 until the Sergeant at Arms has started the clock.
9 The following individuals who have test-- excuse me--
10 who signed up to testify should now come to the
11 witness table. We will begin with Kaitlyn Schuster.
12 I'm sorry if I mispronounced your name.

14 KAITLYN SCHUSTER: Good morning, Chair
15 Riley, Council Member Rivera, and members of the
16 Subcommittee. My name is Kaitlyn Schuster. I'm here
17 on behalf of SEIU Local 32BJ. 32BJ is the largest
18 union of property service workers in the country,
19 representing over 175,000 members across our 13
20 states, including tens of thousands commercial
21 property service workers, security officers, and
22 residential building staff in New York City. I'm here
23 to report that 32BJ is in active discussions with the
24 development team. We're in agreement to ensure the
25 provision of dignified wages and benefits to the

1 future building service workers and security officers
2 who will staff Innovation East after the property is
3 constructed, and which would memorialize the
4 development team's commitment to labor peace [sic] at
5 the site with respect to those same workers. 32BJ
6 maintains productive relationships with both Taconic
7 and DivcoWest which together employ over 200 of our
8 members across their respective portfolios. So we're
9 optimistic that we'll be able to arrive at a written
10 agreement in the near future, and hopefully before
11 it's considered by the full council. Thank you so
12 much for your time.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.

15 Are there any questions for this panel? There being
16 no questions, this panel's excused. I also have a
17 list of people who signed up to testify, but did not
18 put what they want to testify on. So if you do want
19 to testify on 455 and I did not call you and you're
20 present, please just indicate to the Sergeant at
21 arms. I'm now going to the online testimony, and I'm
22 going to call a group of four for online testimony.
23 We're going to begin with David Garza, Marissa
24 Mitchell, Elizabeth Fassberg, and Chris Kiesel. I

1 will begin first with David Garza. David, if you can
2 hear me, please unmute and you may begin.

3
4 DAVID GARZA: Yes, thank you so much. My
5 name is David Garza. I'm the President and CEO of
6 the Henry Street Settlement. I thank the committee
7 for the opportunity to testify. I want to
8 acknowledge Council Member Rivera for her support of
9 the Lower East Side Employment Network. I'm here
10 today in representation of the Lower East Side
11 Employment Network who is a grateful and proud
12 partner and enthusiastic partner within Innovation
13 East. We know that the life sciences sector will
14 bring-- is a high-demand sector that will bring
15 educational opportunities to our community. the
16 Lower East Side Employment Network is eight
17 organizations that work collaboratively to create a
18 single point of access with economic development
19 opportunities to help the residents of the Lower East
20 Side and beyond access those employment and
21 educational opportunities which will hopefully will
22 ultimately lead to high-wage employment, education,
23 training, skill certification and otherwise. We
24 already have an MOU signed with Innovation East that
25 was executed last year, and it outlines the

1
2 responsibilities for both parties and both
3 stakeholders to create those points of access to
4 report on the progress and to leverage the support
5 that is being invested by the development company
6 into our community to help create that ramp to access
7 so that we can provide critical support to the job
8 seekers and training seekers that we serve and our
9 partners at Innovation East, and their expanded
10 partners can help provide those opportunities and
11 that platform for the engagement of our residents.
12 So, I'm grateful to be here today to speak on the
13 reality of that MOU and we're excited to pursue the
14 work as it unfolds. I thank the committee again for
15 the opportunity to testify, and I'm grateful to be
16 here. Thank you so much.

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, David.
18 Next we'll hear from Marisa Mitchell. Marissa, if
19 you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin.

20 MARISA MITCHELL: Hi. I'm the Executive
21 Director of HYPOTHEkids. We provide low income and
22 under-represented New York City public school
23 students of all ages with hands-on education,
24 training and internship opportunities in science and
25 engineering, setting them on the path toward academic

1 success and well-paying careers. I'm thrilled to
2 express our support for the Innovation East project
3 at 455 First Avenue. We have already established a
4 robust relationship with the developers of this
5 project, and we're excited to continue this
6 partnership at Innovation East. At another of
7 Taconic's life science developments, West End Labs,
8 we've benefitted very much from their generosity.
9 They hosted our educational and training programs.
10 They provided lab tours to public high schoolers that
11 expose them to high-tech work environments and career
12 paths, and they've donated space for a major
13 fundraiser which allows us to direct more of our
14 funds towards helping-- towards serving students in
15 need. We anticipate that Innovation East would help
16 expand the impact the HYPOTHEkids in similar ways.
17 For example, assisting with internship host
18 recruitment among the building's life science tenants
19 to give high school students real world work
20 experience and a leg up, and hosting a speaker series
21 with life science professionals from the building,
22 and providing space for hands-on STEM programs for
23 our elementary students from the community, including
24 those in public housing. From the beginning of our
25

1 relationship, HYPOTHEkids has been very impressed
2 with Innovation East team's care for the surrounding
3 community and the willingness to take time out of
4 their work days to help our students learn and grow.
5 We're confident that when this project comes to
6 fruition, they'll demonstrate the same level of
7 commitment to helping those residents who could most
8 benefit from their resources and--

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank
11 you. Your time's expired.

12 MARISA MITCHELL: expertise.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you.

14 MARISA MITCHELL: I'm done anyway.

15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Right on time.

16 Alright, next we'll have Elizabeth Fassberg.

17 ELIZABETH FASSBERG: Hi, everybody. Thank
18 you all for having me here today. I'm the Executive
19 Director of Life Science Cares New York, and we are a
20 nonprofit devoted to activating the financial and
21 human capital of the life science industry and we
22 partner with nonprofits to disrupt the cycle of
23 poverty and inequality in our communities, and we're
24 committed programming partner in proposed Innovation
25 East life science building. We also have benefitted

1 from the generosity of Innovation East in different
2 programs at West End Labs and really appreciate that,
3 you know, as a nonprofit they have been incredibly
4 generous with our students. We hosted a full day of--
5 - a Life Science Cares Day with 50 students from low-
6 income high schools around New York City, and they--
7 we had lab tours and met with different professionals
8 in the building, had lunch and really had an
9 incredible day. We've also done some other
10 fundraising events at the beautiful space and, you
11 know, feel that it's going to continue in the same
12 fashion at this building. We're particularly excited
13 about the ground floor because it does open up many
14 opportunities for the neighborhood and the
15 neighboring schools to be able to participate in
16 programming as well as their proposed interesting and
17 healthy food options that they plan to have available
18 which is exciting for me as a public health
19 nutritionist. But we're definitely in support of
20 this 455 First Avenue project and believe that it
21 will be super beneficial to the community and are
22 excited to be a part of this program. Thank you.

23
24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next--
25 last, we'll hear from Chris Kiesel.

CHRISTOPHER KIESEL: good morning, Chair Riley and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Christopher Kiesel. I'm here on behalf of NewYorkBIO and the NewYorkBIO Institute which is dedicated to workforce development in the life sciences sector. I'm here to express strong support for the Innovation East project at 455 First Avenue and to respectfully request that Community Board Six recommend approval for the necessary zoning actions to enable the development of this transformative new life sciences building. The demand for modern lab space in New York City continues to grow as life science companies seek locations where they can innovate and thrive. New York is home to the largest and most vibrant bio sciences community in the world. It supports more than 75,000 direct bio technology jobs, produces the highest number of life sciences PHDs in the country, and hosts over 25 percent of all clinical trials in the United States. At NewYorkBIO we focus on fostering innovation, supporting the life sciences industry, development and connecting our members in the community. Innovation East aligns perfectly with these goals and will be a cutting-edge facility

1 designed to accommodate businesses of all sizes from
2 start-ups to establish research and development
3 firms, while also serving as an anchor for the NYU
4 Grossman School of Medicine, a leader in the field.
5 The building's location alongside First Ave health
6 and science corridor is strategic, replacing the
7 city's outdated lab space while fostering
8 collaboration among medical, research, and academic
9 institutions. This project also complements the Life
10 Sci NYC initiative led by the New York City Economic
11 Development Corporation which aims to position New
12 York City as a global leader in life sciences. By
13 supporting the project, we will not only create a
14 facility that meets modern laboratory standards, but
15 also contributes to creating thousands of jobs,
16 accelerating discoveries of new treatments, and
17 building a healthier, fairer city. NewYorkBIO is
18 committed to building a strong bio science's
19 ecosystem through events--

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your
22 time's expired.

23 CHRISTOPHER KIESEL: Thank you for your
24 time.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Chris. You
3 can submit the rest of your testimony online. Are
4 there any questions for this panel? There being no
5 questions for this panel, this panel is excused.
6 There being no other members of the public who wish
7 to testify on LUs 214, 215 and 216 regarding 455
8 First Avenue rezoning proposal, the public hearing
9 has now closed and the items are laid over. I will
10 now open the public hearing on LU 217 through 224
11 regarding the proposal by EDC to create a new life
12 science campus located in Council Member Power's
13 district in Manhattan. The proposal seeks to
14 redevelop approximately 4.75 acres of land owned by
15 the City in Kips Bay. This new campus will rebuilt
16 Hunter College's outdated Brookdale's campus into
17 approximately two million square feet of a state-of-
18 the-art academic, healthcare, and life science space.
19 The proposal involves several land use application
20 which EDC will walk us through, including a related
21 city map application. Please silence your phone if
22 you're in the chambers. Thank you. For anyone
23 wishing to testify on these items remotely, you must
24 register online through the council's website at
25 council.nyc.gov/landuse. And once again, of anyone

1 wishing to testify in person, please see one of the
2 Sergeants to prepare and submit a speaker's card. If
3 you would prefer to submit written testimony, you can
4 always do so by emailing it to

5 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. I will now call
6 the applicant-- oh, sorry. Before I begin, I would
7 now like to give the floor to Council Member Powers
8 to give his opening remarks.

9
10 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Thank you.

11 Welcome. Thank you everyone for being here today.
12 I'm City Council Member Keith Powers, representing
13 the site that we are discussing today, the SPARC
14 proposal for the SPARC's Kips Bay campus. I want to
15 thank Chair Riley for giving me some time to speak
16 today on this proposal. I know you have a long day,
17 so I'll try to keep my version short, but it's
18 certainly an exciting and interesting project for the
19 Kips Bay area and the borough of Manhattan. I want
20 to first state my excitement for the idea of
21 substantial investment in life sciences field that's
22 being introduced here in Manhattan and in my
23 district, something that I think anytime we have a
24 large investment in opportunity to grow our economy
25 here in the city is something we should celebrate. I

1 want to note that there have been former plans on
2 this project that the community long opposed, so we
3 are grateful to see a project that brings a lot more
4 investment and a lot more consensus to the table, and
5 we deeply appreciate that. The proposal here today
6 is a campus that would bring much new life sciences
7 and education opportunity and healthcare services to
8 the Kips Bay neighborhood. A brand new high school
9 that'll be partnering with the campus to introduce
10 students to aspects of the life sciences field, a new
11 state-of-the-art facility for the Office of the Chief
12 Medical Examiner, a new H+H-ran Ambulatory Care and
13 Wellness Center, a new CUNY Healthcare and Public
14 Health campus that brings together programs of the
15 three schools, Hunter, Borough of Manhattan Community
16 College, and the Graduate School of Public Health and
17 Policy-- Public Health and Health Policy, and we
18 believe we'll deliver 13,000 construction jobs and
19 potentially 3,100 permanent jobs once it's fully
20 operated-- one acre of new and enhanced public realm,
21 and a publicly accessible central open space. Every
22 time I read those things I feel like I left something
23 off. So you guys will probably tell me which part I
24 left off. And I think that we have seen the forming
25

1 of physical cluster and network of life sciences is
2 essential for the success for this industry, and this
3 is one of the several city-led projects in that area
4 to encourage growth of the life sciences industry to
5 help attract talent and jobs. This is expected to
6 delivery one million square feet of life sciences
7 space which will be crucial to I believe our 2030
8 goal of 10 million. I believe that's still our goal,
9 and that will be a major dent in it. I want to thank
10 my staff, both Pat and Ben who are here today for
11 being actively involved in this and all the members
12 of the community who have participated in our
13 taskforce and offered critical input at all times
14 about how to make this project-- that will be their
15 permanent neighborhood-- a successful project for the
16 community. Myself living only about footsteps away
17 from this project, I know how important it is to make
18 sure this is a good neighbor as well. I want to
19 commend Council Member Rivera here as well and the
20 other electeds who have been participants in that
21 project, and I'll of course take the opportunity to
22 ask questions after the presentation as well. So
23 thank you guys for being here today.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
3 Member Powers. Counsel, please administer the
4 affirmation.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Panelists, would you
6 please raise your right hands and I will ask you in
7 turn to answer the following question. Do you swear
8 or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and
9 nothing but the truth in your testimony before this
10 subcommittee and in answer to all Council Member
11 questions? Cecilia Kushner, EDC? Julieanne
12 Herskowitz, EDC? Andrew Wallach, New York City
13 Health + Hospitals? Mitch Gibson, CUNY? Isha Sheth,
14 New York City Public Schools? Robert Van Pelt,
15 Office of the chief Medical Examiner? Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. For the
17 viewing public, if you need an accessible version of
18 this presentation, please send an email request to
19 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. And now the
20 applicant team may begin. I'll just ask that you
21 please reinstate your name and organization for the
22 record. You may begin.

23 CECILIA KUSHNER: Good morning, Chair
24 Riley, Council Member Powers, and members of the
25 Zoning and Franchise Subcommittee. My name is

1 Cecilia Kushner, and I am the Chief Strategy Officer
2 at the Economic Development Corporation, and I'm very
3 pleased to presenting the Science Park and Research
4 Campus, also known as SPARC Kips Bay, project today
5 as part of our ULURP application, and I'm joined by
6 Julieanne Herskowitz from EDC and a number of my
7 colleagues from city agencies and CUNY. Next slide,
8 please. SPARC Kips Bay is a generational project.
9 It is a first of its kind education, workforce, and
10 industry hub made possible through an unprecedented
11 partnership between New York State and New York City.
12 The project was announced in the fall of 2022 with
13 the city and the states putting together \$1.6 billion
14 of funding into SPARC which will leverage more than
15 \$2 billion of private investment on the campus. Next
16 slide, please. This historic partnership brings
17 together five different public entities dedicated to
18 education, workforce, healthcare, and life science.
19 First, New York City Public Schools with the creation
20 of a new high school educational facility offering
21 health and life science pathways. The City
22 University of New York with three schools coming
23 together and offering more than 60 degrees and
24 certifications for healthcare, public health, and
25

1 life science careers. New York City Health +
2 Hospitals Bellevue with a new Ambulatory Care Center
3 for patients and simulation training center serving
4 H+H staff. And finally, the Office of the Chief
5 Medical Examiner with a new facility which will
6 provide nationally leading forensic research. The
7 site will also provide one million square feet of
8 commercial life science space. The entire campus
9 will be centered around a brand new open space and
10 will connect to the waterfront via a new bridge
11 across the FDR which were two important community
12 priorities. Next slide. This partnership with
13 agencies and community stakeholders culminated in the
14 release of the SPARC Kips Bay masterplan in the fall
15 of 2023 and led to the site plan. The site organizes
16 educational uses with public schools and CUNY on the
17 eastern side of the campus which will be built by
18 EDC. This building is part of SPARC's first phase of
19 construction which will also include public realm and
20 pedestrian circulation improvements, allowing EDC to
21 deliver the new and universally accessible pedestrian
22 bridge as soon as possible to the community. The
23 current dorms on this site will be replaced by CUNY,
24 one for one, at the centrally-located Hawkins [sic]
25

1 Way dorms at Lexington Avenue and 51st Street close
2 to the Hunter main campus and about 20 minutes from
3 SPARC. Moving west on the site, H+H and OCME will
4 occupy the podiums of the privately developed life
5 science buildings. One of our priorities for this
6 project, as well as Innovation East across the
7 street, is to activate First Avenue with retail and
8 community use. Next slide, please. The city has
9 been investing in the Kips Bay Science District for
10 nearly 15 years. Since the Alexandria Center for
11 Life Science opened in 2010, followed by the opening
12 of Deerfield Cure in 2022. Innovation East and SPARC
13 will continue to cement the Kips Bay Science District
14 as the anchor of the city's life science ecosystem.
15 Next slide, please. Through Life Science NYC, EDC
16 coordinates the city's vision for the life science
17 industry which is becoming one of the fastest growing
18 and top performing sector of the innovation economy
19 in terms of company growth, revenue, and job
20 creation. At the end of 2023, the life science
21 industry represented more than 1,500 companies in New
22 York City, a 46 percent increase since the Life Sci
23 NYC program began in 2016. And in 2024, the life
24 science ecosystem employed over 42,000 workers and
25

1 contributed \$16.5 billion to New York City's economy.

2 Next slide, please. SPARC will be a model for

3 workforce development and career-connected learning

4 all within the same city block. And to make sure we

5 are capturing on this momentum, EDC convenes the Kips

6 Bay Science District Education and Workforce

7 Taskforce which gathered 50 industry workforce and

8 education experts to develop a plan to connect the

9 next generation of New Yorkers to family-supporting

10 jobs in the Kips Bay Science District. The taskforce

11 insight and expertise have culminated in their report

12 called "Empowering Kips Bay Futures Workforce," which

13 we are proud to release today and we have copies for

14 members of the panel. Next slide, please. The

15 community has long advocated for improvements to the

16 public realm in Kips Bay. This project will deliver

17 \$1.5 acres of new and improved public realm in the

18 first phase of the project, and integration into the

19 Kips Bay Coastal Resiliency Project. Earlier this

20 year, we procured the world-class design team of

21 Ennead and Dattner Architects who will design the

22 east building of the campus. The design team and EDC

23 consulted with the community to develop the community

24 design guidelines to ensure that the public realm

1 improvements reflect community priorities. Next
2 slide. Since we began the project in 2022, we have
3 engaged the community through a variety of
4 approaches, including working tour of the site and
5 district including visits to the aging city
6 facilities that will be replaced through SPARC. We
7 hosted a neighborhood open house welcoming nearly 150
8 community members to learn more about the project and
9 the master plan, and we have held countless other
10 community and tenant association meetings to garner
11 feedback and share information about the project.

12
13 JULIEANNE HERSKOWITZ: Thank you. My
14 name is Julieanne Herskowitz. I'm a Senior Vice
15 President at the New York City Economic Development
16 Corporation. Next slide, please. To make this
17 generational project a reality, EDC is seeking
18 approval for seven discretionary land use actions
19 that are crucial to achieving the full breadth of the
20 SPARC Kips Bay vision. Next slide. Our final
21 requested land use action will allow for the
22 replacement of the East 25th Street pedestrian
23 bridge. This is a longstanding community priority,
24 and we are pleased to deliver this important
25 infrastructure project within the first phase of the

1 SPARC Kips Bay project. This new bridge will provide
2 full ADA access, replacing the currently inaccessible
3 pedestrian bridge, enhancing this important
4 connection for Water Side Towers residents and the
5 community between the neighborhood and water front.
6 The bridge will be designed to universal design
7 principles and enhance connections to public open
8 space at SPARC Square and the Manhattan waterfront
9 greenway. Minimizing interruption of the pedestrian
10 bridge during construction is a major priority for
11 both EDC and the Department of Transportation. And
12 to that end, we recently brought on the world-
13 renowned construction firm Skanska to serve as the
14 construction manager for this project. Skanska will
15 work with the design team to diligent concept design
16 options with the particular focus on minimizing
17 construction impacts and expediting project delivery.
18 We will of course continue to coordinate with the
19 community on the bridges design as it progresses.
20 Next slide, please. In June of last year, the SPARC
21 Kips Bay Community Taskforce co-chaired by Council
22 Member Powers and CB6 Chair Sandy McKee released
23 community design principles to inform and guide the
24 design of SPARC Square in the project's public realm.
25

1 The design guidelines will also be included in the
2 future developer RFP for the project's second phase
3 to be released this year. Recommendations include
4 making better connection to nearby public open spaces
5 and designing SPARC with a variety of spaces to
6 encourage a range of programming and use. Next
7 slide, please. And EDC also kicked off the Kips Bay
8 Science District's Education Workforce Taskforce last
9 spring. As Cecilia mentioned, this brought together
10 50 experts in healthcare, life sciences and public
11 health, working across education workforce and
12 industry, including our project partners of CUNY,
13 Health + Hospitals, OCME, and New York City Public
14 Schools. With support from Council Member Powers,
15 the taskforce aligned on a vision for career
16 pathways, programs, and partnerships needed to ensure
17 that Kips Bay provides equitable access to families
18 supporting jobs within the city of life science and
19 healthcare ecosystem. Next slide, please. And as
20 noted, we released the report today. You should have
21 copies before you. And these insights and expertise
22 culminated in four key recommendations: Scale and
23 fund exposure-based learning opportunities;
24 strengthen New York City's student career pathways

1 through dual enrollment, transferable credits, and
2 workspace learning, all things that will take place
3 at SPARC Kips Bay; develop sector-specific industry-
4 driven training programs for talent into priority
5 occupation career tracks; create an independent
6 organization led by SPARC's Inc or tenants to drive
7 district-wide training and engagement. This report
8 sets a concrete framework for the next steps of
9 developing impactful career pathways connected to
10 establish and growing job opportunities in health and
11 sciences in the Kips Bay Science District and beyond.
12 Next slide. SPARC Kips Bay will become a national
13 model for place-based economic development. We're
14 building new modern facilities for our very best
15 public education institutions with CUNY and New York
16 City Public Schools, state of the art training space
17 for career-connected learning in the healthcare,
18 public health, and life sciences industries paired
19 with private industry which will occupy one million
20 square feet of new modern life sciences space. It
21 will grow New York City's economy with over 3,100
22 well-paying jobs in future-forward industries, and
23 12,000 union construction jobs resulting in
24 approximately \$42 billion of economic impact to New
25

1 York City over the next 30 years. This project will
2 also be built smarter and cleaner as the largest
3 municipal project in the country to deploy
4 sustainable and circular construction methods.
5 Finally, SPARC will invest in the Kips Bay
6 neighborhood, addressing longstanding community
7 priorities to add new open space and improve the
8 public realm and infrastructure for New Yorkers of
9 all abilities and ages. Next slide. Thank you so
10 much for your consideration of the SPARC Kips Bay
11 project. We are proud of the engagement we have done
12 on this project as reflected in the very strong
13 support shown in CB6 and Borough President's
14 resolutions, and the CPC's unanimous vote for this
15 project. The team is available to answer any
16 questions you have. Soon you will hear from a number
17 of our project partners and stakeholders who will
18 also testify on behalf of the project. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much. I
21 just have a few questions, then I'm going to turn it
22 over to Council Member Powers. Most of the floor
23 area in buildings B1 and buildings B2 are allocated
24 for office and laboratory space. Understanding that
25 this project is several years out from completion,

1 have you received interest from any life science
2 organizations eager to move into these spaces?

3
4 JULIEANNE HERSKOWITZ: Thank you so much,
5 Chair, for that question. That is right. We are
6 planning to build a million square feet of modern,
7 cutting-edge life sciences space at this project. We
8 were pleased earlier last year to release a life sci
9 innovation anchor tenant RFEI's, request for
10 expressions of interest, for the site. understanding
11 that we are still quite a way out, looking at project
12 completion in 2031, we were able to put forward as
13 part of this request for expressions of interest,
14 \$100 million to support the build-out of a modern
15 life sciences space, specifically trying to attract a
16 world-class tenant that is working with life sciences
17 industry and the intersection of AI and tech. So,
18 that is an open, you know, request for proposals that
19 I can't speak to the details of right now, but just
20 part of our commitment to ensure that we tenant up
21 the space and are actively working to attract this
22 life sciences industry to the future SPARC Kips Bay
23 campus.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: What types of retail
25 are you hoping to attract on the ground floors?

2 JULIEANNE HERSKOWITZ: Sure. Thank you
3 for that question. So I think everyone is familiar
4 with the block flog [sic] on First Avenue in this
5 part of Kips Bay. There's really a dearth of retail
6 activities surprisingly considering the number of
7 residents that live in this area as well as the
8 workers, you know, Health + Hospitals Bellevue, NYU
9 Langone and other places. So we really want to
10 attract a number of different retail tenants that
11 will be open throughout the day and then into the
12 evening as well. So, this is a priority of the
13 project, something that came out through the master
14 planning phase. We heard loud and clear from
15 Community Board Six that this is their priority as
16 well. I am also happy to share that as part of the
17 Health + Hospitals Bellevue lease hold within the
18 First Avenue building, they also will have healthy
19 concessions, a healthy concessions café. So,
20 definitely a range of programming but really trying
21 to improve and increase the retail offerings in this
22 community and throughout the day and into the
23 evening.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: You propose to
25 demolish and rebuild the East 25th Street pedestrian

1
2 bridge which crosses over the FDR Drive and connects
3 to Waterside Plaza. When do you anticipate a final
4 design for the bridge and when would it be open to
5 the public?

6 JULIEANNE HERSKOWITZ: Thank you so much
7 for that question. So, this is a long-standing
8 community priority to finally bring an ADA-
9 accessible pedestrian bridge to 25th Street which is
10 such an important lifeline for the Waterside Towers
11 residents and the broader commute to the waterfront
12 and the east side of Manhattan. As noted, we brought
13 on the Dattner Ennead design team earlier this year
14 and have been just in the beginning of the concept
15 design process with them, working with Department of
16 Transportation as well. So, to that end, we're
17 hoping to advance the concept design this spring, but
18 you know, we anticipate in our planning to build this
19 pedestrian bridge as part of the first phase of the
20 project. That means it would be completed in 2030.
21 We are working with, as noted, Skanska Construction
22 Manager to identify all opportunities to expedite
23 that project delivery and to minimize interruption
24 for this community during that time.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Was there a reason why design for the pedestrian bridge wasn't finalized prior to the certification?

JULIEANNE HERSKOWITZ: It has to do with the timeline. So, as noted, we just brought on the design team earlier this year and are working through concept design with them. So, yes, we don't have the final design yet as part of that mapping application, but we'll continue to work with the Borough topo [sic] office, our partners with the Manhattan Borough President, Council Member Powers, the community to keep everyone super engaged as we have been as that design further refines and finalizes.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: What alternatives are nearby for the public to use to cross the FDR Drive?

JULIEANNE HERSKOWITZ: Sure, certainly. So, right now on 23rd Street there is additional access underneath the FDR crossing, and we are, you know, discussing with Department of Transportation opportunities to make crossing safer along the streets within this area. One thing we didn't note before, but it is important to note, 25th Street for example is an important pedestrian connection and one in which will be made much safer through our project

1 with a raised crosswalk and bump-out along that
2 corridor, especially enhancing connections to Asser
3 Levy Park just across the street from our project
4 site.
5

6 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. My last
7 question before I turn it over to Council Member
8 Powers. You are requesting a special permit to allow
9 use group seven laboratories in the commercial area
10 where they are not currently permitted. Can you talk
11 more about these laboratories and why other
12 laboratories under use groups permitted in commercial
13 districts are not compatible?

14 CECILIA KUSHNER: So, we are looking at a
15 long-term investment in this commercial life science
16 building, and so we wanted to have the zoning
17 proposal in front of us that was the most nimble
18 possible to be responsive to changes in evolution in
19 the life science sector overall. What we're seeing--
20 we're seeing a tremendous amount of evolution right
21 now, especially as Julieanne mentioned as it relates
22 to RFEI at the intersection of AI, tech and life
23 science, and so we just want to make sure that land
24 use is as broad as possible to allow for whatever
25 changes may happen in the next five, 10 years. That

1 we may not be aware of today, and so this is why
2 we're seeking the special permit.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Council
5 Member Powers?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Thank you. And
7 that's a good jumping in point for me, because I have
8 some questions on the special permit. Thank you for
9 the testimony. Thank you to Chair Riley for those
10 questions-- helpful to the-- some of the questions I
11 was going to ask. There has been some discussion
12 around the site and the uses around life sciences.
13 The site across the street, I know they had said they
14 had as-of-right laboratory space based on zoning. Am
15 I correct to say that you can do lab-- what is the
16 difference between what's the as-of-right use is when
17 it comes to laboratory space and what you're asking
18 for when it comes to a special permit?

19 JULIEANNE HERSKOWITZ: Sure. Thank you
20 for the question, Council Member. So, as Cecilia
21 just noted, we are, you know, working with a rapidly-
22 evolving industry, one in which we don't know how it
23 will continue to change and grow, but we want to
24 prepare for that growth, and specifically the special
25 permit what it allows for is the potential for

1 production-based activities, which although we
2 understand may not be happening at a large scale
3 within New York City. We see real opportunity at a
4 smaller scale, especially when it comes to early-
5 stage development whether that's of medicine, cell
6 and gene therapies, vaccines, and biologics. So we
7 want to prepare for that, and that's why we are
8 actively seeking this special permit for life
9 sciences use.
10

11 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Got it. And as
12 you're noting it's in a rapidly evolving area with a
13 lot to still be seen by 2030+ where this is all
14 headed, we could be in a totally new world based on
15 how rapidly we're evolving right now. What is the--
16 what is the anticipated perception of those
17 properties around the life sciences buildings to be
18 used for that type of manufacturing capacity? I
19 think you might have said it might be a smaller
20 footprint in there. What's a percentage that we
21 anticipate might be allocated towards that usage?

22 JULIEANNE HERSKOWITZ: I think it's hard
23 to put an exact pinpoint to how much space could be
24 utilized for production within a facility, but again,
25 this is why we're seeking the permit. The permit

1 would enable the entirety of the building to be
2 utilized for production. We think that likely it
3 would be smaller, but want to, again, provide that
4 availability and flexibility for future anchor tenant
5 to be able to do production if that is desired in
6 [inaudible].

8 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: So, look, I
9 certainly think it would be helpful if we had a
10 better understanding of exactly what we're talking
11 about, because that's a specific zoning action
12 relative to the counterpart across the street without
13 a clear understanding of whether it might be
14 utilized. It's my understanding that because of that
15 special permit we also lose some opportunities to do
16 housing and affordable housing on this property which
17 has been something the community has been asking for
18 and others have been asking for as part of this site,
19 and certainly recognize the complicated nature of
20 putting different school buildings and healthcare
21 facilities and life sciences in one place, and then
22 trying to mix in housing as part of that, and whether
23 that would even be desirable for someone to live on
24 top of a lab space anyway. But it still seems like
25 we're getting restricted by that, and perhaps

1 flexibly does benefit. Often case, the world does
2 change in a way that we might want to add that in
3 later or housing becomes a new set of priorities. We
4 have a state of the city-- we're talking about a
5 Manhattan plan that certainly talks a lot about that.
6 Can you talk to us about specifically the choices
7 around special permit for housing and why that choice
8 was made? also, why-- what it precludes, I guess,
9 when it comes to housing, and does it preclude
10 housing there as a result of putting a special permit
11 on it if thought processes change even in the next
12 few years, or priorities change, or you know, thought
13 process around that.

