CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING &
FRANCHISES

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May 27, 2026
Start: 11:00 a.m.
Recess: 4:00 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway-8th Fl.-Hearing Rm. 3

B E F O R E: Farah N. Louis
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
David M. Carr
Elsie Encarnacion
Amanda C. Farias
Simcha Felder
Yusef Salaam
Justin E. Sanchez
Lynn C. Schulman
Shanel Thomas-Henry

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

Wesley O'Brien
Fried Frank Land Use Counsel

David West
Hill West Architects

Paul Devlin
Co-Chair Clinton House Land Use Committee
Manhattan

Theo Perez
SEIU Local 32BJ

Shashank Shamshabad
New York Building Congress

Noreen Doyle
President of Hudson River Park Trust

Jack Connors
City Legislative Manager at Open New York

Leo Guttman

Bryan Kelly
Gotham Organization

Simeon Maleh
Gotham Organization

Dan Kaplan
FX Collaborative Architects

Sean Fitzpatrick
MTA Construction and Development

Eugene Travers
Land Use Counsel, Greenpoint Museum

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

David Velez

Adam B

Coco Boonparn
PS 34 Student

Isa Michalski Ratcliffe
PS 34 Student

Stephen Chesler
Friends of Bushwick Inlet Park

Jerry Mraz

Maisha Morales
Southside United

Justin Lashley-Maloney
32 BJ Service Employees International Union

Teddy Francis
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Victoria Alexander
Resilient Red Hook

Sarah Klebanhoff

Debra Funkhouser

Marissa Bohk

David Marker

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

Andrew Bodiford
New York State Assembly District 50 Candidate

Katherine Thompson
Friends of Bushwick Inlet Park

Veronica Zapasnik

Louise Carroll
Former HPD Commissioner

Iniko Carter
Local 79

Arthur Kirmms
Greenpoint Monitor Museum

Maria Silva
32 BJ

Rolando Guzman
St. Nicks Alliance

Matthew Tromp

Natasha Bent
Local 79, 32 BJ

Neil Sheehan
Founder of Pete McGuiness Senior Center

Sean Cahill
Brooklyn Community Kitchen at St. Johns Lutheran Church

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

Trina McKeever
Community Board One

Baruch Stern

Sarah Roberts
Save the Inlet

Jonathan Jackson
Local 52 Union

Juan Ramos
Southside United

William Wilkins

Chuck Brass

Kirk Goodrich

Kate Yourke

Zoe Raphael

Christopher Leon Johnson

Frank Lang
St. Nick's Alliance

Robert Brunotte
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St. Nick's Alliance

Irak Rivas
New York State Association for Affordable Housing

Donato D'Agosto
Local 79

Jonathan McKenna

Janice Lauletta-Weinmann
President of Greenpoint Monitor Museum

Irwin Denny
Local 79

Jason Thompson
Green Cedar Management

Charles Lirio

George Weinmann
Vice President of Greenpoint Monitor Museum

Debbra McAllister
NYC Housing Partnership

Jim Su

Howard Slatkin

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

Steve Flack

Barbara Hertel

Ida Marks

Andrea Odysinska

Rob Solano
Churches United for Fair Housing

Eric Bederman
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Michelle de la Uz
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Jamie Smarr
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Kendra Chiu
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Maria Clara Golfo
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Sandra Baptista

Angela Howard

Jessica Katz

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

Anissa Pugh
Dr. A.R. Bernard and Christian Cultural Center

Alice Wong
Chinese-American Planning Council

Mark Raziano

Erin Drinkwater

Ryan McCain

John Merz
Church of the Ascension

Andrew Mandelbaum

Stephanie Andrews

Dan Miller

Luke Levanway

Lindsay McCormick

Jonathan Suarez

Remy Ziff

Daniel Donovan

Andrew Barokas

Darren Lippman

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Quiet please. Thank you. Good morning and welcome to the New York City hybrid hearing on the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. Please silence all electronic devices at this time. Also, please do not approach the dais. If you have any questions, please raise your hand. One of us, Sergeant-of-Arms will kindly assist you. Thank you very much for your kind cooperation. Chair, you may begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [gavel] Good morning and welcome to a meeting of the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. I am Council Member Farah Louis, Chair of the Subcommittee. This morning we are joined by Council Members Brewer, Encarnación, Minority Leader David Carr, Farias, and Felder. Today we are holding public hearings related to three proposals. The first hearing concerns two projects for proposed mixed-use residential developments known as the Dewitt Clinton Park North proposals in Council Member Brewer's district. The second hearing concerns another proposed residential mixed-use development known as Monitor Point in Council Member Restler's district. This meeting is being held in hybrid

format. Members of the public who wish to testify may testify in person or via Zoom. Members of the public wishing to testify remotely may register by visiting the New York City Council website at www.council.nyc.gov/landuse to sign up. For those here in-person, please see one of the Sergeant-at-Arms to prepare and submit a speaker card. Members of the public may also view a livestream broadcast of the meeting at the Council's website. When you are called to testify before the Subcommittee, if you are joining us remotely, you will remain muted until recognized by myself to speak. When you are recognized, your microphone will be unmuted. We will limit public testimony to two minutes per witness. If you have additional testimony that you would like the Subcommittee to consider, or if you have written testimony that you would like to submit instead of appearing in person, please email it to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Written testimony may be submitted up to three days after the hearing is closed. Please indicate the LU number and/or project name in the subject line of your email. We request that witnesses joining us remotely remain in the meeting until you are excused, as

Council Members may have questions. Lastly, for everyone attending today's meeting, this is a government proceeding and decorum must be observed at all times. Members of the public are asked not to speak during the meeting unless you are testifying. The witness table is reserved for people who are called to testify, and no video recording or photography is allowed from the witness table. Further, members of the public may not present audio or video recordings as testimony may be— you may submit transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant-at-Arms for inclusion in the hearing record. I will now open a combined public hearing on LU's 72 through 77 regarding two proposals located at 801 11th Avenue and 629 West 59th Street, each proposing a mixed-use residential building in the Midtown West section of Manhattan in Council Member Brewer's district. Each proposal requires the same set of actions: a zoning map and text amendment and a special permit. The special permits would allow the transfer of air rights transferred from piers within Hudson River Park. The site located at 629 West 54th Street will have between 617 and 701 apartments, of which 154 to 210 will be permanently affordable by

mapping a mandatory inclusionary housing area on site. The site at 801 11th Avenue will have between 477 and 541 apartments, of which 119 to 162 will be permanently affordable by mapping a second mandatory inclusionary area on the site. For anyone wishing to testify regarding these proposals remotely, if you have not already done so, you must register online by visiting the Council's website at council.nyc.gov/landuse. For anyone with us in-person, please see one of the Sergeant-at-Arms to submit a subject card— to submit a speaker card. If you would prefer to submit written testimony, you can always do so by emailing landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. I now recognize Council Member Brewer for remarks.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. So I am Gale Brewer, City Council member, and we look forward to hearing from the applicants. I will say in this particular case, this community board— and I know Paul Devlin is here representing them— mostly says yes and then with conditions. But in this case, they said no with conditions because, to be honest with you, there were several outstanding issues that have not been

addressed. And so I think that we should hear from the individuals who are presenting and then hear what the conditions that were troubling are. I will say that this is unusual in the sense that of the Hudson River Park, which is in the river there, is selling ability to go FAR higher on this building. And so that's a good thing for the park because they will then get the money and the building gets to go higher. However, we are concerned about how it goes higher. We are concerned about the number of affordable— we want more. And we also have some concerns about the park that is nearby, which does need some support. Not Hudson River Park, it's the Dewitt Clinton Park. So we look forward to hearing from the applicants, and then I will have questions afterwards, but that's the general notion. Generally, Community Board Four and I support the idea of housing at this location. However, we have certain conditions that have not been addressed. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Council Member. I will now call the applicant panel for the two proposals, which consist of Wesley O'Brien and David West.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, one second, I'm just going to administer the oath, if that's okay. Could you please raise your right hand and state your name for the record?

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Wesley O'Brien.

DAVID WEST: David West.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony this morning in response to Council Member questions?

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Yeah.

DAVID WEST: Yes.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. You may now begin your testimony, which is limited to 10 minutes, and we will ask you to start wrapping up your presentation after eight minutes. When you begin your presentation, please restate your name and organization and clarify whether you'll be presenting as both applications.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Yes, and, and good morning, Chair Louis. Good morning, Council Members. Wesley O'Brien of Freed Frank. I am land use Counsel to the app— to both applicants, and I'm joined by David West of Hill West Architects, also representing

both applicants. The- let's see, next slide, please. The applicants are owners of two sites shown here in red. An affiliate of Friedland Properties owns the site to the west along 12th Avenue, and an affiliate of Chapman Group owns the site to the east along 11th Avenue. So we are here to discuss both of these applications that are for rezoning of the sites from manufacturing to general commercial districts. This would facilitate the development of two mixed-use predominantly residential buildings on the site— on sites that were identified by Community Board Four for high-density development. As the Chair noted, we are also seeking special permits to allow for the purchase of unused floor area from Hudson River Park to be transferred to the sites for development. Next slide, please. So, focusing first on the 12th Avenue site, which is in the block north of DeWitt Clinton Park, images are provided for reference with the bottom left image looking northeast towards the site across 11— across 12th Avenue. We'll reference this angle again later in the presentation. Next slide, please. The proposed building at this site is a 44-story mixed-use development with 84,394 square feet of commercial auto showroom in the three-story

base and 421,435 square feet of residential use above. This would yield approximately 617 residential units, of which 463 would be market rate and approximately 154 would be affordable in accordance with the mandatory inclusionary housing program. Next slide, please. The building is shown here in section, rising up to a maximum roof height of 550 feet. With a three-story commercial base shown in pink and the residential tower above that. Next slide, please. And this slide shows the building's ground floor layout with the residential lobby located to the east along 54th Street facing the park and the auto dealership fronting along 12th Avenue. Loading would be located on the north of the site facing the DOT facility across 55th Street. Next slide. Here in the center is a rendering of the building shown in axonometric view. Next slide, please. And we have another rendering at ground level. This is looking northeast across 12th Avenue with a three-story commercial base shown at the bottom and the residential units located above that. Next slide, please. Now turning to the 11th Avenue site outlined in red, it's— it is located two blocks north of DeWitt Clinton Park, and the view at the upper left, look- which looks northwest to the

site from the intersection of 11th and 55th Street, will be referenced again later in this presentation. Next slide. And here is a site plan of the proposed 38-story mixed-use building, which would include 64,392 square feet of auto showroom in the base and 321,958 square feet of residential use above that. This would yield 400— approximately 477 units, of which 358 would be market rate and 119 would be affordable units in accordance with the mandatory inclusionary housing program. Next slide, please. And here is this building, the 11th Avenue Building, shown in section, rising up to a maximum roof height of 485 feet with a three-story commercial base shown in pink and the residential tower above it. Next slide, please. And here is the 11th Avenue Building's ground floor layout with a residential lobby located at the corner of 55th and— 55th Street and 11th Avenue. It is set back slightly at that intersection to provide more pedestrian circulation space. The auto dealership use is located in— shown in pink at the north end of the site. Next slide, please. Here set back in the center is a rendering of the 11th Avenue building, and this is— this is shown without the 12th Avenue building. Next slide, please. And

here is a rendering of the building at ground level, again, looking northwest from the intersection of 11th Avenue and 55th Street. The corner recess is clearly visible at ground level in the foreground. Next slide, please. And then here we have axonometric views of the two buildings shown in the surrounding context to the north of— again, to the north of DeWitt Clinton Park. Next slide, please. Turning now to these zoning actions, these zoning actions are essentially the same for the two projects. I will note a couple of minor differences between them. Both of these applications are seeking zoning map amendments from M2 districts to C4-7 districts, and also we are seeking to map these within the special Hudson River Park District. We're also seeking zoning text amendments to allow for the projects- for the proposed projects, and importantly, to require mandatory inclusionary housing at these sites. We are also seeking special permits, first to allow for the transfer of approximately 84,000 square feet from Hudson River Park to the 12th Avenue site, and then 64,000 square feet from Hudson River Park to the 11th Avenue site. And finally, we are seeking bulk modifications to allow for each of these projects.

Next slide, please. So the transfers would shift unused floor area from Hudson River Park, and we've identified the piers here in which the floor area could come from. It would be from Chelsea Piers, Circle Line Piers at, at Piers 81 and 83 and/or the Con Ed Pier at Pier 98. And these would be the transfers to the development sites for a total of not less than $29 million— $29.7 million. This amount may be increased based on later appraisals and inflation. Next slide, please. The anticipated— you— the funds that would be given to Hudson River Park in conjunction with the transfer of floor area would be for— it's anticipated that it would be used for Pier 76 for a new pile-supported pier, landscaping, utilities, planting, new pavement and railings at that location. Some portion of the funds could also be set aside for maintenance at Hudson River Park Trust's discretion. Next slide, please. Oh, there we are. So we have the two sites, renderings of the two sites here. In conclusion, I'll just note again that the applicants are seeking to facilitate a total of 1,094 new residential units on sites that have been identified by Community Board Four for high-density development. Approximately 273 units would be

permanently affordable pursuant to the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Program. We have committed to a construction task force to work with the community board during the construction process. The project would facilitate good service worker jobs pursuant to an agreement with 32BJ, as well as including good auto repair jobs in the commercial spaces. This is all in conjunction with the payment of not less than $29.7 million to Hudson River Park. And with that, we would be happy to take any questions.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. I have a few questions, before I hand it over to Council Member Brewer. I just want to announce we've also been joined by Council Member J. Sanchez and Council Member Thomas-Henry. So there are two large developments moving forward together. Can you clarify how the two sites are linked from a development standpoint and the for construction while both will be built at the same time?

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Yes, they are separately owned and will be separately constructed. We have presented them together because they are using the same consultants and the actions are essentially the same, so we're moving through on the same timeline.

We anticipate that they would both be constructed in overlapping time frames, and we have planned for that and would work with the community board and the construction task force jointly, but they are separate applications and applicants.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright. These applications would allow high-density commercial and residential buildings. Is there a precedent in this area for such density and height?

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Yes, it's— it is similar to the density that's located further to the north. At the Via building, which you see there, the Durst Via building, and also the TF Cornerstone building in the blocks directly to the north. Riverside Center further north of that also has similar high-density development.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: This proposal includes a substantial transfer of development rights from the Hudson River Park. Have there been such large transfers in the past from the park?

