

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND
FRANCHISES

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February 12, 2025
Start: 12:22 p.m.
Recess: 12:35 p.m.

HELD AT: COMMITTEE ROOM - CITY HALL

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

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

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Crystal Hudson
Shahana Hanif
Carlina Rivera
Keith Powers

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a microphone
3 check for the Committee on Zoning and Franchises.
4 Today's date is February 12, 2025. We're located in
5 the Committee Room. Recording is done by Rocco
6 Mesiti.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning, and
8 welcome to today's New York City Council vote for the
9 Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises.

10 At this time, we ask that you silence all
11 electronic devices and at no time are you to approach
12 the dais.

13 Chair Riley, we're ready to begin.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [GAVEL] Good
15 afternoon, everyone, and welcome to a meeting of the
16 Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. I'm Council
17 Member Kevin Riley, Chair of this Subcommittee. This
18 afternoon I'm joined remotely by Council Member Moya,
19 Abreu, and in person by Council Member Hanks,
20 Schulman, Salam, Carr, Hanif, and Hudson, and also in
21 person, Council Member Rivera.

22 Today, we are voting on five proposals.
23 The first proposal concerns a mixed-use residential
24 development at 441 and 467 Prospect Avenue, known as
25 Arrow Linen, in the South Slope section of Brooklyn.

1 The second proposal concerns the redevelopment of
2 City-owned land into a life science academic complex
3 known as SPARC, which stands for Science, Park, and
4 Research Campus, in the Kips Bay section of
5 Manhattan. The third proposal is across First Avenue
6 from the SPARC proposal and involves the rezoning of
7 City-owned land to facilitate the development of
8 commercial life science space. The fourth proposal is
9 to develop a residential mixed-use building known as
10 122-03 14th Avenue Rezoning in Whitestone section of
11 Queens. The fifth and last proposal is to de-map and
12 convey a parcel of City-owned land next to a highway
13 entrance ramp in Long Island City, Queens.

14
15 Beginning with the 441 and 467 Prospect
16 Avenue Arrow Linen proposal, the vote is to approve
17 with modifications LUs 212 and 213. The proposed
18 residential mixed-use development in Brooklyn is
19 located in Council Member Hanif's District. The
20 proposal seeks to redevelop the commercial site of
21 the Arrow Linen Company into approximately 250
22 apartments, of which approximately 100 are projected
23 to be affordable. Arrow Linen relocated its
24 commercial laundry facilities, which serve many of
25 the city's restaurants, to the new facilities on Long

2 Island in 2013. The proposal consists of two actions.
3 The first is a zoning map amendment to change the
4 existing R5B residential district to an R7-1
5 district. The second action is a zoning text
6 amendment to map a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing
7 area. We are recommending to modify the proposed
8 zoning district to an R7A and R6B districts, which
9 will de-incentivize the teardown of existing
10 brownstones and a rent-stabilized building within the
11 proposed rezoning area. These zoning districts are
12 also more consistent with the height of buildings in
13 this part of Brooklyn. The entire proposed rezoning
14 area will remain an MIH-designated area. In addition,
15 we are recommending to remove MIH Option 2 so that
16 the affordable apartments subject to Mandatory
17 Inclusionary Housing will have to be affordable to
18 families with a household income of 60 percent AMI,
19 which is approximately 93,000 for a family of four. I
20 will give the floor to Council Member Hanif to give
21 any remarks regarding this project.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: I'm going to hold
23 on remarks for now.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: The second vote is to
25 approve the SPARC proposal, which consists of LUs 217

1 through 224. The proposal seeks to redevelop
2 approximately 4.75 acres of land owned by the City in
3 Kips Bay. The new campus will rebuild Hunter
4 College's outdated Brookdale Campus into
5 approximately 2 million square feet of state-of-the-
6 art academic, healthcare, and a life science space.
7 The proposal consists of eight actions, beginning
8 with the City map change to facilitate the
9 reconstruction of a pedestrian overpass over the FDR
10 Drive at East 25th Street. A zoning map amendment to
11 change the existing R8 district to a C6-4 district.
12 Two special permits to allow different types of
13 laboratory use and bulk relief that will provide more
14 flexibility in terms of the design of the proposed
15 buildings. A zoning text amendment to map MIH over
16 the C6-4 rezoning area. This is necessary because
17 even though residential uses are planned for this
18 development, the proposed C6-4 will not only increase
19 the amount of commercial density that can be built,
20 but also the amount of potential residential uses.
21 The proposal also seeks disposition authority to
22 dispose part of the site. Lastly, the proposal seeks
23 site selection and acquisition authority to
24 reallocate City's Forensic Pathology Center and
25

2 Medical Examiner Facility that is currently located
3 on the site. Council Member Powers supports this
4 proposal.

5 The next vote concerns a proposal across
6 First Avenue from the SPARC proposal and involves LUs
7 214 through 216. The proposal, which is known as 455
8 First Avenue Rezoning, seeks to redevelop a parcel of
9 City-owned land as new commercial life sciences
10 building that will be approximately 359,000 square
11 feet. The proposal consists of three actions. A
12 zoning map amendment to change an R8 residential
13 district with a C2-5 commercial overlay to a C6-4
14 commercial district, a zoning special permit to allow
15 more flexibility in the design of the building, and
16 the third action is a zoning text amendment to map an
17 MIH over the rezoning area for similar reasons in the
18 SPARC proposal. Council Member Rivera supports this
19 proposal.