14
15 CECILIA KUSHNER: Yeah, sir, I'm happy to
16 address this question. The SPARC Kips Bay and
17 Innovation East is part of a long-term economic
18 development investment that the city is making that
19 is building on another generational investment that
20 the city has made with Alexandria and with
21 [inaudible] Cure. So we are fully committed to these
22 developments be a life science commercial
23 development. what we've learned through all of our
24 years, really trying to grow the sector in New York
25 City, that clustering deeply matter, and so the Kips

1 Bay Science District is the premier current
2 healthcare research and life science district in New
3 York City which is why we really want the SPARC
4 campus to be primarily a science campus with a
5 commercial life science. We have never wavered on
6 this really strong city commitment which is backed by
7 all of the partnership that we have around us to
8 really create like a comprehensive and well-rounded
9 project. again, the choice of the special permit for
10 us looking into a project that is very long-term for
11 which we will seek a developer in 2025 through a
12 request for proposal, is to be able to give
13 development community and the life science community
14 the most flexibility in their vision of tenancy and
15 uses at the site. So, that's-- that's our approach
16 and that's the one that we are presenting here today.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: And have there
19 been potential applicants for this? [inaudible] with
20 your engagement in the industry, is that a need that
21 they are stating they clearly need right now? Is
22 that differentiated manufacturing space?

23 CECILIA KUSHNER: Yeah, absolutely. I
24 mean, as part of the life science initiative that EDC
25 has been needing since 2016, we have a Life Science

1
2 Advisory Council which is made of prominent
3 scientists, including a Nobel Prize, you know, with
4 one of our co-chair. And so we are continuously in
5 dialogue with them around how the industry is
6 changing, and we are in regular dialogue with the
7 Department of City Planning and Department of
8 Building as well on how city land use regulation
9 actually respond to changes in industry. And so I
10 think it was everyone's strong recommendation that we
11 be as flexible as possible on this block and that the
12 inclusion of the newly-created special permit for the
13 City of Yes with City Planning was a good idea.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Thanks.

15 Understanding that answer, and I know Council Member
16 Rivera had this question, so I'll just repeat it-- is
17 have you looked at other opportunities in the area to
18 do added housing? Two Council Members here-- so, I
19 know she's talked to some-- to you about some of
20 them, and can you talk about what those identified
21 opportunities are around Community Board Six and
22 where that conversation lies right now?

23 CECILIA KUSHNER: Yeah, I think we first
24 are very in [inaudible] that CB6 is a very strong
25 pro-housing Community Board that has been asking for

1 the city repeatedly to look at housing in their
2 district. And so that's a commitment that we are
3 making with Capital Plan as well, which is to sit
4 down and to look at different opportunities both like
5 from an area-wide rezoning, corridor-wide approach,
6 or specific sites that are of interest and to do this
7 work moving forward.
8

9 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: And what's the
10 timing of that?

11 CECILIA KUSHNER: I think we would be
12 ready to sit down with Community Board as soon as
13 there's a wish. We could sit down with them right
14 away.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Okay. A few more
16 questions. You talk about a \$100 million commitment
17 to help build out this property for life sciences.
18 Is that city is putting \$100 million to assist with
19 the building out of it, to then have a tenant take
20 that over and the RFP would be essentially being the
21 tenant, and the City would be doing \$100 million
22 commitment for building it, is that correct?

23 CECILIA KUSHNER: That's right. So, in
24 the spring we released an RFEI with \$100 million of
25 capital attached to it. That is really geared

1 towards developing a center of excellence ideally at
2 the intersection of AI and tech and life science in
3 one of the commercial life science tower. We are
4 reviewing application. We-- life science is a very
5 expensive industry to develop. Labs are extremely
6 expensive. The technology that supports AI and tech
7 is also extremely expensive, and so the capital money
8 which is up to \$100 million is there to support any
9 need that an anchor tenant, be an academic
10 institution or a corporate institution, may have and
11 be able to develop and open the center of excellence
12 at this location.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Got it. And has
15 the City entered into any agreement with unions
16 regarded to the construction jobs there, and can you
17 talk to us what that arrangement is right now?

18 JULIEANNE HERSKOWITZ: Yeah, that's
19 exactly right. We have a project labor agreement
20 with unions for the construction of the future
21 project. So in total that would be 12,000 union jobs
22 which we're very excited to deliver as part of this
23 overarching project.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: And have you had
25 a dialogue with the building service workers about

1 dinner, so I have to look at some Hunter students in
2 the eyes. But can you just share with us exactly the
3 status of that timing of it and just the details of
4 that agreement?
5

6 MITCH GIBSON: We are involved in
7 conversations with the owner of that project. We
8 have an agreement with them. We're tweaking it as we
9 go along, but the bottom line is our-- these new
10 dorms would be available in August of this year to
11 accommodate our students moving from Brookdale.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Got it. And the
13 students are there today, would move over there this
14 fall, or is that for new students moving in that
15 would move directly there versus Brookdale?

16 MITCH GIBSON: All students related that
17 go to Hunter will have the opportunity to get a dorm
18 room at this location. Certainly, we'll accommodate
19 all the students that are there. We will also make
20 special accommodations for those that were at the
21 location when we announced the project two years ago.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: And how many
23 rooms are we talking about total right now?

24 MITCH GIBSON: We're-- well, the whole
25 project at the dorm, the new dorm, will be around 950

1
2 dorms. That will replace all the dorms that are
3 presently at Hunter, Brookdale.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Got it, okay.
5 Appreciate that. And have students who are there
6 today been notified about this, and have they--
7 what's the communication been to CUNY campus
8 community?

9 MITCH GIBSON: All the students-- well,
10 yes. We have a standard communication that makes
11 available the opportunity to get a dorm room to all
12 of our students, and certainly those that are there
13 will get special attention to make sure that they're
14 aware of the opportunity. Most of them are already.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Okay, thank you.
16 Last few. Council Member Riley talked about the
17 retail. I heard the answer, but I want to maybe just
18 get a more specific thought process on exactly what
19 type of retail. You are completely right. It's an
20 area with noticeable lack of-- the 23rd to 34th Street
21 and some spots in between, noticeable lack of open
22 space-- I mean, retail space. I would encourage food
23 eating, things that would be available for the people
24 that are working there. But is that what you're

1 envisioning, or are there other uses that you're
2 envisioning?
3

4 JULIEANNE HERSKOWITZ: That's exactly
5 right. Food and beverage I think is definitely a
6 priority considering the number of people that are
7 already in the area looking for a good place to eat,
8 but then also all the students and workers who will
9 be operating out of the SPARC Kips Bay campus. In
10 particular, with the two life sciences buildings, so
11 on First Avenue and also on 26th Street, we have a
12 real opportunity to influence and encourage more
13 retail within the ground floor of those spaces. As I
14 also noted before, too, as part of Health + Hospitals
15 lease hold, they will also have healthy concessions,
16 a healthy café, and then a pharmacy within their
17 ground floor space closer to 26th Street. So really
18 excited to really make the entire campus more active
19 and more permeable as we know and accessible than it
20 is today.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Thank you.
22 Thanks for that. We have a, as part of this, a new
23 high school coming on board, and that's an exciting
24 opportunity for a lot of folks who live in the area
25 of the borough of Manhattan and potentially citywide,

1 and with the connection and integration to the rest
2 of the campus. One, can you just tell us how many
3 seats we're expecting in that high school? And
4 second, as I talk to parents and they hear about a
5 new school building opening up, I think for the many
6 young parents, the first thing they ask is about new
7 Pre-k and 3K opportunities in the area. And where I
8 live in Stuyvesant Town been a lot of discussion
9 about trying to convert existing programs that are
10 not universal 3K and Pre-K programs into Pre-K,
11 something people are very eager to have. We've talked
12 about it with you. Can you give us an update on
13 where that stands right now?

15 ISHA SHETH: Hi, good morning. My name's
16 Isha Sheth and I'm here from New York City Public
17 Schools. We believe that this building could serve
18 approximately 1,000 students at capacity, and we are
19 currently planning to focus the building exclusively
20 for the high school educational facility. Based on
21 our data, there are actually sufficient capacity
22 within the zip code for that area for Early Childhood
23 and we believe that there are actually open seats in
24 that zip code right now. So, we are not prioritizing
25 Early Childhood for this space.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Big zip code, so
3 let's talk about that. What is the amount of open
4 seats right now? And-- yeah, give us the information
5 about the 3K/Pre-K in that zip code?

6 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Can I just ask if you
7 guys could do it in a very short answer, because we
8 have a lot of people signed up to testify.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Yeah, apologies.

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

11 ISHA SHETH: If it's alright, I would
12 like to call on my colleague from District Planning
13 to speak to that question, Eric Herman.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Sure, I'll
15 actually save us the-- if you could follow up with us
16 after the hearing.

17 ISHA SHETH: Absolutely.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: I also want to be
19 clear, like, the neighborhood I'm talking about is
20 10009, 10010. It's two zip codes. I grew up in one.
21 I live in the other. I live right across the street,
22 and I think analysis has to go a little bit beyond
23 just the zip code to be fair and what parents are
24 kind of asking for and thinking about. I think the
25 whole-- the whole 3K strategy right now, Pre-K

1 strategy seems to be lacking in that regard about
2 really sort of drilling down. So, I'll-- and I have
3 to give credit to Eric Herman who I played little
4 league with growing up and knows this neighborhood
5 very well. Nice to see you. And I'm very fond of.
6 So nice to see you. Why don't we have an offline
7 conversation, because I want to save us the time, but
8 would like to talk more about that? So, thank you.

9
10 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Chair Riley,
11 can I ask one quick question?

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, I'll call on
13 you--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: [interposing]
15 Is that--

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Hold on.
17 Hold on, Council Member. Hold on one second.
18 Alright, thank you so much. Going to call on Council
19 Member Narcisse to ask questions, and then after if
20 you did not sign-- if you want to testify on this-- I
21 only have three names. They're Michael Jordan,
22 Michael Piccirillo, and former Council Member Steven
23 Levin that's going to testify. If you do want to
24 testify and I did not call your name in person,
25 please see one of the Sergeant at Arms to notify them

1
2 that you're here, alright? Sorry, Council Member
3 Narcisse, you may go.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Thank you,
5 Chair. One of my question, is there any reason,
6 particular reason you're not considering other part
7 of-- I mean, part of the city instead of Manhattan,
8 because some of the good problems can go to some
9 other part of New York City, and is that any reason
10 that you're not considering other part of the City to
11 build? Because we would love some of the problems to
12 spread out.

13 CECILIA KUSHNER: That's a really good
14 question. So, what we found over bout close to a
15 decade of investment in life science is that this
16 industry wants to cluster around medical research
17 centers, many of which are located around the First
18 Avenue corridor in Manhattan. There's also some life
19 science development on the west side around some
20 really large hospitals on the west side as well as
21 Columbia Hospital to the north in West Harlem. There
22 is a little bit of life science development in
23 downtown Brooklyn in the Brooklyn navy yard, in part
24 because there is production space available and also
25 large hospitals in downtown Brooklyn. So, what we

1 found is that the industry is most successful and can
2 be attracted in places that really center around
3 scientific research and long-term investment and
4 medical research that the city and private sector has
5 over multiple decades, and this is really what drives
6 the location of this project in Kips Bay.
7

8 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Thank you,
9 Chair. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.
11 There being no more questions for this applicant
12 panel, you are now excused.

13 CECILIA KUSHNER: I just want our
14 colleagues from H+H, CUNY, OCME, and New York Public
15 Schools are also here to testify on behalf of the
16 project.

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. You guys
18 should have did that before we did the questions.

19 CECILIA KUSHNER: We thought-- we wanted
20 to be respectful when questions started. We didn't
21 want to--

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Yeah,
23 you guys should have did that before we did the
24 questions. Give me one second. Okay, can you guys
25

submit this in writing, please, if possible?

Alright.

CECILIA KUSHNER: Happy to do that.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: This panel is now excused. Thank you so much. Alright, so for this panel next I'm going to call on Michael Jordan, Michael Piccirillo, former Council Member Stephen Levin, Cleveland Cyrus, and Michael Baran. Can you please come up to the dais, please? Okay, thank you so much. For the members of the public, you will be given two minutes to testify. At the end of your testimony, please just wait to see if Council Members have any questions. After we fulfill this in-person testimony, we will switch to online testimony on this project. We will begin first with Michael Baran. Michael, can you just please press the button.

MICHAEL BARAN: Okay, we're on. Good afternoon everybody. So, my name's Mike Baran. I'm here to testify on behalf of myself. Although professionally, I'm a partner in Pfizer's venture capital fund. I travel the world building biotech companies on behalf of Pfizer and other institutional investors. I'm in favor of this project, but one

1 thing that I just said that's problematic is I said
2 travels the world. We should be building these
3 biotech companies here in New York City, and that's
4 why I support-- that's one of the reasons why I
5 support this project. So just three other quick
6 points. First is around geographic dispersity. We
7 do have lab space in the city across all the
8 boroughs, and part of the reason why that's not
9 working-- and myself and colleagues often build these
10 companies in other cities is because it takes a long
11 time to get from the different parts of the city,
12 from Bronx, to Queens, wherever, right? So what you
13 have here is you have everything in one spot, and
14 it's already happening organically, right? You have
15 NYU, Bellevue, Alexandria, Deerfield there. SPARC
16 just adds to that, and then you have all the
17 scientists together, and that's how good things
18 happen. Number two is I'd like to emphasize the
19 importance of the high school. You need to build
20 physical infrastructure, but you need talent to be
21 there also, and at the moment I feel that the next
22 generation looks at other professions as a better way
23 to go such as management consulting, technology,
24 medicine, law. So no we'll have these kids, and
25

1 we'll be able to catch them early and interact with
2 them and show them that, you know, science is a
3 viable career path. And then point number three, I
4 had to slip this in. You have the building. You
5 have the talent. How do you get them stay here? You
6 have to make it easy for them. You can't make it
7 hard. And so also as a resident, I'd like to, you
8 know, say something negative. I'm not in favor of
9 this congestion taxing-- congestion tax. You know,
10 we need to be doing the opposite when it comes to the
11 SPARC project. We can't be charging people \$10 to
12 come to work, or nine dollars. We have to make it
13 easier. We should do the opposite. We should give
14 them tax incentives. So that's it. I'll yield my one
15 second. Thank you for the time.

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
18 we'll hear from Michael Jordan. A very unique name.

19 STEPHEN LEVIN: I was going to say, I
20 cannot believe Michael Jordan's in the house.

21 MICHAEL JORDAN: I disappoint all the
22 time. Good afternoon. My name's Mike Jordan. I'm a
23 business representative of Local Union Three of the
24 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.
25 Local Three represents nearly 28,000 members in

1 construction and other related electrical industries,
2 including maintenance and manufacturing. I am
3 responsible for the borough of Manhattan and several
4 thousand construction division members who work here.
5 I am here today on behalf of Business Manager Chris
6 Erikson and the offices and members of Local Three to
7 express our support for the science park and research
8 campus project at Kips Bay known as SPARC. The SPARC
9 project is a win/win for New York City, our residents
10 and our future. This project will ensure our city's
11 growth as the center of critical industries like life
12 sciences and healthcare. Vitally important to my
13 union is that the project will be built by building
14 trades-affiliated union label. And once built, this
15 project will strengthen the pipeline from New York
16 City's public education system into top-notch careers
17 for our current and future generations. With the
18 commitment from the city and the EDC to build this
19 project with union labor, the tradesmen and women
20 will earn good union wages and benefits, allowing
21 them to support themselves and their families. It
22 also ensures that our union pension funds can make
23 investments in projects like SPARC and others,
24 bolstering the money already committed by New York
25

1 City and New York State. This project truly
2 encapsulates everything good about New York City,
3 building out key industries to strengthen our city's
4 position, recruiting the best talent while creating
5 pathways for residents and investing in local public
6 education, all while being built and maintained by
7 the most talented, productive, and safe union
8 construction workforce. I thank you for your time,
9 and again, on behalf of Local Union Three's IBW
10 offices and 28,000 members, I urge you to support the
11 SPARC project.
12

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next we
14 hear from Michael Piccirillo. Sorry, Mike.

15 MICHAEL PICCIRILLO: It's all good. Good
16 afternoon, Chair and members of the Subcommittee on
17 Zoning. My name is Michael Piccirillo. I am the
18 Area Standards Manager of the New York City District
19 Council of Carpenters, and I'm a proud resident of
20 New York City. I'm here today to express our strong
21 support for the SPARC project, a visionary
22 development that promises immense benefits to our
23 city and its residents. I just want to note, we were
24 asked today to come and support the SPARC and I'm
25 happy to do so, but it takes a lot of gall for EDC to

1 schedule a similar project with no guarantee for good
2 wages on the same day. I know the Council deeply
3 cares about labor standards, so I hope they'll not
4 the difference, even though it's the same kind of
5 project. First and foremost, this project will
6 create hundreds if not thousands of good paying union
7 construction jobs during its development. Jobs that
8 provide fair wages, benefits, and opportunities for
9 hard working New Yorkers to build a better future for
10 their families. Beyond construction, the SPARC
11 project will also bring permanent good quality jobs
12 in science, research, and operations, diversifying
13 our city's employment landscape and securing long-
14 term economic growth. The SPARC project is a bold
15 investment in science and innovation, positioning New
16 York City as a global leader in research and
17 development. This facility will drive advancements
18 in fields like healthcare and technology, attracting
19 top talent and fostering partnerships with local
20 universities and institutions, including CUNY. These
21 contributions will not only elevate our city's status
22 on the world stage, but it will also ensure that New
23 Yorkers reap the benefits of ground-breaking
24 innovation and develop-- ground-breaking innovations
25

1 developed right here. The SPARC project is more than
2 just a building. It's a beacon of progress,
3 opportunity and hope for the people of New York City.
4 As a lifelong New Yorker and a representative of a
5 proud union that values quality, safety and
6 community, I urge you to approve this project.
7 Together we will ensure that the SPARC project sets a
8 new standard for growth and benefits everyone. As a
9 New Yorker, I take pride in the opportunities our
10 city provides. The SPARC project exemplifies what we
11 can achieve when we invest in our people. Thank you,
12 sir.
13

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much,
15 Mike. Next we'll hear from Cleveland Cyrus.

16 CLEVELAND CYRUS: Good afternoon
17 everybody. My name is Cleveland Cyrus. I'm a
18 journeyman electrician, a member of Local Union
19 Number Three of the IBW. I'm here on behalf of
20 28,000 union sisters and brothers to express support
21 of the science park research campus project in Kips
22 Bay. It's clear this project is necessary to keep
23 growing New York as a hub for the critical life
24 sciences. Important for my union and me is that it
25 be built by the skilled trades people of the unions

1 affiliated with the Building and Construction Trades
2 Council. While many New York City school children
3 will join the life sciences and healthcare sector in
4 the future because of SPARC project. Many public
5 school children will also join the unionized building
6 and construction trades, including Local Number
7 Three. The SPARC project encapsulates both of these
8 futures, solid life science infrastructure built onto
9 a project life agreement by unionized tradesmen and
10 women. Thank you for your time, and on behalf of my
11 union sisters and brothers, I urge you to support the
12 SPARC project.
13

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. And last
15 we'll hear from former Council Member Stephen Levin.

16 STEPHEN LEVIN: Thank you very much,
17 Chair. Chair Riley, Council Members Powers and
18 Narcisse, nice to see you all. Good morning. I'm
19 Steve Levin, CEO of Solar One. We are a nonprofit
20 environmental education organization where we focus
21 on K to 12 education focused on renewable energy,
22 green workforce development, and solar technical
23 assistance for a nonprofit and affordable housing.
24 In addition, we are a long-term stewards of
25 Stuyvesant Cove Park in Council Member Powers'

1 district, and we are currently in the final stages of
2 construction on the Solar One Environmental Education
3 Center at 23rd Street in collaboration with EDC which
4 is scheduled to open in the coming months. I'm happy
5 to issue my strong support for the SPARC project.

6 I've been engaged with the SPARC project for over a
7 year now, and since January of last year I have
8 served on the SPARC taskforce where I and a diverse
9 set of other community stakeholders met a half-dozen
10 times. As a former Council Member, I've been
11 impressed by this level of engagement at the earliest
12 stages of the project, and I look forward to
13 continuing to work with the city. Through the many
14 meetings that we had, I learned just how
15 transformative the SPARC project is. It's a
16 tremendous workforce development opportunity. It
17 truly-- it is truly unique in that it'll bring
18 students and industry under one campus. As you have
19 seen many times in developments in New York City in
20 recent decades, this kind of cohabitation leads to
21 great innovations. Students will be exposed to life
22 sciences industry, meet people, get internships, and
23 learn what it takes to enter the industry. In this
24 you'll have the opportunity to have a robust pipeline
25

1 of talented New Yorkers who can make up their future
2 workforce, and the neighborhood will benefit from the
3 energy of a campus full of ambitus youth and
4 innovators through a new high school, the CUNY
5 facilities, Health + Hospitals, OCME, and private
6 industry partners. I'm also thrilled that the project
7 will be using cutting edge construction techniques
8 like circular construction which will result in
9 emissions reductions equivalent to taking thousands
10 of cars off the road. Obviously, at Solar One we
11 focus on environmental sciences as opposed to life
12 science, but we see a strong complement in the SPARC
13 project to our mission of engaging young New Yorkers
14 in the sciences and the related industries, and we
15 are long-term stakeholders in the Kips Bay community.
16 We could not be more thrilled to welcome SPARC to the
17 neighborhood. We strongly encourage the Council's
18 support and we look forward to continuing to
19 collaborate with the City on this project. Thank
20 you.
21

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. I have no
23 questions for the applicant panel. Council Member
24 Powers?
25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Sure. Just a
3 quick statement. One, I want to welcome my friend
4 and colleague, Steve Levin, to the chamber who has
5 shorter hair than when he was here as a Council
6 Member. I also want to toast [sic] to IBW. I know
7 there was a-- you lost a member just a few weeks ago
8 at the Waldorf Astoria. No? Oh, it wasn't one of
9 you guys, okay, I'm sorry. Well, my condolences to
10 the family. Okay.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
12 Member Powers. Council Member Narcisse, you have any
13 questions?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: No, I just want
15 to say welcome to our former colleague. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Alright. There being
17 no questions, this applicant panel is excused. I'm
18 going to now move to the online panel that will
19 consist of Santos Rodriguez, and Jennifer Rosati.
20 I'll begin first-- you guys are excused. You guys can
21 go. We'll begin first with Santos Rodriguez.
22 Santos, if you can hear me, please unmute, and you
23 may begin.

24 SANTOS RODRIGUEZ: Thank you very much,
25 Council Member, Chair Riley. And just off topic

1 really quick, Council Member Powers brought it up.
2 This is obviously why it's important to highlight
3 trained skilled workforce. You know, the
4 construction industry did suffer a loss last week,
5 unfortunately non-union, unfortunately untrained. I
6 don't want to digress right from the beginning, but
7 thank you very much for acknowledging that loss to
8 that family. Our hearts go out to them. Good
9 afternoon members of the Subcommittee. My name is
10 Santos Rodriguez, and I'm here to testify on behalf
11 of Gary LaBarbera, President of the Building and
12 Construction Trades Council of Greater New York to
13 express strong support for the SPARC Kips Bay
14 project. The BCTC is an organization of local
15 building and construction trades unions that are
16 affiliated with 15 international unions of the North
17 American Building Trades. Our local union affiliates
18 represent approximately 100,000 union construction
19 workers. The BCTC's mission is to raise the standard
20 of living for all workers, to advocate for worker's
21 conditions and collectively advancing worker's
22 conditions for our affiliates, members, as well as
23 all workers in New York. We believe that the SPARC
24 project represents the principles and innovation,
25

1 economic development, and community enhancements.

2 This transformative initiative will establish a

3 state-of-the-art science, healthcare, and public

4 health hub in the Kips Bay neighborhood, revitalizing

5 two million square feet of space by positioning New

6 York City as a leader in the life science sector.

7 SPARC will not only drive science advancement but

8 also foster sustainability, economic growth in the

9 region. A crucial aspect of this project is the

10 commitment to create thousands of union jobs. The

11 city and EDC have ensured that these opportunities

12 will be accessible to skilled union workers which

13 align with our mission to promote middle-class that

14 supports families and community. Furthermore, we

15 commend--

16
17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank

18 you. Your time is expired.

19 SANTOS RODRIGUEZ: sorry, can I have two

20 more minutes. I did start--

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Just

22 finish-- you can finish up, Santos.

23 SANTOS RODRIGUEZ: Thank you so much.

24 The inclusive approach ensures that the voices of

25 Kips Bay represents the heart are heard and the

1 project's benefits will extend to those who live and
2 work in the area. BCTC's projects like SPARC are
3 aligned with our shared vision improving the lives of
4 New Yorkers, fostering economic opportunity and
5 enhancement of the city's infrastructure. We urge
6 the Subcommittee to approve this vital initiative
7 which will undoubtedly be lasting benefits in Kips
8 Bay. Thank you once again--

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Thank--

11 SANTOS RODRIGUEZ: for the opportunity to
12 testify.

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
14 we'll hear from Jennifer Rosado-- Rosati, excuse me.
15 Jennifer, if you can hear me, please unmute and you
16 may begin.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Jennifer Rosati, are
19 you online? If you are, please unmute and you may
20 begin. You can press star six. Jennifer, if you can
21 hear me, press star six to unmute yourself.

22 JENNIFER ROSATI: Yep.

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: There you go.

24 JENNIFER ROSATI: Yes, can you hear me?
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.
3 You can begin.

4 JENNIFER ROSATI: Okay, thank you. My
5 name is Jennifer Rosati. I currently serve as Chair
6 of the Department of Sciences Program Coordinator for
7 the Forensic Science Undergraduate Program at John
8 Jay College CUNY. Our Forensic Science program has a
9 longstanding history of excellence in the field, and
10 John Jay College itself has a history of education
11 injustice. We pride ourselves in being an MSI-
12 serving institution, and we have demonstrated a
13 longstanding commitment for serving STEM students
14 with experiential learning opportunity. We currently
15 provide free degree programs, our forensic science
16 program, some molecular biology and toxicology with
17 experiential learning opportunities at the
18 undergraduate and graduate level. SPARC would be an
19 integral component to not only support the current
20 educational experiences we provide our students, but
21 it also improves the impacts of these experiences
22 across all three of our majors. And it's notable
23 that the current OCME facilities need many upgrades
24 which can be financially cumbersome on older and
25 outdated instrumentation. SPARC would allow for

1 upgraded and new instrumentation to be utilized which
2 is integral to maintain and build upon OCME's current
3 reputation within the field. The project would
4 provide students with access to cutting-edge
5 technology and instrumentation and with an
6 unparalleled opportunity to further develop their
7 research and practical skills. An important aspect
8 of our program relies on the recognition that
9 students learn best through their experiences. SPARC
10 would build, nurture and reinforce the theoretical
11 lecture-based and practical lab-based skills students
12 learn through their academic pathway provide through
13 our programs. More recent focus were some programs
14 or institution and the CUNY community and to provide
15 students with career and industry-specific skills to
16 be employment-ready upon graduation. SPARC will
17 provide students with a realistic opportunity to gain
18 workforce-related skills such as the ability to work
19 in a team-focused environment, understand workflow
20 and workplace directives, and to develop their job-
21 related responsibilities and communication skill.

22
23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Your time's
24 expired.

2 JENNIFER ROSATI: I'm honored to provide
3 my support on behalf of the Forensic Science Program
4 and Department of Sciences. Thank you very much for
5 allowing me to testify.

6 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much,
7 Jennifer. There being no questions for this panel,
8 this panel is now excused. There being no other
9 members of the public who wish to testify on LUs 217
10 through 224 regarding EDC SPARC proposal, the public
11 hearing is now closed and the items are laid over. I
12 will now open the public hearing on LUs 208 and 209
13 for the 2185 Coyle Street rezoning proposal in
14 Council Member Narcisse's district in Brooklyn. The
15 proposal seeks to develop a residential mixed-use
16 building with approximately 435 apartments in
17 Sheepshead Bay. The proposal also involves the
18 mapping of mandatory inclusionary housing and
19 approximately 109 of the units would be affordable.
20 For anyone wishing to testify on these items
21 remotely, you must register online through the
22 Council's website at council.nyc.gov/landuse. And
23 once again, for anyone with us in person, please see
24 one of the Sergeants to prepare and submit a
25 speaker's card. If you prefer to submit written

1 testimony, you can always do so by emailing it to
2 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. I would now like
3 to turn it over to Council Member Narcisse to give
4 any remarks.
5

6 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Good afternoon
7 and thank you. Thank you, Chair Riley and thank you
8 for being here my friend. While no project is
9 without its challenges-- we know that for sure-- this
10 development at 2185 Coyle Street represents an
11 opportunity to bring much needed housing and jobs to
12 our district, addressing critical needs in our
13 community which is housing. I am particularly
14 hopeful that these construction jobs associated with
15 this project will be unionized, which I know we spoke
16 about it for 32BJ. So thank you for that. We have
17 to make sure the workers are protected, the wages are
18 in place, right? We have to have the vision of this
19 community while we're doing all that. As we move
20 forward, it is crucial to support the hard-working
21 individuals and families who will benefit from this
22 project, and I want to thank you because you've been
23 a great friend. We've been in conversation, and I
24 love the community engagement. So I'm looking
25

1 forward to make sure District 46 benefit from this
2 project. So thank you, Chair Riley.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
5 Member Narcisse. And I just want to state for the
6 record we've been joined by Council Member Hanif.
7 Counsel, can you please administer the affirmation?

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mr. Bass, please
9 raise your right hand and answer the following. Do
10 you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole
11 truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony
12 before this subcommittee and in answer to all Council
13 Member questions? Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: No, you're not-- say
15 that one more time, Richard. Just say I do.

16 RICHARD BASS: I do.

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Thank
18 you. For the viewing public, if you need an
19 accessible version of this presentation, please send
20 an email request to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov.
21 And now the applicant team may begin. I'll just ask
22 you to please reinstate your name and organization
23 for the record.

24 RICHARD BASS: I'm Richard Bass. I'm with
25 Akerman LLP. I represent the applicant. Chair Riley,

1 Council Member Narcisse, thank you for the kind
2 words. Good afternoon. Good seeing you all. I have
3 hard copies if that's helpful.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: We-- you could save
6 it, we have it on our iPads.