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Yes, there have been three transfers to date to the park that totaled, I believe, approximately $150 million to the park, and these were to facilitate the St. John's Terminal

project as well as the Douglaston and Lalezarian projects at Block 675.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright, I will now recognize Council Member Brewer for questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I guess I've been around a long time, because I signed off on every one of those damn ULURPs that you just mentioned, and I can give them to you, every inch. So Community Board Four, as you know, recommended disapproval, and I have to say this is very unusual for Board Four, unless several key conditions are met, particularly around building height, affordability, and family-sized units. So can you walk us through, of those requests, what you have agreed to? Obviously we're concerned about, as you know, the height and also the bulk, the affordability, and the family-sized units. I know that, you know, the- have your position on these, but if you could begin to walk people through— I think I know the answers, and I think we may not agree so far, but I'd love to hear your response.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Sure. So with respect to the height, this is focused— the comment was focused on the 12th Avenue building. So the roof height as

proposed in the application was at 550 feet. We have- we have been asked to- by the community board, to reduce that to 450 feet. We have studied and confirmed that we can reduce it to 510 without losing any floor area, which is the height that is consistent with the borough president's recommendation for the site.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, that's your response. That's what we may or may not agree, but I appreciate the responsibility. In terms of affordability, I mean, this is the issue of we want to count the number of not just the number of units, but the square footage. And I think the, again, Community Board Four is unusual because they also believe in workforce housing, which is higher income.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So we would like to see the delta between those that are units and the square footage to be workforce housing.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: What's your response? Yes. So, so New York City, when you are developing mandatory inclusionary housing pursuant to the New York City programs, there's option one or

option two. We've provided- we've provided for both of those in the application. Option one is the one that aligns with 485X. So while we would like the flexibility in case the program changes later and, and accommodates option two better, at this time, in order to construct these buildings, we would need to build pursuant to option one. And I'll note that between MIH and 485X, New York City has the most ambitious and rigorous affordable housing program in the country for any large city. And we are committed to meeting that, but that is a reach, but we are committed to it.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Alright, so you're not basing it on the number of square footage, you're still basing it on the number of units?

WESLEY O'BRIEN: It would be- it's- it would be based on a percentage of the residential floor area.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, but I- alright, we'll have a further discussion about that. And what about family size versus- we prefer family size units, what's your response to that?

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Yes,the applicant has not settled on exact sizes for the unit layouts, but have

committed that we could provide not less than 15 percent of family-size units.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. We have to— again, to be discussed. In terms of the step-down toward the waterfront, we talked about reducing the height, but how have you modified the design to better reflect the neighborhood context concerns, particularly the step-down at the waterfront.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Yeah, so the project includes a deep setback from the waterfront. So, the height would come down to 510–

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] According to your proposal, yeah.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Correct. And then it sets down to the base at 60 feet, and then the tower is set back from 12th Avenue approximately 60 feet there.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yeah, I think the community board wanted more, my understanding. So you're not willing to go even further in terms of the setback? Uh, The setback— the issue was not with the setback on that site. The issue was with the setback on the other side. They were focused on height on that side. If we go further, there's a likelihood

that we will have to reduce the amount of floor area and thereby housing both market rate and affordable that would be constructed at the site.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. Again, further discussion.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:Oh. The other issue is- maybe this is already decided, but the units would be spread around the buildings or would they be in one location? We prefer that they be integrated. The units would be integrated. So as part of the mandatory inclusionary housing program, when it was initially proposed by the city, it would've been required that they be spread on 50 percent of the floors throughout the building. City Council pushed it to 65 percent of the floors throughout the building. We would absolutely comply with that. Okay. We just need more units, just so you know. There is this, you know, we don't want to look too much like a glass building. We want to be more representative of the neighborhood, so what are your finishes? How are you making it as— I think you've agreed to some of this, but how do you make it more representative of

what the rest of the neighborhood looks like in terms of the finishes?

DAVID WEST: Yeah, hi. The rendering you see of the 12th Avenue building has actually been changed from when we initially presented it to the community board. It's a more masonry facade with a more contextual base. The base of the building relates very nicely, I think, with the industrial buildings that fill out the rest of the block. And the tower is not a glass tower at this point. The initial design was far glassier and a more vertical emphasis.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: And this is shown in slide 14, if you'd like to-

DAVID WEST: Yeah, so the image you see here is actually a response to the community board's request.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, it looks like a lot of glass to me, but I'm willing to work with the community board, to be honest with you. I hate glass. I like brick and preservation looking.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: If I may, council member, just one second. Could we please go to slide 14? Yeah, it's more clearly shown at the street level.

DAVID WEST: Not this image. Actually–

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I would preserve the whole city if I could.

DAVID WEST: Just keep– it's not 14.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Oh, it's not 14.

DAVID WEST: Okay, if you could just direct them where–

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Sorry, slide eight, if you would.

DAVID WEST: Slide eight. Sorry about that. Thank you. That's– yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I've seen it, so I hear. I'm just letting you know we want as much as possible. I don't know if that's enough. We'll have to have more discussions. Within the building, I know the 65 percent integrated– would they have the same looking– the same type of finishes In all of the apartments, the affordable and the market?

DAVID WEST: Yes, we've committed to using identical finishes and equivalent appliances.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And what about for the amenities? I– every one of these buildings, I don't believe in this, gyms and daycare centers and all that stuff. So would the affordable have the same

opportunity to use them as the market rate or would there be a discount?

WESLEY O'BRIEN: It would be subject to equal access. So free amenities through the building would be open to everybody. If it is for a gym that requires a membership fee, that would be for everybody.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So there wouldn't be any discount for the affordable? I'm just asking.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: No, not quite.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. The other question of course is DeWitt Clinton Park. Every single one of your larger slides shows that great green space looking out, and it's in bad shape in many cases. So it needs bathrooms and it needs a playground. They're both about $6 million. How much are you going to donate to the park? Because that will be a park used by your 1,009, whatever it is, units, households.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: So, as part of this project, we are paying $29.8 million.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: That is for you going higher. That doesn't count in my book. I'm just

saying. That's not– that's not a donation. That's like development higher.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Yes, Council Member Brewer, I think this is an area we look forward to discussing with you further.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, then we have ongoing discussions. Alright, so those are basically my questions. I have to say that we have— I appreciate the discussion. Who are the actual development for the two different buildings, the names of the companies?

WESLEY O'BRIEN: It's Friedland Properties.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Friedland is one, yeah.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: And Chapman Group.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, so those are the two, just so for the record. Alright, so I'm done with my questions. I have to say that these issues that I brought up still need to be addressed. Working with Community Board Four is a pleasure. No other community board, with all due respect, has the expertise of land use that Community Board Four does. I don't care who you are. So it's a pleasure to work

with them, and I will do so, and we will continue the discussion. But we really do need some of the issues that I brought up today to be realized. Having done 250 ULURPs in my past, we will be talking. Thank you very much.

WESLEY O'BRIEN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you council members. So being no council member has questions, this panel is now excused. Thank you for your time. Counsel, are there any members of the public who wish to testify remotely or in person regarding this proposal?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, Chair, we have a few people in person and also a couple people online. We will start with the in-person testimony.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: For members of the public here to testify. Please note that witnesses will generally be called in panels of three. If you are a member of the public signed up to testify, please stand by when you're— when you hear your name being called and prepare to speak when I indicate that you may begin. Please also note that once all panelists in your group have completed their testimony, if remotely, you will be removed from the

meeting as a group and the next group of speakers will be introduced. Once removed, participants may continue to view the livestream broadcast of this hearing on the council website. Members of the public will be given two minutes to speak. Please do not begin until the Sergeant-at-Arms has started the clock. The following individuals who signed up to testify should now come to the witness table. We'll start with Jason Diaz— sorry, not Jason Diaz. Okay, sorry, Paul Devlin, not Jason Diaz, Theo Perez, and Shahaski Shamahasha [sp?]. Sorry for butchering your name. And we'll start with Paul Devlin. Paul? Okay, you may— all good. You may begin.

PAUL DEVLIN: No, no, no swearing in? Oh, okay, alright. My apologies. I'm Paul Devlin. I'm the Co-chair of the Clinton House Kitchen Land Use Committee of Manhattan Community Board Four. Thank you all very much for the opportunity to testify today. Council Member Brewer, thank you very much for your kind comments. This developer has put our board in a very awkward position. We are known as a pro-housing board. We are the largest housing producer in all of the district, in all of Manhattan. We're the highest producer. We're the only ones with

affordable housing plan. We supported the removal of the 12 FAR cap from the MDL. We are pro-housing. We work with our developers to make sure that the housing fits into our community. And as our land use committee met, we actually voted to approve this with conditions. But the fact that the developer is not willing to meet our conditions The full board instructed our committee to vote deny unless these conditions are met. We are making some very standard requests that we make of all of our developers. We want to have a higher increased percentage of affordability; 25 percent MIH option one is not sufficient. We need to have 30 percent affordability. We want to do this by de— and we want to also do this by decreasing the height. We can maintain the bulk. We contain- maintain, but shift the massing. There's no reason for this height adjacent to the Hudson River. We want to make sure that this percentage of affordability is reflective of every other development that we have. We are working with other developers who are working at 18 FAR, higher density buildings that are lower height and the higher percentage of affordability. For this development team to say they cannot do it does not make sense in

a district where we actually are successful at doing that with other developers. So we urge you to work with this development team to make sure that we increase this percentage. Also, I want to have a comment about this contribution to the Hudson River Park. They are purchasing development rights at $200 a square foot. The gentleman compared this to block 675, at Douglas and Lalezaarian. I was part of that negotiation. Those development rights sold at $300 a square foot. They're now purchasing these development rights at $200 a square foot and saying that $30 million is sufficient for a contribution. They need to make a greater contribution to the park across the street from them. Time. I have more.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Now we're going to hear from Theo Perez.

THEO PEREZ: Good morning, Chair Louis, Member Brewer, and to the rest of the council members. My name is Theo Perez. I'm here today representing SEIU Local 32BJ. 32BJ is the largest union of property service workers in the country. We represent over 175,000 members across the east coast, including tens of thousands of commercial property service workers, residential workers, and security

officers here in New York City. So at 32BJ, we support responsible developers who invest in the communities where they build, and I'm happy to report that the developers behind these proposed projects, Friedland Properties and Chapman Group, have made credible commitments to creating good jobs for the workers who will permanently staff these buildings. These good jobs mean prevailing wages, they mean meaningful benefits, they mean a pathway to the middle class for the community members who fill them. And beyond this, 32BJ believes that we need housing to be built in every neighborhood of New York City to ensure working families are not displaced by dwindling supply and skyrocketing rents. The proposed development, which will include roughly 1,000 residential units, hundreds of which will be permanently income restricted for low- to middle-income New Yorkers. So as the cost of living rises and working New Yorkers struggle to stay in their homes, It's important to support those projects that create both affordable housing and good jobs, which uphold the industry standard. And for these reasons, 32BJ supports both 801 11th Avenue and 629 West 54th Street. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Theo. And the next— if you could please put—

SHASHANK SHAMSHABAD: I got it. Hey, how are you? Good afternoon. Good afternoon. Wow. Uh, my name is Shashank Shamshabad from the New York Building Congress. The New York Building Congress represents over 500 constituent organizations and more than 250,000 skilled tradespeople and professionals dedicated to growth and prosperity of New York City. We write to express strong support for the project, and we are here to discuss that. As New York City continues to confront a severe housing shortage, projects like DeWitt Clinton Park North are essential in expanding the city's housing supply while generating substantial economic and community benefits. Together, these developments would develop more than 1,000 new residential units, including 25 percent permanently affordable homes in a transit-rich neighborhood on Manhattan's West Side. These projects represent the type of thoughtful, high-density development New York City needs to address affordability challenges and support long-term economic growth. In addition to creating much more needed housing, the developments will

generate hundreds of construction jobs and permanent building operations and maintenance positions while supporting local businesses and economic activity in the surrounding community. Importantly, the projects will also preserve auto showroom, uses that have been long part of the neighborhood's economic character, helping retain quality jobs and commercial activity in the area. In addition, the project's significant air rights purchase from Hudson River Park Trust will help fund critically needed infrastructure improvements within Hudson River Park, benefiting residents and visitors alike. The New York Building Congress believes the DeWitt Clinton Park North represents a strong example of how New York can responsibly advance new housing production, support economic opportunity, and invest in critical public infrastructure simultaneously. We respectfully urge the Council's Zoning Subcommittee to support these applications. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. I have a quick question before I hand it over to Council Member Brewer. This is specifically for you, Paul. Thank you for testifying today. In your testimony, you mentioned that you would like to see a decrease

in height, so I wanted to know if you could elaborate your concerns about the height. The applicant testified today and shared that they would be willing to go down- to decrease to 510, but we wanted you to elaborate a little bit more about your concerns regarding the height.

PAUL DEVLIN: The concerns we have are that across our district, we try to taper the height from inland down towards the river so that as the city— as you're on the river, the experience— you don't experience this, a wall of housing. And so we've asked for them to taper down as you approach the river. The massing that they currently have has a significant setback away from 12th Avenue. We truly believe that if they increase the massing at the base and extend the base closer to 12th Avenue, they can cut some of the top off and push the units out closer to the river. When we presented that option to them, they complained about the noise levels from 12th Avenue as the reason why they wanted to be further set back from the 12th Avenue. I don't know about you, but noise 10- 50 feet away and 10 feet away is the same noise unless there's something between you. So that argument didn't hold water with us. And, oh,

one other additional point. We have a proposed development now on 57th Street at the 18 FAR. Their height is at 385 feet. So it is possible to have high density without high height.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. I'm going to now call on Council Member Brewer.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you. I hope Paul, you will talk to us a little bit about the fact that the difference between 25 and 30, how it was determined and the importance of workforce housing. With all due respect to 32BJ, I'm supportive and I'm glad to hear from the Building Congress. Guess what? Your workers would be able to get into this building with that extra five, 10 percent. So just if you could talk about the importance of it- and other developments have done it, the one on 57th Street, TJ Cornerstone, as an example, did. So this is not unusual.