20 Council Member Rivera, do you have any
21 remarks?

22 Council Member Powers, did you have any
23 remarks for your proposal?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: I'll wait until I
25 (INAUDIBLE) Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. The fourth
3 vote is to approve LUs 229 and 230, known as 122-03
4 14th Avenue Rezoning proposal in Council Member
5 Paladino's District. The proposal seeks to develop a
6 residential mixed-use building with approximately 94
7 apartments, of which approximately 28 would be
8 permanently affordable. The proposal consists of two
9 actions. The first is a zoning map amendment to
10 change an existing R4-A residential district with a
11 C1-3 commercial overlay to an R6-A district with a
12 C2-4 commercial overlay. The second action is a
13 zoning text amendment to map a Mandatory Inclusionary
14 Housing area with Options 1 and 2, which will ensure
15 at least 25 percent of the new housing is permanently
16 affordable. Council Member Paladino supports this
17 application.

18 The fifth and last vote is to disapprove
19 LU 231, known as 49-39 Van Dam de-mapping proposal.
20 The proposal seeks to de-map and have the City convey
21 to a private applicant an area of publicly owned land
22 next to Borden Avenue on-ramp to the Queens Midtown
23 Expressway in Long Island City. This section of Long
24 Island City has little green space. Although this
25 green space is not ideally located and has been

2 neglected by the City, it does not mean that we
3 should give up on it. The City needs to strive to
4 preserve green spaces in areas that have little
5 natural drainage and greenery. With increasing
6 cloudbursts, green spaces are becoming even more
7 important to address flash flooding. It is not too
8 late to show this space some attention, create
9 effective natural drainage, and maintain some much-
10 needed greenery in the area of Long Island City. I
11 will now read the statement prepared by Council
12 Member Won.

13 Today, the Zoning Subcommittee is voting
14 on the de-mapping of 49-39 Van Dam Street, a green
15 space under DOT's jurisdiction in Long Island City.
16 De-mapping the land will result in a loss of green
17 space to private interests who will not provide any
18 public benefit. After attending the public hearing on
19 January 29th and listening to testimonies of members
20 of the public as well as the applicant, I have
21 decided that I will be voting against this land use
22 action at the full Council vote. As I have said
23 before, while there are circumstances in which it may
24 make sense for public land to become privately owned,
25 I believe that the goal of such ownership transfers

2 must be public benefit. I do not believe that this
3 land use action will deliver the maximum public
4 benefit. The Community Board, which voted against
5 this de-mapping, has called on DOT to ensure adequate
6 site maintenance and security, and I support them in
7 this call. The Community Board also asks that this
8 parcel, the only green space in the vicinity, be
9 maintained for purposes of stormwater management,
10 green infrastructure, and I urge the DOT to clean up
11 this parcel so that it may serve this purpose. Given
12 the dwindling supply of City-owned land and green
13 space, especially in Long Island City, Sunnyside, it
14 is important that this public land remains public and
15 serves public interest, rather than the bottom line
16 of a developer whose main driver is capitalizing on a
17 market opportunity in order to grow his business.
18 Finally, I would like to point out that this land use
19 action involves a broader policy point. Publicly
20 owned land is a scarce and valuable resource. The
21 answer to neglected publicly owned land is not to
22 transfer the land to private interests, but to
23 actually invest in it, which is why the City should
24 not dispose of this green space, but instead should
25 start maintaining it properly.

2 Counsel, are there any Council Members
3 with questions or remarks at this time? Members
4 remotely, if you have any questions or remarks about
5 today's item, you should use the raised hand
6 function.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: No, Chair, no
8 questions at this time.

9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. Council Member
10 Powers, do you want to give your remarks now? You're
11 good? All right.

12 Council Member Hanif, you want to give
13 your remarks?

14 I now call for a vote to approve
15 modifications LUs 212 and 213 relating to the 441 and
16 467 Prospect Avenue Arrow Linen proposal, to approve
17 LUs 217 through 224 relating to the SPARC proposal,
18 to approve LUs 214 through 260 relating to 455 First
19 Avenue proposal, to approve LUs 229 and 230 known as
20 the 122-03 14th Avenue rezoning proposal, and to
21 disapprove LU 231 relating to the 49-39 Van Dam de-
22 mapping proposal.

23 Counsel, please call the roll.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Chair Riley.

25 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Aye.

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2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Council Member
3 Moya.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: I vote aye.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Council Member
6 Abreu.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Council Member
9 Hanks.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: I vote aye.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Council Member
12 Schulman.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Council Member
15 Salam.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAM: I vote aye.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Council Member
18 Carr.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: By a vote of
21 seven affirmative, zero opposing, and zero
22 abstention, the items are approved and referred to
23 the full Land Use Committee.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: That concludes today's
25 business. I would like to thank the members of the

2 public, my colleagues, Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use
3 and other Council Staff, and the Sergeant-at-Arms for
4 participating in today's meeting. This meeting is
5 hereby adjourned. [GAVEL]

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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 February 14, 2025