7 RICHARD BASS: Okay.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: So we're fine.

9 RICHARD BASS: because that's there, and
10 I want to look at you. I'm going to look at my
11 printed copy, so I'm not disrespectful. Can we go to
12 the next slide, please? The site is a 96,000 square
13 foot lot. It's a former closed supermarket. It's
14 located between Coyle, Avenue V, and Bragg Street.
15 Coyle and Avenue V are wide streets. Next slide,
16 please. This is the usual area map showing the land
17 uses. It's a residential neighborhood. To our east
18 and south are six-story NYCHA buildings and a co-op.
19 Next slide, please. This slide shows the condition
20 of the site, and I'd like to thank the Council Member
21 staff who's alerted us to illegal dumping and we took
22 measures to address that. So I really appreciate you
23 being our daily eyes and ears there. This basically
24 shows a closed supermarket and a very large sea of
25 parking. The meat of the proposal is on the next,

1
2 please. We're seeking two actions. We're looking to
3 change the existing R4 C12 to three different zoning
4 districts, R6A C24, R7A C24, and R7X C24. There'll
5 be a map next that will show the various zoning
6 districts. The second action is a zoning text
7 amendment establishing an MIH area, and we're doing
8 option one. Next slide, please. As you can see from
9 the slide, R6A is mapped along Bragg. I blanked
10 there for a second, sorry-- which is a narrow street.
11 Coyle is a wide street that's an R7A, and Avenue V is
12 a wider street, and that's R7X. We're not including
13 the frontage on Avenue U, but we go within a 100 feet
14 of Avenue U. Next slide. This shows the propose--
15 the existing and the proposed zoning map. As you can
16 see to the west side of Coyle there was a recent
17 rezoning to R6A and on Avenue V there was a rezoning
18 to R7D. Just to show you what's been approved, the
19 next slide shows the west side of Coyle that was
20 rezoned to R6A. The community-- actually, just to
21 digress for a second. We met with the Community
22 Board even before we met with City Planning, and
23 their two concerns were height and parking, and they
24 also didn't want us to repeat this urban design where
25 you had a very long unarticulated building. And I'll

1 show you how we address that in the additional
2 slides. The next slide shows the recent approval for
3 the corner of Avenue V and Coyle which results in a
4 nine-story building. Next slide, please. Our
5 proposed development is for 458,000 square foot
6 development, 4.77 FAR. It's a mix between the three
7 different zoning districts. We're proposing 263
8 parking spaces which is greater than the minimum
9 requirement as a response to the Community Board
10 seeking more parking. We're going to have close to
11 415,000 square feet of residential floor area. This
12 would be 430 dwelling units, including 108 or 109
13 permanently affordable MIH option one units. The
14 minimum requirement is 193 parking paces. We're also
15 looking at reintroducing a supermarket and other
16 local retail. This would be on Coyle and Avenue V.
17 The community and the Council Member have urged us,
18 as the Borough President, to reintroduce the
19 supermarket to serve the host community. This would
20 have 47 required parking. As you can see, we
21 provided more parking, even though the Borough
22 President and the Planning commission objected,
23 we're, you know, keeping our promise to the Community
24 Board. The next slide, please, which is kind of hard
25

1 to see at that distance. This is the site plan.
2
3 Next slide, please. And to address the community's
4 concerns, we designed this project to be a varied
5 height between four and nine stories, and as you can
6 see we don't have a continuous block wall that you
7 saw from the other Coyle development. Next slide,
8 please. And then in rendering form you can see how
9 it will look in the future when it's-- once it's
10 built. Next slide, please. This is from the corner
11 of Coyle and Avenue V looking northeast. Next slide,
12 please. We have a signed agreement with 32BJ.
13 Again, I thank the Council Member for helping
14 facilitate that. We have a commitment to at least 25
15 percent MWBE contractors and suppliers, and we're
16 going to create both permanent and local-- permanent
17 and temporary jobs. The last slide, please. This
18 shows the proposed unit distribution. Because we're
19 at option one, we decided to try to produce more very
20 low AMI units. So as you can see in the lower right
21 hand of this page, we're looking at 60 percent of the
22 affordable units at 40 percent AMI. This is normally
23 deeper than normally have three bands [sic]. So
24 we're doing two bands, one at 40 and one at 90, but
25 the majority of the units, the affordable units, will

1 be at the 40 percent AMI. Now, if I could, whoever
2 is running the slide projector, can we go back to the
3 sixth page? It's the proposed zoning. Keep going.
4 Keep going. That one. So, it was brought to my
5 attention earlier this week that there seemed to be
6 some confusion about what City of Yes does to this
7 project. The R6A on the right was increased by
8 11,400 square feet and additional 10-foot height.
9 That results in approximately 11 units. We're not
10 changing the proposed heights of the design of our
11 buildings, because 11 units over a 38,000 square foot
12 zoning district can be easily accommodated. At the
13 bottom of the map, the R7X, it was a 6.0 FAR and 125-
14 foot maximum height. Under City of Yes it stays as a
15 6.0 FAR, but they raised the height to 145 feet.
16 Previously we were at eight and nine stories at 6.0
17 FAR. With the additional height, we're still at
18 eight and nine stories. We're not going to go to 145
19 feet, because to go to that height, we'd have to
20 construction with steel, and steel makes this project
21 unaffordable, and with the threatened tariffs by our
22 incoming president, it further makes this project
23 unaffordable. So we will keep our promise of doing
24 eight and nine-story on Avenue V, and we ask that the
25

1 R7X be retained. The last district, the R7A, was
2 increased by 15,500 square feet. That's
3 approximately 15 units. In our design we proposed
4 four to seven-story buildings. 15 units can be
5 easily absorbed in those four to seven-story
6 buildings. We've spoken with the Community Board.
7 They have a concern about height. They told that to
8 me three years ago. I think our design and our
9 promise has kept the project between four and nine
10 stories and we urge the committee and the council to
11 support that. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Richard.
14 Just have a few questions. I'm going to turn it over
15 to Council Member Narcisse. There have been two
16 other prior applications in the area since 2022. One
17 mapped in R6A district on Coyle Street and one mapped
18 on R7D district on Avenue V. This application
19 proposes slightly higher density and height. How did
20 you arrive at the mixture of the proposed three
21 zoning district R6A, R7A and R7X for this site?

22 RICHARD BASS: This site versus those two
23 other sites is really different. First of all, it's
24 a 96,000 square foot lot. It may be the largest lot
25 I rezoned in my 45-year practice. The other Coyle

1 Street development backed on ground stones and there-
2 - it was sensitive to the scale of those ground
3 stones, so that's why that was R6A, and the Avenue V
4 and Coyle corner was again a much smaller lot. Our
5 opportunity to create this amount of housing and
6 affordable housing and re-establish the supermarket
7 lent us to go towards these zoning districts. Even
8 though-- and-- even though the height districts, the
9 height in these districts are higher than we want,
10 zoning is like this cup. Your zoning entitlements
11 bring it up to maybe 70 percent of the cup. Under
12 the new R7X it's actually only 60 percent of the cup.
13 So even though we have the ability to go higher,
14 we're not going to for economic reasons. We're going
15 to do stick and plank construction and not do steel.
16 That's why the heights are between four and nine
17 stories.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: You're proposing a
20 building ranging from four to nine stories, but the
21 proposed zoning district allows significantly more
22 height in R7A and R7X district. Why not take
23 advantage of this full height allowed by the zoning
24 there?

2 RICHARD BASS: Because it doesn't make
3 economic sense to build higher, we would have to do
4 steel. Steel is much more expensive. If this was a
5 midtown Manhattan site with a view of the Hudson
6 River, I might give you a different answer, but this
7 is in Sheepshead Bay. We want to make the project
8 affordable. The "market rate" units are going to be
9 priced almost at the same level as the affordable
10 units. So we have to keep costs under control.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: And lastly have you
12 undertaken any outreach or engagement with the NYCHA,
13 Nostrand or Sheeps Bay House Tenant Association to
14 determine which ground floor retail uses are most
15 needed in the area?

16 RICHARD BASS: Yes, and again, I want to
17 compliment the Council Member who gave us those
18 introductions. We've had several discussions with
19 the NYCHA leadership. We know what they would like
20 in terms of retail. This project took much longer
21 than we expected. So, we've had discussion with
22 various retailers, including supermarket operators,
23 but until we have an approval and we start getting
24 into construction, we won't be able to nail down the
25 exact tenant, but we know what they want.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Richard.

3 Before I call on Council Member Narcisse, the only
4 in-person testimony I have here is Kaitlyn from 23BJ.
5 If you wanted to testify on this Coyle project and I
6 did not call your name, please just indicate to the
7 Sergeant at Arms that you filled out a paper,
8 alright? Council Member Narcisse?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Thank you,
10 Chair. I want to say thank you to Richard for being,
11 you know, a good team. You know, you were out. You
12 want to reach everyone. You want to engage every
13 one. You're a great team leader of whoever you
14 represent. So, I want to say thank you to you. I
15 want to say thank you to Brian and Dana that been on
16 top of it, that been helping me to the process to
17 make sure that we represent the 46th District well,
18 and of course, the tenant association from Nostrand
19 and Sheepshead, and Theresa from Community Board that
20 been on top of it. having said all that, I want to
21 say that we going to make sure that we address all
22 the issues that we spoke about, and furthermore, to
23 make sure that MWBEs that we-- the conversation we
24 had, the percentage stay the same, unionized workers
25 and making sure that our community, the District 46

1 benefit from the project, and all the family that
2 coming on board, of course. So, even though I trust
3 you, Richard, you're a lawyer, you know we going to
4 have to put certain things on papers and making sure
5 that it fit just in case if you-- your-- the person
6 that you represent that's doing the project decided
7 not to do it anymore. So we have to make sure that
8 we have things on paper to protect our community.
9 There used to be a supermarket at the site of your
10 proposed development which was an essential community
11 amenity, right? What is the status of your
12 conversations with perspective tenants for the
13 supermarket space? Have you received letters of
14 interest from any prospective tenants?

15
16 RICHARD BASS: We've had discussions with
17 several operators. Because this project took almost
18 three years to go through the public review process,
19 we have not letters. Once-- hopefully, the City
20 Council votes in a couple weeks, we can then start--
21 restart those discussions and get those commitments.
22 We will keep your office apprised of our progress in
23 that, but no one's going to agree to a project that's
24 still not approved.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: But you will
3 continue doing the outreach to make sure we have that
4 supermarket?

5 RICHARD BASS: Absolutely. The economics
6 of the project relies on a supermarket. So it's in
7 our best interest to have a supermarket.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Okay. And you
9 know my Chief of Staff is not going to let go of
10 that, too. Sia [sp?] is in the house listening. It
11 is important that the commercial loading areas for a
12 potential supermarket is appropriate and does not
13 interfere with the circulation of pedestrian and
14 vehicular traffic. What consideration went into
15 locating the commercial loading area on Coyle Street?

16 RICHARD BASS: The architect and the
17 engineer designed it so there wouldn't be that type
18 of conflict. Also, the Community Board was quite
19 helpful. They made suggestions that we followed and
20 so the design we have that we presented today takes
21 into account those concerns.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Do you plan to
23 apply for the fresh tax incentive program?

24 RICHARD BASS: Yes, the Borough President
25 put that in their resolution supporting the project.

1
2 Yes, we're-- it would be silly for us to turn down
3 tax incentives.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Thank you.

5 Now, this question-- like I said, I trust you, but we
6 going to have to go there. City of Yes for Housing
7 Opportunity increased the height and density
8 permitted in several zoning districts including R6A
9 and R7A. Can you please state for the record what is
10 the maximum allowable height and FAR for the three
11 zoning district?

12 RICHARD BASS: Sure, the-- let's start
13 with the largest.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: The R6A, R7A,
15 and R7X.

16 RICHARD BASS: Right.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: And how were
18 they changed by the city-- I mean, by the City of
19 Yes?

20 RICHARD BASS: Okay, the R7X did not
21 change the FAR. It was 6.0 before. It's 6.0 now.
22 The maximum height was 125. It's now 145. At 125
23 our project was at 80 and 90 feet height. The R7A
24 was a 4.6 FAR. It's now a 5.01 FAR that increased the
25 potential development by 15,500 square feet. It

1 increased the height, maximum height, from 95 to 115
2 feet tall. Again, our proposal was 40 to 70 feet on
3 Coyle. And on the R6A it changed it from a 3.6 to a
4 3.9 FAR, an increase of 14,000-- 11,400 square feet
5 and also increased the height by 10 feet from 85 to
6 95. We're not changing the height of our building on
7 Bragg. We will absorb those 11 apartments in the
8 proposed height that we showed you. You know, again,
9 just, you know, sorry that I keep using the cup. I
10 used to be a professor and I loved, you know, props.
11 Just because there's a height, a maximum height
12 limit, doesn't mean you build to that height limit.
13 Again, your zoning entitlements only will bring you
14 up so far on the R7X, and I-- you have to speak to
15 City Planning why they went from 125 to 145. We
16 didn't need the 125 at the 6.0. We definitely don't
17 need the 145, but to go to that height, we would have
18 to change construction methodology, and that was
19 expensive, and that makes us not do the project. So
20 we're going to do a plank building and we're going to
21 keep our promise of eight and nine stories,
22 regardless of what the zoning district has. And your
23 question is-- you know, I've been doing this a long
24 time. Every zoning I've done, the community raises
25

1
2 the same issue, that you're building is X, but the
3 zoning permits Y. Chairman Riley, you probably have
4 heard this many times.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: So that's the
6 reason we're focusing on a square footage.

7 Community-- may I ask you? Community Board 15
8 supports development here, but feels strongly that
9 the height should be no more than the nine stories
10 proposed in your presentation. When this project
11 begins, the proposed R7A district limited development
12 to nine stories, but now after City of Yes it allows
13 up to 11 stories. You already straight that out.
14 You're not going to go high. We could change the R7A
15 district to an R6A district to limit the height on
16 the Coyle Street to nine stories as originally
17 proposed. Have you looked at this action? We want
18 to make sure the building design you are presented
19 here is what we see actually built. And you heard me
20 before. I trust you, but if you-- if your client
21 sell, we will have to deal with that. That's the
22 only reason I'm asking.

23 RICHARD BASS: I would never say trust me
24 on the record. The difference between what we're
25 suggesting and what you just said in terms of

1 changing the zoning would result in a reduction of
2 over 50,000 square feet of development rights.
3 That's over 50 units, 12 of which would be
4 affordable. I would argue against that reduction,
5 because it really gains nothing. It protects this
6 mythology that one could build taller when we're
7 really not going to build taller. The economics
8 doesn't permit us to build taller. The other thing
9 is, besides saying trust me, we're going to be doing
10 multiple developments in your district with your
11 Community Board. We're going to be back here before
12 this committee multiple times. If I mislead you
13 today, you're not going to, you know, believe me
14 tomorrow. Our design is what it is based on the
15 economics of it. So just because the zoning allows
16 for greater height, I'm arguing don't lose 50 units
17 of housing for no reason.

18
19 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: So, thank you,
20 Chair. We're going to further have conversation
21 because we-- we're in a housing crisis. So we need
22 houses. But thank you, Richard.

23 RICHARD BASS: And just one further
24 correction. You stated that I was an attorney. I'm
25 not an attorney.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Oh, you're not.

2 RICHARD BASS: I work for a law firm.

3 I've been working for law firms--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: [interposing]

5 Oh, you work for the law firm.

6 RICHARD BASS: for 30 years.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: The correction.

8 RICHARD BASS: I have a masters in Urban
9 Planning. My mother told me I should have gone to
10 law school, but I just want to make the record clear.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: you did it so
12 well, I thought you were a lawyer. Once upon a time,
13 they thought I was a lawyer, too. So--

14 RICHARD BASS: [interposing] I've been
15 doing it a long time.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: thank you.

17 RICHARD BASS: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: That's alright,
19 Richard. My mother said I should have been an
20 attorney instead of elected official. So, that's
21 alright. Being that we have no more questions for
22 Richard, you are excused. We're going to start with
23 public testimony, and we're going to begin first with
24
25

1 the only person that's here to testify, Kaitlyn from
2 32BJ.

4 RICHARD BASS: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Alright,
6 Kaitlyn, you may begin.

7 KAITLYN SCHUSTER: Alright, hello again,
8 Chair Riley. Hello, Council Member Narcisse. My
9 name is Kaitlyn Schuster. I'm here today
10 representing SEIU Local 32BJ. 32BJ is the largest
11 union of property service workers in the country,
12 representing over 175,000 members across our 13
13 states, including tens of thousands of commercial
14 property service workers, security officers, and
15 residential building staff in New York City. Our
16 union is here today in support of the proposed
17 rezoning and development at 2185 Coyle Street. 32BJ
18 is happy to show support for developers who invest in
19 the communities where they build. I'm glad to report
20 that the developers of this proposal have made a
21 credible commitment to creating prevailing wage jobs
22 for the workers who will permanently staff the future
23 development at 2185 Coyle Street. We estimate that
24 this rezoning will allow for the creation of five to
25 six new property service jobs. Good jobs like these

1 mean prevailing wages, meaningful benefits and a
2 pathway to the middle class for local community
3 members who tend to fill such positions. In addition
4 to the important job creation that will come from
5 this project as rents reach historic highs and
6 housing availability reaches a historic low, 32BJ
7 recognizes the need for more housing to be built in
8 every neighborhood of New York. This project will
9 introduce 430 new units of housing to Brooklyn
10 community district 15, at least a quarter of which
11 will be income restricted and available to low- to
12 middle-income residents. The cost of living rises
13 and working New Yorkers struggle to stay in their
14 homes, it's more important now than ever to create
15 affordable and good jobs which uphold the industry
16 standard in the city. For all the reasons, we're
17 happy to be here and support the project. Thank you
18 so much for your time.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much,
21 Kaitlyn. Any questions for Kaitlyn?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Just want to
23 say thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: thank you, Council
25 Member Narcisse. There being no other members of the

1 public who wish to testify on LU 208 and 209 for the
2 2185 Coyle Street rezoning proposal, the public
3 hearing is now closed and the items are laid over.
4 Okay, we have three more hearings left. We're going
5 to be here first with the Gleason commercial overlay,
6 and then following Gleason, we're going to do the 438
7 Concord Avenue. Alright? I now open the public
8 hearing regarding LUs 206 for an application by
9 Gleason Funeral Home located in Whitestone Queens in
10 Council Member Paladino's district. The application
11 seeks to map a commercial overlay to bring the
12 existing funeral home facility a longstanding
13 neighborhood business into conformance as well as to
14 facilitate an expansion of accessory parking
15 facility. For anyone wishing to testify on this item
16 remotely, you must register online through the
17 Council's website at council.nyc.gov/landuse and for
18 anyone here, please see the Sergeant at Arms to get a
19 speaker's card. I will now call on the applicant
20 panel for this proposal which consists of Richard
21 Lobel. We shall also have Jonathan Baker, John
22 Golden, Kevin Williams, also appearing from the team,
23 but remotely. Counsel, please administer the
24 affirmation.
25

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Would all panelists
3 please raise your right hand and I will ask you this
4 question in order. Do you swear or affirm to tell
5 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth
6 in your testimony before this subcommittee and in
7 answer to all Council Member questions? Mr. Richard
8 Lobel?

9 RICHARD LOBEL: I do.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Jonathan Baker?

11 JONATHAN BAKER: I do.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: John Golden [sp?]?

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: John Golden?

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: How about Kevin

15 Williams?

16 KEVIN WILLIAMS: I do.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do we have John

18 Golden?

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If he's unavailable,
20 we're able to continue in his absence.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: No problem. Thank
22 you. For the viewing public, if you need accessible
23 version of this presentation, please send an email
24 request at landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Now the
25 applicant team may begin. Richard, just please

reinststate your name and organization for the record.

You may begin.

RICHARD LOBEL: Thank you, Chair Riley.

Richard Lobel of Sheldon Lobel PC from the applicant,

Gleason Funeral Home. Happy to be here for the

Gleason Funeral Home commercial overlay rezoning.

Next slide, please. This is a very straightforward

rezoning which involves rezoning three lots, 1015,

1025, 150th Street and 15019 11th Avenue in the

Whitestone neighborhood of Queens from an R2A to an

R2A C22 district which would permit the conversion of

one lot, 5,000 square foot lot, for accessory

parking. This will allow for 22 new parking spaces

for the funeral home while the existing lots will

provide a total of 36 spaces. This will alleviate

much congestion in the area during funeral services.

CB7 voted unanimously to approve with conditions and

a Queens Borough President also recommended approval.

Next slide, please. As the committee can see there

is on the zoning map in the shaded areas in the

circled area existing C22 zoning districts in and

around the site. So both on the same block as the

site to the east along Clintonville for 100 feet, as

well as diagonally across the site and across 11th

1 Avenue. So, this is an area where C22 is commonly
2 known and the existing funeral home is an existing
3 non-conforming use which was subsequently enlarged
4 presumed to BSA approvals. This will enable the
5 elimination of the BSA variants and allow for parking
6 for what is a valued community institution. The
7 funeral home has been there since 1913. The next
8 slide is a tax map showing the duration and extent of
9 the proposed C22 overlay. The next slide is the area
10 map which I think well-illustrates why this is
11 particularly appropriate. We note the commercial
12 overlay to the east of the site as well as to the
13 southeast of the site, and large community facility
14 uses abound in the area. The next slide shows
15 pictures of the site. Again, a rather handsome
16 building dating back-- the use dates back there again
17 for over a century. There is no proposed development
18 pursuant to this proposal. This would merely
19 alleviate very challenging parking condition which
20 exists during funeral services. If you can page
21 through the remainder of the pictures, we would come
22 to the plans and materials. The first plan, merely a
23 site plan demonstrating location of the site. The
24 next slide, showing the existing area map. And the
25

1 next slide showing existing conditions at the site
2 and of the funeral home in the southwest portion of
3 the picture, as well as the vacant lot to the north
4 and the parking spaces to the east permitted by BSA
5 variance [sic]. And one more slide shows the new
6 proposal will parking spaces now to the north of the
7 site. The final slide shows proposed improvement
8 measures in terms of landscaping. That is the sum
9 total of the presentation, and we're happy to answer
10 questions.
11

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: that is great,
13 Richard. Thank you so much. That was less than
14 three minutes.

15 RICHARD LOBEL: All good.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: I only have one
17 question for you.

18 RICHARD LOBEL: Great.

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Would the proposed
20 rezoning bring the exiting parking on lot 52 into
21 conformance?

22 RICHARD LOBEL: It would, Chair. So the
23 parking in lot 52 currently exists pursuant to a BSA
24 variance, most recently, extended to the year 2038.
25

1 This would allow for elimination and relinquishing of
2 these BSA approvals.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. I have no
5 more questions. Council Member Hanif, you have any
6 questions? Alright, being no questions, you're
7 excused. Thank you.

8 RICHARD LOBEL: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Is there anyone here
10 that wants to testify on the Gleason Funeral Home?
11 Going once, going twice. Thank you so much.
12 Alright, there being no other members of the public
13 who wish to testify on LU 206 regarding the Gleason
14 Funeral Home application and map of commercial
15 overlay, the public hearing is now closed and the
16 item is laid over. I will now open the public hearing
17 of LUs 210 and 211 related to the 438 Concord Avenue
18 rezoning located in Deputy Speaker Ayala's district
19 in the Bronx. The proposal seeks to develop a mixed-
20 use building with manufacturing and commercial
21 spaces, and approximately 87 apartments in Mott
22 Haven. The rezoning will also involve the map-in of
23 mandatory inclusionary housing, yielding
24 approximately 24 affordable units. For anyone
25 wishing to testify remotely, you must register online

1 through the council's website at
2 council.nyc.gov/landuse, and for anyone here, please
3 see one of the Sergeant at Arms to prepare for a
4 speaker's card. If you want to submit written
5 testimony, you could do so by submitting it and
6 emailing it to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. I
7 will now ask Counsel to administer the affirmation.
8 Being we administer it for Richard and the rest of
9 the team, I'll just ask that you administer for this
10 one.
11

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We also
13 have, I believe, Felix della Paolera remotely. I'll
14 ask you and Alejandro to raise your right hands and
15 answer the question. Do you swear or affirm to tell
16 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth
17 in your testimony before the subcommittee and in
18 answer to all Council Member questions. Alejandro
19 Waldman? Felix della Paolera?

20 ALEJANDRO WALDMAN: Yes, I do. He had to
21 leave, sorry.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: That's alright.

23 ALEJANDRO WALDMAN: He's not going to
24 participate.

25 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Alright, thank you so
3 much. For the viewing public, if you need accessible
4 version of this presentation, please send an email
5 request to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. And the
6 applicant team may begin. Just please restate your
7 name and organization for the record. And Richard,
8 let's see if you can beat your time.

9 RICHARD LOBEL: Thank you, Chair Riley.
10 Richard Lobel, Sheldon Lobel PC for the applicant.
11 This is the 438 Concord Avenue rezoning. Next slide,
12 please. This is a zoning map amendment which would
13 rezone four parcels as well as portions of two other
14 parcels from existing M12 district to an M14 R7D
15 district. This would allow for the redevelopment of
16 438 Concord Avenue, a site with roughly 25,000 square
17 feet of lot area to permit for a new 10-story mixed
18 use building with commercial light manufacturing,
19 community facility and residential use. There would
20 be roughly 141,000 square feet pursuant to this
21 proposal as well as 87-- or inclusive of 87 dwelling
22 units. We'll go over a breakdown of the uses in the
23 building, and then Alejandro will very briefly
24 discuss the building program, and then we're happy to
25 answer direct questions. This text amendment would

1 also-- this application would also involve a minor
2 text amendment to allow for the R7D district here to
3 be part of this special MX18 mixed-use district, as
4 well as of course, a text amendment to appendix F to
5 allow for mandatory inclusionary housing to apply to
6 the site. Currently, the applicant is mapping option
7 one and two, but intends to use option one. The
8 building-- next slide-- will be a 10-story building
9 plus cellar with roughly, as stated, 141,000 square
10 feet of floor area. While other proposals have come
11 to this committee in the area of the site,
12 particularly across the street, 431 Concord, three
13 years ago and offered solutions to the local area's
14 issues with what would be one tool, we are offering a
15 multifaceted tool here. The building itself in
16 addition to residential would contain 7,600 square
17 feet plus or minus of light manufacturing space for
18 light manufacturing, makers, artists, 3D printing,
19 etcetera. It would involve 3,300 square feet of
20 commercial retail space which potentially would be a
21 supermarket has been discussed with the community, as
22 well as a potential bank branch. This is an area
23 which is very highly underserved in terms of banks.
24 So that's something that the area, as well as Deputy
25

1 Speaker, expressed interest in. There would be
2 roughly 25,000 square feet of commercial office in
3 the cellar through third floors. This commercial
4 office is really valued by the community and the
5 local area, given the fact that Alejandro has
6 experience in what's called My Hub Studios. This is
7 a studio that he and his partners have opened in
8 Bushwick which allows for local artists, wellness
9 professionals and such to use space in the area in
10 smaller quantities and allow for them to open local
11 businesses here. It's really been valued in their
12 community. They've got over 95 percent occupancy
13 rate, and they want to use that space similarly here.
14 In addition to this, there'd be roughly 6,600 square
15 feet of community facility healthcare space and of
16 course much of the development being devoted to
17 95,000 square feet of residential. A rough height of
18 92 feet at a base going up to 10th floor at 111 feet
19 with 43 vehicular parking spaces and 52 bike parking
20 spaces. There would also be a breakdown in units of
21 87 units which would include six studios and 12 one-
22 bedrooms. I note the units particularly in this
23 case, because the local area and particularly Bronx
24 Borough President Gibson noted the unit breakdown
25

1 here being something that was to be valued. Eighty
2 percent, a full 80 percent of the units in this
3 building would be two-bedroom or greater, and a
4 quarter of the units would be a three-bedroom or
5 greater. So the Bronx Borough President did note
6 that the opportunity to bring three and four-bedroom
7 units to this community inclusive of ones that would
8 allow for inclusionary housing, affordable housing
9 within those units, was something that their office
10 rarely if ever saw, and they issued a very strong
11 recommendation in favor of the project as-is. There
12 would also be an additional-- in addition to the
13 units as stated, of course, 25 percent affordability
14 and then sustainability pursuant to typical measures.
15 I would merely allow Alejandro to again briefly speak
16 to the building program, and then I would just close
17 with a discussion of the land use rationale, and then
18 we're happy to take questions. Alejandro?

19
20 ALEJANDRO WALDMAN: Okay. When we
21 envisioned this project, we had several objectives in
22 mind. So the first one was, of course, to increase
23 the supply of housing for the community, market
24 based, as well as affordable units. The second one
25 was to also create new job opportunities. We are

1
2 estimating the creation of 250 to 300 new jobs
3 through a combination of adding office spaces run by
4 one of our companies called My Hub Studios that
5 specializes in providing studio spaces to creative of
6 all types including artists, musicians, wellness
7 professionals, interpreters, etcetera, as well as by
8 adding additional jobs through retail like
9 manufacturing and community-related-- community
10 facility related jobs. The third one was to protect
11 existing light manufacturing jobs and strengthen them
12 by combining with retail spaces. For example, you
13 can imagine a wooden-- a wood shop on the back end,
14 and on the front end to have a furniture store.
15 Those synergies we believe are very powerful. The
16 fourth objective was to offer a community facility to
17 provide health-related or educational services to the
18 community. The fifth was to offer healthy and fresh
19 food market to the community which is a longstanding
20 need for the neighborhood. All of this has to be
21 done. The sixth objective was to run the building
22 efficiently and sustainable. So we are offering
23 urban farming at the top of the building and solar
24 panels for electricity generation. So, all these
25 objectives can only be achieved simultaneously only

1 through the proposed mixed-use zoning. We are not
2 only proposing here to build a new building. It is
3 much more than that. We are building a-- we are
4 helping contributing to build a stronger and vibrant
5 community, and we hope that this project will become
6 an example for the future of the Bronx.

8 RICHARD LOBEL: thank you. To close if
9 you could just advance the slides to the zoning map,
10 which just demonstrates exactly why we feel from a
11 zoning standpoint the proposed R7D is appropriate
12 here. And then we're going to go to the area map in
13 a moment. But you can see in the general area of the
14 site, there are R6 zoning districts, R7 zoning
15 districts, M12 at the site and M13. And what does
16 this mean? R6 districts allow for a maximum floor
17 area ratio of 4.8, close to five. R7 districts
18 including one immediately to the north of the
19 property allow for greater of 4.0 with quality
20 housing and greater with inclusionary housing. So we
21 already floor area ratios that exceed four to the
22 north of the site, as well as the existing M12 which
23 allows for a 4.8 FAR and to the south and southeast
24 of the site, an M13 which permits a 6.5 FAR. The
25 proposed 5.6 FAR here is entirely appropriate given

1 these larger floor area ratios around the site. And I
2 would close just by looking at the area map which is
3 two slides ahead to demonstrate that there is an R7D
4 district much like we are asking immediately across
5 Concord Avenue. This was zoned, approved by the
6 Council in 2021. There's been no development there,
7 and so the idea with this building is that we're not
8 interested in a rezoning. We're actually interested
9 in a build project, and we're very excited about the
10 fact that we've gotten great support within the local
11 area. The tremendous support of the Bronx Borough
12 President's office and are offering a development
13 which not only allows for job generation, over 200
14 jobs created, but also in terms of the housing allows
15 for units which have washers and dryers in each unit
16 which have 80 percent of them with balconies. This
17 is really a model in terms of multifaceted, multiuse
18 building. And with that, the applicant's happy to
19 answer any questions.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: thank you so much.
22 Just one question. While this proposal for a truly
23 mixed-use development is on-- excuse me. While this
24 proposal for a truly mixed-use development is on the
25 one hand exciting, it also raises challenges of

1 finding and retaining suitable tenants. Can you
2 please describe your outreach thus far with groups
3 interested in the commercial and community facility
4 space proposed? And furthermore, the Community Board
5 has expressed that local entrepreneurs, artists, and
6 manufacturers should be given preference for the
7 available space in the development. Can you speak to
8 that specific request and how you might be able to
9 work with the community to find suitable tenants?
10

11 RICHARD LOBEL: Happy to discuss that
12 directly, and then I'd ask Alejandro if he has an
13 additional comments. So, we've got an applicant here
14 who is really engaged and has been attending
15 Community Board meetings since prior to his
16 application, really wants to dig in and see what he
17 can do as far as this community is concerned. The
18 first thing is that he and his partners have
19 experience with similar commercial space, with My Hub
20 Studios in Bushwick, again, over 95 percent
21 occupancy. They take in local artists, and I think
22 the creativity is they allow them to come in in small
23 studio spaces, 200, 250, 300 square feet. There's
24 recording studios in there. There's wellness
25 professionals. So, it's a project which has really

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2 been embraced by the local community. Similarly
3 here, given their prior experience, they intend to
4 engage the local community and allow for this local
5 utilization. We heard the Community Board's opinion
6 in terms of that studio space, and Alejandro and I
7 have talked about the fact that we will make an
8 effort of both in the local community as well as
9 through the Bronx Borough President's office to
10 engage local stakeholders and get more local people
11 into that space. Frankly, it makes the most sense
12 for people in the area to use that commercial space,
13 and we're going to make every effort to do so. The
14 second thing with regards to the commercial use
15 generally, Alejandro's already reached out to various
16 potential commercial tenants, most importantly to--
17 he's looked at potential food stores and also looked
18 at potential bank branches, particularly desirable
19 use in terms of the opinion of Deputy Speaker Ayala.
20 And so we've made that outreach already. He and his
21 partner have experience with certain banks, and so
22 they've been able to do that, and we also would just
23 as an aside bring up the fact that this is in a fresh
24 food eligible area, and so we've talked internally
25 about bringing a fresh application after potential

1 rezoning in order to ensure a food store will be
2 utilizing the site. so, all of that together with
3 the other uses in the building we think make this, as
4 the Chair said, a very exciting project, and we're
5 looking forward to further engaging the community in
6 order to do that.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. There
9 being no questions for this panel, this panel is
10 excused. Is Felix della Paolera -- I believe you
11 said he left already, right?