PAUL DEVLIN: No, it's not unusual at all. We have had many developers come through with a higher percentage of affordability, and we have worked with different development teams to figure out if the MIH option one formula aligns best with 485X, maybe there's a way to introduce some additional

housing as we're now using the term workforce housing. We are not looking for affordability at the 60 percent AMI or lower. We have a lot of that. We can– we can accommodate in our community AMI bands that are higher. We can go up to 125 percent AMI. That will generate enough rental income to support the finances of a building like this. If you can figure math in the five percent at a higher percentage of AMI. We're not looking for an additional five percent at 60 percent AMI or even 80 percent AMI. We're looking for workforce housing, and that can be at the 125 percent AMI. Which will generate enough rental income for the developer.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: The real issues— I think we will continue the discussion about DeWitt Clinton Park, perhaps offline. I would love 32BJ to help us with this extra affordability that would generate workforce housing. I know you're supportive. I'm glad you're supportive. Do you think you could bring that back to Manny and company and see if they would support the extra?

THEO PEREZ: I mean, I think we support the project as it stands and we'll continue to follow what conversations you have with the developers.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, that's not an answer, but I'll deal with it.

THEO PEREZ: I'm low-level. That's Manny has to give you that answer, not me.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I'd love to see him support it, because it is for your members, to be honest with you, or members who are—

PAUL DEVLIN: What is the average salary of a 32BJ employee? It's above the 60 percent AMI.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Exactly. So we'd love to see your members in this building. So you could bring that back. Alright, I don't have any other questions, Madam Chair. I would say that we have a lot of negotiation still to do. Thank you very much.

PAUL DEVLIN: Thank you all very much.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Council Member. Switching to in-person, I will now— this panel's now excused, sorry. Switching to in-person, I will now call on the next panel of individuals who will testify in-person. We will now call on Noreen Doyle and Daniel Kurtz. Noreen Doyle and Daniel Kurtz. Please come to the— they are remote. Okay, sorry, no worries. Alright, Doreen, you may begin.

NOREEN DOYLE: Thank you. Good morning. My name is Noreen Doyle. I'm the President and CEO of the Hudson River Park Trust, and I'm speaking today on behalf of both DeWitt Clinton North projects, 801 11th Avenue and 629 West 54th Street. As you may know, the Trust is a legislatively created partnership between New York State and New York City. We were created for the purpose of designing, building, and operating Hudson River Park along four miles of the Manhattan shoreline, and doing so on a financially self-supporting basis to the extent practicable. The special Hudson River Park District is a valuable tool that has to date generated approximately $151 million for park infrastructure, and we've used these funds to perform essential structural repairs at Pier 40, to build new public restrooms in Chelsea, to help build a new public park here at Pier 97 in Hell's Kitchen. And to advance park improvements that are currently in design between West 29th and West 44th Streets. In consultation with CB4, the Trust has identified Pier 76 as the priority use for the contemplated development rights proceeds. Pier 76 is located opposite the Javits Convention Center in an area that

has very little public open space. And until 2021, when it became part of the park, Pier 76 was used by NYPD as Manhattan's tow pound. Today, it is essentially a large swath of asphalt, measures more than 5.5 acres, and is supported by 6,500 wooden piles that are deteriorating as I speak. It's going to need to be rebuilt completely, which it, given its scale, will be very costly. The Trust has secured a commitment of $85 million from New York State towards this goal, and we're working towards an eventual match from New York City, as well as funding provided by the Trust, including hopefully the proceeds from these two transactions. At present, the Trust cannot conduct our own legislatively required public significant action process concurrently with ULURP, as the developers do not yet have a committed closing or construction schedule for their projects. For this reason, and with the encouragement of CB4 and the cooperation of the developers as well, we built certain protections into our agreements, including minimum prices—

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] [inaudible] expired.

NOREEN DOYLE: [inaudible]

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Noreen. Now we're going to hear from Daniel Kurtz. Daniel Kurtz, you may begin. Daniel Kurtz.

DANIEL KURTZ: Hello, can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: We can hear you. You may begin.

DANIEL KURTZ: Okay, thank you. Just picking up on where President Doyle left off. Excuse me. Yes, the Trust has entered into a number of protective agreements with the developer, as this- the commencement of the project will likely extend beyond the— well beyond the approval date of the ULURP. And included among them is an agreement by the developer that notwithstanding other opportunities to secure additional development rights for the site, that they will always use these development rights to be purchased from Hudson River Park. In the rather unlikely event, as President Doyle indicated, that we have sufficient funds to pay for the extremely expensive Pier 76 renovation and reconstruction, Hudson River Park has committed to Community Board Four and the City Planning Commission to consult with Community Board Four with regard to alternate uses for the develop— the proceeds from the sale of the

air rights, and that these— the sale— the improvements to be funded would be primarily within the Hell's Kitchen area of Community Board Four. Obviously the sale of development rights will be subject to the ULURP, which is presently before the Council here. That's all I have unless you have a question.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Daniel. If there are any members of the public who wish to testify regarding this proposal remotely, please press the raise hand button now. If you are in-person, please identify yourself to one of the Sergeant-at-Arms. This is the last call. Being that there are no members of the public who wish to testify— oh, we do. Oh, sorry. Come on down.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Did you fill a speaker's card? Okay.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: When you come to the panel table, if you could please just restate your name for the record. Thank you.

JACK CONNORS: Hello, good morning. My name is Jack Connors. Oh should I start? Good. I'm okay. I'm sorry. I'm Jack Connors, the City Legislative Manager at Open New York, a statewide

grassroots advocacy group that advocates for abundant homes and lower rents. Thank you to Chair Louis and members of the committee for the opportunity to speak in support of Land Use items 67 to 77, DeWitt Clinton and Monitor Point. Combined, these projects would construct more than 2,100 new homes, over 700 of them affordable. In the seven years since talks around Monitor Point began in the— and in the years since the talks around DeWitt Clinton began, our housing crisis has only worsened, and New Yorkers have made it clear that they're tired of the financial stress placed of our city's ever-increasing rents. And tired of seeing friends, family, and neighbors displaced because of rising housing costs, and tired—

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I'm sorry, Jack, you could only testify right now on the first project, not on Monitor Point.

JACK CONNERS: Oh, okay.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Okay?

JACK CONNERS: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: You could continue your testimony for the first project but not the second project.

JACK CONNERS: Got it.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Okay.

JACK CONNERS: Tired of seeing friends, families, and neighbors displaced because of rising housing costs, and tired of being unable to see a future for themselves and their families in a city they love because it doesn't seem to love them back. That's why this past November, New Yorkers went to the polls in unprecedented numbers and said yes to affordable housing. In a city where disagreement is a way of life, New Yorkers handed these questions the highest yes vote of any odd-year ballot proposition this millennium. The message is clear: voters want a lot more homes built quickly. Sites like DeWitt Clinton are exactly the places we need to be building housing all across the city, close to transit, in a high amenity area with good jobs, in an underutilized land that currently houses no housing. Further delay of either of these— or sorry, of this project will leave it walled off to the community and will delay badly needed park improvements for residents. I urge you to vote yes on these proposals. Yes to housing, yes to green space, and yes to a city New Yorkers can afford. Thanks again.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. If there are any— oh yeah, I just want to share that we've been joined by Council Member Restler. Oh, sorry, Council Member Restler has a question.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you so much, I appreciate it. So Open New York does advocacy in support of housing projects across the City of New York, correct?

JACK CONNERS: That's correct, yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: And you engage with council members on those projects in their districts?

JACK CONNERS: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Have you reached out to Council Member Brewer about the DeWitt Clinton project?

JACK CONNERS: I don't know, have we been in contact? Well–

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] No, okay. Have you— has Open New York been in contact with— well, I'm not supposed to ask about Monitor Point, but you can see where this is going. So thank you for joining us today and for sharing your insights.

JACK CONNERS: Thanks. Would, would welcome the opportunity to meet with either of your offices and discuss this project and the homes New Yorkers need. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. This panel is now excused. We have another person on— person online that wants to testify, Leo Guttman. Leo Guttman. Leo Guttman online.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Leo—

LEO GUTTMAN: Uh, sorry, thank you. It just added me as a panelist.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright, you may begin your testimony.

LEO GUTTMAN: Yes. Everyone, I'm Leo Guttman. I am a member of a community board, Queens Community Board Two, but speaking on my own behalf. I'm here to speak today in favor of this DeWitt Clinton Park project. I just want to say, like, first of all, in terms of connection to the area, I do live in Long Island City, but my father worked in the neighborhood for many years at one of the car dealers, not on the site, but a couple blocks away. And actually, that's my one, like, kind of quibble

with this project is I would really like to see a better ground floor usage than auto dealers. This is a place with lots of, you know, active transit options, public transit. I don't think it's great for the fabric of the city to, you know, continue to support, you know, such an auto-centric usage there. Everything else about the project I really like. I really love seeing, you know– the housing crisis is, you know, really out of control and we need tons of new units going up in every neighborhood. And so, you know, this project I think supports that goal. I support, you know, for the deepest affordability possible, sticking with MIH Option 1. And I also like seeing, you know, the park funding that comes out of this. I like seeing our parks do better. So, overall, yeah, I support the project. I just wish the ground floor usage ended up being something different. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Leo. If there are any other members of the public who wish to testify regarding this proposal remotely or in person– if you're remote, please press the raise hand button. If you're in-person, please identify yourself to one of the Sergeant-at-Arms. This is the final,

final last call. Alright, being there are no members of the public who wish to testify regarding LUs number 72 through 77 relating to either the DeWitt Clinton Park North development proposals, the combined public hearing is now closed and items are now laid over. We will now hear— we will now hear next Monitor Point. Alright, I will now open the public hearing on LUs numbers 67 through 71 regarding the Monitor Point proposal, a mixed-use residential proposal in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, in Council Member Restler's district. The proposal involves multiple actions: a zoning map text amendment, two special permits, including the establishment of a large-scale development plan and a city map amendment. Applicant is seeking to redevelop a site on the Greenpoint waterfront owned by the MTA and build two buildings and a museum space. The development would continue approximately 1,150 apartments, of which approximately 40 percent would be affordable units. The affordable apartments would consist of permanently affordable units required by the mapping- a mandatory inclusionary housing area over the development site and a building dedicated to affordable housing on the eastern portion of the

development site. For anyone wishing to testify regarding the proposal remotely, if you have not already done so, you must register online by visiting the council's website at council.nyc.gov/landuse. For anyone with us in-person, please see one of the Sergeant-at-Arms to submit a speaker card. If you prefer to submit written testimony, you can always do so by emailing it to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. I will now recognize Council Member Restler for remarks.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you so much, Chair Louis. I really appreciate it. Thank you for your leadership, and thanks to all my colleagues who are in attendance today. You know, I'm very grateful for the feedback that I've received on this proposal from many thousands of community members over the last several years. I just want to thank all the neighbors and the local advocacy groups who are with us today, including a couple students from PS 34. This proposal at Monitor Point is to build giant residential towers as high as 56 stories of primarily luxury housing just feet from long-promised Bushwick Inlet Park on publicly-owned land. When I was first approached about this project almost five years ago,

before I was even sworn in as a council member, I made clear to the MTA that I was strongly opposed, but in much more colorful language. There was hardly any affordable housing included in the proposal at that time, not even mandatory inclusionary housing, just luxury towers with no additional benefit to our community. Our city is facing a severe housing crisis, and we need to continue to add housing across the five boroughs. My district, District 33, has built more new housing over the past 15+ years than any other council district in the City of New York, including 30,000 units since the Greenpoint-Williamsburg rezoning was passed 20 years ago. That's about 18,000 units on the waterfront within the rezoning area and an additional 12,000 units inland. We remain committed to doing our part to build more housing in our transit-rich district. However, development on publicly-owned lands— on publicly-owned land demands a much higher level of affordability. Indeed, development on public land must be primarily for the public good. There are some individuals here today that think we should take whatever crumbs this developer is willing to say— was willing to offer and say thank you. I'm not one of

them. We can stand up and say we're not willing to sell out our extremely valuable public land for primarily luxury housing. New market-rate housing in Greenpoint is quite simply unaffordable. The average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Greenpoint today is $7,000. There's currently a two-bedroom rent for- there's currently a two-bedroom for rent right across the street from 40 Quay for $14,420 a month. You would need an income of over half a million dollars to afford that apartment. Furthermore, in the more than 20 years since the Greenpoint-Williamsburg waterfront was rezoned, the city has failed to deliver on the central promise of that rezoning: a new 28-acre park, the Bushwick Inlet Park. That land has sat derelict for decades across four mayoral administrations, from Bloomberg to de Blasio, from Adams to Mamdani. We have seen more and more and more towers go up and our park remain fenced off from our community. To earn my support, any proposal for this publicly-owned land would have to guarantee true affordability in a clear majority of the housing units and an ironclad commitment with crisp timeline and full funding for the completion of the long-promised Bushwick Inlet Park. I'd like to thank

the Council Land Use team, particularly Brian Paul and Lena Saad [sp?] and William Vidal [sp?] for their expert counsel through this process, and my excellent staff, particularly my District Director Hannah Aida [sp?] and my Chief of Staff Molly Haley [sp?], for their always terrific work. I'll leave it at that for now.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I will now call the applicant panel for this proposal, which consists of Sean Fitzpatrick, Simon Maleh, Bryan Kelly, Daniel Kaplan, Eugene Travis, and David Velez.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: One second. Could you please raise your right hand? We're going to administer the oath first. Thank you. Oh, okay. While going from right to left, could you please state your name for your record?

ADAM TAUBMAN: Adam Taubman [sp?].

SEAN FITZPATRICK: Sean Fitzpatrick.

SIMEON MALEH: Simeon Maleh.

BRYAN KELLY: Bryan Kelly with Gotham.

DAN KAPLAN: Dan Kaplan.

EUGENE TRAVERS: Eugene Travers.

DAVID VELEZ: David Velez.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony this morning and in response to council member questions?

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. You may begin your testimony, which is limited to 10 minutes. We will ask you to start wrapping up your presentation within eight minutes. When you begin your presentation, please re— restate your name and organization. You may begin.

BRYAN KELLY: Yes, Bryan Kelly with Gotham. Gotham Organization is leading this project, which I believe is the definition of a public-private partnership. The MTA and Greenpoint Modern Museum are co-applicants. We have the experienced team to execute upon this plan and to try and work with Council Member Restler to close the gap here on the housing. Proof is in the pudding. From rezonings, we built the Suffolk in the Lower East Side with the Chinese American Planning Council. That was a ULURP,

more than 40 percent affordable. We built Covenant House's new home in the West Side and the Innovative Urban Village in East New York, which within two years of rezoning, 900 units in the ground. So we're here to testify that we're ready to execute. The site— next slide, please— is two properties. One is publicly-owned land, which is owned by the MTA. It has hindrances to development. It's been zoned for housing since 2005, but hasn't been tapped. The other parcel is owned by the Greenpoint Monitor Museum. It is an irregular-shaped lot which, although the museum has fought resiliently to try and preserve it, it is subject to erosion. Next slide, please. Next slide, please. Next slide, please. Previous slide, please. The existing conditions are a hindrance. There's environmental disrepair. The MTA facility is a wall to the waterfront. There's industrious traffic, no public access or improvement, no shoreline resilience, and the Motiva parcel just completed is fenced off. Next slide, please. In summary, 1,150 homes of which 40 percent would be permanently affordable to lower income. Households, 51,500 square feet of public waterfront access, unlocking Box Street Park by removing the emergency response unit

from that location, a new MTA facility for the mobile wash unit, critical funding for the MTA through ground rent. We are not buying the land. We do not own the land. We'll be a tenant under a lease. Critical funding for the park, resiliency and native habitat investment, and a permanent home for the Greenpoint Modern Museum. This is not a mutually exclusive proposal on just housing or open space. It's cumulative. What does new lower income homes mean on the next slide? It means 40 percent, 460 homes, nearly 500 people today who can't imagine they would have a home on the waterfront and a roof over their head at real deep affordability, 40 AMI, 60, and 80. We've also cross-subsidized a large portion of the site to unlock for an all-affordable building as well, working with HPD. That is homes focused on two and three bedrooms with a target of 40 percent of those homes being family-oriented. Abundance in housing production is the case for the Greenpoint-Williamsburg area. However, according to HR&A, only 11 percent of those homes have been for a lower income. This project is a single standalone project, will nearly quadruple that. Next slide. What does affordability mean in terms of rent? At 40 AMI,

a two-bedroom for $1,458. That is a massive discount to the market. 60 percent AMI for a one-bedroom, $1,822. This is based on the 2025 published AMI. Next slide. What does that mean case study-wise? A warehouse manager married with two children making nearly $60,000 could have a three-bedroom for $1,685, or a mental health counselor, single person making $67,000 at 60 AMI, one-bedroom for $1,822. Next slide. What does a zoning change mean? Density unlocks affordability. This site today that the MTA owns is zoned for only market-rate condos. The zoning change does add a tremendous amount of density in light of a housing crisis, but 50 percent of the new floor area will go to deep affordability. Next slide. Simeon, please.

SIMEON MALEH: Hello, Simeon Maleh from Gotham Organization. Monitor Point and its open space is made possible only through the construction of the new MTA facility, on-site remediation, and investment in resilient infrastructure. The project creates a singular opportunity to open the waterfront here to the public. The project will deliver and exceed the goals of the 2005 rezoning through the delivery of 51,000 square feet of publicly accessible open space.

Next slide, please. West Street will end in a wide park portal connecting the public from the street to the Bushwick Inlet. The design includes pathways, benches, elevated grove, seating areas, an interactive water feature, and native plantings. Next slide, please. A dry creek bed will help mitigate against stormwater, in addition to on-site retention tanks and permeable ground surfaces. Next slide. The south end of the park portal will be raised in elevation to connect with the new Bushwick Inlet Park. The open space is not just hard paved surfaces, rather includes landscape planted areas and trees specified to create a continuous landscape with the new Bushwick Inlet Park. Next slide, please. The waterfront is made available through the installation of a new bulkhead that will allow for the grade to be raised across the two sites, protecting against future flooding and storm surge. Additionally, the bulkhead will stem on-site erosion, helping to improve the inlet's water quality. The design here includes industrial materials, signage speaking to the site's maritime history, pathways, benches, and seating areas, including a picnic area overlooking the Bushwick Inlet. Next slide, please. At the south

end, the landscape steps down to connect to the Bushwick Inlet Park, providing accessibility for all visitors. Next slide, please. In addition to the onsite open space, the relocation of the MTA's ERU from Box Street, North Greenpoint, to the new facility that we will be constructing will provide for the full realization of an additional 25,000 square feet of open space at the new Box Street Park's front door. Next slide, please.

DAN KAPLAN: Good morning. Dan Kaplan, Senior Partner, FX Collaborative Architects. Starting with the East River skyline from Hunters Point South to River Ring and Domino, the height and scale of the project is appropriate, especially given its considerable public benefits. Next slide, please. Moving from skyline to street, we are amplifying the benefits of the public open space that Simeon just described by framing them with community and cultural uses, bringing people and activity to the waterfront. On the right is a park-related use, in asterisk, with public toilet rooms. And on the left is the home of the Greenpoint Monitor Museum with pride of place, 270-degree exposures, views of the East River, and at the site of the historic launching of the US Monitor

Museum. Next slide, please. The massing has been pushed away from Bushwick Inlet and opened up to the upland. Next slide. We have provided three orientations to avoid a wall to the waterfront. Next slide. And we have stepped down to the community, tapered the buildings, and gaining them a profile. Final— next slide, please. Finally, we have avoided the all-glass formulation of the towers, providing color, texture, depth, and materiality that will complement the neighborhood.

BRYAN KELLY: As mentioned earlier, the museum retains land ownership. Gotham will build out the waterfront. The waterfront areas will be publicly accessible and maintained and funded by the Gotham affiliate. We will work— next slide, please. We will work with the museum to purpose-built the facility. Right-sizing it as well, and building it concurrently with the housing to make it a year-round cultural and educational space. Their land will serve a double bottom line: open space and culture. Next slide, please. As mentioned, the MTA site has been a housing site for 20 years that doesn't require affordability. In order to unlock that and turn potential into

reality, we have to construct for them a new home for three agency functions–

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] You guys have two more minutes.

BRYAN KELLY: That would be the mobile wash unit, the material control storage unit, and the emergency response unit. A nearly cumulative $60 million investment before we can put a shovel in the ground. Next slide, please. This development will lead to direct and indirect benefits exceeding $1 billion. Jobs, income taxes, property taxes, local spending versus today with no housing units, no solution for the site, nowhere to move the MTA. We have worked arduously to identify the site to relocate them. Before we can pour one ounce of concrete to go vertical, we have to spend $130 million to get to that point in time. It is a lot of work, a lot of risk, a lot of energy, but also resulting from community and collaborative efforts. Next slide, please. We didn't get here today, six days later, by accident. We've heard constituents loud and clear– affordability, real affordability. We have 4,300 project supporters on a petition. Although with conditions, the project was approved by the

community board, the borough president, and then it was approved by the commission. We take every condition very seriously. We can meet many, and others we will work together through this process to try and adhere to as well. Next slide, please. Next slide. Just to reinforce the actions that were mentioned by Chair Louis. I thank you, Council Members, so much for the opportunity. I realize there's a lot of moving parts, and thank you for your open ear.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. I have a few questions before I hand it over to Council Member Restler. My first question is for the MTA component of this project. What are the MTA's main goals when it considers the redevelopment properties it oversees? How does this proposal meet the goals?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: Thank you, Council Member. I'm Sean Fitzpatrick of MTA Construction and Development. We have a robust transit-oriented development group that looks to identify opportunities where we can both meet operational needs sort of first and foremost. In this case, unlocking a new sort of purpose-built facility for critical functions like our mobile wash unit and the

emergency response unit to replace sort of outdated and at this point inappropriate locations on the Greenpoint waterfront, and also, to meet our sort of fiduciary responsibility to create revenue for reinvestment in the transit system. We have a robust, ambitious capital plan that has funding gaps that need to be met. And one of the ways we've been charged with meeting that in addition to sort of efficiencies on our spending side is through public-private partnerships, like the one we've identified here. So that was the process by which this site was identified as being a potential opportunity. It took a sort of robust public-private partnership with a group like Gotham in order to actually unlock it for us, and we're excited to continue to work, you know, both to meet the sort of two goals of the MTA and also figure out how we can best meet other public goals in partnership with the council and with the city.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Second question regarding the MTA. This question is both for the MTA and the applicant. What happens to the MTA property if this application is not approved? Does the mobile wash unit stay in place?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: Yes, the— until there is an identified, you know, other location, and the only way we've come up with that is through this process, the mobile wash unit would remain in that building. We will eventually reach a point, you know, the building is from the 1970s, it has some state of good repair needs. We would eventually reach the point where we need to make additional investments to make sure it continues to function.

BRYAN KELLY: But answering further of that, it is not what Gotham does. It's not our objective. We're very interested in building inclusive mixed-income housing and appreciate the charge to try and do more. It's at the heart of what we do. The highest and best use without the zoning changes is market-rate housing on the site.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Please explain the agreement you have between you and the Greenpoint Monitor Museum? How will you be supporting the development of the museum? Does the organization have the means to manage a museum of over 30,000 square feet, which will make for quite a large museum?

BRYAN KELLY: Yeah, I can, I can start and Jean Travers representing the museum can answer in furtherance. We actually are revisiting the size of the museum to right-size it. To make it about 18,000 to 20,000 square feet. That program would focus on inclusion of artifacts or certain replications of the USS Monitor, classrooms, program space, and a way to really make it an inviting cultural hub. In terms of executing upon that business plan, development rights purchased by the Gotham Organization affiliate from the museum would establish the proof of concept, meaning there would be the funds to do it. Exemplary, when we built Covenant House, their new facility on the West Side, we bought land from them and the dollars from the land was what enabled us to build their purpose-built facility. It is important that when we come in front of the public, we propose things that we could actually effectuate. So that establishes the proof of concept. Moreover, by rightsizing the facility, it will endow— enable a net endowment to the museum to have sufficient capital for operations. As one can imagine, both Gotham and the board members of the museum are not going to be the ticket collectors or vendors running the museum.

We'll run a process just like with the design consultants, run an RFP working with the museum and their representative to find an entity or a group that can sufficiently run the museum and make sure the programming is reflective not only of the history of the Civil War and the USS Monitor, but moreover, other functions, community events which the community could benefit from. And that's part and parcel to the fact that two-thirds of their land will be for public open space accessible by the community.

EUGENE TRAVERS Thanks, Bryan. Eugene Travers, pro bono Land Use Counsel, the Greenpoint Monitor Museum. I don't have too much to add to Bryan's response. Obviously, this is a significant undertaking for, you know, a small nonprofit. Kind of to get to the starting point, we need to get through this approval. We have been working with, FX Collaborative, world-renowned architect, to right-size the museum. And our agreement with Gotham will give us the funding necessary to construct the museum, construct the museum, share the waterfront open space, and have an endowment, you know, to make sure the ongoing viability of the museum. Gotham is responsible for the maintenance and insurance of the

waterfront open space in perpetuity, so there won't be a financial drag on the museum. So we're really excited about this. We think it's going to be, you know, a local and regional destination and really the crown jewel of the Brooklyn waterfront.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. The project as proposed would have 40 percent of the apartments as affordable housing by developing one of the buildings as— sorry, by developing one of the buildings as 100 percent affordable with HPD. But unlike MIH, this is not actually required by zoning. What guarantee do you have that this HPD-financed building is actually- will actually happen?

BRYAN KELLY: I think it starts with setting aside the land to deal with it, to do that. And Gotham, working with the MTA, has essentially navigated and pushed all the significant costs of the development, which includes the waterfront costs, building the replacement facility, the vast majority of the development rights being purchased from the museum, the demolition of the existing facility, and the ongoing ground rent to the MTA. So there is essentially, comparative to the overall project, a nominal amount of land cost that would be allocated

to the East site. So it's very accretive to develop HPD-sponsored housing on that site. We can enforce that in a variety of mechanisms, including in a large-scale restrictive declaration or some other form of binding document, which includes the fact that we have binding documents with the MTA. In terms of the reality of it happening, the first is the land and the cost of the land, because that establishes the amount of subsidy that an all-affordable building needs. This administration, just like past ones, has billions of dollars programmatically allocated to the new construction program for deep affordability. HPD has issued us what they call a soft commitment letter, just like they did on Urban Village. As well as the Broom Street development. So key one, having the land at a price that works within program term sheets, that's established. Two, strings attached that we're obligated to do it, meaning we don't develop that site in the future as market. And three is having the administration on board. We think we have all three components. I would say proof is also in concept in Broom Street development, which we did 44 percent affordable working with Council Member Brewer, who was the Borough President at the time, as

well as Margaret Chin. We closed the MIH building in December of 2020, and in April of 2021, we closed with HPD on the all-affordable building. It's a case study, in fact.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We're going to now hear from Council Member Restler. After that, Council Member Thomas-Henry.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I've got a lot of questions. If she wants to go first, I'm fine. Do you want go first–

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] Council Member Thomas Henry?

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Let me— for the next hour and a half.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Oh wow, appreciate you. First one is a clarifying question. Is it 40 percent or 50 percent affordable in the mixed-use building? It— in the aggregate, it's 40 percent affordable inclusive of the existing zoning development rights. The increment, meaning the amount of upzoning development rights, is 50 percent.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay. What do you anticipate for the commercial space? Chain retail outlets or smaller businesses, and what would

those anticipated lease terms or rent amounts be? Would those be affordable for small businesses?

BRYAN KELLY: But we view retail and commercial spaces as amenities to our tenants, whether that's grocery, that's a place for personal care, whether that's daycare. Those are the kind of users we would be targeting. And that would include local purveyors.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay. And just to clarify, is the MTA responsible for building your site and the museum and with funds from Gotham, or how is that working? Are you building- Gotham building it as part of the overall development?

BRIAN KELLY: The important distinction is that in order to get to the development site to build the museum, the housing, and the open space, the three primary components of Monitor Point, mhm, Gotham has to substantially and privately fund the construction of the mobile wash material control storage and emergency response units. So if we were to obtain land use approval, the first thing we must do for the lease to be put in place for Monitor Point is turnkey deliver to the MTA as part of our consideration, that new home. Once they move— and

there are very specific timelines which we must do that— if we do that, then they turn over the site and say, go ahead, start paying rent and build housing.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Now with that rent that you're paying to MTA, does the MTA anticipate targeting support of MTA operations for that local area and any type of community benefit?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: So, the money will go into our 2025 to 2029 capital plan, which supports a broad range of investments, you know, to rebuild, improve, and expand our transit network. That being said, we're very open to conversations. There's a lot of investment that has happened in this neighborhood and we're happy to continue to, you know, fortify the G train and all the other services that run through this area.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: And my last question for the East Building at 100 percent affordable, what do those— what does that look like in terms of rent? The— was that the mhm?