12 RICHARD LOBEL: He left, yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay, is there anyone
14 else here that wants to testify on 438 Concord
15 Avenue? No one online? Okay. There being no
16 members of the public who wish to testify on LUs 210
17 and 211 regarding 438 Concord Avenue rezoning, the
18 public hearing is now closed and the item is laid
19 over. Alright. I will now open the public hearing
20 on LUs 212 and 213 relating to the 441 and 467
21 Prospect Avenue rezoning proposal in Council Member
22 Hanif's district in Brooklyn. The proposal seeks to
23 redevelop the commercial site of the Arrow Linen
24 Company into approximately 244 apartments. Arrow
25 Linen relocated its commercial laundry facilities

1 which serve man of the city's restaurants to new
2 facilities on Long Island in 2013. The rezoning will
3 also involve the mapping of mandatory inclusionary
4 housing, and approximately 61 of the units would be
5 affordable. For anyone wishing to testify on these
6 items remotely, you must register online through the
7 Council's website at council.nyc.gov/landuse. And
8 once again, for anyone here in-person, please see one
9 of the Sergeant to prepare and submit a speaker's
10 card. If you prefer to submit written testimony, you
11 can always do so by emailing it to
12 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. I would now like
13 to give the floor to Council Member Hanif for her
14 remarks.
15

16 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Thank you, Chair
17 Riley, and good afternoon everyone. I'm Council
18 Member Shahana Hanif. I proudly represent the 39th
19 Council District which includes the 441 and 467
20 Prospect Avenue rezoning application on today's
21 agenda, also known as the Arrow Linen development.
22 My office has already received a significant amount
23 of feedback on this application, and I want to assure
24 you that I've been carefully considering the voices
25 and concerns of my constituents as this application

1 progresses through the formal review process. Over
2 the past several months I have participated in
3 several public hearings regarding this rezoning
4 proposal, including Brooklyn Community Board Seven's
5 two-day hearing on September 9th and September 12th,
6 and Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso's
7 hearing on October 9th. I've also reviewed hundreds
8 of letters and heard from many community members. I
9 want to sincerely thank everyone who has shared their
10 views with me, and I'm especially grateful to those
11 who have joined us today to testify. While there
12 have been a range of opinions expressed, one priority
13 has stood out, and clearly a shared concern, the
14 urgent need for affordable housing on this site. New
15 York City is facing an unprecedented housing crisis
16 with a severe shortage of affordable options. Despite
17 our population growth and job growth, we are not
18 producing nearly enough housing to meet this demand.
19 The problem is pronounced in neighborhoods like
20 Windsor Terrace where zoning changes over the past
21 decades have led to no new developments offering
22 affordable housing for local residents. The result
23 has been an escalating affordability crisis, pushing
24 families out of their neighborhoods, out of their
25

1 communities, and ultimately out of the city they call
2 home. Housing affordability has been a central focus
3 of my work throughout my career, from organizing as a
4 tenant organizer advocate for NYCHA residents in
5 Queens to community organizing in Kensington where I
6 grew up, and now as your Council Member. As someone
7 who was born and raised just a short walk away, I've
8 seen firsthand how families that once called this
9 home are being priced out at a time when we should be
10 providing them with the safety and support New York
11 City's policies are meant to offer. Unfortunately,
12 many are now forced to move to places they can
13 afford, but these new locations don't extend the same
14 sense of protection and belonging. Just last month,
15 the City Council took a major step forward in
16 addressing our housing crisis with the passage of the
17 historic City of Yes for Housing Opportunity and the
18 City for All housing package, securing the largest
19 investment in housing production in two decades,
20 creating 80,000 new units of housing in New York
21 City. With these critical zoning updates, we now
22 have an opportunity to ensure that this rezoning
23 maximizes the number of affordable units in our
24 neighborhood, while protecting current residents and
25

1 preserving existing homes. That said, while I
2 recognize that this proposal includes 25 percent
3 affordable housing through the Mandatory Inclusionary
4 Housing program, I must be clear, this is the legal
5 minimum, not the solution our community deserves.
6 Twenty-five percent affordable housing is simply not
7 enough. Affordability cannot be an afterthought or a
8 check box on an application. It must be a sustained,
9 long-lasting investment in the future of this
10 neighborhood. As we move forward, I will continue to
11 advocate for deeper affordability with a particular
12 focus on those most at risk of housing insecurity. I
13 look forward to hearing more from the Arrow Linen
14 team on how they intend to ensure this project
15 contributes its fair share to the citywide and local
16 housing challenges. Many local residents have also
17 expressed concerns about the height of this proposed
18 rezoning. I understand the importance of preserving
19 the unique character and identity of Windsor Terrace,
20 and I believe with the right modifications this
21 project can add to the fabric of our neighborhood
22 while also delivering much needed permanently
23 affordable housing. I look forward to continuing to
24 engage with all stakeholders to maximize
25

1 affordability and building community consensus.
2
3 Finally, I want to thank Community Board Seven,
4 Borough President Antonio Reynoso, the City Planning
5 Commission, and my colleagues on the Zoning
6 Subcommittee for their thorough evaluation of this
7 proposal. I also want to extend my heartfelt
8 gratitude to the residents of Windsor Terrace and all
9 those connected to this community for their continued
10 engagement and invaluable input throughout this
11 process. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
13 Member Hanif. I'll now call on the applicant panel
14 for this proposal. Counsel, can you please
15 administer the affirmation?

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Panelists, would you
17 please raise your right hands and I will call on you
18 in order to answer the following. Do you swear or
19 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing
20 but the truth in your testimony before this
21 subcommittee and in answer to all Council Member
22 questions? Nora Martins?

23 NORA MARTINS: I do.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Andrew Esposito?

25 ANDREW ESPOSITO: I do.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Nelly Hennessy?

3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. For the
5 viewing public, if you need accessible version of
6 this presentation, please send an email request to
7 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Now the applicant
8 team may begin. I'll just ask that you please
9 restate your name and organization for the record.
10 You may begin.

11 NORA MARTINS: My name is Nora Martins.

12 I am from Akerman LLP, the applicant land use
13 counsel. Good afternoon, Chair Riley, Council Member
14 Hanif. Thank you in advance for your time today, and
15 Council Member Hanif for the many hours and days and
16 evenings that you have spent to-date on this project.
17 I'm joined by Nelly Hennessy from Caliendo
18 Architects, the project architect, and by Andrew
19 Esposito from Apex Development, the applicant's
20 development partner. They'll be available for
21 questions at the conclusion of our presentation.
22 This application is brought by Arrow Linen, a family-
23 owned business that has owned and operated at the
24 site of the rezoning for over 40 years, seeking to
25 facilitate the redevelopment of a nonconforming

1 commercial laundry in a transit and public resource-
2 rich residential neighborhood, replacing it with a
3 residential development and allowing the relocation
4 of the existing facility to a much more appropriate
5 industrial location within Brooklyn. Next slide.
6
7 You can see here outlined in purple the u-shaped mid-
8 block site with two frontages at 441 and 467 Prospect
9 Avenue. Outlined in red, that is the Arrow Linen
10 site. You can see it is located in the midst of a
11 residential neighborhood just south of Prospect Park
12 and the F and T trains. Next slide. This aerial
13 view just illustrates the current Arrow Linen
14 buildings and operations which take up a large part
15 of this block and cover the entire site with parking
16 and building, including the mid-block adjacent to the
17 historic residential contrast [sic]. Next slide.
18 Just an aerial view which further illustrates what I
19 just mentioned. Next slide. While Arrow Linen has
20 been at this site for over 40 years, the site has
21 operated as a nonconforming commercial laundry used
22 for nearly 100 years, previously occupied by Cascade
23 Company. You see a historic photo here showing a
24 smokestack that actually has since been removed, but
25 was previously at the site. Next slide. This

1 application seeks two land use actions to facilitate
2 the proposed development. it would seek a zoning map
3 amendment to change the existing R5B zoning district
4 to an R71 zoning district, and a zoning text
5 amendment to establish a Mandatory Inclusionary
6 Housing area with option one, which is 25 percent
7 residential floor area at or below 60 percent AMI.
8 Next slide. The proposed development is comprised of
9 two buildings, designed this way because of the
10 unique site and also to maximize the open space on
11 the site. Two 13-story buildings that rise to a
12 total height of 130 feet. However, while 13 stories
13 is the maximum height, the buildings are comprised of
14 four and seven-story base heights. The buildings are
15 highly articulated to reduce the impact of the height
16 from the street level and to match the base height on
17 the block which is something that the R71 zoning
18 district permits by design. Just under 250,000
19 square feet of residential floor area. I will note
20 that this project was conceived and designed prior to
21 the City of Yes adoption last month, and so this
22 presentation and our design still account for the 4.6
23 FAR. City of Yes rezoning-- City of Yes text
24 amendment would allow 5.01 FAR which would be about
25

1
2 22,000 square feet more at the site. Unlike the 19
3 stories that was originally proposed, and I know it's
4 great concern for the community-- not something we
5 had ever considered for the project. That maximum is
6 now 15 stories, but we are still committed to
7 building no more than 13 stories. The additional
8 22,000 square feet which is about 20 units or so
9 could be accommodated within the exiting envelope
10 given the size of the site. The-- within the exiting
11 height. The envelope would need to change a bit.
12 This would be about 244 dwelling units. Again, a
13 little bit higher with City of Yes, with 25 percent
14 of those units permanently affordable under MIH
15 option. Included a significant number of two- and
16 three-bedroom apartments, and that distribution would
17 continue with permanently affordable units. Lastly,
18 and I think not insignificantly, the project would
19 restore space that is currently covered by building
20 totally, you know, impervious with nearly half an
21 acre, 21,000 square feet of landscaped open space at
22 the rear of the site, adjacent to the residential
23 rear yards on the block. Next slide. The site plan
24 illustrates the proposed open space as well as the
25 building mapping that show the articulation. Next

1 slide. And then a rendering showing the proposed
2 materiality. Obviously, this is still to be
3 designed, but the concept is to break up the massing
4 of the building and to have the base match the
5 existing materiality on the block. Next slide. Just
6 a little more detail on the proposed open space,
7 because we have heard through this process about
8 concerns about storm water runoff. This would be a
9 vast improvement over the current conditions at the
10 site, adding 21,000 square feet of soft-scape, nearly
11 90 percent of which would be pervious. It would make
12 a big difference. And of course, the new development
13 would comply with all storm water requirements from
14 DEP. Next slide. As Council Member Hanif mentioned
15 and as everyone is aware housing is a pressing issue
16 citywide, no less so in Community Board Seven, and
17 particularly in this specific neighborhood in the
18 neighborhood of Windsor Terrace where only 0.1
19 percent of housing is currently income restricted.
20 The housing stock generally is aging and only 2.4
21 percent of the housing in Community Board Seven was
22 built in the last 15 years. Next slide. This is a
23 unit distribution. I won't go through it in detail.
24 You have it in your packets, but happy to answer any
25

1 questions. This is showing a potential distribution
2 of the permanently affordable units at 40 percent
3 AMI, 60 percent AMI, and 80 percent AMI bands. Next
4 slide. That concludes our presentation. We thank
5 you again for your time and look forward to the
6 subcommittee's questions.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much. I
9 have a few questions, and then I'm going to pass it
10 over to Council Member Hanif. The Community Board
11 voted against this project, and the opposition has
12 centered on objections to the proposed height. Have
13 you explored alternative building designs or zoning
14 scenarios that would reduce height by yield the same
15 unit count?

16 NORA MARTINS: Yes, we have looked at
17 some alternatives at the beginning of this project
18 and then also throughout this process. One of those
19 districts would be an R7A contextual zoning district
20 which has the same floor area, would result in the
21 same number of units, but does have a lower maximum
22 building height. The reason this was not selected
23 from the beginning of the process was in consultation
24 with City Planning and with our input we found that
25 the articulation and the design of the building,

1 particularly given this unusually-shaped site was
2 much better, for lack of a better word, than under
3 the R71. Although the buildings would overall be
4 lower, and which we understand is something the
5 community is looking for that would be a higher
6 building wall on the street wall and less
7 articulation to the building.
8

9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: What will be built on
10 the site if this rezoning were not to be approved?

11 NORA MARTINS: It would like-- I mean, an
12 as-of-right development here, there's no-- currently,
13 I think it's an important point, there's currently no
14 Mandatory Inclusionary or even voluntary inclusionary
15 housing mapped here. There's no requirement to
16 provide affordable housing. It could be, under the
17 R5B, likely condo development, residential condo
18 development.

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Have you begun your
20 search for where to relocate Arrow Linen's laundry
21 business, and have you considered relocation to one
22 of Brooklyn's industrial business zones?

23 NORA MARTINS: Yes. Again, at the
24 beginning of this process, because that is a critical
25 element of the project, the applicant has spoken with

1 the Borough President's office, reached out to EDC
2 and also spoken with SBIDC about potential relocation
3 sites. However, until this rezoning process is
4 complete, they cannot fully engage in that relocation
5 plan. But that is absolutely the concept.

7 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Since you have
8 presented and committed to using MIH option one, why
9 does the application propose to map both MIH option
10 one and two over the rezoning area?

11 NORA MARTINS: The reason for that was to
12 preserve flexibility, but the applicant is committed
13 to option one.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. I'm going to
15 yield to Council Member Hanif. If I have any more
16 questions I'll come back and ask.

17 NORA MARTINS: Thanks.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Council Member Hanif?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: thank you, Chair,
20 and thank you Nora, Andrew and Nelly for joining us
21 today. So, as you know, over the past few months
22 Windsor Terrace residents have voiced their concerns
23 very loud and clear during many hearings hosted by
24 the Community Board, the Borough President and the
25 City Planning Commission. They've consistently

1 highlighted the urgent need for affordability and
2 raised concerns about the proposed height. The depth
3 of affordability is a top concern for both me and my
4 constituents as we continue to see residents
5 displaced from my district and the city. Can you
6 walk us through your consideration of a 100 percent
7 affordable development on this site?
8

9 NORA MARTINS: sure. Again, something
10 that we did review and engaged an affordable housing
11 consultant to take a look at along with, you know,
12 our experience with affordable housing development
13 which our firm does a lot of work in that space.
14 Unfortunately, right now, the pipeline for public
15 financing for 100 percent affordable housing
16 development is quite long. This is a big site. It
17 would be a large financing, a large use of public
18 resources, and this neighborhood and this kind of
19 site is exactly why the MIH program was created.
20 It's an area where market rate housing can cross-
21 subsidize permanently affordable housing that is
22 privately financed. This does not use city resources
23 and does allow for production of those affordable
24 units far more quickly than if they were 100 percent
25 publicly financed.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Fine. So, have
3 you discussed the possibility of financing one of the
4 two buildings as a 100 percent affordable new
5 construction project with HPD?

6 NORA MARTINS: We have looked into that.
7 Again, it's the same concern even though it would be
8 smaller and less units. again, the pipeline is just
9 very long and the applicant can't finance one
10 building and start construction and then have to wait
11 five years on the other portion of the site, and then
12 whilst trying to relocate the operations of the
13 facility.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: And so this is
15 just to make sure we have this on the record, the
16 concern is mainly about the timeline.

17 NORA MARTINS: Yes.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: As it stands, the
19 proposal with the base level of MIH affordable units
20 falls, as we've said a lot, short of what this
21 community needs. Are you exploring ways to increase
22 the number of affordable units beyond the 2030
23 required at 60 to 80 percent area median income?
24
25

2 NORA MARTINS: Yes, absolutely. We are
3 exploring that, and we look forward to presenting--
4 to presenting that to the Council.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: And if you are
6 willing to provide additional affordable units beyond
7 MIH, can you commit to ensuring deeper affordability
8 for those units?

9 NORA MARTINS: Deeper than option one of
10 MIH?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Deeper than option
12 one?

13 NORA MARTINS: That's something we would
14 have to consider, but we will definitely look into
15 that.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: It's imperative
17 that we recognize that we need units that are 40
18 percent, 30 percent, 20 percent, 10 percent AMI, in
19 particular the political climate we're entering and
20 the already existing affordability crisis. Why was
21 the R71-- and I know Chair Riley asked a version of
22 this question. Could you just again summarize why
23 R71 was chosen, and have you considered other
24 options? And I know R7A [sic] was considered, but
25 sum-- can you provide just a quick summary?

1
2 NORA MARTINS: Sure, sure. So, yes, like
3 as I mentioned, R7A was considered, and again, we
4 decided to proceed with the R71 really due to the
5 design flexibility that it offered to the project.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: And can you just
7 for the average person-- what is design--

8 NORA MARTINS: [interposing] Sure.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Yeah.

10 NORA MARTINS: No, sure.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Tell us--

12 NORA MARTINS: [interposing] I'll explain
13 and then maybe Nelly can jump in as our expert here.
14 But basically there are overall height limitations in
15 zoning, but there are also other building envelope
16 controls, particularly in contextual districts which
17 are the districts that end in a letter like R7A
18 instead of R71 that provide for certain minimum
19 street wall, minimum/maximum street wall heights,
20 setbacks, and other ways the building is actually
21 massed other than the total overall height. So, the
22 R71 as a non-contextual district does not have the
23 same controls, so we were able to lower, for example,
24 the front façade of both buildings to four stories,
25 which would not be possible in the R7A district.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: The difference
2 between an R71 and R7A is basically the setbacks that
3 would be possible with R71, whereas with R7A no
4 setbacks and it would be a bulkier building.
5

6 NORA MARTINS: Right. There would still
7 be some setbacks, but there would be less
8 flexibility.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Less flexibility
10 with the R7A.

11 NORA MARTINS: Yeah.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Moving on to
13 environmental remediation, could you talk about what
14 sustainability and resiliency features are included
15 in the building's design and construction?

16 NORA MARTINS: Sure. So the building
17 would be-- and Nelly can jump in too. The building
18 will be designed. Obviously it's a new building in
19 accordance with all current codes and regulations,
20 one of which is DCP-- sorry, DEP's new combined storm
21 water permit regulations which require, significant--
22 I think five times more storm water to be retained
23 on-site. So that is something that would be required
24 to be complied with and would be a huge improvement
25 to the current conditions at the site. I would also

1
2 look into doing bioswells [sic] for the tree pits in
3 front of the property. I mean, obviously there's a
4 good amount of frontage, so that would be-- that
5 would be significant. And then the open space just be
6 amount of green open space, 21,000+ square feet
7 restored to the block.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: So, this is about
9 the residents who are in the building, they will be
10 protected. They won't have issues that pertain to
11 maybe flooding outside of their building.

12 NORA MARTINS: Oh, the residents of the
13 new build? Do you want to take--

14 NELLY HENNESSY: This will be for the
15 tenants, but it would also-- the neighborhood would
16 also be-- what's the word I'm looking for-- benefit
17 from this, because there's-- the storm water, we're
18 going to use different methods. Bioswells can also
19 divert the water front the street, the runoff from
20 the street into these bioswells. So they will
21 contain and seep into the ground as to flood the
22 neighborhood. So that's one of them. We're also
23 going to probably do-- not probably-- the green roofs
24 and solar-ready because that's the new thing.

1 ANDREW ESPOSITO: And the building will
2
3 be fully electrified, no gas service, all utilities
4 electric.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: So, essentially,
6 despite the already existing storms that turn into
7 massive floods, this building would cont-- would not
8 contribute to that flooding?

9 NELLY HENNESSY: To increase--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: To increase. And
11 you know, that flooding is a big concern in that
12 neighborhood. My office deals with many complaints
13 about flooding and these are disasters. People have
14 to completely renovate their homes, and the city
15 doesn't, you know, subsidize the funding nor pay
16 through a program. So how are you addressing the
17 flooding concerns beyond bioswells? You mentioned
18 bioswells, green roof. Are there other-- how's the
19 park going to contribute?

20 NELLY HENNESSY: Yes, that's correct.
21 We're going to be using a lot of the softscapes and
22 materials that would let the water seep into the
23 ground and not just hold and flood the neighborhood.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Given that the
25 site has been assigned an E designation, a phase two

1 environmental investigation is required before the
2 construction, what methods will be used in this next
3 phase of remediation?
4

5 NORA MARTINS: Yes, that's correct.
6 There's an E designation assigned which basically
7 puts the Mayor's Office of Environmental Control in
8 charge, and it gives them jurisdiction over the site.
9 Before we can pull a building permit, have to comply
10 with all their testing and remediation protocols
11 under their oversight.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: So, this-- you're
13 telling me that the Mayor's Office of Environmental
14 Control would be--

15 NORA MARTINS: [interposing] Sorry,
16 environmental remediation.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Remediation--
18 would determine our-- are they determining the tools
19 or the methods, or how is--

20 NORA MARTINS: [interposing] Yes, they
21 have full review. I'm going to-- Andrew's been
22 through it.

23 ANDREW ESPOSITO: Yes, the soil
24 disposition. It's typically you work with--

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] We need you to put a mic.

ANDREW ESPOSITO: I was trying to speak loudly for you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

ANDREW ESPOSITO: Sorry, Council Member. So, typically, an in ordinary development that did not have an E designation, the environmental agency is New York City's Department of Environmental Protection, DEP, of course. When there's an E designation that is elevated to the Mayor's Office of Environmental Remediation, OER, which has heightened standards. So, they'll have strict oversight on soil remediation. They may require something called and SSDS system, sub slab depressurization which allows vapors out of the soil and/or a vapor barrier below the foundation, things that are not typically required with DEP and an ordinary non-E-designated development site. So we will be working with their office shortly.

COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: got it.

NORA MARTINS: And I think just an important thing, too, is that usually there's a construction health and safety plan which is intended

1
2 to protect workers and the community from any adverse
3 impacts from any necessary remediation.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: And then I know
5 you're awaiting the proposal. How long do you expect
6 the environmental remediation to take?

7 ANDREW ESPOSITO: We would have to
8 understand further the scope. I mean, typically it's
9 conjunction with demolition and then some of the
10 foundation work. So, for example, when we're
11 excavating for foundation, the folks from the
12 environmental consultant and inspectors will come and
13 review where the soil goes. There's certain trucking
14 tickets where it's tracked, which facility. So it's
15 very stringent. It's a-- you know, in conjunction
16 with the early stages of construction. It could be a
17 six month process, but then there are components like
18 in the event of an SSDS system which is a system that
19 is incorporated into the building, and then there
20 could be monitoring thereafter. So, we'll have to
21 understand the extent with OER. They will-- that
22 agency will give us what's called a notice to proceed
23 once they are satisfied with the game plan by virtue
24 of a RAP, or REWP, remedial action work plan, which
25 when they're satisfied with what's in it, they'll

1
2 give us what's called a Notice to Proceed, and then
3 they'll check that we actually fulfill all those
4 obligations.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: And as this work
6 will take place, are there potential risks associated
7 with the remediation?

8 ANDREW ESPOSITO: I hate to be cavalier
9 and say no, but the short answer is no. There are
10 quite a bit of E designated sites. I'd almost go so
11 far as to say many. I probably would not say most,
12 but many, many sites have E designations in the city.
13 There's three different types, hazmat which is soil,
14 air and noise, and so it's actually very commonplace
15 in development. In fact, some work that we do will
16 incorporate some of these safety mechanisms like a
17 vapor barrier even if there's not an E designation
18 because it's best practices. So I say candidly that
19 it's commonplace and something that there's quite a
20 bit of mechanisms in place to handle.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Will you commit to
22 providing regular updates on the remediation and
23 construction progress to the community?

24 ANDREW ESPOSITO: Absolutely.
25

1 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: I'm moving onto
2 jobs, and then I have just two more questions. Thank
3 you, Chair Riley, for the time. Are you committed to
4 protecting the existing jobs of current Arrow Linen
5 workers?
6

7 NORA MARTINS: Yes, absolutely, and
8 actually part of what this plan will facilitate is
9 not only the relocation, but also building back the
10 number of workers that they had in Brooklyn pre-
11 pandemic.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Understood, and
13 that's good news. Will this development create good
14 paying jobs for building service workers, and how
15 many jobs are you anticipating?

16 NORA MARTINS: I don't have the number of
17 jobs right now, but we are in active discussions with
18 32BJ and look forward to providing an update on that
19 soon.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Moving on to
21 community facility space. How will you ensure the
22 community facility space meets the needs of the local
23 community?

24 NORA MARTINS: So, with the community
25 facility space, that's something that we did not

1 originally envision as a part of the project, but
2 that has evolved as something that would be a huge
3 benefit to the community. So, we are looking forward
4 to working with the Council Member, the Community
5 Board and with community stakeholders to identify
6 potential uses that would be most beneficial.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: So that means at
9 this time there hasn't been--

10 NORA MARTINS: [interposing] No, we don't
11 have that.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: any discussion
13 with tenants to build a facility space. Okay, those
14 are all my questions. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
16 Member Hanif. There being no more questions for this
17 panel, this-- actually, I do have one question. You
18 spoke about the employees at Arrow Linen laundry
19 business. How many employees are you anticipating
20 that are going to get their jobs back?

21 NORA MARTINS: I actually don't have that
22 exact number on me right now. I will send it to you.
23 Sorry, I have it in my folder, but it will be all the
24 workers that are there now is not intended to

1 decrease, and like I said increase that number of
2 workers. So we will provide that information.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. And are they
5 currently-- where are they currently working at? I'm
6 not familiar with the location. So is that business-
7 -

8 NORA MARTINS: [interposing] They're
9 currently-- the facility is currently operating, but
10 at a reduced capacity. since the pandemic one of
11 their main, you know, client bases was hotel linens
12 which obviously took a major hit and has only started
13 to build back up.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay, thank you.
15 There being no questions, this panel is excused.

16 NORA MARTINS: Thank you.

17 ANDREW ESPOSITO: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: We have a lot of
19 people signed up to testify. Respectively, I'm going
20 to cut people off at two minutes. I apologize. I do
21 not want to be disrespectful. I just want to put that
22 out there. If you disagree-- I just want to say you
23 guys have been doing a tremendous job with approving
24 or disagreeing. Keep it the same way, please,
25 respectfully. Thank you so much. The first panelist

1
2 group that we're going to call up first consists of
3 Timothy Jowes [sp?]. I'm sorry if I mispronounced
4 your name, or Gilles. Laura Hurbert, Jacob Walsh,
5 Kate McCabe, and Brighid Odea. We're going to begin
6 first with in-person testimony. We're going to
7 complete all in-person testimony, and then we're
8 going to move to online testimony. Okay, the
9 following group I'm going to call up so you can get
10 ready is going to consist of Luz Torres, Cleveland
11 Cyrus, Kaitlyn Schuster, Matthew Wagman, and Samiya
12 Rubaiya. I'm sorry if I mispronounced your name.
13 We'll begin first with Kate McCabe. Kate, you may
14 begin.

15 KATE MCCABE: Good morning or afternoon
16 now. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name
17 is Kate McCabe. My husband and I grew up around the
18 corner from Arrow Linen and now live in nearby
19 Kensington. I want to share three reasons for the
20 City Council to amend Arrow's zoning application from
21 15 stories with the minimum required affordable units
22 to Housing on High Rises proposed solution of R6A and
23 at least 40 percent affordable units. Number one,
24 Arrow is exploiting the laws that were meant to help
25 and protect communities. Mandatory Inclusionary

1
2 Housing was created to encourage affordable housing,
3 but Arrow is using it as a tool to create tremendous
4 land value. Spot zoning laws were created to protect
5 communities from one owner reclassifying their land
6 to the detriment of the surrounding community in
7 order to avoid an illegal spot rezoning. Arrow
8 included 11 additional buildings, 10 of which are
9 renter-occupied and compose of 44 units, six of which
10 are rent stabilized. That is a misuse of the purpose
11 of the law. If this City Council approves this
12 misuse, the Council is condoning tenant displacement
13 as a tool of luxury development. Number two, Arrow's
14 proposal will displace tenants and transform Prospect
15 Avenue into luxury boulevard. There are roughly 201
16 rental units on the block, 59 of which are rent
17 stabilized. What happens to those 201 families if
18 their landlord can rezone and make twice as much per
19 apartment and add 12 stories to the building as this
20 precedent would encourage? Those renters lose their
21 homes and Prospect Avenue transforms into luxury
22 rentals. Number three, this decision-- whether our
23 City Council listens to the voices of constituents or
24 to real estate lobbyists has citywide implications.
25 Housing on High Rises organized three community-wide

1 meetings with hundreds of attendees. Community Board
2 Seven voted 30 to six against the proposal and
3 testimony to the City Planning Commission and Borough
4 President overwhelmingly opposed the Arrow
5 application. The voices of our neighbors matter. As
6 Council Member Hanif has said multiple times, she
7 decides, but the point of the ULURP process is for
8 all parties to be a part of the decision-making. And
9 while this application is for the Windsor Terrace
10 South Slope community, it could be anywhere in New
11 York City. We hope you will recognize these
12 important--

13
14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Thank
15 you, Kate.

16 KATE MCCABE: the important vote you will
17 be making for all New Yorkers and vote to reject this
18 application as submitted.

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

20 KATE MCCABE: Thank you for the
21 additional time.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Next we're going to
23 hear from Jacob Walsh.