BRIAN KELLY: The commitment on the commitment on those homes, in alignment with the term sheet from HPD allows for income averaging, but the vast majority, at least 80 percent of them, would be

40 to 80 AMI, no more than 20 percent of— as currently proposed today would be between 80 and 100, but the 80 percent between 40 and 80 AMI, the vast majority would be at really lower income bands, 40, 50, and 60 percent of AMI.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, who wants to take their lumps first, the MTA or Gotham? I don't care.

SEAN FITZPATRICK: Your call.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: It's up to you guys, whoever wants to go first. You want— Sean, you volunteered.

SEAN FITZPATRICK: Sure enough.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: So it's— it took a little courage for you to show up on the day that you announced that you're making no adjustments to the 40— to the G train shutdown plan, where 40 percent of the weekends this year the G train will be shut down in our community. But I guess you didn't— it's— it is what it is. So, Could you confirm for us the net payment that Gotham is making to the MTA over the next 25 years?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: I don't have it over the next 25 years, but I'm happy to follow up with you on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [inaudible] dollars, is that correct?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: What was the number you gave?

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: $39 million. Is that correct?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: Well, it's $39 million is the net present value of the over the next 100 years.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: No, 25 years.

SEAN FITZPATRICK: Okay. I- we'll have to clarify that but that-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: somebody want to correct that on the record?

BRYAN KELLY: I have a— Council— Council Member, I have a summary of the entire compensation for the 99-year lease. I can give you a copy of the letter.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: You wouldn't be able to determine the compensation for the 100-year lease because the lease renewals after 25 years

haven't yet been determined. So how could you possibly have that number?

BRYAN KELLY: We can summarize for you as a follow-up.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: A range, you could provide a range, but you don't know the exact number because the leases haven't been determined for the amounts in years 26 through 50, years 51 through 75, and year 76 through 99.

BRYAN KELLY: It's collared, so every five years it's no less than 10 percent, and on this re— reset—

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: It could be 10 percent increase to a 20 percent increase for each of the ensuing 25-year periods. But you don't know what that amount will be at this time. So for the next 25 years, which we do know the amount— the net amount that the MTA is receiving is—

BRYAN KELLY: I— we don't—

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] $39 million.

BRYAN KELLY: We didn't summarize 25 years, but we can follow up in writing.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Well, that's the amount that we– that is the amount that's determined. You can— if– $39 million is the amount. That is the equivalent of over 25 years, $39 million. That is the equivalent of MTA's operating expenses for about one half hour of one day out of those 25 years. That's just what we're talking about in terms of the money that's directly going to the MTA on this project. Okay. Now that that's clear–

BRYAN KELLY: [interposing] I would like to respond that we are spending nearly $60 million upfront to build a replacement facility.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you, William. Okay, so you mentioned the MTA capital plan. We just had the most recent capital plan approved last year. There was a substantial increase in the MTA capital plan, is that right?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: On sort of inflation-adjusted dollars, it was four percent lower than the prior capital plan.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: It's a 25 percent increase overall, but on inflation-adjusted 25 percent increase, you're saying that inflation adjusted it was a decline in the actual capital plan?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: If you compare— that's right, yes. In real dollars, it was a four percent decrease.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: So, the relocation of the MTA bus facility, the estimated cost is almost $27 million. Is that right?

BRYAN KELLY: No, as I mentioned, including soft costs, it's nearly $60 million.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: The capital costs in your documents that you submitted to the MTA were $27 million. That's inaccurate?

BRYAN KELLY: The facility is 140,000 square feet. And in today's dollars, including soft costs and hard costs, to build a 140,000-square-foot facility, it's upwards of $60 million.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay. I mean, in the documents that have been submitted to the MTA, the numbers are dramatically different than that. So we welcome any updated documentation that you can have that backs up that price. In the information that was submitted to the MTA, the relocation of the bus facility was estimated to cost $27 million. Just to give context on that, that is 0.038 percent of the MTA capital plan. So almost infinitesimal number out

of the broader $64 billion plus MTA capital plan over these five years.

BRYAN KELLY: Councilmember, I suspect that did not include the emergency response unit, which was—

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] Emergency response unit is a different cost, which was a commitment that was made.

BRYAN KELLY: That was added.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay. So the emergency response unit was a commitment that was made to my community 20 years ago in the Greenpoint-Windsburg rezoning. The MTA committed in 2005 in writing to relocate that facility. Still, it sits. We are breaking ground this summer to finally build Box Street Park. We are only building on 85 percent of the park because the MTA has refused to relocate the ERU facility from our promised park space. So if you're telling me that you're doing me some sort of favor, I'm confused. 20 years ago, this was promised to us. Jay Walder [sp?] has a letter sent to my community, sent to the elected officials in my community, 20, 15 years ago, that they were relocating the ERU facility, and we've seen no

movement from the MTA, no cooperation from the MTA. The MTA has been a bad partner for my neighborhood and my community, not- in failing to follow through on the promises you made to us in the Greenpoint-Williamsburg rezoning. So if you're going to tell me that you're doing me some sort of favor, you're confused.

SEAN FITZPATRICK: I- Council Member, I respect your sort of sense of the— you obviously know the history better than anyone. I think that there is a- there's a lot of things that went wrong over the course of that period of time and the attempts at partnership with the city and with other actors. I'm not saying the MTA has no responsibility there. From our perspective, we identified this as a way to meet that responsibility, meet that commitment, and that's why we're excited to sort of find a way to finally fulfill it. So I hear your frustration that it's taken us this long. This is our opportunity to do that.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: MTA has had many opportunities over many years to fulfill that obligation, and to tell us that we need to build predominantly luxury housing on private— on

publicly-owned land to fulfill that is pretty outrageous. So, you know, if the MTA cared about our community, they would have moved. They would have said we're going to cooperate, we're going to work together, we're going to see this park move forward. We recognize that there have been 30,000 additional units of housing built in our community, and essentially none of the new park spaces have opened since this rezoning 20 years ago. And the MTA has said, we don't care. That has been your loud and clear message to everybody in Williamsburg and Greenpoint: we don't care. So with that, we know the MTA's goal is to use its real estate to raise revenue for the citywide capital program. How does the MTA balance that goal with making sure that a project on MTA land actually benefits the local community?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: Yeah, so we work very closely to try to make sure that we are, you know, achieving both sort of the MTA's goals and public goals. So the way that we typically do that is through public-private partnerships. We like to see, you know, especially in a city with the housing— a housing crisis like New York City faces, we like to see opportunities to build housing on land that it

could be better utilized, than sort of existing MTA uses. In this case, as Brian sort of outlined earlier, we were able to structure our agreement with Gotham to enable the construction of a— in addition to sort of the value being created by the mandatory inclusionary housing building, to enable the construction with support from HPD and with partnership with HPD, a 100 percent affordable building. This is somewhat similar, in fact, in many ways it has a great analogy with a similar agreement that we reached with Council Members Hudson and Osse as part of the Atlantic Avenue rezoning where we had an MTA site that sort of was not the right location anymore, had some structural issues, sort of similar situation. We were able to work with the city and with the council members to enable the construction of a 100 percent affordable HPD building on one portion of the site and enable the MTA to meet our fiduciary responsibilities through an MIH building on the other portion. So that's a model that we've turned to in the past. We're obviously— and every site is different. We're very, very happy to work with you to figure out how to sort of maximize the benefits on both sides of the ledger as much as we

possibly can. But that's been our MO both in the city and across the region where we've done transit-oriented development projects on Long Island and Westchester.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: When the MTA put this RFP out back in 2019, is that right?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: The plan was less than even MIH?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: The way that we structured the RFP– so the existing— there is existing sort of pre-MIH, you know, housing zoning in place of the R-6 designation that's there today. The way we put the RFP out sort of asked for responses both in terms of what somebody could do if they were to, you know, build an as-of-right project. That was sort of to set a baseline for it. As well as we encouraged, and Gotham and other applicants came in with proposals that would have, you know, would have added MIH to the site, and in fact Gotham's proposal including MIH, and then ultimately obviously we were able to work with them to go beyond MIH, was the one that we chose. So, yes, it was something that we solicited responses on. That being said, we always

anticipated that there would be a better and higher use to go through a rezoning process and have MIH applied.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: So you understood that there'd be some givebacks through a rezoning process, but the proposal that you put— the request for proposals that you put out was focused on maximizing revenue for the MTA?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: That— I mean, that's the— that's— we always— and I think there was language in the RFP related to sort of other needs and other balances, but yes, the MTA's bottom line is the sort of revenue for our capital program.

BRIAN KELLY: Council Member, can I—

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] this is for Sean. Thank you. So specifically, you know, the MTA does have a requirement to maximize revenue when disposing of land to a private property owner, right?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: But there is an express exception in state law, specifically Section 2897 of the New York Public Authorities Act, that provides an exemption if that land is being provided

to the City of New York for either— whether HPD or the Parks Department— disposal of property for less than fair market value is permitted when no asset is owned, leased, or otherwise in the control of the public authority may be sold, leased, or otherwise alienated for less than fair market value, except if the transferee is a government or other public entity and the terms and conditions of the transfer require that the ownership and use of that asset would remain with the government or any other public entity. So the purpose of that transfer is within the purpose, mission, or governing statute of the public authority. So I guess my question is- MTA is a public entity. You could have worked with our community to transfer some of this property to HPD, Parks Department, to work with us— all of this property— to work with us on a plan that actually met the needs of our community, that would have been beneficial to Greenpoint and Williamsburg, which, as I stated here earlier in my comments—

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] Council Member, I'm gonna let you finish this question. Just want to give you a heads up because we gave 10 minutes for you to ask questions. After this-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] I wasn't informed of the 10-minute.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Right. After you ask this question, we could give you an extra five minutes.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: That won't be—

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] because we have 90 people signed up to testify. Just wanted to give you a heads up.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: What are we doing? Okay. Alright. Nobody informed me of any time restrictions, so I did— I guess that's a new policy. However you all want to handle it, it's your hearing. So the MTA- but it's not helpful to be told about it at this stage in the process. So why did the MTA not work with our community on a plan that actually would benefit our community and meet our priorities?

SEAN FITZPATRICK: I sort of— I hear you on the sort of the legal point. There are instances in which the MTA is sort of legally permitted. I think we have a desire and a sort of a policy set by our board to try to meet both MTA fiscal needs and other public needs at the same time. And so, you know, from our perspective, you know, when we put

this RFP out and especially in the sort of negotiations and changes that have happened to the proposal over the intervening years, we think we've put ourselves in a position— again, understanding there's more conversation to be had between now and the end of this process— we think we've put ourselves in a position to be delivering both on the MTA's fiscal needs and on other public needs.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay. Since it seems like we've got some time restrictions- what's the distance between your property and Bushwick Inlet Park? Between the— where the building will be constructed and the park?

BRYAN KELLY: I think the set-off is up to 100 feet.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: There's 100 feet between where your building will be located in the park? That's totally inaccurate. Could you please correct that on the record?

BRYAN KELLY: From the towers to the Bushwick Inlet Park shorefront, I believe it's approximately-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] Not the shorefront, the border at the beginning of the

park. Where the park begins and your building, what's the diff— what's the distance?

BRYAN KELLY: In some places it's set on the property line, in other places it's set back.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, so as much as zero.

BRYAN KELLY: But this is just the podium—

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] The setback will be as much as 15, 20 feet? Go ahead. No?

UNIDENTIFIED: As much as-

UNIDENTIFIED: the— there's a very There's various amounts of setbacks. The— from the property line to the south side of the towers varies, and it averages approximately 30 feet. We can get you the exact dimensions in a—

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, so between zero and as much as in a couple spots, 30 feet.

UNIDENTIFIED: No, no, no, the- we'll get you the plan.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay. I, my rec— my review of the plan was that it's about 20 feet, a 10-foot separation, and then 10 to 15 feet setback. So we're talking about a distance from me to the wall

of this building between the park and where your building is located. Approximately accurate?

BRYAN KELLY: Approximately accurate, but just for the base of the building and the building sets back-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] The base of the building, that's what we're talking about. You propose— so I just want everyone to understand on the record that the distance between the parkland and the building is the distance between me and the end of the— and the wall in this room. Just to give a sense of proximity. Mr. Kelly, in December you informed me of your plans to move forward on the ULURP process. You know, once a project is certified, there are limited changes that can be imposed by the City Planning Commission or the City Council. In December, I encouraged you to wait until the Mamdani administration took office so that we could all meet together, work together, try to find a path forward, see if there were any opportunities for this to be a more sensible proposal. You rejected that. Could you explain why you rejected that, and- on the record?

BRYAN KELLY: Yeah, Councilmember, we've been at this for six years now. Obviously, I've received a lot of feedback from you as well. We have deadlines in our agreements with the MTA. We've made substantial investments to undertake this. We've done over 150 community meetings. And although I know there is resistance from some community members, I would like to highlight that the form and the scope and the substance of these buildings was majority approved by the community board, 24 to nine. We have also expressed a firm commitment to work with you continually on the affordable housing. We're not abstinent from trying to accomplish that. But we have a housing crisis. We've made an investment. We've collaborated. We've heard the community and we made changes. And we think stopping the project in its tracks would be a negative. So, but we want to work with you together.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: To be clear, what I suggested was that you wait two weeks to talk to the new mayor who was about to take office so that we could see if there was an alternative proposal that might work for all of the parties involved, and you said no. So are you concerned that with the short

distance between the base of the tower and the parkland, that this will— that the parkland will be a front yard or an exclusive space for the people in your buildings?

BRYAN KELLY: Not, not at all. We think the more— nearly 100-foot-wide park portal, which connects to West Street and the public esplanade that's created through the museum as an invitation and connectivity for the community and have received quite a lot of positive feedback.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: On the public esplanade, you indicated that- are you committed to supporting the 40-foot esplanade that is required as a part of the water— the link [sic] for Greenpoint Waterfront rezoning?

BRYAN KELLY: Yeah, within more detailed discussions that we know we have to have with you, we very much are so.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: So you're no longer seeking any waiver or reduction in the waiver to 30 feet?

BRYAN KELLY: There's clearly a lot more detailed conversations, but it's something the Museum, Gotham, and the MTA is receptive to adhering

to. We heard the community's feedback on it. That was an important item. We heard the community board's goals of having public bathrooms. We're including that in the plan. Like I said, we take every condition from every entity very seriously and aim to try and achieve as many of them as possible.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: What are you expecting the market rate rents will go for in the private unit, in the market rate units?

BRYAN KELLY: You know, as I mentioned in my testimony, the market units cross-subsidize and pay for a lot of things.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Sorry, just a direct answer to the question, please.

BRIAN KELLY: Yeah, and so market rents- I'm just trying to pull up some data here. You're looking at studios that would be just short of $4,000, one bedrooms between $5,000 and $6,000, two bedrooms could go up to $7,500 to $7,800, and threes north of that.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Threes north of?

BRYAN KELLY: threes would be— again, these are averages. There's lower prices in the lower

part of the building and higher prices other parts of the building. It could be $8,500 to $9,500.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, just want to make sure that that's understood on the record. I've made— the community board recommended a majority affordable housing, the borough president recommended a majority affordable housing. I've been clear that- clear majority affordable housing development is a non— is essential for my being open to this. Are you actively evaluating ways to add more affordable housing, and what options are you evaluating?

BRYAN KELLY: We've- we're looking at and trying to identify ways to either find lower cost capital, credits, bonds, maybe using some floor area from a reduced size of the museum. Council Member, you've got our commitment to spend the next three to four weeks to try and tick that number upward. But to be clear, from our perspective, developers are executing upon a business plan. We also have constraints. Banks, ultimately endowment investors, you know, institutional pension funds that invest the equity and tax credit investors with the support of the city. If we can move the needle, we'll move the needle. And I mentioned the projects earlier we've

done, not to say, you know, we're greater than thou, but more to show you the flexibility of what we've accomplished in the past. We're proud to try and work with you to do it.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: My understanding is that you've made some sort of commitment to operating expenses to Bushwick and the park. Can you articulate what that commitment is and for what period of time?

BRYAN KELLY: Yes, it's $300,000 starting upon the completion or our first TCO. It is memorialized, enforced, and would be in the regulatory agreement called the restrictive declaration, and it would grow with inflation.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: For how long?

BRYAN KELLY: For the entire term of the ground lease, which is nearly 100 years.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: The Monitor Museum's deed said they cannot sell this land- this be for Gene- to a for-profit entity. Can you explain whether purchasing the air rights for this property violates that deed?

EUGENE TRAVERS: Yeah, thank you, Councilmember. So, the deed restriction was imposed

on the museum's land when Motiva donated it to the museum. It does limit the use of the land itself for the establishment of a museum to honor the memory of the Civil War battleship USS Monitor. The deed restriction, again, it is specific to the land. It does not attach to the development rights. There's precedent for this. It's been reviewed. It's been done before.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Where?

EUGENE TRAVERS: We can follow up specific—

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] Provide in writing examples of where this—

EUGENE TRAVERS: Absolutely.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Be able to do that by next week?

EUGENE TRAVERS: Absolutely, Council Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: On open space, your proposal includes 51,500 square feet of open space, 44,500 of which is publicly accessible. You're required to include 41,000 square feet by law, is that correct?

BRYAN KELLY: I think the number works out to about approximately 33,000, so we're increasing the number provided by about 17,000.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: The requirement by law is 33,000. 17,000 is what you're adding, is your analysis, and that 33,000 is with the 40-foot esplanade?

BRYAN KELLY: That's excluding the 40-foot esplanade. The additional 40-foot esplanade would add another 1,000 on top of the 51,000 square feet.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, and of the 17,000 that you're adding, 7,000 is private— is private and 10,000 is publicly accessible?

SIMEON SALEH: I wouldn't necessarily characterize it as private given that it's accessory to the museum and also landscape space is accessory to the PAAs and the WPAs identified.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, according to what we saw, the proposed development would provide 51,000 square feet of open space, 44,000 square feet of which would be public— publicly accessible, including 34,200 square feet of required waterfront public access area space, 10,300 square feet of public access area in— so the remaining 7,000

square feet of open space would be for museum visitors as well as landscaping and planting. So just want to make sure that I understand, is what I just read correct?

SIMEON SALEH: That's correct. There's no fence between the WPA spaces and non-PA— WPA spaces. The PAA and the WPA are dictated by the zoning resolution, so those are the areas identified within this land use drawings. The additional space is adjacent to and not separated from the other open space.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: So this area is in an AE flood zone. It's the second highest level of risk for flooding, flooding potentially as high as 12 feet high. Do you think it's sensible to build 600-foot towers for thousands of residents in such a severe floodplain?

SIMEON SALEH: I think the infrastructure proposed contemplates that flood zone and considers it to ensure the protection of the residents. All of the residential lobbies and all MEP infrastructure will be raised above the 2080 floodplain. So that's either at a higher lobby elevation or mezzanines above that. There'll be no critical infrastructure in

the basements of any of the buildings protecting, you know, the residents throughout the two buildings.]

BRYAN KELLY: May—

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] Did the affordable housing buildings have the same flood protections as the mixed income buildings?

BRYAN KELLY: Absolutely. I'd like to, Councilmember, give an example. Gotham Point is also in a very similar floodplain design with the same constraints. So, it's a good example.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: So all of the same design features that will protect the mixed-rate, mixed-income buildings will be in place for the affordable building?

BRYAN KELLY: Absolutely.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: What new water flow patterns will your development cause? I know there's concern that these towers will lead to significant amounts of flooding inland. Is this something you've analyzed?

SIMEON SALEH: We've had— we've worked with the city to develop a waterfront revitalization plan. Any specific questions we can—

BRYAN KELLY: [interposing] I would- I would add to Simeon's point. Today the warehouse is 80,000 square feet, impervious, full lot coverage. We will be reducing lot coverage, increasing stormwater management, increasing above design flood elevation, and creating bulkheads and riprap for the museum site. So it should reduce, not exacerbate. Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: And then lastly, this is for everyone, can you speak on the record to the conversations that you've had with the administration about the future of Bushwick Inlet Park and what the path forward is there?

BRYAN KELLY: Council Member, I think our objective here is to try and solve a housing crisis. With that said, we've been proponents. We would be developing and building next to the park. We're friends to the park. We're going to support the park. And yes, we've advocated for the park, but our objective, I believe, as an applicant on a housing side is trying to solve the housing issue at hand. With that said, we are advocates for the park. It's sensible, it's needed, and it's long awaited.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Understood. That wasn't exactly my question though. My question was,

what conversations have you had to date with the administration on the park and what updates can you share on the record?

BRYAN KELLY: My understanding from conversations with city and state government is that there is continued testing being done on the site. I am not aware that the construction is imminently planned forward. With that, I would say the city spent north of $300 million to acquire those properties. So I think it's critical that it move forward.

SEAN FITZPATRICK: I don't have much to add beyond that. I'd say, you know, as a state entity, we've had, I think, positive conversations expressing sort of the ability for the city to continue to make the investment that it needs to make. We've also tried to play a coordinating role on some of those things with the testing and the sort of DEC process, but I don't have anything beyond that that I cannot add today.

BRYAN KELLY: Councilmember, do you mind if I add one point? Because I acknowledge what you talk about with public land, and we've developed a lot of HPD sites that are dollar lend. The critical

difference here from Monitor Point, set aside opinions on what MTA should do with the money, is when we develop Gotham Point, we've developed the Ashland, where we developed Gotham West, we were delivered a piece of land for a dollar as a greenfield, flat and ready. At Gotham Point, all the waterfront work was done. In this case, we're dealt with a hindrance. We have to move three facilities off the site. Nobody's paying for that. We are substantially— we're paying for it. We have to buy the museum development rights. Well, Yeah, they own the land, they have a decision what to do with it. So we have to convince them to make a deal. So we had to convince them to make a deal. We have to demolish the warehouse. We can't get a single TCO on a single housing unit till every piece of the waterfront is done under the restrictive declaration. So I just wanna say that there is a difference between land as subsidy at a dollar versus even if we didn't pay a dollar of ground rent. We've got a $130 million ticket just to get to the site. And I just ask that that be acknowledged as a differential point. Although we fight for affordability, that's the main difference.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: To be clear, if there weren't costs associated, I would be insisting that it's 100 percent affordable housing development or we wouldn't even be having a conversation. Recognizing there's some costs here, we're trying to figure out a path toward a healthy majority affordable housing that actually meets the needs of our community. The MTA has made, as far as I can tell, no concessions. They're just looking to generate as much revenue for themselves as possible in this process. So we hope that that will change in the weeks to come. We hope the administration will step up in the week to come, and we hope that you will figure out some creative and flexible strategies in the weeks to come that make this a less terrible project. But as of today, I remain uncomfortable, opposed to what's been proposed. I don't think this makes sense, and we're going to have to see significant improvement for us— for my position to change. Thank you all for your testimony.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: And Council member, I just want to share with you, I didn't try to silence you.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: No-

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] No, because I understand your frustration. I understand the complexities with this project, so that's why we gave you extra time.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I really appreciate it, Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: And given that we have 90 people set— that are here to testify from your district, we wanted to make sure that everybody had time because we want to make sure that the public gets to testify.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Chair, I really appreciate it.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Especially the young people who are online waiting. So thank you for your questions. We have a question from Council Member Won.

COUNCIL MEMBER WON: I just want to first acknowledge all the hard work and the advocacy of Councilmember Restler. Thank you so much. And also thank you, Chair Louis. I want to dig in a little bit more on resiliency. So we hear a lot of frustration on the environmental impacts of this and the concerns about the Bushwick Inland Park as is, as well as for

the long-promised waterfront park access and also the fears that people have for all the wildlife and ecology that currently exists in that park. So right now we're spending billions of dollars on coastal resiliency in Lower Manhattan and Battery Park, especially in South Street Brook— Streetport. While this ULURP process, we aren't really seeing— I would like to know if— because I don't currently see it in your presentation— on what is the investment that we're going to see from the government as well as you from the private sector on waterfront resiliency, because this is indeed a floodplain. And why build only flood walls in Lower Manhattan and then build towers just across the street of the river, 50 feet from the East River shoreline? And our rising floodwaters will not have anywhere else to go. And we've seen so much flooding all across the waterfront. So right now I see an easement zone about 15 offset from the outside of the utilities. No trees within the easement. And I want to see more, because I'm looking through your presentation, but I'm not seeing anything substantial on waterfront resiliency. So can you help me understand a little bit more in addition to just setbacks and separations of how

you're going to one, guarantee resiliency infrastructure and what that looks like for you, and what kind of investment, like what's the dollar amount. For resiliency funding? And also, what steps are you going to take to protect the wildlife and the nature that currently lives in that Inlet Park, at Bushwick Inlet Park, as well as the Bushwick waterfront as overall?

BRYAN KELLY: Council Member, want to thank you for the questions. Can fully understand your appreciation for these issues too, given the Hunters Point South waterfront. To start with, we are not receiving any money from city and state government for our resiliency issues, which is one of the points that I shared, which is in order to turn a potential development site into housing, open space, and the other myriad of uses, including the museum, we need to spend north of $20 million to restore a decaying shoreline that the museum owns, as well as to come up to the edge of the inlet park. So that's $20 million plus, which we have to invest and fulfill upon. In order to do it, we've been working with DEC and DEP over the years in iterations to make sure that our heights, our sea walls, our plantings, and

other items are workable within those objectives. At the same times, for example, the pier that goes out has a CSO in it. So the reason you don't see a lot of trees in the CSO is because there's a CSO within that easement area, but there's a very strong hard edge that's raised to protect from inundation. Simeon, you wanna add any more points? But it's a process we're taking seriously and working with all the agencies that oversee it, including Army Corps as well, right?

SIMEON SALEH: I would just add beyond the coordination with all the agencies to determine the best solution that this is a missing- this is a missing piece in shore public walkway from North Greenpoint all the way down to the Williamsburg Bridge. So we're making connections to the adjacent sites in order to ensure that visitors can travel along the waterfront from north to south. And so we're working with— within those confines to deliver the bulkhead and the other resilient infrastructure in addition to onsite stormwater retention and et cetera, in order to ensure long-term longevity of the site and the buildings.

BRYAN KELLY: And moreover, the Marti— the Motiva parcel, which looks beautiful, just

finished, that comes up and connects to where the gate is, when the gate comes down, the elevations meet to complement one another.

COUNCIL MEMBER WON: I still didn't get an answer for what you— what steps you're going to take for the nature and the ecology and all the wildlife that currently lives on that waterfront.

SIMEON SALEH: Yeah, to reiterate, I think Bryan just touched upon it, is that currently on site there's on-site erosion. The soils need to be remediated. We've submitted for the MTA site both, both the east and the west building into the Brownfield cleanup program, and both have been accepted. So we'll be remediating the soils. We'll be removing invasive species that do not support the local habitat and planting native plantings, landscaped areas, and others that support the habitat in addition to aligning with what's being planted at the Bushwick Inlet Park. So we believe that post construction- and is included in the FEIS, that habitat will be restored and it will support the local fauna.

BRYAN KELLY: Moreover, including trying to collaborate with entities if they were interested,

like a billion oyster project post-completion of the waterfront for habitat like that, and to be encouraging for that kind of use.

COUNCIL MEMBER WON: I believe one of the points of concern is also for the wild birds that migrate towards that area, and there's a big concern of those birds being displaced and not having a place to land while they're migrating. In addition to that, for the funding of $20 million, can you break down exactly what that's going to be cost— what that cost will be allocated for, and why it is that you have not received any government funding to build out the waterfront resiliency?

BRYAN KELLY: We could, we could seek it, but In terms of a public-private partnership, the dollars we've sought have been to build incrementally more affordable housing. In terms of site preparation, it's a cost that we've undertaken that's part of our, you know, our objective or, you know, our, our return over cost. In terms of how much, ballpark, the park portal is about $5 to $7 million in range and the waterfront portion is about 12 to 14. There's significant costs in terms of creating the bulkhead, the riprap fill, and then the MTA sites

are— need environmental repair much like any other Greenpoint Williamsburg site. It's not only the warehouse to come down, it's going to be removing soils that have SVOCs in them.

COUNCIL MEMBER WON: So can you just guarantee me that they're not going to be losing the same— are they going to be gaining any acres of open front water space compared to what is currently available now, even if it's fenced off?