24 JACK WALSH: My name is Jack Walsh. I'm a
25 lifetime Park Slope Windsor Terrace resident, and I

1 support contextual, affordable development of the
2 Arrow Linen site, but I oppose Arrow's proposal.
3 While many closed door meetings have taken place
4 between Council Member Hanif, Arrow Linen's owners,
5 developer Open New York and lobbyists, the community
6 has organized transparently to raise awareness and
7 provide alternatives. We engaged Catholic Charities
8 to make a market-rate offer based on a seven to nine-
9 story zoning to build 100 percent affordable housing.
10 Arrow rejected it, betting their lobbyist would get
11 their proposal approved as-is. Our two community
12 meetings were attended by 200 and 500 people; 95
13 percent opposed Arrow's proposal. The CB7 Land Use
14 Committee hearing, CB7 full board hearing, Borough
15 President's hearing, and the City Planning Commission
16 hearings had a combined 681 testimonies. Ninety
17 three percent opposed Arrow's proposal. CB7's full
18 board voted 30 to six against. Calculate all
19 testimonies for today's hearing and you will
20 undoubtedly find an overwhelming number opposed as
21 well. But as we've heard, Council Member Hanif gets
22 to decide. I implore the Council Member to amend
23 the application to R6A designation with 40 percent
24 affordability. With a slight adjustment to Arrow's
25

1
2 proposed unit mix, R6A allows for up to 124
3 apartments at nine stories, doubling the number of
4 affordable units of Arrow's proposal. Arrow will make
5 tens of millions as they have no land cost, and the
6 remaining 186 apartments will be luxury market rate.
7 Conversely, Arrow's proposal for 13, now 15 stories
8 with City of Yes includes 60 fewer affordable
9 apartments, and the remaining 200+ will be luxury
10 market. Arrow can make tens of millions on a
11 development the community wants or hundreds of
12 millions on a development with fewer affordable
13 apartment that will trigger a landslide of
14 speculation and displacement. The choice is clear:
15 wildly enrich Arrow's owners or stand on your stated
16 values of community-driven instead of profit-driven
17 development, and the 2,000 community members of
18 Housing Not High Rises will loudly support you when
19 we vote in June. You get to decide. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you Jacob.
21 Next, we're going to have Laura Hulbert.

22 LAURA HULBERT: Hello. My name is Laura
23 Hulbert. I'm a resident of Windsor Terrace for 35
24 years. Just to be clear, we're all on board with the
25 City of Yes. We're saying yes, let's create units

1 that enable city residents to stay in Brooklyn, but
2 we're not saying yes, let's maximize the profits of
3 the Arrow Linen family or the housing developers.
4 I'm here to urge you to deny Arrow Linen's radical
5 upzoning application. It's absurd to say that 15 or
6 even 11-story towers would fit seamlessly into the
7 context of the Windsor Terrace neighborhood
8 surrounding the Arrow Linen site. This surrounding
9 houses are mostly three stories high. The skyline
10 proposed would be unrecognizable, and the number of
11 luxury units being pursued is out of touch with the
12 character of the neighborhood. Limiting the upzoning
13 of the area to seven stories and increasing the
14 percentage of Mandatory Inclusionary Housing from 25
15 percent to 45, or to 40 actually, would serve to
16 bring more affordable housing to the neighborhood,
17 and at the same time it would deter developers from
18 converting the existing apartment buildings in the
19 neighborhood into luxury high rises. It is a little
20 ironic that the idea behind City of Yes is to prevent
21 residents being priced out of the city. Yet, the
22 upzoning proposal for the Arrow site would displace
23 our neighbors in rent stabilized apartments, and it
24 has already subjected some privately owned, multi-

1 family buildings to predatory speculators. Yes to
2 housing, but housing for whom, precisely? Please
3 vote no on this rezoning application and uphold the
4 Department of City Planning's stated mission to work
5 with neighborhoods to develop sound ground-up
6 frameworks for growth. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Laura.
9 Thank you. Next, we're going to hear from Timothy
10 Gilles. Sorry if I mispronounced.

11 TIMOTHY GILLES: Gilles.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Gilles.

13 TIMOTHY GILLES: Honorable Chair Riley,
14 Honorable Member Hanif. My name is Timothy Gilles,
15 testifying on behalf of the Park Slope Civic Council,
16 the oldest civic association in Brooklyn where I am a
17 member of the Executive Committee and the immediate
18 past President. The Civil Council takes a balanced
19 view and a balanced approach to the land use and
20 development issues. We supported the upzoning of
21 Fourth Avenue in 2003 and the Gowanus rezoning in
22 2021. We are active in Brooklyn Speaks, protesting
23 the multiple delays in building affordable housing at
24 Atlantic Yards. We supported the development of the
25 Fifth Avenue key food site, because the developers

1
2 accepted our demand for more affordable housing and a
3 lower threshold of affordability. We have not
4 objected to any of the 13 or larger story buildings
5 on Fourth Avenue. We did not oppose City of Yes. We
6 do, however, object to the Arrow Linen upzoning. Our
7 Board of Trustees adopted a resolution in September
8 that I am submitting for the record. Today, I will
9 highlight just two points. First, the only blocks
10 within a half mile of Arrow Linen that allow 13-story
11 buildings are on Fourth Avenue. From curb to curb,
12 Fourth Avenue is 88 feet wide. Whereas, Prospect
13 Avenue is just 42. From façade to façade, Fourth
14 Avenue is 120 to 130 feet wide or wider, while
15 Prospect Avenue is just 80. Prospect Avenue is a
16 much narrower street and it is not a commercial
17 street. Yet, the upzoning would allow equally tall
18 and out-of-scale buildings. Second, this upzoning
19 request is not a binding development plan. If it is
20 approved, Arrow Linen could withdraw this plan and
21 build something else with even taller buildings
22 allowed by City of Yes. There might be new
23 developers with new plans. One or more of the 11 non-
24 Arrow Linen buildings might be purchased and
25 demolished to permit an even bigger project. The

1 City Council should reject this upzoning and insist
2 that the owners negotiate with the community to take
3 advantage of an excellent opportunity to building
4 affordable housing without creating an island of high
5 rise development on a relatively narrow residential
6 street in a low-rise historic neighborhood. Thank
7 you very much.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: thank you so much.
10 Last we'll hear from Brighid Odea.

11 BRIGHID ODEA: Hello. Thanks for the
12 opportunity to speak today. My name's Brighid Odea.
13 I'm a renter. I've lived one block from the proposed
14 site for over 12 years. I strongly oppose this
15 rezoning. Like many of my neighbors, I support new
16 housing at this location, but it must prioritize our
17 community's needs, not to maximizing developer
18 profits. Limiting the rezoning to seven stories and
19 increasing the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing
20 requirement to 40 percent would create more
21 affordable units and protect against displacement of
22 renters. The site is surrounded by 59 rent stabilized
23 units and pockets of some of the neighborhood's most
24 affordable housing. Allowing 15-story luxury towers
25 will fuel speculative buying, rising rents, and push

1 many of my neighbors out of their homes. Arrow's plan
2 also proposes to rezone 11 privately-owned multi-
3 family buildings and predatory speculators have
4 already targeted these owners. I've attended nearly
5 every public meeting on this radical rezoning, and I
6 can say that Arrow Linen has not been a good
7 neighbor, despite owning this property for over 40
8 years and benefitting from a 25-year taxpayer funded
9 tax abatement, they spent hundreds of thousands of
10 dollars lobbying elected officials, but have made
11 zero attempts to engage with us, the community.
12 Which as an aside, listening to the other applicants
13 today, it's such a stark contrast to hear some of the
14 other developers who seemingly engaged with the local
15 community, but I digress. Our community deserves
16 better. Limiting this rezoning to seven stories with
17 40 percent affordable housing protects existing
18 renters and ensures that housing is treated as a
19 public good, not a vehicles for massive, private
20 profit. I urge you to reject this application in its
21 current form and stand with the community you're
22 elected to serve. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much for
25 this panel for your testimony and being patient.

1
2 You're excused. Thank you so much. The next panel
3 I'm going to call up consists of Luz Torres,
4 Cleveland Cyrus from 32BJ, Matthew Wagman and Samiya
5 Rubaiya. Alright, first we begin with Luz Torres.

6 LUZ TORRES: Council Members, please vote
7 to limit this application to more than seven stories.
8 My name is Luz Torres. I live on Prospect Avenue
9 almost 25 years. My three-story home is in the Arrow
10 Linen U sandwiched between the two Arrow Linen
11 driveways. I live on the first floor and rent the
12 other two apartments below market rent. I strongly
13 oppose Arrow Linen zoning my land. Arrow Linen has
14 intentionally excluded [sic] my environment, the
15 other homeowners in the U and the Windsor Terrace in
16 South Slope communities. Arrow Linen has ignored
17 Community Board's recommendation to engage community
18 in discussion-- to engage the community in discussion
19 regarding proposed rezoning. Arrow Linen has
20 benefitted from 25 years tax abatement, which has
21 been subsidized by our city plays-- city pays, your
22 constituents. Arrow Linen has continued to meet with
23 our Council Member Hanif and other interested parties
24 to elicit support for two 13+ towers under the guise
25 of affordable housing. Arrow's focus is on selling or

1 renting the three apartments which of course increase
2 rent in market value, making apartments in the area
3 unaffordable to current residents to rent or
4 purchase. In conclusion, I would like to paraphrase
5 Borough President Reynoso who was a City Council
6 Member on May 13th, 2016 in a Ted Talk stated, "A
7 basic right of the community is to engage in
8 collaboration, civic engagement." He added that it's
9 extremely important towards development of inclusive
10 and empower community. Council Members, from the
11 bottom of my heart, we are asking you to empower us a
12 community and for elected officials to listen to our
13 express needs and our objections as constituents of
14 District 39. Thank you so much.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
17 we're going to hear from Samiya Rubaiya. I'm sorry
18 if I mispronounce your name.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Bring the mic
20 closer.

21 SAMIYA RUBAIYA: Okay, thank you. Hello
22 everyone. My name is Samiya Rubaiya, and I'm a proud
23 youth advocate and Kensington neighborhood native.
24 When I was six, my family briefly moved to the
25 suburbs of Philadelphia. At first, it felt like a

1 vacation, but before we could settle into the quiet,
2 we returned to Kensington. The truth is no place
3 compares to the culture and community that thrives in
4 District 39, especially in neighborhoods like Windsor
5 Terrace and Kensington. Yet, my family's return
6 wasn't easy. My father, an employee of the DOE, and
7 my mother then a medical assistant could not afford
8 the city's rising cost. Even then, the cost of
9 living pushed us out, and for many people today,
10 particularly working-class families, the struggle
11 continues. I've seen the effect of the crisis
12 firsthand. Rent increases forces families to crowd
13 into smaller spaces forcing familiar faces in our
14 neighborhoods to ask around, sometimes even to me as
15 a teenager if we know of any vacant apartments. This
16 proposal represents a critical chance to ease that
17 burden. The Arrow Linen zoning plans provides an
18 opportunity to support a significant amount of
19 affordable homes in a neighborhood that has seen
20 little affordable development in years. In a city
21 where working-class families are being driven further
22 from opportunity daily, this is a step we cannot
23 afford to ignore. We must be clear, either we
24 support affordable housing or we don't. I understand
25

1 that some people are concerned about the height of
2 the proposed building. We cannot let this overshadow
3 what is truly at stake. Reducing the height of the
4 proposed buildings would severely limit the number of
5 homes that we can build. This is especially critical
6 in a district where the median income far exceeds
7 that of which many can afford. This proposal creates
8 a space for those families, providing with an
9 opportunity to live, work, and thrive in the
10 wonderful community that I call home. Maximizing the
11 number of affordable homes is what matters the most,
12 and I urge the City Council to support this proposal.
13 Thank you.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
16 we're going to hear from Matthew Wagman.

17 MATTHEW WAGMAN: Hello. My name is
18 Matthew Wagman. I am not here to represent any formal
19 group, but rather the interest of young people like
20 myself. For our future, I'm advocating for the Arrow
21 Linen rezoning of Prospect Avenue and any opportunity
22 to ease the housing crisis. I grew up on Windsor
23 Terrace. I don't know if I'll be able to afford to
24 continue to live there, even in New York City at all.
25 Here's some publicly available statistics which

1
2 underscore the severity of the situation. I would be
3 happy to share my source with anyone who's
4 interested. Brooklyn housing prices are up around 60
5 percent in the last decade, double the roughly 30
6 percent CPI inflation rate. The citywide vacancy
7 rate this year is 1.4 percent, the lowest it has been
8 in 50 years, and less than half of what it was pre-
9 pandemic. In our neighborhood, the median rent
10 within a half mile of the 15th Street station is now
11 \$3,355 for a one-bedroom. That is roughly five
12 percent higher than last year, and only affordable
13 for someone making about 120 percent of area median
14 income, over \$130,000 for a single person. The only
15 way to address this crisis is to build enough housing
16 to meet the existing demand. According to a study by
17 NYU and Fannie Mae on the NYC housing market, every
18 10 percent increase of housing units decreases local
19 rents by one percent over the next five years, and
20 also spurs an increase in small businesses openings.
21 Windsor Terrace desperately needs new housing and has
22 the amenities and quality of life to support it. With
23 more housing we can support more small businesses,
24 have more leverage demand, improve transit service to
25 schools, and keep the neighborhood affordable to

1 long-time residents. This project is the best
2 opportunity to build in our community. The property
3 is currently a blight on the neighborhood and
4 converting it to housing will allow us to meet demand
5 without impacting existing homes. While it would be
6 amazing if there are more affordable units in this
7 project, the bottom line is that we need as many
8 units as we can get out of such a good opportunity.
9 I humbly request the City Council not let the perfect
10 be the enemy of the good and continue to approve new
11 housing construction so we can solve the housing
12 crisis.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Next we're going to
15 have Kaitlyn Schuster from 32BJ.

16 KAITLYN SCHUSTER: Hi, one more time,
17 Chair Riley. Hi Council Member Hanif and members of
18 the Subcommittee. My name is Kaitlyn Schuster. I'm
19 here today representing SEIU Local 32BJ. 32BJ is the
20 largest union of property service workers in the
21 country representing over 175,000 members across our
22 13 state, including tens of thousands of commercial
23 property service workers, security officers and
24 residential building staff in New York City. I'm here
25 to report that 32BJ is in active discussions with the

1 development team over an agreement to ensure the
2 provision of prevailing wages and benefits to the
3 future property service workers who wills staff 441
4 and 467 Prospect Avenue after the project is
5 constructed and which would memorialize the
6 development team's commitment to labor peace at the
7 sites with respect to those same workers. We're
8 optimistic, and I'm told we're very close to arriving
9 at a written agreement before the project's
10 considered by the full City Council this month. And
11 we're also, I want to say, really thankful to the
12 Council Member for ensuring that the union and our
13 members concerns were addressed and, you know,
14 facilitated during this ULURP process. Thank you so
15 much for your time.

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. There
18 being no questions for this panel, this panel is
19 excused. The next panel we're going to call on
20 consists of Jay Goldberg, Ford Harris [sp?], or
21 Harris-- excuse me, Ford Harris, Jonathan Woker
22 [sp?], Alex Rutold [sp?], and Eric Olsen. The group
23 after that will be Shawn Mclaughlin, Alex Maza [sp?],
24 Olivia Gonzalez, Eric Neilson, and Gregory Thomas.
25 No, Jeffrey Thomas, excuse me. Alright, we're going

1 to begin first with Eric Olsen [sp?]. Alright, Eric-
2 - we'll begin first with Alex.
3

4 ALEX RUTALD: Good afternoon, Chair
5 Riley, Council Member Hanif, and members of the City
6 Council. Thank you for the time and opportunity to
7 speak today. My name is Alex. I've lived in Windsor
8 Terrace for over 21 years, my entire adult life. I
9 love the neighborhood and I'm raising my children
10 here. I'm here today to oppose the rezoning
11 application by Arrow Linen and ask that you limit any
12 rezoning to seven stories and increase the Mandatory
13 Inclusionary Housing in their proposed development to
14 at least 40 percent. I also request that you use your
15 influence to push Arrow Linen to fully engage with
16 the community about environmental safety, traffic
17 concerns, and most of all, to consider the proposal
18 for 100 percent affordable housing from Catholic
19 Charities. Windsor Terrace is a proudly a
20 historically working-class neighborhood, populated by
21 city workers and retirees. That includes
22 firefighters, sanitation, and city workers like my
23 husband, and we're get squeezed from all sides. We
24 are all in agreement about the need for more
25 affordable housing in this city. However, this spot

1 rezoning will accelerate luxury development in South
2 Slope, Windsor Terrace and Kensington while creating
3 only 61 units of affordable housing and jeopardizing
4 59 existing units of rent stabilized housing to
5 development and speculation. If you gain 61 units,
6 but lose 59 units of existing residence, that's a net
7 gain of two units of affordable housing at the cost
8 of displacing exiting constituents with long-time
9 roots in the neighborhood. Where do these people go?
10 What do they do? Arrow Linen stands to profit
11 hundreds of millions of dollars from this approval.
12 They are requesting a significant exemption to the
13 zoning laws to maximize their profits with luxury
14 developments and offering us scraps in the form of
15 trickle-down housing. It was interesting to hear the
16 additional rezoning proposals this morning where it
17 was clear other applicants had actively engaged the
18 community and provided for their own needs instead of
19 just their own self-interest like Arrow Linen. As a
20 regular person trying to get by, it's frustrating
21 seeing a business with deep pockets bringing in
22 outside lobbyists to speak on these issues. These
23 are lobbyists aligned with big real estate and they
24 are coming to our community meetings and maligning
25

1 the people who live in Windsor Terrace who all want
2 affordable housing for all of our neighbors. Thank
3 you so much for your time.

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Alex.

5 Next we're going to have Jonathan Booker.

6 JONATHAN BOOKER: Hello and thank you to
7 the members for this time. I'm a 15-year resident of
8 South Park Slope and I'm here urging you to vote
9 against this proposal. We in the community-- and I
10 am not in any way against affordable housing, and we
11 believe that it is necessary and something that we
12 want, but this development is not the way to do it.
13 You asked about could they have a lower height limit
14 on this building and have the same number of units,
15 and their answer was very unsatisfactory. They
16 basically did not answer that question. It's clear
17 that you could have a much lower height for this
18 development and still have the same number of units.
19 So, they have not in any way answered that question
20 satisfactorily. This is about the profit for Arrow.
21 Arrow is out the door. They are leaving our
22 community. They are leaving Brooklyn. These jobs
23 are going to Garden City where they already are.
24 They don't care about this neighborhood. They don't

1 care about Brooklyn. All they care is maximizing the
2 profit of this transaction. The neighborhood has
3 done plenty to bring new housing to this area.
4 Fourth Avenue is replete with tall buildings.
5 There's a tall building on the other corner of
6 Prospect Park, a huge apartment building that's being
7 built. Gowanus is-- it's a horrocity [sic] what's
8 going on in Gowanus, over building in that area.
9 This is about profit. It's not about benefitting the
10 community. It's not about affordable housing. They
11 are doing the absolute minimum to get this thing
12 built so that they can make the maximum profit. If
13 you deny them, they're not going to go away. They're
14 going to come back and they're going to propose
15 another development that's more in line with what the
16 community wants. I also would note that Arrow didn't
17 show up here. They sent hired guns, people who are
18 paid to advocate for this development. Did they show
19 up? No. Did they show up at our community meetings?
20 No. They refused to engage with us because they have
21 no argument for this except for their own
22 profitability. That's the only thing they're
23 interested in. Thank you for your time.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.

3 Next we're going to have Ford Harris.

4 FORD HARRIS: I would just like to say
5 thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak
6 here. My neighbors have all said much more eloquently
7 all the reasons to oppose this rezoning than I can
8 say. So I just want to sum it up with a couple of
9 quick remarks. Firstly, just sitting here and seeing
10 the other possible projects and the involvement that
11 those people have had with the community just speaks
12 volumes to the dearth of that involvement that we've
13 had with Arrow Linen. It's quite frankly been
14 extremely demoralizing. And here's the thing, we all
15 want the same thing. This is a win/win. At the end
16 of the day, the housing crisis in New York City is
17 going to be met with community engagement and
18 compromise. That's all we're asking for. To my
19 neighbors who are for this development, we want the
20 same thing. We want affordable housing units built,
21 but you need to understand Arrow Linen is not your
22 friend. You really need to understand that. and to
23 Council Member Hanif, the one thing we're really
24 asking for is just to push back against this
25 profitability model that the developers are coming

1 out you know, they've got to say the cross-
2 subsidies, it works a certain way, and so based on
3 that, we have to dictate the scope of the project.
4 All we're asking you to do is to push back a little
5 bit on their profitability models to listen to us so
6 that we have a voice and the scope of this project
7 lies somewhere in a realm that works within the
8 fabric of the community. So at the end of the day, we
9 all want the same thing and compromises the way
10 forward. Compromise is what City of Yes is about.
11 It's about a little bit everywhere. It's about all of
12 us coming together to solve the needs. It's not
13 about just giving a windfall to Arrow Linen and
14 having lobbyists quite frankly confuse many people
15 who have real needs into thinking that this
16 particular development is their friend. That's not
17 the way to go, and I know you'll do the right thing.
18 We're engaged, and we're here with you. Thank you.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.
21 And we're going to have Jay Goldberg.

22 JAY GOLDBERG: Hi, everyone. Thank you
23 for having me here. I'm Jay Goldberg, and I've lived
24 around the block from Arrow Linen for 18 years. I'm
25 active in Housing Not High Rises, and I strongly

1 support building contextual housing to the Arrow
2 Linen site, seven to nine stories at 40 percent or
3 more MIH. If you view this spot rezoning as part of
4 the solution to New York City's housing affordability
5 crisis, you are working at cross purposes to your own
6 goals. You say you want an increase in affordability,
7 but what we're talking about here today, approving 15
8 stories of luxury high rises on one of the most
9 affordable blocks in the neighborhood is a design to
10 reduce affordability and enrich the Magliocco's
11 who've spent over \$350,000 lobbying you and your
12 colleagues in city government. Looking at this
13 application, even the units required as Mandatory
14 Inclusionary Housing would be more expensive than the
15 rents people are paying today on Prospect Avenue.
16 Should you approve it, every future project that
17 directly results from your decision will be another
18 blow to affordability in the neighborhood. We're
19 aware that other Council Members will look to the
20 local Council Member's recommendation for their
21 district. Council Member Hanif, I implore you not to
22 let your political legacy be that you got the ball
23 rolling to replace modest apartments at affordable
24 rents in Windsor Terrace with luxury high rises. Have
25

1
2 you talked to my neighbors who rent on Prospect
3 Avenue? I have, and they're scared that this
4 rezoning is going to displace them as it has already
5 happened to them in Williamsburg, Greenpoint, and
6 Crown Heights. Please limit the rezoning to seven to
7 nine stories and require at least 40 percent MIH.
8 This will yield up to double the rent stabilized
9 units in the Magliocco's application, reduce the
10 profit motive to buy every other modest apartment
11 building in the neighborhood, and reduce the
12 displacement pressure on tenants. The only
13 difference will be the amount of profit the
14 Magliocco's make. Your decision here will send a
15 crystal clear message about whose side you're on.
16 Council Member Hanif, the people in your district,
17 the thousands of us represented in Housing Not High
18 Rise, voice of Gowanus and Park Slope Civic Council
19 are active and engaged and we hope that you do right
20 by us so that we can continue to support you. Thank
21 you.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. And
23 lastly we'll hear from Eric Olsen.

24 ERIC OLSEN: My name's Eric Olsen. My
25 family has rented one block west of Arrow Linen for

1 the past 10 years. I strongly oppose this upzoning
2 from five to 15 stories and over 200 more luxury
3 apartments in my neighborhood with only 60 or so
4 affordable units. I support seven stories at 40
5 percent affordability. But honestly, Council
6 Members, I don't think any argument I make today is
7 going to persuade the Council. So let me share a
8 couple of things that the public should know when
9 they see this travesty approved. One, Arrow Linen
10 spent \$365,000 on lobbying to get this approved.
11 This started in 2020 and targeted all key officials
12 in the ULURP process, and you know what, it worked.
13 Everyone targeted has come out in support. In
14 contrast, our own Community Board voted 30 to six
15 against, over 2,000 residents have signed a petition
16 against it. Two, every public hearing has been
17 brigaded by lobbyist from groups like Open New York.
18 These groups are libertarian in philosophy, but
19 clothe themselves in progressive language. They want
20 housing deregulation, and they're funded by big tech
21 and real estate money. Their goal is to spread
22 disinformation and make it appear that communities
23 are divided. Look for these outsiders at your next
24 hearing. Three, this council just passed City of
25

1 Yes. Windsor Terrace was upzoned from three to five
2 stories with no affordability requirement, but it's
3 near a subway stop. We were told a little more
4 housing in every neighborhood, and yet, here we are
5 discussing a spot rezoning three times the allowed
6 height. If the Council approves this, they're
7 basically telling constituents that City of Yes was a
8 big fat lie. Finally, I'd just like to say, whatever
9 this committee decides, it's ultimately Council
10 Member Hanif's decision. The Council almost always
11 defers to the local Council Member. Whatever she
12 decides is something she'll have to own going into
13 her 2025 election and beyond. So I ask the public to
14 stand with us and let Council Member Hanif know what
15 you think about this project. Go to
16 housingnohighrises.org, and you can get more info
17 about how to help. Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. There
20 being no questions, this panel is excused. The next
21 panel I'm going to call up consists of Sean McCollum,
22 Alex Maza, Olivia Gonzalez, Eric Neilson, and
23 Geoffrey Thomas. The following group after that will
24 be Nicole Cartagna, David Roche, Stefan-- I can't
25 pronounce your last name Stefan, but it starts with a

1
2 B. Damien Andrade, and Marilyn Coppa. We're going
3 to being first with Geoffrey Thomas.

4 GEOFFREY THOMAS: Good afternoon. My
5 name is Geoffrey Thomas. I'm a home owner in District
6 39. I go to church about two blocks from the Arrow
7 Linen site. I do support this rezoning application. I
8 think it's appropriate for its block and very much
9 needed in this district. I've testified about the
10 Borough President City Planning Commission hearings
11 as have many people here. Out of respect for the
12 Council's time I'd like to add three new things.
13 First off, please do read the Borough President's
14 report. I think it takes community concerns
15 seriously, including the concern that we need to see
16 some housing get built, but also many other things
17 you're hearing today like concerns about the height
18 right by the street. It recommends earmarking more
19 affordable units. I don't 100 percent agree with the
20 report, but I think it's a good balance, and I think
21 the Council would need a very strong case to go in a
22 completely different direction. Second, at the CPC
23 hearing, we also heard about the Concord Ave, Bronx
24 project we just heard about today which is also about
25 30 percent affordable. The Commission asked them why

1 don't you do more affordable units, and the applicant
2 said, "Look at the site across the street from ours
3 which has proposed 100 percent affordability,
4 approved in 2021 and still has not been built." Now,
5 I completely agree that we have an affordable housing
6 crisis. That's why I want to make sure that the
7 affordable apartments in Arrow's proposal actually
8 successfully get built. That Bronx site, you can go
9 look at it, it's an empty lot with overgrown weeds. I
10 believe they just said that. That is the sad reality
11 of demanding 100 percent affordability if you got 100
12 percent of zero. Opponents of the [inaudible] has
13 suggested the smaller 100 percent affordability
14 building run by Catholic Charities [inaudible] say
15 they don't have the funds to build a building there.
16 If the Council denies this ULURP hoping some
17 alternative might still work out, you will get an
18 empty lot with zero affordable apartments for many
19 years. Third, before the CPC voted a couple weeks
20 ago a DCP staff member made what I thought was an
21 excellent point which I'd like to quote, "if we have
22 an opportunity to build to 100 percent affordable
23 housing, this density is absolutely appropriate. I
24 would say it's the minimum." So, I'm primarily
25

1
2 concerned about making sure we get some affordable
3 housing on this site. There is probably room to ask
4 for a little bigger commitment than what the
5 applicant proposed. I'm not here to defend the
6 applicant making a profit. I'm here to defend them
7 being able to build at all. It would be an absolute
8 shame if at the end of this long process it turns out
9 we asked for something unrealistic and we get an
10 empty lot with overgrown weeds. I urge the Council to
11 approve this application. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: thank you. Next we
13 will have Eric Neilson.

14 ERIC NEILSON: Hi, thank you City Council
15 for letting us into this hearing and allowing us to
16 speak today. So my name is Eric. I'm a native New
17 Yorker. I live in Brooklyn. I rented in that
18 neighborhood about 20 years ago, and even then I had
19 to leave after about a year because of affordability
20 concerns. Later in life I was able to finally able
21 to become a homeowner in Brooklyn simply because of
22 new construction in my other neighborhood that I live
23 in now, Bushwick. The-- it just seems like there's--
24 my entire adult life there's been a perpetual housing
25 crisis in New York City, because we simply just don't

1 build enough housing. So, that's why I urge the City
2 Council to support this project and build it. I know
3 there are concerns from the community about lack of
4 affordability, but the community has-- there just
5 isn't a lot of affordable housing in the community to
6 begin with. So, any little bit we can get I think is
7 just a win, a win overall. Yeah, thank you for your
8 time.
9

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
11 we'll have Olivia Gonzalez.

12 OLIVIA GONZALEZ: Hi. Thanks. My name
13 is Olivia Gonzalez Killingsworth and I'm a resident
14 of Kensington where I am a co-op owner and a proud
15 constituent of Shahana and also a fellow DSA member.
16 Shout out. And I'm here to testify in favor of this
17 rezoning. I think it upholds one of the core values
18 of the City Council's Fair Housing framework which is
19 more open communities. And you know, there's been a
20 lot of questions about who the affordable housing
21 would be for. I've actually done some research on
22 this. In the 51 to 80 percent area median income
23 range, here's some examples of the types of people
24 who could afford those types of apartments. New York
25 City public school teacher earning about \$64,000 a

1 year could afford one of those studios at \$1,630 a
2 month, \$1,630 a month for rent. Right now, I think a
3 studio in Windsor Terrace market rate probably goes
4 for like \$2-3,000. A parks maintenance worker
5 earning \$53,000, and a minimum wage worker at \$33.2
6 thousand a year together with their combined annual
7 income would be in that middle income range, that low
8 income range, excuse me, and they would be able to
9 afford a one-bedroom at \$2,038 a month. These are
10 the current HPD AMI levels. also, a city accounting
11 assistant earning about \$71K per year and a bank
12 teller earning about \$40,000 per year with their
13 five-year-old, that's a three-person household
14 earning, you know, low income or what HUD deems as
15 low income, would be able to afford a \$2,796 a month
16 two-bedroom. A two-bedroom in Windsor Terrace right
17 now probably goes for about \$5,000 on the open
18 market. Thank you.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. I have to
21 names here, but just one person here. Alex or Sean?

22 UNIDENTIFIED: I think Alex is online,
23 actually. He had to leave.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Alex Maza?

25 UNIDENTIFIED: Alex Maza, yeah.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Sean, you can begin.

SEAN MCLAUGHLIN: Thank you. My name is Sean Mclaughlin. I'm a Brooklyn resident, and I'm speaking in favor of the Arrow Linen rezoning. New York is suffering from a severe housing shortage that is leading to substantial rise in the cost of living. This cost of living crisis is impacting residents in Windsor Terrace, across Brooklyn and across all New York. Rising housing costs are making it increasingly harder for New York families to stay in the neighborhoods and for children raised in New York to stay in the city and for new neighbors from around the world to join our communities. The most effective way to combat these rising costs is to build new housing. This rezoning is a perfect opportunity to relieve the cost of living pressures in this neighborhood. It is important to note that this redevelopment will lead to one out of four new units being permanently affordable. That means lower middle-class residents will be able to live-- also be able to live in Windsor Terrace. Reducing the size or scale of this development will not only reduce the number of market rate units entering New York City's housing market, but many of these affordable units as

1 well. Each of these units that is not built directly
2 leads to a family that could not live in this
3 neighborhood that otherwise could have. Continued
4 delays in modifications to the proposal will also
5 lead to substantial delays that lead these potential
6 residents hanging out for even longer. It is also
7 important to emphasize that this neighborhood is well
8 behind the pace of other neighborhoods in Brooklyn in
9 terms of new units being developed. Specifically,
10 only 175 units were developed in 2022 compared to the
11 citywide average of 445. Every neighborhood has to do
12 their part to contribute to fighting our city's
13 housing crisis and take development pressure off of
14 other neighborhoods who have had the most new
15 development in recent years. This rezoning is an
16 excellent opportunity to reduce cost of living in
17 Brooklyn and invite new neighbors across all income
18 levels to join our community. I'm strongly in favor
19 of it. Thank you for your time.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: thank you so much.

22 This panel is excused. The next panel we're going to
23 have consists of Mary Mullally, excuse me, Nicole
24 Targate [sp?], Stefan with B, Stefan B, Damien
25 Andrade, and Marilyn Coppa. So, that's Mary who's

1 replacing David Roche, Marilyn Coppa, Damien, Stefan
2 B, and Nicole. Okay. Nicole, you may begin.

3
4 UNIDENTIFIED: Hello. Thank you first of
5 all for giving so much time to us and hearing our
6 concerns. I'm here on behalf of myself and my
7 husband as a resident of Windsor Terrace, and I want
8 to say that I oppose this rezoning application
9 because I feel that it is-- the project is so out of
10 scale to the area. I taught for many years in a
11 public elementary school in the Gowanus area, and I
12 witnessed firsthand what happened when the high rises
13 went up. Families were driven out completely,
14 because the prices for rents and homes became
15 completely out of reach for those families, and the
16 community was destroyed and shifted and changed.
17 Windsor Terrace is a very welcoming community. I
18 think we really would like to see some real work for
19 yes in providing housing, but at scale and within
20 reason and within affordability. So I really think
21 this should go back and get shifted around and find a
22 way to make housing truly affordable and to the scale
23 of this welcoming neighborhood. And the last thing I
24 want to add, that sunlight is really important in our
25 lives, and I think it's part of what creates a

1 neighborhood as special as this area, and you know,
2 it's-- could we take a moment to say let's keep our
3 streets in Brooklyn [inaudible] sunlight [sic].

4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Stefan?

6 Is Stefan, last name begins with a B, Stefan? Okay.
7 Damien.

8 DAMIEN ANDRADE: Good evening Chair Riley
9 and Council Member Hanif. My name is Damien. I am a
10 proud member of Community Board Seven, though I do
11 not represent CBC, a student at Brooklyn College
12 studying political science and a renter, a retail
13 worker, and a lifelong resident of Sunset Park. I
14 stand with my neighbors and fellow working-class
15 families in opposing the application as submitted for
16 Arrow Linen rezoning and have it no more than seven
17 stories. While this project is located in Windsor--
18 well, this project is in Windsor Terrace. Approving
19 unaffordable developments like this sets a dangerous
20 precedent for neighborhoods like Sunset Park.
21 Developers are already targeting our community with
22 so-called affordable projects that working-class
23 families cannot afford. If we allow this to move
24 forward, it sends a clear message that massive,
25

1
2 unaffordable towers are welcome in south Brooklyn,
3 accelerating displacement and gentrification. The
4 developers of this project claim to be affordable,
5 but most of these units are household-- are for
6 household earnings between \$83,000 and \$111,000, far
7 out of reach for the nearly 18,000 residents in
8 Community Board Seven who make less than \$60,000 a
9 year, according to Data USA. Worse, 187 of these 244
10 units will be market rate with rents as high as
11 \$4,000 per month. Only 24 of these units are
12 reserved at 40 percent AMI, and even those don't meet
13 the needs of retail workers, essential employees or
14 students like me. Gentrification already has
15 displaced so many working-class families and young
16 people in our neighborhood. These developments bring
17 higher rents, drive out small businesses, and erase
18 the culture and the diversity that makes our
19 communities unique. We need housing that prioritize
20 deeper affordability like 20 to 30 percent AMI and
21 push for the Mandatory Inclusion Housing to be at
22 least 60 percent for those who are earning less than
23 \$40,000 per year, and ensure that young people and
24 working-class families can afford to stay. This is
25 not about one project. It's about protecting our

1
2 neighborhoods and demanding community-based
3 developments that puts people before profits, and I
4 urge you guys to vote no. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next,
6 Marilyn Coppa. You Marilyn? Okay. And do we have
7 Mary in the building, Mary Mullally?

8 MARILYN COPPA: Okay.

9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Oh, you just spoke?
10 That was you, Mary? So who was-- hold on one minute.
11 Is Nicole here? Nicole? No. Alright. I'm sorry.
12 Marilyn?

13 MARILYN COPPA: Yeah, I don't want to
14 lose my time. I don't know how this works.

15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: No, you won't lose
16 your time. Don't worry about it. You're Mary?
17 Okay, so Mary. Marilyn, go ahead.

18 MARILYN COPPA: Okay. Good afternoon.
19 My name is Marilyn Coppa and Windsor Terrace has been
20 my home for the past 35 years, and I am highly
21 opposed to this high rise. This is a community that
22 respects our longtime residents and welcomes the new
23 ones. My immediate neighbors include a widow from
24 the World Trade-- the widow of a World Trade Center
25 hero. Next to me I have new transplants from the

1
2 Midwest on one side, and on the other side an
3 immigrant from Africa and his Asian-American wife.
4 We've had new buildings going up. Two three-story
5 buildings have gone up on my block in the last 10 or
6 15 years, one's a condo, one's a rental, and all the
7 newcomers have been welcomed. We've-- as a community
8 we band together for causes such as a block-wide yard
9 sale in which we raised money for Ukraine. And my
10 community also includes a lot of nontraditional
11 housing. There's a residence for cognitively-
12 impaired, cognitively-delayed adults on my corner.
13 Nearby is a six-story building with at least 250
14 apartments for seniors in which every resident there
15 must be below a certain income level to qualify in
16 order to get in. A block away there's a homeless
17 shelter housing many residents who appear to be in
18 need of intensive guidance, and to my knowledge
19 nobody has protested in the past for any of these
20 buildings that have gone up. Nobody's protested the
21 homeless shelter. That was probably 10-15 years ago
22 put in place-- or for any other programs for people
23 in need. Because-- quickly, I'm real close. None of
24 these projects included a high-rise of this kind of
25 dimension, and this is really what we're-- we're not

1
2 objecting to newcomers. We welcome newcomers, but it
3 is the height which is completely out of whack with
4 the rest of the neighborhood and will just change--
5 it won't be the same neighborhood.

6 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Mary.

7 MARILYN COPPA: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Not Mary.

9 MARILYN COPPA: It's Marilyn. Close
10 enough.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Marilyn.

12 MARILYN COPPA: I appreciate it. It's
13 okay. I'm used to it.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: I'm sorry. This
15 panel is now excused. There's no questions. Thank
16 you for your patience. Next I'm going to be calling
17 on Kurtis Weatherford, Luke Lavanway, Samir Lavingia,
18 Rachel Fee, Michael Feinberg, and Neil Miller. First,
19 we'll begin with Kurtis Weatherford.

20 KURTIS WEATHERFORD: Hi, my name is
21 Kurtis Weatherford, and when I first moved to
22 Brooklyn, I tried to move to Windsor Terrace. I
23 worked at a bakery at the time, and one of my
24 coworkers who lived in the neighborhood raved about
25 its convenient access to the F train, which also

1 served the bakery, and its proximity to Prospect
2 Park. I remember how devastating it was when I
3 arrived to tour a just listed place that was one of
4 the few in the area I could afford, only to find more
5 than 50 people lined up outside. Before getting in
6 line, I stopped to buy a water bottle at the deli
7 directly beneath the apartment. The man behind the
8 counter informed me that the massive line had been
9 there for two consecutive days. It's crazy he said.
10 It didn't used to be like this. When I got to the
11 front of the line I asked the broker how they would
12 choose who got to rent the apartment. She said what
13 so many Brooklynites already know, the landlord will
14 probably pick the person with the highest income.
15 After that experience and many similar ones,
16 including viewing a two-bedroom apartment, where the
17 second bedroom only fit a twin bed. I sadly had to
18 give up on living in Windsor Terrace. There's a
19 massive shortage of housing in Brooklyn, especially
20 in areas like Park Slope and Windsor Terrace that are
21 close to transit and parks. That shortage is making
22 Brooklyn unaffordable for anyone but the wealthiest
23 New Yorkers. The Prospect Avenue rezoning would
24 allow more than 200 new homes to be built in an area
25

1 that has not created many homes and has created
2 almost no new affordable homes in recent years. We
3 all know New York City is the middle of a massive
4 housing crisis brought on by a massive shortage of
5 housing. We should also be very clear about how we
6 ended up with the shortage. We caused it by
7 rejecting, shrinking, watering down, or otherwise
8 preventing every new potential housing project over
9 the course of decades. To fix the shortage in an
10 equitable way, we must build more housing in every
11 neighborhood. Approving this application is what
12 that looks like. Council Member Hanif, I was
13 thrilled to see you and several other Council Members
14 support the much-needed City of Yes program late last
15 year. Now, it's time to make good on the promise of
16 building more housing in every neighborhood. Please
17 support the Prospect Avenue rezoning. Brooklynites
18 like me who have to spend most of our take home pay
19 on ever-increasing rents are depending on you. Thank
20 you.

21
22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
23 we'll hear from Michael Feinberg.

24 MICHAEL FEINBERG: Thank you very much
25 for the opportunity to speak. My name is Michael

1
2 Feinberg. I've been a resident of South Slope for six
3 years, and I'm here to voice my support for the
4 proposed rezoning on the Arrow Linen site. As a
5 market-rate renter I've seen the cost of housing
6 skyrocket over my time in the city. Just last year I
7 received a proposed rent increase of over 20 percent.
8 I know many of my neighbors are homeowners and do not
9 have to face the uncertainties of the housing market
10 each year, but year after year more and more of our
11 neighbors are being pushed out of their communities.
12 While no proposal will make everyone happy, the
13 proposed rezoning will help create hundreds of new
14 homes that families of all incomes will be able to
15 live in. Preferences around the height of buildings
16 should not outweigh the immediate need for more
17 housing units. Although this is a drop in the bucket
18 over the course of the whole city, each project like
19 this throughout the City contributes to the easing of
20 the housing crisis in creating new homes. I urge the
21 council to approve this rezoning to allow these homes
22 to be built. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next,
24 we'll hear from Rachel Fee.

1
2 RACHEL FEE: My name is Rachel Fee. I'm
3 Executive Director of the New York Housing
4 Conference. My organization does not take positions
5 on projects, so I'm testifying in my personal
6 capacity as a resident of Windsor Terrace. Greetings
7 to my neighbors here. Everyone that's here today
8 cares deeply about the neighborhood just as I do. I'm
9 in favor of more housing and in maximizing affordable
10 housing. Council District 39 is ranked 25 out of 31
11 in affordable housing production, producing less than
12 half the citywide district average. The main
13 opposition seems to be directed at height, but height
14 is what will give us more affordable housing through
15 MIH. This is not like the building proposed to cast
16 shadows over the treasured Brooklyn Botanic Gardens
17 which I oppose. This is an unattractive commercial
18 building with an enormous parking lot on a wide
19 street and a large site. No one will be displaced,
20 and this site can handle a taller building than its
21 surroundings. When I look at other residential
22 corners surrounding Prospect Park, I see tall
23 buildings adjacent to four stories and they are part
24 of the landscape for decades and not eyesores.
25 Prospect Park West at Garfield Place and also at

1
2 Montgomery are examples of 15 stories adjacent to
3 four. No one notices. I understand the desire to
4 keep the neighborhood as it is, because it's
5 charming, but this is a chance to add significant
6 housing that is desperately needed by our neighbors
7 and our city. Just in my block on 16th Street two
8 families I'm friends with are actively looking and
9 can't find anything in the neighborhood. One of them
10 is expecting a third child and has been looking for
11 more than five months to move. The other, their
12 landlord told them it was time to go because their
13 son needed the apartment. They can't find anything in
14 the neighborhood. I encourage the Council to vote yes
15 for more housing and for Windsor Terrace to do its
16 part in adding needed housing supply. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next,
18 we'll hear from Samir.

19 SAMIR LAVINGIA: Thank you, Chair Riley,
20 Council Member Hanif, and members of the Subcommittee
21 on Zoning and Franchises for the opportunity to
22 testify in favor of the Arrow Linen proposal. My
23 name is Samir Lavingia and I serve as the Campaign
24 Coordinator of Open New York. Open New York is an
25 independent grassroots pro-housing nonprofit. We

1 have 12 chapters across the state and over 650 active
2 volunteer members. New York faces a severe housing
3 shortage. In February 2024, the New York City Housing
4 and Vacancy Survey revealed that the rental vacancy
5 rate had fallen to a mere 1.4 percent, the lowest
6 since 1968. New Yorkers know these pressures all too
7 well. Evictions have increased. Asking rent has
8 skyrocketed and newly-issued building permits have
9 plummeted. Projects like Arrow Linen offer
10 opportunities for our great city to welcome
11 neighbors, share ample public resources and ensure
12 that those who grew up in Brooklyn can afford to stay
13 in Brooklyn. For far too long, many of the most
14 well-resourced parts of our city have been off limits
15 and have stopped the creation of housing in their
16 neighborhoods, especially housing for middle and low-
17 income residents. According to the NYU Furman
18 Center, Windsor Terrace has created no new affordable
19 units since 2008, and this has created significantly
20 less housing than other nearby neighborhoods around
21 Prospect Park. It is impossible to uphold fair
22 housing principles without every neighborhood being
23 part of the solution, and our leaders are stepping up
24 to the plate. In 2023, Speaker Adams championed the
25

1 Fair Housing framework, and at the end of last year
2 led the Council on passing City for All which will
3 create more than 80,000 new units across the City.
4 The Arrow Linen proposal will not only help us
5 accomplish our Fair Housing goals, but it will also
6 bring much needed affordable housing to a transit
7 rich neighborhood. We support the Council Member in
8 her efforts to further deepen the affordability of
9 the project. However, we want to emphasize the
10 importance of not reducing the new unit count. If we
11 are serious about solving our housing shortage, we
12 cannot cut the number of new homes being approved.
13 Every New Yorker deserves the opportunity to stay in
14 their community or find a place to live in a city
15 where they don't just survive, but thrive. Approving
16 the Arrow Linen project is one of these many steps we
17 can take to ensure that happens. Thank you for the
18 opportunity to speak today.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next,
21 we're going to hear from Luke.

22 LUKE LAVANWAY: Good afternoon. My name
23 is Luke Lavanway. I am an 11-year resident of New
24 York City and I've lived in Brooklyn for four years.
25 Currently I live in Fort Greene. I'd like to raise

1
2 our attention to one specific issue today. That is
3 issue is new housing being blocked in all but a small
4 handful of neighborhoods. According to data
5 published by the Department of City Planning, just a
6 handful of neighborhoods, including downtown
7 Brooklyn, Sunnyside, Long Island City, Chelsea and
8 the South Bronx account for a majority of new
9 building units added to the city since 2010. There
10 are many other neighborhoods which are a good fit for
11 more housing. If we look at their existing resources
12 such as public transportation and school capacity,
13 Windsor Terrace is one such neighborhood. Yet,
14 Windsor Terrace has added very little to its housing
15 supply. According to the City Planning dataset I
16 mentioned previously, the community district which
17 includes Windsor Terrace ranks 43rd of the city's 59
18 community districts in terms of new building units
19 added since 2010. Now, to some, it might not seem
20 like a huge problem to say we don't want to build in
21 Windsor Terrace for such and such reasons, but the
22 same excuses about why we shouldn't build have played
23 out in a majority of neighborhoods across the City.
24 This is a key cause of the housing crisis which is
25 subjecting more than half of renters to rent burden

1 and has already displaced far too many New Yorkers
2 including on a personal note, dear friends of mine.
3 Concerns about neighborhood contexts are
4 understandable. However, it is more than fair for the
5 many rent-burdened New Yorkers to ask for such
6 concerns to be set aside so that every neighborhood
7 can do its part to add to the housing supply. So I
8 urge this City Planning Commission, the residents of
9 Windsor Terrace, the neighborhood's elected
10 representatives to end the cycle of blocking new
11 housing from being built. New Yorkers are struggling
12 and we really don't have time to waste in adding to
13 our housing supply. Thank you very much.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: thank you. Lastly,
16 Neil Miller?

17 NEIL MILLER: Thank you to the Committee
18 and Council Member Hanif. I wanted to give a brief
19 comment in support the rezoning at Arrow Linen.
20 Previous commenters have spoken about how the
21 shortage of housing is driving up rents and
22 displacing the neighbors that already live in this
23 city, and I also hope the Council considered the
24 people who don't know to participate in this process,
25 but who decades down the line this gets built, would

1 find a lovely home and contribute to the
2 neighborhood, immigrants that move here to seek
3 opportunity, young people who want to stay in the
4 community where they grew up, or couples seeking more
5 space to grow their family. I understand all of the
6 concerns that have been expressed by other
7 commenters, but I hope that the Council doesn't
8 remove homes and take away opportunities from all the
9 neighbors that will add to the neighborhood in the
10 future. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.
13 There being no questions, this panel is excused. The
14 next panel we're going to hear from is-- oh, before I
15 say that. We have about two more panels left, and
16 then we're going to go to online testimonies, okay?
17 Next panel we're going to hear from is Madelon
18 Gauthier, James O'Dea, Maria Scarvalone, Bruno
19 Grandsard, and Emily Gillcrist. We'll begin first
20 with James O'Dea.

21 JAMES O'DEA: Starting with O'Dea?

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yeah, O'Dea.

23 JAMES O'DEA: Yes, thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Sorry, James. Go
25 ahead.

1
2 JAMES O'DEA: Thank you for this
3 opportunity to speak in opposition to this egregious
4 money-grabbing proposal. I respect and appreciate
5 all the comments that have been made about the need
6 for housing and affordable housing. This is not
7 about whether or not we need more affordable housing
8 or the condition in New York City. This is about a
9 specific proposal, a specific proposal that is
10 antithetical to everything the City Council of New
11 York City stands for and everything that all of the
12 boards and all the representatives who have been
13 addressed in this, and who have the power and
14 authority to address this matter. It's not about
15 affordable housing. That's already been pointed out.
16 You've already heard all the reasons why this should
17 be opposed. I just want to point out height. It's not
18 height. Sure, height, but it's not the height
19 itself. Maybe it is, because in the pictures that
20 were provided in the presentation, they show a seven-
21 story building behind Windsor Place, not a nine, not
22 an 11, not a 13, seven-story building. That's what
23 they showed. In the picture from Prospect Avenue,
24 they take it as though it's from a long distance.
25 Prospect Avenue is a very narrow block as has been

1 pointed out. Not only is it a narrow block, it's the
2 only two-way street from Flatbush Avenue to the other
3 side of Greenwood Cemetery that goes from south of
4 Prospect Park and south of Greenwood Cemetery down to
5 the battery and to the waterfront. It's a lifeline
6 which is a word that had been used earlier today. I'm
7 just going to make one other point, that earlier
8 today in testimony somebody used a cup as an example,
9 and kind of said that the cup could be filled.
10 Here's the point. The cup is our neighborhood. It's
11 our community. You're going to pour water into that
12 cup, you're going to keep pouring and pouring and
13 pouring. I got news for you, it's going to overflow,
14 and when it overflows, that's a flood condition that
15 you are going to be held responsible for. Thank you
16 very much.

17
18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
19 we're going to hear from Madelon.

20 MADELON GAUTHIER: Thank you, Committee.
21 My name is Madelon and I'm a community member living
22 three blocks away from the site. I strongly oppose
23 Arrow Linen's request for the spot zoning change and
24 the proposed development. I do support development
25 that includes sufficient affordable housing while

1 still being appropriate to the neighborhood. Arrow
2 has not engaged with the community at the time the
3 proposal came out, nor now, on a comprise that would
4 provide more meaningful affordable housing while
5 still being able to develop these sites. As Council
6 Member Hanif strongly noted and Borough President
7 Reynoso conditioned his support on, the proposal
8 contains only 25 percent affordable units which is
9 the bare minimum. The representative today said she
10 would consider more than that, but where is that
11 proposal? The proposal's high number of market-rate,
12 I'll say luxury apartments, will push up prices in
13 the area, push families out of the neighborhood, and
14 the rezoning of nearby houses creates a displacement
15 risk for community residents. Given the large size
16 of these lots, I am confident that buildings with 40
17 percent affordable housing can be built at heights
18 that will be at the scale of our neighborhood and
19 still be an attractive project for developer.
20 Prospect Avenue is not a major commercial
21 thoroughfare which can support 13-story buildings. I
22 for one don't feel confident from those wrote
23 assurances today from the engineer that this building
24 won't contribute to flooding in the neighborhood. I
25

1 am also one of those people who has had to renovate
2 my building from the constant flooding. The Arrow
3 project renderings are deceptive in that they portray
4 Prospect Avenue as a huge open space and show no
5 contextual surrounding blocks or even the other side
6 of the avenue. All of these surrounding blocks
7 contain three to five-story buildings, excepting the
8 Bishop Boardman Senior homes on eight and 16th
9 Street, which incidentally could be a model for the
10 Arrow site. We should see the proposal the
11 representative said today that they had considered,
12 but apparently rejected with the reduced height and
13 lower setbacks you mentioned. If the requested
14 zoning is approved, it will propel a cascade of
15 building and other requests for zoning changes on
16 Prospect Avenue and the rest of the neighborhood.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

19 MADELON GAUTHIER: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: thank you so much.

21 MADELON GAUTHIER: I urge the council to
22 reject this spot zoning change.

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next,
24 we're going to hear from Emily.

1
2 EMILY GILLCRIST: Hello. I'm Doctor Emily
3 Gillcrist. I'm an expert in cultural analysis and a
4 resident of South Slope for 15 years and Prospect
5 Avenue for seven years. I'm completely against this
6 rezoning. First of all, it in no way supports the
7 goals of affordable housing. It seems many people
8 here are under the impression that there's a housing
9 crisis because there's a lack of housing. There's a
10 housing crisis because of the unregulated and out of
11 control development of luxury housing. And it's very
12 disappointing to see an elected official not
13 listening to the voices of these who elected her and
14 honoring what the residents actually want and the
15 reality that the residents are actually living. And
16 for those who are also misled by the phrase
17 affordable housing, this reflects the, I believe,
18 median salary for the district which in this area is
19 far higher than the average or the median for
20 Brooklyn. So, those who think this is housing for
21 the working class, it is not. And that doesn't even
22 really get into the environmental impact which is
23 quite severe, and I'd be very curious to see the
24 environmental report once they release that. Thank
25 you.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
3 we're going to have Bruno.

4 BRUNO GRANDSARD: Hi, I'm Bruno
5 Grandsard. Thank you for the opportunity. I live in
6 Park Slope and I believe that this project needs to
7 be down-scaled. Converting Arrow Linen to housing is
8 not only, you know, desirable, it's a necessity. We
9 all know that. Everyone acknowledges that, but it's
10 just out of scale, out of proportion with the
11 neighborhood. Now, if we take every single charming
12 area and put high rises, does that open up, you know,
13 development on Prospect Park southwest, on Sherman
14 Street, on Frillo [sp?] Place? I mean, there's a
15 wide range of streets in that-- in the whole
16 neighborhood. In fact, there's not a single street
17 in Windsor Terrace that is land-marked or the South
18 Slope. So, 20 stories-- I mean, if I were a
19 developer, I'd go and tear down everything I could
20 because it'd be so profitable. So I just want to,
21 you know, just emphasize how important it is to, you
22 know, build, but build intelligently. We don't want
23 to make mistakes that we're going to regret in 10,
24 20, 30 years. The one certainty about this project
25 is that it's going to screw up the neighborhood. Is

1
2 it really going to change everything about New York
3 housing? Absolutely not. Yes, we know we need to
4 build more. City of Yes is a good initiative. It's
5 about putting a little bit more housing in every
6 neighborhood. It's not about putting 20-story
7 buildings all across the city. So, I oppose this
8 project for three reasons: its size. It's
9 gargantuan. Secondly, it opens up development, you
10 know, unfettered development across Windsor Terrace
11 and Park Slope. And then thirdly, it's a giveaway to
12 the owner, and it's just bad policy. So I urge you
13 not to approve it. Thank you very much.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much for
15 your testimony. Lastly, Maria. Maria, press the
16 button. Thanks.

17 MARIA SCARVALONE: I've lived near the
18 Arrow Linen site for 35 years now, and I vehemently
19 oppose this upzoning application. I do welcome truly
20 affordable contextual housing there, as Catholic
21 Charities proposed. It wanted to purchase the
22 property to develop seven to nine stories and 100
23 percent affordable units, but Arrow summarily
24 rejected the idea. Why? Because it's holding out to
25 make even more money when you all okay taller

1 buildings. After benefitting decades from variances
2 and tax abatements, Arrow is now moving its business
3 out, but not before it tries to extract one last huge
4 benefit, a grossly out-of-context upzoning from you
5 our elected officials. This, despite having
6 repeatedly lied to all of us about why it
7 mysteriously included 11 privately-owned townhouses
8 in its upzoning area, or how it had supposedly
9 engaged the community. It actually tried to pass off
10 its private meeting with the Community Board
11 President as community engagement. That' called
12 lobbying, and lobbying is powerful on this subject.
13 Increased supply is a mantra repeated by loud
14 proponents of this project, many of them barely
15 familiar with our rear and members of Open New York,
16 a registered lobby that has received \$3.5 million
17 from tech billionaire Dustin Moskovitz [sp?] and has
18 now formed a PAC. The truth is, housing unit growth
19 has out-paced our population growth for the last 15
20 years and still housing costs are increasing
21 exponentially. It turns out the law of supply and
22 demand isn't quite so clear cut in the New York City
23 real estate market. We need only look to
24 Williamsburg and Greenpoint to see that build baby
25

1
2 build has led to luxury unit building that has
3 increased rents and forced out lower income tenants
4 and worsened racial disparity in those areas. By
5 limiting upzoning to seven to nine stories, you can
6 incentivize and resurrect the Catholic Charities
7 option and build more affordable units--

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Thank
9 you.

10 MARIA SCARVALONE: than Arrow has
11 proposed, all within the area's context. That is the
12 win/win solution.

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: thank you so much for
14 your patience and your testimony. This panel is
15 excused. The last panel in-person to testify will
16 consist of Roger Melzer, Scott Newmann, and Michael
17 Baron. If I did not call your name and you want to
18 testify and you're in-person, please raise your hand
19 so the Sergeant at Arms can give you a speaker's
20 card. Alright. We'll begin first with Roger.

21 ROGER MELZER: Thank you for this
22 opportunity to testify. I am opposed to the rezoning
23 and construction of two luxury towers on the Arrow
24 Linen property on Prospect Avenue. The real intent
25 of Arrow is to build 183 expensive luxury apartments,

1 and throw in 61 so-called affordable units that might
2 not be so affordable after all. Arrow has never
3 revealed what they intend to charge for any of the
4 apartments. So I've put the table-- put together a
5 table of the projected rents based on the proposal
6 they have submitted to the Community Board. I do not
7 have time to explain my table, but if Arrow wants to
8 comport with their numbers, so much the better. It is
9 my belief that these two luxury towers will be the
10 driving force in rapidly escalating rents throughout
11 the neighborhood. As others may testify, there's
12 substantial high rise developments on Fourth Avenue
13 in Park Slope that led to higher rents and
14 displacement for many years. The Arrow Linen
15 Corporation has owned Prospect Avenue property for
16 decades and they have not paid property taxes for 25
17 years due to a prior industrial abatement. So they
18 effectively have zero land cost and that-- an zero
19 acquisition costs. What a sweet deal. Windsor
20 Terrace is a neighborhood of mostly two and three-
21 story buildings and more contextual development with
22 affordable apartments is possible on this site and it
23 can still be profitable. I urge this committee to
24 point-- to vote no on this proposal. And I want to
25

1 add that I own probably the largest four-story walk-
2 up apartment building in Windsor Terrace, 27 units,
3 mostly one-bedrooms. My average rent in the whole
4 buildings are \$2,200 and that's what you get when you
5 have an owner that lives in the neighborhood and
6 cares about their tenants. Arrow Linen is an absentee
7 landlord. They don't care about tenants. They don't
8 care about what happens to the neighborhood, and the
9 rent levels they propose are astronomical. I project
10 their rent levels for the luxuries will be over \$12
11 million and the--

12
13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Thank
14 you.

15 ROGER MELZER: regulated ones a little
16 over \$1 million. So it's a real cash grab. Thank
17 you very much.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much for
19 your testimony. Next, we will have Michael Baron.
20 Michael, is Michael here? Going once, going twice?
21 Scott?

22 SCOTT NEWMANN: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: I'm sorry, sir. Sir,
24 you have to remain right there until you're excused.
25 Thank you so much. I'm sorry, Scott. Go ahead.

2 SCOTT NEWMANN: That's alright. My
3 name's Scott Newmann. I'm here to oppose the
4 rezoning application for Arrow. Like people on both
5 sides of the argument, they have so many good points
6 that housing is needed. I drew up my notes on the
7 train ride in. a lot of people have a typed-out
8 testimony. I have been a resident on Prospect Avenue
9 a block away from the development, below it, for 27
10 years, and in the neighborhood for 30. I'm a musician
11 and teacher, adjunct faculty member at a couple of
12 colleges, and I must say that even buying our
13 property in 1997, Prospect Avenue was the one avenue
14 we could afford to buy a house on, and we bought it
15 with friends. We went in together on a two-family
16 house, and we've had a tenant now in that house,
17 because the other family moved out, for 19 years, and
18 we've kept her rent at 40 percent below market value.
19 I'm not looking for accolades. I'm just saying we've
20 contributed to affordable housing. Arrow Linen is a
21 big site. There's no reason why this thing has to be
22 as high. Everybody keeps talking seven to nine
23 stories, it's because of the Bishop Morgan building
24 at 1615 Eighth Avenue. The next buildings are that
25 are near that big are down on Fifth Avenue and 15th

1 Street, and then Fourth Avenue where they're all 10
2 to 15 stories high. So it's grossly out of place in
3 our neighborhood. As you can tell, people are in
4 favor of affordable housing and we're counting on you
5 to take into consideration that maybe the number
6 should be brought up of the amount of affordable
7 units that are in the building development, and that
8 the floor plan could come down and go out instead of
9 up.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much,
12 Scott. There being no questions, this panel is
13 excused. Thank you so much for your patience and
14 your testimony. Going again, is there anyone else
15 that wants to testify in-person that did not testify
16 already before we go to online testimony? Please
17 raise your hand. Okay, being that we have none, we
18 will go to online testimony. Okay. Alright, we're
19 just going to do a five-minute break, because I have
20 to use the bathroom real quick. So just give me a
21 second, alright? Thank you.

22 [break]

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Can everybody settle
24 down and find a seat. We are getting ready to
25

1 continue. Everybody settle down and find a seat. We
2 are getting ready to continue.