BRYAN KELLY: That's, that's correct. Right now, the MTA site is 100 percent lot coverage on the entire site. The park portal, which goes from west and creates a public connection to Bushwick Inlet Park is part of our plan. So that's new open space. Then the rest of the museum's land, short of its footprint, is going to become publicly accessible except for some events from time to time when the museum has on its land, it's not publicly accessible. This project unlocks that property for the greater community. We felt strongly one of the benefits of this plan, aside from enhanced affordability, was the public equity access for the larger community to come to this area.

COUNCIL MEMBER WON: I don't feel reassured that this is enough investment for resiliency, especially when I compare it to the Long Island City waterfront of how much resiliency infrastructure funding was put in to build out that waterfront and the amount of green space that we gained to make sure that there was a certain amount of feet away from the buildings to the waterfront to make sure that we weren't within the flood risk. So I still have a lot of concerns, but I believe my time is up.

BRYAN KELLY: Happy to follow up in writing with more details and information to try and create the resolution, Council Member.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Is that the last call for questions from Council members? Alright, this— yeah, this panel is now excused. Thank you for your time.

BRYAN KELLY: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Counsel, are there members of the public who wish to testify remotely or in person regarding this proposal?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, Chair. So we have a lot of people signed up, in fact. As you said, we

have 60 people in person, and then we have another about 30 people online. For the online people, we're going to first hear in person for— so 60 times two is about 120 minutes. So it will be a good hour and a half, I would say, before we get to the online, but we'll try to keep you updated.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. For members of the public here to testify, please note that witnesses will generally be called in panels of four. If you are a member of the public signed up to testify, please stand by when you hear your name being called and prepare to speak when I indicate that you may begin. Please also note that once all panelists in your group have completed their testimony, if remotely, you will be removed from the meeting as a group, and the next group of speakers will be introduced. Once removed, participants may continue to view the livestream broadcast of this hearing on the council website. Members of the public will begin— will be given two minutes to speak. Please do not begin until the Sergeant-at-Arms has started the clock. The following individuals who are signed up to testify are some of our youngest New Yorkers from Council Member Restler's district, and

we're happy to have two young people with us. We have Coco and Isa. Come on down. Alright, we're going to start with Coco and then go with Isa. If you could press the little button on the microphone there.

COCO BOONPARN: Well, we have a speech together.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Yes. Sergeant, if you could get the microphone to go on the other side of her PC. There we go. You may begin.

COCO BOONPARN: Good morning, my name is Coco Boonparn.

ISA MICHALSKI RATCLIFFE: And my name is Isa Michalski Ratcliffe. We are 5th grade debaters at PS 34. We believe Bushwick Inlet Park is a wonderful place that should not be replaced by luxury condos no one can afford.

COCO BOONPARN: Bushwick Inlet Park is vital to the New York City harbor. Replacing it with high-rises can affect the ecosystem in negative ways.

ISA MICHALSKI RATCLIFFE: This will affect human life. We were born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. Bushwick Inlet Park is extremely important to us. Every time we go to the park, we cherish its natural wildlife.

COCO BOONPARN: This park has created amazing memories for people. It makes life more joyful. Also, we have more than enough buildings that would withstand a very long time.

ISA MICHALSKI RATCLIFFE: I can't imagine life without Bushwick Inlet Park.

COCO BOONPARN: Vote against Monitor Point.

ISA MICHALSKI RATCLIFFE: Don't replace public space.

COCO BOONPARN: Thank you for your time and consideration.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We appreciate you both making time. Council Member Restler, you have questions?

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I just want to thank you both for coming and for sharing your insightful testimony. I'm a big fan of the PS 34 debate team. You guys do an amazing job and really appreciate you showing off those skills today at this hearing. It's really appreciated. Thank you for making the effort.

COCO BOONPARN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Do members of the committee have questions for this applicant? And they're gone. Okay. Now- sorry it took so long to get to you guys. Alright, now we're going to have Stephen and Jerry. Stephen Chesler and Jerry Mraz. If you could state your name for the record.

STEPHEN CHESLER: Yes, I am Stephen Chesler. Hello, Chair Louis, Council Members. I'm a 24-year resident of Greenpoint who lives 10 minutes from Bushwick Inlet Park in the 40 Quay site. I'm Vice President of Friends of Bushwick Inlet Park and a member of Community Board One, a member of its Land Use Committee. And of course, I'll just say, just a point of accuracy, please refer back to the community board report. I'm not testifying on behalf of them, but as a witness, the Land Use Committee voted unanimously no with a strong condition for 75 percent affordable housing, and then the full board opted to vote yes, but also with a strong condition of a healthy majority of affordable housing. I urge Council Member Rustler and his committee to recommend no without conditions for this rezoning application. There are viable and superior alternatives to constructing the tallest residential buildings in

Greenpoint abutting Bushwick Inlet and its namesake park that would overwhelm the park and the neighborhood and its infrastructure. Thirdly, there could be no action. A low-rise brick building framing the park would be very much a part of the historic architectural landscape of Greenpoint. Also, building as-of-right at 40 Quay would be more reasonable with adherence to the original thoughtful lower density zoning designated for this site in 2005. But the best alternative would be for the MTA to dispose of 40 Quay property to state or city agency for the purpose of transforming the site into residential- resilient public open space that would expand Bushwick Park for the community board's recommended condition in their response to 2005 waterfront rezoning, rebalancing open space infrastructure to meet incredible influx of new local residents while also mitigating future storm surges in a more meaningful way. State law allows for this type of transfer, and the good news along with this is an incredible amount of mixed income housing units this community district has created for the last 15 years, the most in New York City, with thousands of mixed-income units in the pipeline and nearby West Street alone with no action.

This rezoning is unnecessary. Public land for public use is just the alternative to the plan for an oppressive private for-profit development on the public land. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: We appreciate it. Jerry? You could press the button in the middle of the microphone and then begin. You may begin.

JERRY MRAZ: Hi. I'll keep it short. I just— I think this project should be majority affordable or else it shouldn't happen as proposed. It's an eyesore. And there's already way too many rich people in the neighborhood. Make it 100 percent affordable or bust. That's all I got to say. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Jerry. This panel is now excused. Thank you for making time to be here. Now we will call Maisha Morales, Theo Perez, Teddy Hanks, and Justin Lashley-Maloney. Leahy [sp?] Malone. I'll repeat the names. So the panel we're looking for now is Maisha, Leo, Theo, Teddy, and Justin. They're probably in the other room. After this panel will be Victoria Alexander, Sarah Kaibinsoft, Debra Funkhouser, and Marissa Bohk. Okay, what's— you can have a seat, turn on your microphone, and you may begin. You may begin, Maisha.

MAISHA MORALES: Okay, good afternoon, Council Members. My name is Maisha Morales, Chairwoman of Southside United, HDFC, Los Sures, a 54-year-old housing organization founded and created by the Puerto Rican and Black community in Williamsburg. As someone who leads an organization that not only organizes tenants but also develops and manages real affordable housing in our community, I know what it takes to make affordability a reality. I'm writing to— well, it's in a letter— I'm writing to express my support for Monitor Point and to challenge all of us to step up. At the start of this process, some opponents used offensive language, I would even— with racial undertones. For some, this was never about affordability or housing. Many openly stated they did not care whether affordable housing was built or whether this site remained stalled for years. Their focus was solely on securing funding for Bushwick Inlet Park. Let me be clear, I support Bushwick Inlet Park. Our community deserves quality parks and open space. The City of New York should fully fund the completion of the park. However, affordable housing should not be sacrificed in the process. The funding of Bushwick Inlet Park is the

responsibility of the city and should be addressed separately from this project. For transparency, many of the same voices now raising affordability concerns were not advocating for deeper affordability at the beginning of this process. Meanwhile, organizations like St. Nick's and Los Sures and community members have been fighting from the beginning to secure as much permanent affordability as possible for North Brooklyn families. This project is an opportunity for meaningful affordability on land that belongs to the MTA, not city land. If the project falls through, we risk the MTA proceeding with something far worse— luxury condos with no affordability, leaving our community behind. And you guys have a copy, you can read the rest. Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Now, Theo.

THEO PEREZ: Hello again, Council— Chair Lewis, Council Member Restler, and to the rest of the Council Members here today. My name is Theo Perez. I'm here today representing SEIU Local 32BJ along with some of my union brothers and sisters you'll be hearing from shortly. Again, we're the largest union of property service workers in the country. We represent over 180,000 members across 13 states,

including tens of thousands commercial workers, security officers, and residential building staff here in New York City. At 32BJ, our two main priorities are good jobs and good housing, and we support developers who invest in communities and commit to making that happen. I'm happy to report that the developers of this proposed project, Gotham Organization, have made a credible commitment to creating good jobs for the workers who will permanently staff these buildings. These good jobs mean prevailing, prevailing wages, meaningful benefits, and a pathway to the middle class for community members. Beyond this, we believe this development would align with the borough president's comprehensive plan for housing in Brooklyn. The plan identified the neighborhood as a priority area for new capacity, and this is the perfect place for a heavily affordable development like the proposed project, which will bring 460 affordable units to the neighborhood. So as the cost of living rises and working New Yorkers struggle to stay in their homes, it's more important now than ever to create both affordable housing and good jobs, which uphold the industry standard in the city. And for those reasons,

32BJ is in strong support of Monitor Point. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Justin?

JUSTIN LASHLEY-MALONEY: Hello, council members, members. My name is Justin Lashley-Maloney. I'm a proud son of Flatbush, a doorman, and a member of 32BJ Service Employees International Union. I consider myself very fortunate. While many of my friends and the people I grew up with have been priced out of Brooklyn, I have a good union job, benefits, and an affordable apartment that have allowed me to raise my kids here. But my kids are getting older and my oldest is 17 and getting ready for college, and once she graduates, I'm worried about how she'll be able to get by in this affordability crisis. Our young people, our seniors, and our families all need places they can afford to live. I support this project both because it will create close to 500 affordable homes for families like mine to stay in Brooklyn, and because it will create good jobs like the one I have that allowed me to raise my family here in New York City. And for that, I vote— I hope the council will vote to approve this project.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We're going to hear from Teddy next, and if you all could stand at ease, the council member has a question for you. Teddy?

TEDDY FRANCIS: Hello, council members. My name is Teddy Francis. I am concierge, downtown Brooklyn, Dumbo Heights. I'm a Brooklynite, Brooklyn native, and a proud 32BJ member for the last 16 years. For me, my union job has given me the resources to support my three kids, and I am grateful for that. In addition to you know, your mother and grandparents and aunts and uncles, because it is a community. But what a lot of people don't realize is that my union hasn't just helped me financially, but through classes and other programs, it has given me the resources to educate myself and learn more about the world around me, including, like, political processes like this, which actually gave me more faith in our political system through my union and the programming. Every worker deserves the opportunity to take care of their family and to improve themselves. Unfortunately, good jobs like mine are hard to find. So when we have the opportunity to create good jobs with strong wages,

meaningful benefits, opportunities to learn, and a pathway to the middle class, we need to take them. This project would bring new jobs to Brooklyn so more workers can benefit from the types of experiences I've had. That's why me, my union brothers, sisters, our President, Manny, Vice President Kevin support Monitor Point. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Council Member Restler?

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you so much, and thank you to all for your testimony today. Just, Ms. Morales, since we didn't get a chance to hear it fully, just wanted to get on the record. Do yours— does— do you and does Los Sures support increasing the amount of affordable housing in this project?

MAISHA MORALES: Absolutely [inaudible]

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Would you go-W would you press the— no.

MAISHA MORALES: Absolutely, we do support that, but we must realize that even at 40 percent right now sets the precedent. Of course we want more, that's what we do at Los Sures, but we also understand that money just doesn't come out of

anywhere. And so I'm asking you guys, if you read in the letter right? Our government needs to step up to make this happen. You know, let's see how far we can go. If we can get to 50, if we can get over 50, by all means, but it— you can't expect just— and you guys, like, you know me, I'm not a fan of developers. Okay, but–

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] I do know you.

MAISHA MORALES: Right? And so let's make this happen. That's what I'm asking. And at the same time, the city should fund the park. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I really appreciate that. And I think– my recollection is that, you know, the other public site that was developed along the waterfront was the one at 440 Kent, just south of the Williamsburg Bridge. And that was probably 20 years ago now, where we did get 40 percent affordable housing on that public land. And 20 years later, I think we should be doing better. I think we should have higher standards. We've seen what's happened in the Williamsburg Greenpoint rezoning, where we didn't have MIH in place, we had voluntary inclusionary housing. It was supposed to be

30+ percent affordable housing and ended up being about 16 percent of the units are affordable. It's been totally inadequate, and we need to organize together to demand more affordable housing. So I appreciate that testimony.

MAISHA MORALES: Was that— was that the site where was promised to us, but, I think Two Trees never— we still haven't seen it.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: It was Schaefer Landing.

MAISHA MORALES: Oh, it was the Schaefer one, okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: The Schaefer site, which I think their actual— their affordability deal is expiring soon, which we need to worry about. And does 32BJ have a position on public land pushing for more affordable housing, or no position on affordable housing?

THEO PEREZ: Yeah, I mean, I think we always support affordable housing. We think this project is in a really exciting place to see it move forward. Obviously you and the developers will continue to have your conversations, but we support this project as it stands at the moment.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, so I'm- I'm just surprised considering 32BJ's workers struggle so hard to find affordable housing, as was noted in the testimony today. It's so hard to get by. On public land, is there anything more you want to say about pushing for more affordable housing? The union doesn't have a position on that?

THEO PEREZ: I think we understand the constraints on this site, and we appreciate the commitments the developer has made over the course of this project to improve over the base 25 percent MIH.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: You know, we've seen tens of thousands of Latinos in Williamsburg displaced. We've seen the Black population in Brooklyn decline for the first time since the Great Migration. Working-class people in our communities can no longer afford to live here, and on public land that's where we can really maximize affordable housing. I'm surprised that the union doesn't have a position on that. But I just want to say thank you for your work in the district. I was at 77 Sands two Fridays ago. I met one of your colleagues, a really nice guy. That's a great building.

JUSTIN LASHLEY-MALONEY: Concord Village loves you too.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Oh, you're at Concord too?