3 [gavel]

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: thank you, everyone.
5 We're about to resume. If you could please take your
6 conversations out the chambers. Thank you so much.
7 So we're going to transition to online testimony.
8 We're going to begin first with Susan Lunn [sp?],
9 Matt Goldberg, Diane Brand, Hafina Allen. Once
10 again, Susan Lunn, Matt Goldberg, Diane Brand, and
11 Hafina Allen. We'll begin first with Susan Lunn.
12 Susan, if you can hear me, please unmute, and you may
13 begin.
14

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

16 SUSAN LUNN: Good afternoon, Council
17 Members. I'm a Park Slope resident with Council
18 Member-- within Council Member Hanif's district, and
19 I am testifying in support of the Arrow Linen
20 project. With the vacancy rate of 1.4 percent, we
21 are not producing enough housing. When there is not
22 enough supply, the cost of the supply will go up, and
23 we can see that very clearly with the cost of housing
24 in New York. We are in an affordability and vacancy
25 housing crisis. The result of this is pushing

1 people, families, to leave the city so they can no
2 longer afford to live here. Children that have grown
3 up here are forced to leave. This Arrow Linen
4 proposal is the correct step moving forward, one of
5 many that we must make, and we must build more. This
6 proposal guarantees affordable housing, and according
7 to the Arrow Linen panel that testified under oath,
8 it denied it is much more likely that this will
9 become condos with no promise of affordability. As
10 another testifier eloquently said, do not let perfect
11 become the enemy of good. A critical part of the
12 proposal is also the flood remediation. I know for a
13 fact how many people have been devastated by the
14 floods within the recent years. The fact that this
15 proposal contains flood remediation is a huge and
16 immediate win. I live in Council Member Hanif's
17 district, as I said. I'm friends with many people
18 who live and work in this neighborhood who grew up
19 here, and I too want to preserve the character of the
20 neighborhood. And you know what the character of the
21 neighborhood is? It's the people. It's the
22 community. I want my friends, the community, to be
23 able to stay here and thrive here. I do not want this
24 community to be hollowed out because of a solvable
25

1 issue. Please, I urge the Council to pass this
2 proposal.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next,
5 we'll hear from Matt Goldberg.

6 MATT GOLDBERG: Good afternoon community
7 and Council Members. I speak to you today as a
8 resident of Council Member Hanif's 39th District in
9 South Slope Windsor Terrace. What we have heard
10 today is primarily from a single family's expensive
11 lawyers and hundreds of thousands of dollars of
12 lobbyists is that we will provide this update, or we
13 will look into that, or we look forward to working
14 with stakeholders. None of this is binding, requires
15 no action on the part of the developers, yet us the
16 residents will be bound by their actions for decades
17 and generations to come. You should ask yourselves,
18 why won't they commit? The answer is very simple.
19 They do not care about you or any of us. They want
20 as much money as the city regulations will give them.
21 We've heard today from various housing lobbies like
22 Open New York, from lobbyists who live in Bushwick,
23 Fort Greene, not our community. Our Community Board
24 saw through this charade in their 30 to six vote.
25 Council Member Hanif, we urge you to do the same. I

1
2 urge you to consider the alternate proposal that
3 you've heard today, seven-story zoning with 40
4 percent Mandatory Inclusion Housing. This would
5 create affordable units, and an R6A zoning is the
6 only thing that's appropriate for the site. I please
7 encourage you to disapprove of the application.
8 Council Member Hanif, we elected you to City Council
9 because we believed that you put ideals over
10 corporations and rich out-of-city financiers and
11 developers. Council Member, you promised to
12 represent us, and we believed you, and if you
13 represent us, we will ensure that you'll return to
14 office in the next election. Thank you very much.

15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next is
16 Diane Brand. Diane Brand? Is Diane Brand there? If
17 you are using a phone, you can press star six. Okay,
18 we'll move over to Hafina Allen. Hafina Allen, if
19 you can hear me, please unmute.

20 DIANE BRAND: Excuse me. I'm sorry.
21 This is Diane Brand. I must not-- can you hear me
22 now?

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.
24 Go ahead.

1
2 DIANE BRAND: Okay. My unmute button
3 wasn't working too well. Anyway, my name is Diane
4 Brand and I've lived in the neighborhood for many
5 years, and I'm here to add my voice to those of my
6 neighbors who are very concerned against this
7 proposal. It does not-- from my view, does not
8 accomplish the intention of affordable housing.
9 Speakers have mentioned at least 200 new homes in the
10 neighborhood, etcetera. That's 200, but most-- the
11 vast majority of those are not affordable or slated
12 to be affordable apartments in any event. I have no
13 objection to more affordable housing, but a huge
14 development such as this doesn't accomplish that.
15 This proposal with-- it's a meager proportion of
16 affordable housing relative to its size. And I think
17 that is the height-- pun intended-- of inefficiency
18 and an inappropriate nod to huge corporate greed.
19 This is just Arrow trying to squeeze the last bit of
20 money that it can out of here. And I'm also
21 concerned with respect to environmental concerns.
22 And yes, I am a homeowner who had flood issues in the
23 last few years, and nobody should go through that,
24 and we should not be increasing the prospect of that.
25 The flood remediation that they spoke to was mainly

1 they would have a nice big garden. We didn't hear
2 about the rest of it, and when we spoke-- when they
3 were asked about compliance and the review by the
4 Mayor's Office of Environmental Remediation or some
5 title like that, we were-- they were being asked
6 about water. They responded in terms of air, noise,
7 and soil. Well, we don't air pollution and noise
8 pollution and soil pollution either--

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank
11 you, Diane. Your time's expired.

12 DIANE BRAND: [inaudible] water. Thank
13 you for this opportunity.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.
15 Next we'll have Hafina Allen.

16 HAFINA ALLEN: Hi. I'm Hafina Allen. I'm
17 a social worker who's lived in Windsor Terrace since
18 1994. As a social worker who spent most of my career
19 working in homeless services, I'm well aware of the
20 need for actually affordable housing in this city.
21 However, I oppose this upzoning. The current
22 proposal includes 11 privately-owned properties that
23 are not owned by Arrow Linen. If this project is
24 approved as-is, the displacement of the families
25 renting in those buildings will offset the benefit of

1 the new built, new affordable units in this
2 development. As we've seen in nearby Park Slope and
3 other parts of Brooklyn such as Williamsburg, such
4 upzoning drives up overall cost of housing, and over
5 the long-run leads to the displacement of working and
6 middle-class families. Additionally, without added
7 infrastructure, such upzoning places environmental
8 impact beyond the storm water runoff issues that were
9 addressed by the applicant. The increase in waste
10 water in our sewer system poses potentially
11 devastating sewage backup in the basements of
12 surrounding areas. This has been an issue in
13 neighboring Park Slope and has received media
14 coverage in recent years. In regards to the
15 applicant statement regarding aging housing stock and
16 the lack of new development, I want to remind
17 everybody that the most environmental development is
18 adaptive reuse existing buildings. Newer isn't always
19 better. To be clear, if you-- sorry. To be clear, I
20 want you to listen to those of us who live in this
21 neighborhood. As a community we do want affordable
22 housing, but we don't want to see our neighbors
23 displaced and priced out by this upzoning and the
24 inclusion of luxury housing. To be clear, if you
25

1
2 approve this application, you're supporting profit of
3 Arrow Linen, not affordable housing for our city.

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Right on time. Thank
5 you so much. This panel's excused. The next panel
6 that I'm going to call up consists of Eric McClure,
7 Henry Love, Meryl Breidbart, Gabriel Rich, and Ralph
8 Gatto. We'll begin first with Eric McClure. Eric, if
9 you can hear me, please unmute. You may begin.

10 ERIC MCCLURE: Thank you, Chair Riley and
11 Council Member Hanif. My name's Eric McClure. I'm
12 the Executive Director of StreetsPAC. While
13 rezonings are not quite the bullseye of StreetsPAC
14 mission of reducing reliance on cars, making streets
15 safer, and improving public transportation, projects
16 that create much needed housing and walkable,
17 bikeable neighborhoods that are well-served by
18 transit certainly contribute significantly to those
19 goals, and the proposed rezoning of 441 and 467
20 Prospect Avenue absolutely fit that bill. While the
21 Arrow Linen Supply Company has provided gainful
22 employment and necessary service for decades, the
23 current land use is anachronistic and in congress
24 [sic] with the surrounding dense residential
25 neighborhood. Turning this under-utilized site into

1 mixed-income housing with a large MIH component will
2 help many families find a home in this highly-
3 desirable neighborhood while in turn reducing housing
4 pressure by adding considerably to the supply in the
5 community in which the vacancy rate is low, and
6 income-restricted units are nearly non-existent.
7 StreetsPAC strongly supports the creation of this
8 type of transit-oriented development and walkable and
9 bikeable neighborhoods is a crucial policy for
10 combatting climate change. By spurring housing
11 creation like that proposed here, it will also make
12 it much easier for New Yorkers to avoid the
13 tremendous financial burden of car ownership should
14 they choose to forgo buying or leasing an automobile.
15 The proximity to the 15th Street Prospect Park F and
16 G station just a few hundred feet from the project
17 site offers a major opportunity, and the proposed 13-
18 story building, while taller than what currently
19 exists on the block, are very much in keeping with
20 nearby building heights. Proximity to shopping,
21 dining, and other services also make these sites
22 ideal for new scale development. Finally, while I'm
23 speaking today in my professional capacity, I'm also
24 a resident of the 39th Council District and Chair of
25

1
2 Brooklyn Community Board Six, the adjacent community
3 district. I've seen far too many of my neighbors
4 forced to move away due to skyrocketing housing costs
5 driven by the [inaudible] lack of supply, and the
6 shortage of affordable continues to be CB6's much
7 pressing district need. StreetsPAC urges the
8 Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises and the full
9 City Council to vote in support of the rezoning of
10 441 and 467 Prospect Avenue. Thanks very much for
11 your time.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
13 we'll hear from Henry Love. Henry, if you can hear
14 me, please unmute, and you may begin. Henry Love?
15 No Henry? Okay. We'll move on to Meryl Breidbart.
16 Meryl Breidbart?

17 MERYL BREIDBART: Yes, Breidbart. Thank
18 you.

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Go ahead.

20 MERYL BREIDBART: My name is Meryl
21 Breidbart. I'm a mother and a homeowner in Windsor
22 Terrace, and I'm here to voice my strong support for
23 the rezoning. I don't want to rehash too much of
24 what's already been said. Many of the points I was
25 prepared to share have already been said. But I do

1 want to say, that as we all know our city faces a
2 dire housing shortage and this project represents and
3 opportunity to create entirely new homes where there
4 aren't any right now without displacing existing
5 residents. instead of worrying about who might be
6 driven out, which won't happen here, we should focus
7 on the people we can drive in to Windsor Terrace,
8 young families, essential workers, and neighbors who
9 will enrich our community and keep it thriving. More
10 housing means a stronger, more inclusive Windsor
11 Terrace. So please vote in support of this rezoning.
12 Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
15 we'll hear from Gabriel Rich.

16 GABRIEL RICH: Hi, guys. Thank you. I'm
17 a resident of your District Council Member Hanif. So
18 thank you guys so much. I am speaking in support of
19 the proposal. I've learned a lot today from listening
20 to everybody and learning all this, and really that
21 it comes down to is it's more housing and that's what
22 we need. The only way to build denser housing is to
23 go up. Things have to go up. That's the only way
24 that there'll be more space. But I also heard some
25 very interesting points and I think I'm concerned

1 that it sounded like Arrow Linen was not as involved
2 with the community in building this plan. I'm
3 concerned that they're only doing the minimum amount
4 of affordable housing and that there may be a kind of
5 net even number of affordable housing units in the
6 area. And I urge you, Council Member Hanif, to push
7 the proposal to guarantee more than 25 percent. I
8 don't know if that's possible at this point, if the
9 plan is set and that's how it is. but I would say as
10 a gesture of, you know, of good will, see if they'll
11 commit to a higher percent of affordable housing,
12 especially having read that, you know, it's three
13 different bands and only really a third of that 25
14 percent is going to the lowest income people,
15 residents, tenants, whatever. So, that's kind of
16 where I stand. I still am in support of it, of the
17 development. I think more housing and having to go up
18 is necessary, but I would urge pushing for more
19 affordable housing, even at the cost of the value of
20 the sale. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: thank you. We're
23 going to try Henry Love again.

24 HENRY LOVE: Yeah, sorry about that. Can
25 you hear me?

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you,
3 Henry.

4 HENRY LOVE: Prefect. Good afternoon.
5 My name is Doctor Henry Love. I'm the Vice President
6 of Public Policy and Strategy at WIN, a family
7 homeless provider that's been serving vulnerable
8 communities in Brooklyn for over 40 years. We're the
9 largest provider of shelter and services for
10 facilities experiencing homelessness in the country,
11 and we operate 16 shelters across the five boroughs.
12 In each night, about 7,000 people call WIN home. We
13 support the proposed zoning change for the new
14 development project in Brooklyn which would create 61
15 affordable units. These units are critical for
16 families who are struggling to find safe, stable
17 housing. Finding affordable housing in Brooklyn is
18 incredibly challenging, especially for women and
19 children. In a city where the cost of living
20 continues to rise, women are often faced with
21 systemic barriers like low wages, discrimination, and
22 lack of family-friendly housing options. Many of the
23 families we work with are forced into overcrowded
24 apartments or shelters like the two we run in the
25 neighborhood. This project which offers affordable

1 housing will directly address the issues and give
2 women and children the stability that they
3 desperately need. The affordable housing crisis in
4 Brooklyn isn't just a local issue, it's part of a
5 larger national trend, folks leaving New York City
6 for cheaper red states. However, the risk of moving
7 to these states is real. Many of these states have
8 policies that threaten the livelihoods of women and
9 families, especially with harmful agenda of former
10 President Trump and others who push against workers'
11 rights, reproductive health, basic protections for
12 vulnerable communities. New York City is one of the
13 few places in the country that offers real
14 protections for families, especially women,
15 immigrants, and folks of color. We must do
16 everything we can to keep them here and to ensure
17 that they have access to vital affordable housing
18 that they need. The zoning proposal is a vital step
19 in creating more inclusive Brooklyn, one where
20 families can stay and thrive. Approving this
21 development means giving 61 families a chance a
22 better future. It's an opportunity to strengthen our
23 community and ensure that women with children aren't
24 forced out of the city they call home. I urge you to
25

1
2 approve this project and continue supporting
3 affordable housing initiatives that help families
4 stay in Brooklyn and keep New York City a welcoming
5 place we all know--

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thanks,
7 Henry. Your time's expired.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Next, we have Ralph
9 Gatto.

10 RALPH GATTO: Yes, good afternoon Council
11 Members in attendance today and Council Member Hanif.
12 My name is Ralph Gatto. I am a professional engineer
13 in New York and New Jersey, but not relationship to
14 the Arrow Linen proposal. However, much like the
15 Magliocco family, my extended family has maintained a
16 long-term presence in the area, in our case, over 100
17 years. My comments this afternoon are presented in
18 the context of community interest and my desire to
19 express my opinions and observations. In regard to
20 the Prospect Avenue rezoning, I encourage New York
21 City Council Hanif to approve the Arrow Linen
22 proposal as submitted without hesitation. It's my
23 opinion that the developer undeniably presents a well
24 thought out [inaudible] to an [inaudible] residential
25 accommodation serving the community needs for

1 increased housing at affordable rates. The
2 renderings presented as part of the ULURP are
3 intuitively appealing in my opinion, so much so that
4 I applaud the design team's creativity. I also think
5 that the proposed design fits well within the context
6 of the surround and existing adjacent three-story
7 residential buildings as well as the surrounding
8 area. The extent of the rezoned partials is
9 conservative and affords the opportunity for further
10 housing initiatives, but I think that that's unlikely
11 to become part of this development. I don't think
12 that-- the nine [sic] properties were going to be
13 converted to high rise. Compared to other
14 residential construction on this section of Prospect
15 Avenue directly across the street, the Arrow proposal
16 is an obvious enhancement to the street's presence.
17 For that matter, considering the aesthetics of the
18 proposal, physical relationship to nearby community
19 services and close by amenities, the proposal at hand
20 achieves New York City's goals for increased housing,
21 and a very significant-- in every significant facet,
22 and in a matter that is difficult to challenge in a
23 productive manner. I urge New York City Council and
24 Council Member Hanif to take advantage of this very
25

1 unique opportunity to benefit the opportunity before
2 it slips away. Thank you so much.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. This
5 panel is excused. The next panel we're going to call
6 consists of Alex Weinberg [sp?], Alexander Simon Fox
7 [sp?], Elizabeth Dennys, and Joshua Waterman. We'll
8 begin first with Alex Weinberg. Alex, if you can
9 hear me, please unmute.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Alex, if you can hear
12 me, please unmute.

13 ALEX WEINBERG: Hello there. I-- we are
14 calling in in support of the Arrow Linen rezoning. I
15 currently reside as a renter directly across the
16 street from the affected site, and I've heard a lot
17 in this meeting about the threat the development
18 proposes regarding height. That is mostly an
19 aesthetic concern. I personally believe that building
20 a site of that size could be really any height, 11,
21 13, 15, 20 stories. It doesn't really affect me very
22 much. It's mostly an aesthetic concern. The site in
23 the neighborhood is not landmarked. There's no
24 landmark preservation movement. There's been no
25 effort by any community groups to actually make this

1 area a landmarked site, so the idea of preventing
2 this on aesthetic grounds I don't think is valid.
3 Arrow Linen will make a significant profit on this
4 site which is how development works. This entire
5 neighborhood was developed by developers, speculators
6 from town houses to the apartment building, because
7 it has been a speculated neighborhood since 1890.
8 Also, I understand that Arrow Linen has spent a
9 significant amount of money on lobbyists which I
10 think is a shame. They shouldn't have had to have
11 done that. They should have been able to finish this
12 rezoning process in a weekend. I don't think that
13 the-- come on give me a break. I don't think that
14 the long duration of this discussion and
15 consideration is in the benefit of our neighborhood.
16 What I'm concerned about is getting the most units
17 possible, as quickly as possible built and ready for
18 us.

19
20 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Your baby is so
21 cute.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: thank you, Alex.
23 Does the baby have to testify, too? You have a few
24 seconds left. Next we're going to hear from
25

Alexander Simon Fox. Alexander, if you can hear me, please unmute.

ALEXANDER SIMON FOX: Hey. Can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you, Alexander.

ALEXANDER SIMON FOX: Great. Thanks so much for this opportunity to testify. I'm here today as a neighbor of this proposed site, living about 10 blocks away. I strongly believe in increasing affordable housing [inaudible] affordable housing options in the city, especially in Windsor Terrace which is a neighborhood with resources, amenities, and good transit. Any housing built in the area should provide opportunities for New Yorkers of all income levels to enjoy our neighborhood, as our neighborhood already has a wide variety of high-cost housing options available, but we lack options that are accessible for most New Yorkers. This development adds potential to mitigate or exacerbate our area's current affordable housing issue. Minimum requirements for MIH which is what the developers discussed are not sufficient for meaningfully addressing our neighborhood's housing issue and

1 preserving income diversity in our area, and I
2 encourage all parties to strive for more and better.
3 I hope the developer can commit to an option that
4 maximized the quantity of affordable units and depth
5 of their affordability. Thanks so much.

7 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next we
8 hear from Elizabeth Dennys.

9 ELIZABETH DENNYS: Hello. My name is
10 Elizabeth Dennys. I've literally-- I've lived
11 literally on just the other side of the boundary of
12 community District Seven, a block away from Windsor
13 Terrace and Flatbush for 10 years. I'm here to speak
14 in favor of the Arrow Linen rezoning today. South
15 Slope and Windsor Terrace are wonderful vibrant
16 communities, but unfortunately there's been a net
17 loss of housing in the area and almost no new
18 affordable homes building. The area is becoming much
19 less accessible to families and people of all
20 economic levels, threatening the character of the
21 neighborhood, the people. We need housing of all
22 kinds, and we need more homes in every neighborhood.
23 We especially need them in areas with great transit
24 access like this project under a quarter of a mile
25 from a subway. Windsor Terrace and South Slope has a

1 median income 75 percent above the New York citywide
2 median income. 31.2 percent of residents in the area
3 make over \$200,000 a year, and only 27.4 percent in
4 the area make less than or equal to the citywide
5 median income. This is well-matched using market
6 cross-subsidization for creating income restricted
7 homes through MIH in an area where the city's
8 equitable explorer notes that there's the lowest risk
9 of displacement. While new homes aren't built in
10 areas like South Slope and Windsor Terrace, wealthier
11 areas, it doesn't only make it harder for families to
12 stay in their neighborhood there, it directly
13 increases the pressure of the housing crisis on
14 adjacent neighborhoods like mine in Flatbush and
15 Kensington where tenants are even more vulnerable.
16 The equitable developer explorer notes these adjacent
17 neighborhoods have the highest risk of displacement.
18 I've been a strong supporter of building more badly
19 needed homes in my own neighborhood of Flatbush, but
20 it's not going to be enough unless of every
21 neighborhood is doing their part to fight the housing
22 crisis. The Arrow Linen rezoning as proposed would
23 bring 244 new homes of all sizes and prices to be
24 built on what is currently a commercial lot with a
25

1 surface parking area, as long as this rezoning is
2 approved. I urge you to say no to continuing the
3 cycle of displacement, no to threatening the vibrant
4 nature of this wonderful community, and to say yes to
5 more housing, to say yes to the 244 new families who
6 could live in this wonderful mixed-income community,
7 and to vote yes on this rezoning proposal. Thank you
8 so much.
9

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Lastly
11 we'll hear from Joshua Watterman.

12 JOSHUA WATTERMAN: Thank you, Chair
13 Riley, Council Member Hanif. My name is Joshua
14 Watterman. I live in Park Slope, about a six-minute
15 bike ride from the future site of the 244 homes that
16 will be built at 441 and 467 Prospect Avenue. I'm not
17 here to convince anyone on ideological grounds that
18 New York needs to build more housing. Of course, we
19 need to build more housing. The majority of members
20 on this subcommittee voted in favor of the City of
21 Yes for Housing Opportunity. Council Member Hanif
22 voted for it. Speaker Adams said it plainly, we're
23 in a housing crisis. 1.4 percent vacancy, we know
24 all that. That's not really up for debate. That is
25 a fact. I'm here to tell you about this site which

1 is currently a large parking lot at an industrial
2 laundry facility. I'm going to tell you why that
3 should become apartments. This is a very proposal
4 that will generate that over 60 permanently
5 affordable units. Here are a few reasons why the
6 site is well-equipped to handle these 244 new homes.
7 Subway ridership at the nearest subway station, the
8 15th Street Prospect Park FG is down 36 percent over
9 the last five years with continued low ridership and
10 forthcoming signal improvements to the G train.
11 Transit infrastructure could seamlessly absorb the
12 additional rides that would come with the new homes.
13 Similarly, schools in District 15 continue to be
14 under-enrolled, down 25 percent from five years ago.
15 The families that move into these buildings would be
16 able to send their children to nearby high-performing
17 neighborhood schools. And then opponents of this
18 development like we've heard today have cited recent
19 neighborhood flooding as a reason why the
20 neighborhood can't support more housing, but as Ms.
21 Martins mentioned in her presentation, the developer
22 was required to develop a storm water mitigation plan
23 that will involved green infrastructure. It'll be
24 better than it is now. In closing, I want to quote
25

1
2 the man that we are honoring today, one of the all-
3 time great American home builders, Jimmy Carter. He
4 said, "One of the basic human rights is housing, the
5 right not only to have a place to live, but to have
6 it b your own." This plan before you will create
7 homes, including permanently affordable homes for
8 hundreds of families. I look forward to this
9 committee's yes vote. Thank you for your time.

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. This panel
11 is now excused. The next panel I'm going to call up
12 consists of Julia Harris, Paul Tanish [sp?], Simon
13 Bankoff [sp?], and Betsy Klompus [sp?]. Julia
14 Harris, if you can hear me, you may unmute and you
15 can begin.

16 JULIA HARRIS: Yes, hi, thank you. My
17 name's Julia Harris. I'm an urban planner. I was born
18 and raised in the neighborhood and I strongly value
19 livable cities that balance community feedback
20 against the profit-driven interest of the billionaire
21 and real estate industry. I oppose this 15-story
22 mostly luxury development. I was going to focus my
23 testimony on the complete lack of community
24 engagement, but that's already been covered. I do
25 want to note that in my professional work at DCP and

1 EDC and as a Land Use Committee Member for Community
2 Board Seven, all the applications we've seen here
3 today, I've never seen such a gross refusal to engage
4 with the community as we've seen from the applicant
5 team here. I'd like to clarify instead today some
6 things I heard from Arrow Linen regarding the
7 discussion of flooding. To be clear, there is no
8 flood remediation. They are required by code to have
9 storm water retention, yes, but Prospect Avenue and
10 the larger area has ancient clay combined sewer pipes
11 which drain both rainfall and sanitary sewerage
12 together. So even if they retain rainfall on their
13 site, they're adding thousands of new toilets,
14 showers, washer/dryers, and sinks that flow into the
15 same pipes that flood in moderate rain storms.
16 Surround neighbors will have more brown water-- we
17 know what that is-- back up into their homes.
18 Without sewerage upgrades, Arrow is in no way
19 improving the situation but exacerbating, and what
20 they stated is quite frankly misleading testimony
21 made under oath. To clarify, there is no 21,000
22 square foot park proposed on the block by the
23 applicant. There is a private back yard that should
24 not be touted as a community benefit. Arrow's
25

1 attorney has repeatedly alluded to a lower building
2 massing that was reviewed with City Planning but
3 never presented to the public or the Community Board.
4 We want to see this. We want engagement. Regarding
5 deeper affordability and questions around HPD's
6 timing, I would personally rather wait a little bit
7 longer for permanent-- more permanently affordable
8 housing to serve generations to come than have
9 permanently luxury housing and ever-increasing rents
10 versus from some of the local landlords we've heard
11 from today that keep things at a suppressed under-
12 market cost. There's only one bite at the apple, and
13 we need to do it well and right. Council Members, I
14 read your biographies and your legislative priorities
15 which are very commendable. You may not be involved
16 in this place in Brooklyn--

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank
19 you, your time's expired.

20 JULIA HARRIS: [inaudible] your
21 constituents. So, to be clear, we want housing on
22 this site, but we want you to listen to the voices of
23 local residents.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: thank you, Ms.
25 Harris. Next, we're going to hear from Paul Tainsh.

1 PAUL TAINSH: thank you to the Chair and
2 to the Committee Members for the opportunity to
3 submit testimony. My name is Paul Tainsh. I live on
4 16th Street, two blocks away from the proposed
5 rezoning site for 39 years, and I've lived in
6 Brooklyn for 70 years. I want to ask this committee
7 to reject the application for a number of reasons,
8 most of which have been stated. But I want to say
9 that the City Council after much consideration and
10 input from communities of New York passed the City of
11 Yes to try and provide some uniform guidance to
12 rezoning, and that this new zoning provides ample
13 opportunity for the developers of Arrow and the two
14 lots to increase the number of units allowed by
15 taking advantage of incentives that are included in
16 the framework for developing near mass transit and
17 including affordable units. I think that doing this
18 kind of spot zoning, rezoning, is both unnecessary
19 and actually can be very dangerous in terms of
20 creating exceptions that then become the rule for the
21 kinds of buildings that get built in the future. I
22 do want to say on one hand people keep citing
23 statistic like how many vacancies there are in
24 District 15, for example, which of course is
25

1 irrelevant if your school is the school down the
2 block and it's full. A lot of people also cite the
3 citywide vacancy rate is 1.9 or 1.4 I've heard people
4 say, but the project developers cited a 5.7 local
5 vacancy rate. So I just want to be clear when people
6 throw numbers around it sounds really professional
7 and such, but this issue of housing and its impact on
8 communities is actually much more complex. I'm
9 trained as an urban sociologist and I've studied
10 urban neighborhoods for 45 years, and we know from
11 New York City history that scale matters, and out-of-
12 scale projects can damage the fabric of communities.
13 Jane Jacobs [sp?] made it clear out of pointing out
14 the importance of livable scale communities.
15

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Your
17 time's expired.

18 PAUL TAINSH: [inaudible] because-- thank
19 you so much for your time.

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Paul.
21 Next we will have Simon Bankoff. Simon Bankoff?

22 SIMEON BANKOFF: Good afternoon. My name
23 is Simeon Bankoff. I've lived in Windsor Terrace
24 with my family for over 30 years and I've owned a
25 two-family house within the area of potential effect

1 of this project for 26 years. I am a professional
2 historic preservation consultant and I'm speaking on
3 my own behalf. This proposal would be incredibly
4 deleterious to the Windsor Terrace neighborhood by
5 setting up a precedent for sacrificing rational
6 community planning for private economic growth. The
7 neighborhood was rezoned only 20 years, which at the
8 time DPC said to protect the low rise character of
9 the neighborhood, reinforced several avenue corridors
10 for mixed-use, and provide opportunities for
11 apartment house construction. This is not an
12 apartment house. These are towers. The current plan
13 flies in the face of the sustainable rational
14 planning. The addition to overshadowing blocks of
15 existing residential houses in darkness. The current
16 proposal will serve to displace dozens of existing
17 tenants from their homes, have deleterious effects of
18 the local shopping district on Prospect Park West,
19 which commercial rates will invariably rise in value
20 and displace existing commercial tenants in favor of
21 larger chains which can afford the new rents. These
22 business owners, tenants and their employees
23 represent one of the chief streams of ethnic and
24 economic diversity in the area and will be negatively
25

1 affected, and will be a dangerous and potentially
2 disastrous precedent for other potential developments
3 in the immediate area. I've counted five empty sites
4 within a 500-foot distance from the project site, and
5 my list is not comprehensive. These large sites are
6 currently zoned contextually in order to encourage
7 substantial amounts of quality housing at a scale
8 that is compatible with existing built environment
9 just like the Arrow Linen site. If Arrow Linen is
10 permitted to blow out the existing zoning, these
11 sites will be likely to be next, and the entire
12 physical character of the neighborhood will be
13 irrevocably altered. Mid-block residential blocks
14 will look like Fourth Avenue, a disastrous rezoning
15 which served to uproot a longtime Latino population
16 and required a follow-up corrective action to make
17 the new developments even vaguely tolerable to
18 pedestrians. Frankly, this proposal is an
19 unconstrained growth in the neighborhood, and that's
20 before one considers the effects of City of Yes--

21
22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank
23 you. Your time's expired.
24
25

2 SIMEON BANKOFF: [inaudible] unconstrained
3 growth, damages the whole of the neighborhood, and
4 leads to serious--

5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Thank
6 you. Next we're going to hear from Betsy Klompus.
7 Betsy, if you can hear me, please unmute.

8 BETSY KLOMPUS: Can you hear me?

9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.

10 BETSY KLOMPUS: Great. I just want to
11 point out that I'm vehemently opposed to this
12 proposal because there is no commitment from Arrow
13 Linen or from their builders who they have not
14 engaged to actually live up to any of the promises
15 that they're making to us. It is detrimental to the
16 neighborhood and I hear no commitment, and I'm
17 disappointed that Shahana Hanif is being courted and
18 lobbied by them and they have not engaged with the
19 community at all. I have attended the meetings and I
20 have not heard from the Arrow Linen people at all.
21 They have been not paying taxes for 25 years, and now
22 it is just profit over people. I would love to see
23 fully-affordable housing. I would love to have had
24 them accept the Catholic Charities proposal for
25 fully-affordable housing. We would love to see that.

1 We would love to see housing that is in fitting with
2 the neighborhood. I also am curious about why this is
3 just left to Shahana sitting there and where the
4 other committee members are. They should hear all of
5 our testimony in order to make a responsible vote. I
6 don't understand that process, and I don't understand
7 why they are not hearing our testimony. We represent
8 the neighborhood, and they should know what they're
9 voting for. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you for your
12 testimony. This panel is excused. The next panel
13 that I will call up consists of Jeremy Kaplan,
14 Marlene Boccato, Velma McKenzie, and Peter Slovaska
15 [sp?]. We'll hear first from Jeremy Kaplan. Jeremy,
16 if you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin.

17 JEREMY KAPLAN: Yes. Yes. Hi, I'm
18 Jeremy Kaplan. I'm actually a CB7 board member,
19 speaking on my own behalf. And I just wanted to
20 speak a bit about the way in which we saw with the
21 Community Board the behavior of the developer. Just
22 want to reinforce again that the Community Board
23 voted to basically ask that Arrow Linen pull the
24 application, engage with the community, because we
25 saw hundreds upon hundreds of testimony from Windsor

1 Terrace residents that were against this rezoning,
2 and it was pretty surprising actually to see almost a
3 95 percent against this rezoning with a lot of very,
4 very sensible recommendations. And seeing the lack
5 of disregard for that and the lack of community input
6 from the developer and the way in which they even
7 came to the Community Board-- or didn't come to the
8 Community Board and presented us actually the day
9 that we voted with a letter that was very
10 condescending to us. It demonstrated to me that they
11 had no real engagement with the community and that
12 they disregarded us and they saw us as basically
13 peons or pons and that they had spent more time, you
14 know, spending money on PR and trying to, you know,
15 lobby people instead of actually really engaging with
16 the community. So I ask basically that we really
17 listen to this process, that the Community Board said
18 to pull this application, and to do a taskforce. And
19 I'm curious to hear from Council Member Shahana Hanif
20 if that has come up, if Arrow Linen has discussed
21 that. I very much want to engage in that and would
22 like to help as a Community Board to proceed with
23 that, because I think the community has great ideas.
24 I think they're clearly focused on having more
25

1
2 affordability, and that's what the Council Member has
3 been saying. I think the problem is right now--

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank
5 you. Your time is expired.

6 JEREMY KAPLAN: everything is secret
7 negotiations. And so I--

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Thank
9 you, Jeremy. Next we'll hear from Marlene Boccato.
10 Marlene Boccato? Marlene, are you there? Marlene?

11 MARLENE BOCCATO: Yeah, I'm here. Can
12 you hear me?

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, I can hear you.
14 Go ahead.

15 MARLENE BOCCATO: Okay. My name is
16 Marlene Boccato. I've been a resident at 496
17 Prospect Avenue for over 40 years. I have two
18 tenants. They live in five-bedroom-- five-room
19 apartments. They each pay \$1,850 a month. That's
20 \$1,850 a month, one raise of \$50 several years ago.
21 We're not all wealthy homeowners like other people
22 like you to believe. I wonder where all that lobbying
23 money went. Arrow Linen has done nothing to this
24 neighborhood, not one baseball team or any support.
25 Why should we adhere-- why should we give into their

1 outrageous money-grabbing request? We owe them
2 nothing. They owe us a lot. Again, I agree with
3 everybody who is against the proposal, the seven-
4 story max, 40 percent or more affordable housing.
5 I'd like to just say something that I recently heard
6 about Abraham Lincoln. He stressed government of the
7 people, by the people and for the people. Shahana
8 Hanif, we are the people. We supported you. Support
9 us. And that's about all I have to say.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: thank you so much,
12 Ms. Marlene. Next we're going to hear from Velma
13 McKenzie. Velma McKenzie?

14 VELMA MCKENZIE: Yes, can you hear me?

15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.

16 VELMA MCKENZIE: great. Thank you so
17 much. So much has been said today. I think the only
18 thing I would like to add at this point is, first of
19 all, I am a homeowner that will be in the shadow of
20 these buildings once they are built. I am opposed to
21 the building as presented by Arrow Laundry. I was at
22 the Brooklyn borough New York preview [sic] back on
23 October 9th, and one of the things that struck me was
24 there's two other projects that were being presented,
25 2185 Coyle Street and 581 Grant Avenue. What struck

1 me was the number of people from the community that
2 literally stood at the podium with these developers
3 when they were proposing and asking for the rezoning,
4 because the community had been engaged, which has not
5 happened with Arrow Laundry, which is not surprising.
6 At the 2185 Coyle Street, the presenter, one of the
7 things he says is-- he presented today also. The
8 properties-- the buildings are going to be between
9 four and nine stories. One of the six-story
10 buildings, they presenting at six stories because,
11 "There are brownstones there." It is more
12 appropriate urban design, which is what we're asking
13 for. We're totally fine building residential on that
14 property. I've expected it for years, but what we're
15 asking for is more appropriate urban design. 2185
16 Coyle Street and 581 Grant Avenue are being
17 respectful of the community that is currently there.
18 Are we asking Arrow to be respectful of the
19 community? We kind of don't expect it anymore.
20 Arrow has polluted the land that they sit on. They
21 have not cleaned up the spills. They have been
22 dragged into court by their own employees for wage
23 disputes. Arrow Laundry--

1 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank
2 you. Your time is expired.

3 VELMA MCKENZIE: Arrow Laundry has left.
4 They removed their--

5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [interposing] Thank
6 you, Ms. Velma. Next we'll hear from Peter Slovka
7 [sp?].

8 PETER SLOVSKA: Hello. I'm at work so I
9 can make this short and sweet, but I too am
10 vehemently opposed to this proposal. I was also
11 impressed. I was on earlier and heard about the Coyle
12 Street development where it did seem like the
13 developers engaged the community. There's been no
14 engagement whatsoever. There's the lobbyists in
15 closed door meetings with our elected
16 representatives. It was pointed out, are supposed to
17 represent the people in the community, and that seems
18 to be absent. This project is ludicrously as
19 proposed-- ludicrously out of scale for the
20 neighborhood. I see developments all over the place,
21 including the former Prospect Hall that, you know,
22 they're five stories. Look, everyone knows we need
23 to build there. Everyone's fine. We come at it as a
24 community with a spirit of compromise. Of course, up
25

1 the zoning, double the zoning, but scale still does
2 count, neighborhood character still does count, and
3 we've been shut out of any real negotiations or
4 discussions, and you know, one development can't
5 solve all of the city's housing issues. That's what
6 the City of Yes is for is to make every neighborhood
7 kind of stretch a bit, and really try to solve this
8 together before acting like this is a public works
9 housing where we're going to solve everything in one
10 fell swoop. But I would say one ill-conceived
11 development can have an incredibly negative effect,
12 impact, that really does destroy the character of the
13 neighborhood, and has an impact, you know, above and
14 beyond that ripples into many other neighborhoods.
15 Look, we want to do this. We want more housing and
16 inclusionary housing for sure, but let's do it
17 responsibly in a way that a respects the neighborhood
18 and respects the wishes of the community, the people
19 who actually live in the neighborhood. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. This
22 panel is excused. The next panel we're going to hear
23 from consists of Alex Heuer, Tony Milan [sp?], Alex
24 Maza [sp?], and Michelle De La Uz [sp?]. We'll begin

1 first with Alex Heuer. Excuse me if I mispronounced
2 your name. Alex, are you there?
3

4 ALEX HEUER: Yeah, hi. Can you hear me?

5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.

6 ALEX HEUER: Awesome. Hey everybody.
7 Thank you. My name is Alex Heuer and I strongly
8 support the rezoning of the Arrow Linen development.
9 So, I live in the district. I live in the East
10 Village, but as someone who's interested and excited
11 about living in New York City the rest of my life and
12 raising a family here, Windsor Terrace is the type of
13 neighborhood that I would be quite excited about, but
14 ultimately we need more housing. And this rezoning
15 project provides an awesome opportunity. As I learned
16 more about the project in past meetings, I've really
17 appreciated the flexibility the development team has
18 shown in proposing a building that's shorter on the
19 street and taller on the back. I do think they're
20 kind of accounting for like what's appropriate in the
21 neighborhood, and I appreciate the new building will
22 add additional affordable housing units to the
23 neighborhood in a lot that is an out-of-operation
24 factory. Again, these are all net new units. And
25 it's been encouraging to see the Borough President

1
2 Reynoso and the City Planning Commission provide
3 strong support of the proposal. And so I think that
4 I've seen that the opposition stressed that we need
5 more fully-affordable housing on this lot or much
6 more affordable housing on this lot, but ultimately
7 that plan does not exist, and we don't have time to
8 waste in addressing the urgent housing crisis in this
9 city. So, I strongly encourage the subcommittee to
10 vote yes in supporting the rezoning proposal. Thank
11 you.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next,
13 we're going to hear from Tony Malone. Tony, if you
14 can hear me, please unmute and you may begin.

15 TONY MALONE: Thank you. My name's Tony
16 Malone. I live nine blocks from the Arrow Linen site
17 in Council District 39. I'm a musician. I'm a
18 volunteer in a local Democratic club and I'm a member
19 of Community Board Six which is just a few blocks
20 north of this project. My wife Leah found our rent-
21 stabilized apartment 26 years ago, and that is the
22 reason we've been able to stay and raise our family
23 in this wonderful neighborhood, but other families
24 are getting pushed out every day by the cost of
25 housing. When our twins were born in 2012, we joined

1 a local group for parents of twins, and now nearly
2 all the other families in that group have moved out
3 of the neighborhood because of the cost of housing. I
4 was talking to a friend last weekend in the Little
5 Pakistan section of Kensington, and he told me that
6 many immigrants have moved their families to New
7 Jersey or Connecticut while one parent stays behind
8 and works in New York City. We need to build more
9 housing here and everywhere in Brooklyn so families
10 can stay together and grow and contribute to our
11 community. The Arrow Linen site is a block from the
12 subway and there's plenty of capacity for more riders
13 at my F and G station. Other cities have brought
14 rents down by allowing more housing to be built. The
15 research on this is clear. Borough President
16 Reynoso's report on this project states, "Windsor
17 Terrace is marked as having the lowest level of risk
18 on the city's displacement risk index, making it a
19 place that can accommodate new growth. New housing
20 options will help alleviate rather than create
21 additional market pressure in Windsor Terrace." And
22 one other quote from the Borough President's report,
23 "Catholic Charities at no point has made an offer to
24 purchase the site. It is difficult to imagine that
25

1 such a proposal would only result in the loss of 44
2 units without requiring unit mix and averaging its
3 side to shift downwards." So, you can read the whole
4 report. It's great. But the upshot is that if we
5 want to see more affordable housing units and we're
6 expecting someone to come and come up with the
7 funding for that, we might be waiting five years or
8 ten years, or it may never happen. So I would much
9 rather see 63 affordable units soon than hope for
10 something better down the road.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Your
13 time's expired.

14 TONY MALONE: Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
16 we're going to hear from Alex Maza. Alex, if you can
17 hear me, you may begin.

18 ALEX MAZA: Can folks hear me?

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can.

20 ALEX MAZA: Thank you. Good afternoon.

21 My name is Alex Maza and I live across the park in
22 Crown Heights. First, I want to thank the Council
23 and Council Member Hanif for your efforts to make the
24 city more affordable for all New Yorkers. I'm here
25 like so many other Brooklynites because I'm deeply

1 concerned about the housing crisis in our city. Rent
2 prices keep climbing and too many families are being
3 pushed out of their neighborhoods. To address this,
4 we need more housing overall, and that's why I
5 support the rezoning for the Arrow Linen site. This
6 proposal takes an important step forward. It provides
7 affordable housing while respecting the character of
8 the community with a thoughtful setback design. I
9 understand concerns about the height, but we have to
10 be realistic. We can either maintain the proposed
11 height, or reduce the number of units, or shrink the
12 size of the units to make it harder for families with
13 children or have fewer affordable units. But the
14 only way to have all of these things is to maintain
15 the proposed height, and to achieve affordable
16 housing we need more housing, period. A key element
17 of this proposal is its focus on flood mitigation.
18 Having looked in a Brooklyn in a Brooklyn apartment
19 that experienced frequent flooding, at one point it
20 was over a foot and a half of water. I know
21 firsthand how destructive and emotionally draining it
22 can be. I lost many belongings and it was a deeply
23 unsettling experience. By incorporating measures to
24 address flood risk, this project ensures that future
25

1 residents will have to endure similar hardships.

2 This rezoning balances community needs and addresses
3 pressing issues like affordability and climate
4 zoning. We need developments like this to make our
5 city more affordable for families. I'm worried about
6 being priced out of the city I love, and I know many
7 others feel the same way. So I urge you all to
8 support this proposal and help us keep a more
9 affordable and sustainable city.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next,
12 we're going to hear from Michelle De La Uz.
13 Michelle, if you can hear me, please unmute.

14 MICHELLE DE LA UZ: Hi, how are you.
15 Thank you, Chair and Council Member Hanif. I'm
16 Michelle De La Uz. I'm the Executive Director of the
17 Fifth Avenue Committee. Fifth Avenue Committee is a
18 46-year-old nonprofit comprehensive community
19 development corporation based a few blocks from this
20 site that has been serving the local Community Boards
21 for 46 years. I'm here I think provide a little bit
22 more color in terms of the background related to
23 affordable housing. Everyone has come together I
24 think in saying that we need affordable housing, and
25 you know, whether it's the proponents or the

1
2 opponents, everyone has said that. I'll just say that
3 as the local nonprofit community development
4 corporation that has recently completed two 100
5 percent affordable projects in Community Board Seven
6 in the last few years. The demand from local
7 residents in Community Board Seven for affordable
8 housing is incredible. More than 5,000 people
9 applied from Community Board Seven to our two 100
10 percent affordable projects that we built in Sunset
11 Park. Windsor Terrace is absolutely in need of
12 affordable housing. I know that the Council Member is
13 working very, very hard to make the project more
14 affordable, and to increase the total number of
15 affordable units and work on a number of the concerns
16 that have been expressed by the community. and I'll
17 just say that, you know, Fifth Avenue Committee has
18 entered into community benefits agreements with a
19 number of developers in the community to address
20 concerns, also to ensure that the projects live up--
21 the developers live up to the commitments that they
22 make as part of the project, since I know that a
23 number of folks have expressed concerns about, you
24 know, those-- any commitments being lived up to. And
25 I can assure that it is possible to do that.

2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Your time
3 is expired.

4 MICHELLE DE LA UZ: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. This
6 panel's excused. The next panel I'm going to call up
7 consists of Diane Hawk Johnson [sp?], Stefan Bujah
8 [sp?], and Virginia Powers. Diane, if you could be--
9 hear me, you may begin.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay, we're going to
12 move on to Stefan Bujah. Stefan? Stefan?

13 STEFAN BUJAH: hi.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, go ahead.

15 STEFAN BUJAH: Good afternoon, Council
16 Members. Good to see everybody again. I was there
17 earlier, couldn't make it. Had things to do. By now
18 you've all heard the arguments for and against the
19 proposed Arrow Linen rezoning, and I'd remind you all
20 of the aging infrastructure, how it's not equipped to
21 handle the influx of new residents in the sewer or
22 water system, or how the already over-burdened
23 schools in the area will be affected even more so.
24 And of course, probably not as mentioned, the parking
25 situation in the neighborhood. Already tricky

1
2 enough, would only get worse throughout the years and
3 years, and let's face it, years of construction. So,
4 let the talk of the ground be for the others, that's
5 why we're here, land and use. But there's one thing
6 we're all overlooking which is ironic, because it's
7 always looking over us, which is the sky. I moved to
8 this neighborhood about 15 years ago with my wife.
9 What I love about this place, not just the great
10 public transit and cute bakeries, but the sky above.
11 I can walk out in the morning and I can see sky. At
12 night, when I take the trash out and put it in the
13 NYC-approved bin after 8:00 p.m., of course, I can
14 look up and I can see stars. I can see the moon, and
15 it is thrilling. It's wonderful. You get a clear
16 expanse-- you get a clear expanse in the park. A 15-
17 story building would ruin that illusion, and I think
18 that's an illusion we all need from time to time.
19 This is Windsor Terrace. This is not Manhattan. And
20 one 15-story building leads to another and to another
21 and to another, and soon it's not-- you don't have
22 the lovely, beautiful Prospect Park. We have Central
23 Park which is surrounded and walled in and is nothing
24 more than a playground. And look, I want people to
25 come here and live here. I want them to experience

1 Prospect Bake West, which as my daughter calls it
2 with its frankly unnecessary number of bakeries along
3 its street, but I want these people to experience the
4 view from below, because that will give them the
5 sense of belonging and of community. The view from
6 above--

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Your
9 time's expired.

10 STEFAN BUJAH: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. I'm going
12 to try Dianne Hawk Johnson again.

13 DIANNE HAUCK-JOHNSON: Yes, I'm here.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Alright, you may
15 begin, and I know I mispronounced your name, so
16 please excuse me.

17 DIANNE HAUCK-JOHNSON: I'm so sorry. My
18 name is Dianne Hauck-Johnson, and I'm speaking for
19 myself and for Kevin Johnson. We are longtime
20 Windsor Terrace residents, and I [inaudible] Kings
21 County Democratic Committee and 44th Assembly
22 District delegate. We put-- we petitioned for her to
23 get her name on the ballot as we believed she would
24 represent her constituents. The Windsor Terrace
25 [inaudible] community is unified in opposition to the

1
2 proposed spot rezoning project as planned. I asked
3 Ms. Hanif to represent her constituency, not
4 developers, and not ignore longstanding objection to
5 the project as presented. Here are the voices of the
6 community most impacted by this project as proposed--
7 and to quote the young man-- community-based
8 development, which has sorely been lacking. What has
9 also been given extremely short shrift has been the
10 environmental concerns. For those not familiar, Park
11 Slope and Windsor Terrace are on a slope which leaves
12 Fourth Avenue and Fifth Avenue down water of this
13 proposed development. We are suffering from flooding
14 now. I can only imagine what it would be like to be
15 down water of this. Traffic, Prospect Avenue is a
16 parallel entryway onto the BQE. I can only imagine--

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Thank
18 you. Your time's expired.

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.
20 Next we're going to hear from Virginia Powers.
21 Virginia Powers?

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Is Virginia Powers
24 there? Mr. Powers, if you're on the phone, you may
25 press star six. If not, please unmute. Virginia

1 Powers, please unmute. Okay. We're going to excuse
2 this panel and move to the next panel. The next panel
3 consists of Kathy Park Price, Stan Leo [sp?], Thomas
4 Naeem Huji [sp?], and Veronica Yurosky [sp?]. Excuse
5 me if I mispronounce your name. We'll begin first
6 with Kathy Park Price. Kathy Park Price, can you
7 hear me? If you can hear me, please unmute.
8 Alright, we're going to just take a second. We're
9 trying to figure things out online. Give me one
10 second. Thank you everyone for being patient in here
11 and waiting to hear everyone's testimony. Okay,
12 we're going to try this again. I'm going to call on
13 Kathy Park Price. Kathy, if you can hear me, please
14 unmute.
15

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

17 KATHY PARK PRICE: Hello.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, go ahead Kathy.

19 KATHY PARK PRICE: Okay. Sorry about
20 that. I was in another meeting. Hi, everyone. Good
21 afternoon. Thank you Chair Riley and Council Member
22 Hanif. My name is Kathy Park Price. I am a resident
23 of Park Slope where I've lived for 14 years. My two
24 kids go to school in Windsor Terrace at MS442 which
25 is three blocks away from the Arrow Linen site. So

1 I'm very familiar with and invested in the area as a
2 neighbor and a parent. I'm here to testify in
3 support of the 244 new homes that would be built at
4 441 and 467 Prospect Avenue as part of the Arrow
5 Linen proposal. We have an incredible need for
6 housing and there has been very little new housing
7 development in Windsor Terrace in recent years. This
8 location has excellent public transit, access, and
9 enrollment has been down at nearby schools. So,
10 there's capacity for more students and the density
11 that the proposal supports. Every neighborhood must
12 do its part to address the housing crisis, and I urge
13 you all to approve this project. Thank you.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.

16 Next we're going to hear from Stan Leo. Stan, if you
17 can hear me, please unmute.

18 STAN LEO: Good afternoon. Thank you,
19 Chair Riley and thank you Council Member Hanif. I'm
20 a young New Yorker and a renter. I'm speaking behalf
21 of only myself, and I'd like to testify in support of
22 the Arrow Linen rezoning. We'll [inaudible] over
23 possible [sic] units in New York City, and we all
24 know that this shortage has made the city less
25 affordable and rents higher. There's [inaudible]

1 market rate apartments, like the ones proposed here
2 as well as the affordable ones. Reduce rents in
3 surrounding neighborhoods. [inaudible] here to say
4 that they support building more units and that they
5 support City of Yes, but you can't build a fairer
6 more affordable city if we keep saying no to
7 everything. I've heard people say that there's not
8 enough affordable units oppose rezoning, but how many
9 affordable units will there be if we continue to
10 [inaudible] empty post-industrial lot. The majority
11 of New Yorkers including many working-class people
12 just can't make it to hearing in the middle of a work
13 day, supports more housing including projects like
14 this. [inaudible] New York crisis starts here and I
15 hope the City Council keeps that mind. Thank you for
16 your time.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
19 we're going to hear from Thomas Naeem [sp?]. Thomas,
20 if you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin.

21 THOMAS NAEEM HUJI: Council, my name is
22 Thomas Naeem Huji [sp?] and I'm speaking in favor of
23 the proposal. I am a resident of Brooklyn community
24 District Two and a lifelong New Yorker. I am deeply
25 concerned about the housing crisis facing New York

1 City. I grew up on the outer edge of the subway
2 system and have faced hour-long commutes as far back
3 as middle school. My family lived far away from our
4 places of work and school, not by choice, but because
5 the cost of housing in more centralized neighborhoods
6 priced us out of them. We were condemned to long
7 commutes, not by special interest boogeymen, but by
8 decades of collective obstructionism by our fellow
9 New Yorkers who already had the fortune of living in
10 the core of the city with rich public transportation
11 access. It is easy for people who already have access
12 to the homes they want to reject more housing choices
13 for future families, especially if they perceive
14 their arrival as a threat to their way of life, and
15 the politicians who want to keep their loudest
16 constituents happy to have an incentive to suppress
17 change, but this is not a tenable strategy to keep
18 the cost of living affordable for all and to preserve
19 the working-class of New York City. The failure to
20 keep building homes at the pace of new residents
21 arriving means that we are all left to fight for the
22 few homes that were built before the self-interested
23 ideology that afflicts some of our neighbors took
24 hold of city policy. We all want a higher quality of
25

1
2 life and we want to be able to live here without
3 landlords and lenders confiscating the wages that
4 most of us work so hard to earn. Building the
5 additional diversity of homes afforded by this
6 rezoning means not only can existing residents afford
7 to stay put in the neighborhood, but more families
8 get to call Brooklyn home, and it sends a message
9 that every corner of the city no matter how wealthy
10 has to be a part of the solution to the housing
11 shortage. I encourage the committee and New York
12 City Council to approve this application. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next
14 we're going to hear from Veronica Urski [sp?].
15 Veronica, if you can hear me, please unmute.

16 VERONICA URSKI: Hi. Good afternoon
17 everyone. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to
18 you today and for listening to all of us so
19 patiently. As a renter and a resident of Park Slope,
20 I enthusiastically support the Arrow Linen rezoning
21 as proposed, and I'm thrilled that Council Member
22 Hanif has expressed support for it. I hope the
23 committee does as well and approves it ASAP. It
24 isn't news to anyone who actually lives in our
25 neighborhood or anywhere in New York City that the

1 matter that we're in the middle of a housing
2 shortage. I personally know of many people who have
3 been priced out of the neighborhoods they called home
4 for many years, if not out of the city entirely.
5 Park Slope and Windsor Terrace specifically have long
6 ceased to be neighborhoods the working people and
7 families can call home without winning a stabilized
8 housing lottery or the literal Powerball Lottery. We
9 badly need more housing supply, market rate or
10 subsidized, that would allow renters to gain even a
11 minuscule reprieve against rising rents. As long as
12 we don't have enough housing, landlords can raise the
13 rents by however much they want and our only choice
14 if we can't pay is to leave, leave the neighborhood,
15 leave the city, or even leave the state. If this
16 neighborhood claims to be for working people and
17 families, we should be encouraging the building of as
18 much housing as possible instead of complaining about
19 how a 13-story building is a high rise in the city of
20 the Empire State Building and the Freedom Tower.
21 Turning Arrow Linen site into housing should be a no-
22 brainer, and I hope it is the first project of many.
23 Thank you for listening.
24
25

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.

3 This panel is excused. Before I call the next panel,
4 we have people signed up online that did not sign up
5 to testify. Please, you have to register to testify
6 if you want to testify on this project, alright? The
7 next panel I'm going to call up consists of Max
8 Davison [sp?] and Matthew Dennys [sp?]. Max Davison,
9 you may begin. Max Dav--

10 MAX DAVISON: [interposing] Hi, thank you
11 very much.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Go ahead.

13 MAX DAVISON: Thank you all for giving us
14 the opportunity to testify today. I want to express
15 my strong and unambiguous support of the Arrow Linen
16 rezoning project. We've heard a lot of data today
17 about how New York is in a tremendous housing crisis
18 right now that has been driven by both a lack of
19 market-rate and affordable housing. Projects like
20 the Arrow Linen rezoning are a critical building
21 block towards relieving our housing crisis.
22 Additionally, given the magnitude of his housing
23 crisis, scaling back the proposed redevelopment from
24 13-story to half [inaudible] only harm working
25 families, and to be clear, I really do support, like,

1 any sort of effort to increase the number and depth
2 of affordable units on the rezoned site, but reducing
3 the height of the proposed development will
4 meaningfully reduce the overall number of affordable
5 units at the site. I don't want to belabor this
6 point, but you know, seven-story building where 40
7 percent of units are rent stabilized will generate
8 significantly fewer affordable units than a 13-story
9 building where 40 percent of units are rent
10 stabilized. And then lastly, I would just like to
11 make a broad point about neighborhood character is
12 Windsor Terrace represents one of Brooklyn's whitest
13 and wealthiest neighborhoods with a median household
14 income of \$180,000 a year. When we think about
15 improving economic and racial integration in New York
16 City, projects like this represent a significant
17 opportunity to help meet the goals of New York City's
18 fair housing framework. Council Member Hanif, I hope
19 we can count on your support for this project and I
20 want to thank the committee for their time.

21
22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Max. Next
23 we have Matthew Dennys. If you are on the Zoom link,
24 please use your raise hand function if you would like
25 to testify and did not sign up so we can call you on

1 the next panel. If you would like to testify, and I
2 did not call you because this is the last panel that
3 we have registered, please use the raise hand
4 function. Thank you. Next we will hear from Matthew
5 Dennys.
6

7 MATTHEW DENNYS: Hi. I'm matt Dennys and
8 I'm lucky enough to be a homeowner in Flatbush just
9 down the hill from the site. I'm here to express my
10 strong support for this proposal. This is a great way
11 to add much-need affordable and market-rate homes to
12 the neighborhood, and in the context of our housing
13 shortage and affordability crisis we need projects
14 like this all over the city, but especially in
15 neighborhoods like Windsor Terrace and South Slope
16 where it's already [inaudible]. Adding new homes
17 here will be a nice change from the current use of
18 this site, and it will strengthen the character of
19 the neighborhood by providing new neighbors with a
20 place to live. And [inaudible] customers for many
21 delightful small businesses in the area, which I work
22 biking up a big hill to visit as I can tell you from
23 personal experience. So I'd like to ask the Council
24 to please approve this project. Thank you.
25

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.

3 There being no questions for this panel, this panel's
4 excused. Once again, if there are any members of the
5 public who wish to testify remotely regarding this
6 rezoning proposal, please press the raise hand button
7 now. If you're in-person, please see one of the
8 Sergeant at Arms to testify. The next panel I'll
9 call up consists of Conrad Gantz [sp?] and Donna
10 Schneiderman [sp?]. We'll begin first with Conrad
11 Gantz. Conrad, if you can hear me, please unmute.
12 Conrad Gantz? Conrad, if you can hear me, please
13 unmute. If you are on a phone, please press star six
14 to unmute. Okay. Next we're going to move on to
15 Donna Schneiderman. Donna, if you can hear me,
16 please unmute.

17 DONNA SCHNEIDERMAN: Hi there. Can you
18 hear me?

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.

20 DONNA SCHNEIDERMAN: Hi, thanks so much
21 for including me. I wasn't sure I was really adding
22 anything. There's been great testimony. I've been
23 listening throughout the day while multitasking and
24 doing some work, and I appreciate all the time this--
25 of the committee and Council Member Hanif has given

1 to listening to all this testimony. The only thing
2 that I want to add that hasn't been said already or
3 reiterate some of the things that we've heard is that
4 it has to do with the transparency. That's been my
5 greatest concern. I agree with everything
6 everybody's been saying about the need for affordable
7 housing. What I've been hearing as I've been
8 listening is we have not heard specifically what type
9 of affordable housing would be available, and that
10 seems to be the biggest concern. I feel that once
11 this-- if this project gets voted forward and it
12 becomes upzoned, I share some of the concerns other
13 people have raised about predatory developers coming
14 and looking to buy out some of the smaller properties
15 and pushing out people who have been living in the
16 neighborhood for a long time or who have access to
17 affordable housing already in the neighborhood. So
18 basically I'm mostly concerned about not having those
19 details about what would be affordable. I think we
20 need affordable housing, not more luxury housing, and
21 I think it-- I also echo the concerns about Prospect
22 Avenue. It is not a wide avenue. We have traffic
23 issues happening there already. I can only imagine
24 what that would be like with a building this scale of
25

1 what we're talking about. So, that's what I'd like
2 to add in. Thanks again for hearing all the very
3 insightful testimony that's been offered today. I
4 also just want to say it is a shame that Arrow has
5 not been engaging more directly with community. I was
6 also impressed by the other projects covered earlier
7 today.

8
9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Last,
11 we'll hear from Conrad Gantz. Conrad, can you hear
12 me? Please unmute. Conrad, if you can hear me,
13 please unmute. Okay, Conrad, you can also submit
14 your testimony to us online. Alright, so I'm going
15 stand at ease for 30 seconds. If you are online and
16 you want to testify and we did not call your name,
17 please use the raise hand function. If you are in the
18 chambers and want to testify, just contact one of the
19 Sergeant at Arms. Okay, I'm getting the notion that
20 we're all clear on line. Anybody here, last words?
21 Alright, thank you. There being no other members of
22 the public who wish to testify on LUs 212 and 213 for
23 the 441 and 467 Prospect Avenue rezoning, the public
24 hearing is now closed and the items are laid over.
25 That concludes today's business. I would like to

1
2 thank the members of the public for your patience and
3 your testimony. You all did a tremendous job today
4 with respecting each other. I would like to thank my
5 colleagues, especially Council Member Hanif who
6 stayed to the very end to hear every testimony
7 regarding this project, extremely commendable. Thank
8 you so much, Council Member Hanif. I would like to
9 thank the Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use and other
10 Council staff and the Sergeant at Arms for
11 participating today's meeting. This meeting is
12 hereby adjourned. Thank you.

13 [gavel]

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING & FRANCHISES

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING & FRANCHISES

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date January 30, 2025