JUSTIN LASHLEY-MALONEY: I'm over there.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I love that. Thank you for the work there. That's a great team at BJ over there. We're grateful for the 32 BJ workers across our district and hope we'll be adding more across our community in the months and years to come. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Council Member. This panel is now excused. Thank you for your testimony. We will now hear from Victoria Alexander, Sarah Klebanhoff [sp?], Debra Funkhouser, and Marissa Bohk. And after that panel will be Louise Carroll, Iniko Carter, Arthur Kims [sp?], and Marla Silva. And we'll start with Victoria. You may turn on your mic. We can begin. Victoria. Victoria.

VICTORIA ALEXANDER: Is it me?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Are you Victoria?

VICTORIA ALEXANDER: Yeah, that's me.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright, you may begin.

VICTORIA ALEXANDER: Hi, great. Hi, my name is Victoria Alexander and I'm from– the Chair of an organization in Red Hook called Resilient Red Hook and we are an environmental justice organization. And I'm here to speak up against this project as it's framed right now. And the framing really has been manufactured consent for it. We've been told this is a debate between NIMBY and YIMBY, and it isn't. It's a false choice engineered by an industry that has spent decades creating the very housing crisis it now claims to be solving. The real estate industry restricted supply, converted rentals to luxury condos, bought up affordable stock and lobbied against every serious public intervention. And now it uses the urgency of self-created crisis to push projects like this one into the public waterfront land in flood zones above historic wetlands. Housing is not a commodity, and a neighborhood is not a container for buildings. The financialization of housing, treating homes as investment vehicles rather than as places where people live, is what has produced this crisis. And this project deepens it. It converts irreplaceable public waterfront into a return on investment for private capital while

calling it a solution. The question is never simply what can fit more units on the site. The question is whether this place can actually support the people who would live there. And the answer here is no. Inadequate open space, significant flood risk, environmental burdens, overburdened infrastructure- affordability in this proposal is a Trojan horse, and we must maximize it if we are doing it on public land, should— because this should serve the people of New York. This is the only resource and the commodity that the people own, and we are handing that commodity over to real estate investors. And we have done this for decades, and we— that is why we're in this situation, is because we have financialized housing. Housing is a human right like water, and we need to start treating it that way. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Now we'll hear from Sarah.

SARAH KLEBANHOFF: Good afternoon. I'm a resident of Williamsburg in Greenpoint for the past 20 years, and I've seen the density of the neighborhood grow and expand, but the lack of green space is not keeping up with the immense construction. Construction that is apparent and

relentless. I'm here to support more parks and protect the waterfront and its precious ecosystem. As a local resident, I see the expansion of the parks as an improvement to the neighborhood, not hindering housing, which, let's be honest, is barely considered what we call affordable. And it sounds like affordable housing is still being negotiated based on this panel. I do think that, like, parks are for everyday New Yorkers. The city was promised to the neighborhood years ago. Parks give back to the city, improve the quality of life for local communities, and more importantly, for generations. Ultimately, there needs to be an equal amount of greenery and nature in reliance [sic] to immense construction. Williamsburg and Greenpoint have plenty of luxury looming towers, but what we really need is parks that everyone can enjoy. Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Now we'll hear from Debra.

DEBRA FUNKHOUSER: Good afternoon, Council. Thank you for this opportunity. My name is Debra Funkhouser, and I have lived on the south side of Williamsburg for 30 years. I'm also a volunteer gardener at the Bushwick Inlet Park. I oppose

rezoning Monitor Point so that the Gotham organization can build luxury towers on public waterfront. The height of the building will threaten our promised park, and the majority of market-rate apartments will create a new threshold for what a one-bedroom goes for in our neighborhood. Currently, there's a one-bedroom on the waterfront for $8,000 a month. To me, that is not affordable. The Brooklyn Borough President's comprehensive plan reports that Brooklyn is ill-prepared to face sea level rises and extreme weather events. Our stormwater system is built to handle 1.75 inches of rain per hour. Hurricane Ida saw 3.5 inches of rain per hour. Basements are flooding, and our subway stations and our streets are compromised. A New York Times piece called The Future of New York offered three solutions. The first suggests that the city increase its ability to absorb water by leveraging the city's natural landscape. The Bushwick Inlet is already doing this, and through our- and though our zoning may distinguish the land on the northern edge as separate, nature knows no boundaries. Historically, this land has been a waterway all the way through McCarran Park. The third option is to retreat, which

means that we relocate people out of hazardous areas. So why at this moment would we choose to put our affordable housing in such a vulnerable place? It seems irresponsible. Bushwick Inlet is a rarity in our city. If you haven't come, it's open now. I would encourage you to come visit it before making this decision. It has been fenced off for over 100 years, and because of its isolation from the currents of the East River, it supports a variety of life. I worry how an additional 3,000 residents will affect the two combined sewer outlets that empty into the inlet. The developers claim to be adding open space, but that's far— we should have 300 square feet of space to increase density. And now, just as we have opened access to the public, we are being asked to remove park designation on Lot 25. This land should stay a buffer zone per the 2005 agreement. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Now we'll hear from Marissa.

MARISSA BOHK: Hi. Thank you. I am a born and raised New Yorker and I live in Williamsburg. And in my opinion, Williamsburg Greenpoint has been single-handedly tackling the housing crisis and it is, you know, the city's opportunity now to

acknowledge that by voting no to this upzoning. In 2005, the City of New York decided to respond to our community's needs and created a 27 to 20-acre park- 27 to 28-acre park. 26,000 new units have been built in Williamsburg-Greenpoint since 2010. That means almost 50,000 new residents have been welcomed into our community gladly. Bushwick Inlet Park is a direct response to the influx of neighbors we have taken on. Our neighborhood is critically underserved for green space. We have 0.6 acres for every 1,000 people. The city recommends 2.5 acres for every 1,000 people. That's a huge difference. Our District 33 is one of the most densely populated in New York City, squeezing over 170,000 residents in five square miles. The Bushwick Inlet Park was created to support our housing developments. This was never going to be housing, and it should not be, not in a flood zone. Building 60 stories in a flood zone only a couple steps away from the East River disregards human life by rejecting climate science. Furthermore, as per a 2023 Johns Hopkins study by Luis Quintero, home building monopolies are the reason for the housing crisis, not the residents who live there. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Council Member, you have questions for this panel?

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Just want to thank you for your thoughtful testimony, and taking the time to share your expertise and your insight into what makes sense in our community. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: This panel is now excused. Thank you for your testimony. We will now hear from David Marker, Andrew Bodford, Katherine Thompson, and Veronica Zapasnik— Yeah, we're going to start— we'll start with David Marker, Andrew Bodiford, and Katherine Thompson, and Veronica Zapasnik. After this panel will be Louise Carrow and Iniko Carter, Arthur Kims, and Marla Silva. And we'll start with David, if you could please turn on your mic, and you may begin.

DAVID MARKER: Thank you. My name is David Marker. I've been a resident of Williamsburg for 12 years. It's my home. Publicly held community assets are under assault in America by private interests. Moneyed interests are attempting to privatize more and more of our public goods. This is especially true when it comes to our public lands. There has been much news recently about the exploitation and

attempted sell-off of our public lands across America. Most of these news stories focus on federal lands out west, such as our national parks, forests, and monuments. Unfortunately, this is also happening in New York City, our last vestige of public land along the East River is at threat of being privatized in a corporate giveaway for luxury high-rise towers. We as New Yorkers should reject this corporate land grab. New York City should be leading the country and setting an example of protecting public lands for public good, not exploitation by private capital. Monitor Point has deceptively been framed as an affordable housing issue. This is not an affordable housing issue. The real issue at stake here is the privatization of public land that benefits a corporate interest to build luxury skyscrapers in a flood zone. Vote no on Monitor Point to protect our flood zone and tidal inlet from private development, and vote no to send a message to the rest of America that New York City does not give away its public land for private profit.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Now we'll hear from Andrew.

ANDREW BODIFORD: Good afternoon to the council. My name is Andrew Bodiford. I am a candidate for New York State Assembly District 50. This would be in my constituency if I were to be elected. First of all, I'd like to say that there's maybe one thing that got Gotham got correct, which is that we have a housing crisis. The problem is that Gotham is going to make this crisis significantly worse for many of the reasons which we've already heard today, particularly because so many of the units which they're proposing to build would be not just not affordable but astronomically unaffordable, up to $10,000 a month for rent, which no ordinary person in New York City can afford. And the effects of this are going to spread way beyond just the building itself. It's going to affect the character of the neighborhood. As Council Member Restler has said himself, we've had a 60 percent rise in the rent in Greenpoint over the last years since the coronavirus pandemic. This development would only make the problems associated with this much worse. We desperately need affordable housing. This is the greatest problem that we face in Greenpoint and Williamsburg in New York City overall. The problem is

that this development is not going to make it better, it's going to make it worse. And I think that we need a threshold of 100 percent guaranteed affordable units for buildings that are going to be built on this site. The Willets Point Commons building in Queens achieved this. And for any deviation from this, we need to have some sort of justification that actually makes sense for why it should be less than 100 percent. 100 percent should be the baseline, and anything less than that without justification should be rejected.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from Katherine.

KATHERINE THOMPSON: Good evening, good afternoon. Thank you for letting me speak. My name is Catherine Thompson. I'm the President of the Friends of Bushwick Inlet Park and member of Save the Inlet, a coalition fighting to protect the Bushwick Inlet waterfront. Save the Inlet represents more than 5,000 community members who have signed our petition and submitted hundreds of letters opposing the Monitor Point rezoning proposal. This is broad grassroots opposition shared by residents, environmental advocates, and our local Council Member Lincoln

Ressler, so far. Our opposition is grounded in many compelling concerns. First, Monitor Point is an existential threat to Bushwick Inlet Park. After decades of public effort, investment, this waterfront is finally becoming accessible to New Yorkers. Public land must serve the public good, not private luxury development. Let's get real. This proposal is roughly 120 stories of mostly luxury housing built for private profit, not community need. This will not help solve the housing crisis for the thousands of rent-burdened New Yorkers. Second, the weight of climate science- the climate change is real. Building massive towers 60 feet from the water's edge in a FEMA-designated flood zone on a historic wetland, a vulnerable shoreline, is reckless planning that puts thousands of people at risk while undermining resiliency. Third, affordable housing cannot justify destroying one of North Brooklyn's most important public-only open spaces, especially when Williamsburg and Greenpoint have already added tens of thousands of new residents over the past 15 years. The 2005 rezoning has ushered in over 42,000 new neighbors. This community has fought for Bushwick Inlet Park for more than 25 years. We've opposed this project from

day one, and we will continue fighting until it's defeated. Thank you. And with my 12 seconds, I want to invite everybody here, all the council members, to come and see. Just come and visit before you vote. Come and have a look at this new park that just opened. It's extraordinary. It's so special.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you so much. Now we'll hear from Veronica. Yes, just press that middle button there.

VERONICA ZAPASNIK: Hi, my name is Veronica Zapasnik. I'm a Greenpoint resident. I have 35 years of history in the neighborhood. I'm also a Polish immigrant. I submitted an 18-page written testimony together with a 70-page appendix analyzing major flaws in the developer's environmental impact statement. So I really encourage you to please read that. It's the culmination of five months of rigorous independent research comparing the developer's environmental impact statement against the city's environmental quality review. I spent nearly 20 years in financial research, including 11 years at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. I'm now a small business owner. What I found is that the developer's marketing presentations are very different from what

is buried in the full public record. More broadly, luxury towers roughly 60 stories tall built directly at the park edge would have major impacts on neighborhood character, natural resources, open space, and unaffordability. I ask the council to reject this proposal. The developer's own statement shows that the project fails to meet numerous CEQR standards, including the failure to seriously analyze viable alternatives with lower height and bulk. Moreover, the MTA's own materials indicate that the wash facility relocation could still proceed whether or not this upzoning is approved. So we're being presented with a false choice on public land. There's a very weak MTA financial return, as the MTA confirmed at the Brooklyn Presidents' Hearing. The net present value of $50 million over a 99-year lease is equivalent to one month of congestion pricing revenue that MTA earns today. So it's an extremely small benefit. The open space deficit gets explicitly worse. It's written in the environmental statement. The ratio of open space will be reduced from 1.07 to 0.98 acres per 1,000 residents. This is below the city's two-acre planning goal. It's a real natural resource, which the developer claims in its DIS that

it- there's no natural resources nearby. The public open space benefits are overstated. The applicants use an existing deficiency to excuse making it even worse. And there's a lot more in my 18-page testimony that I emailed. Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: We appreciate everybody's testimony. Councilmember, you have—

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] Just want to thank you for your testimony, and I promise I will read the 18 pages. Thank you all.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. This panel is now excused. We will now hear from Louise Carroll and Inko Carter, Arthur Kimms [sp?], and Marla Silva. Arthur Kirms [sp?]. Hi. After this panel, the next panel will be Luz Rosario [sp?], Rolando Guzman, Matthew Trump [sp?], and Natasha Ben [sp?]. We will now start with Louise Carroll.

LOUISE CARROLL: Good afternoon, Council Members. Thank you so much for having me. I am Louise Carroll, former HPD commissioner and one of the lead team— of the team who wrote the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Program. In all my years of public service, including when I ran HPD, I've learned that the city cannot build its way out of a

housing crisis on its own. We spend over $1 billion a year in housing capital, more than any other municipality in the country, and yet our public dollars do not go far enough, they don't go fast enough, and they don't go to all the places that we need them to go. Despite many successful housing plans of past mayors— and I've been part of that— homelessness in New York City roughly doubled over the past decade. The groundbreaking City of Yes for Housing Opportunity passed by the council in December 2024 is projected to produce about 82,000 new homes over 15 years. That's fewer than 5,500 units a year in a city of 8 million people. In a housing crisis, I think we shouldn't be sort of a Hunger Games against parks versus people, right? We should try to have a plan, as it seems presented here for this Monitor Point that serves a bunch of different interests, right? It doesn't have to be perfect. The perfect doesn't— shouldn't be the enemy of the good. The mandatory housing- in mandatory inclusionary housing program, the analysis that underpins it is that the people who have money, who can pay rent, should pay to cover the shortfall of their neighbors. That's why you need market rate housing to cover the cost of the

low-income units. If you have 100 percent affordable housing, those rents do not cover the operation of the building. They don't cover the replacement of boilers. They don't cover the porters. They don't cover anything. So that means you need a permanent subsidy from the city.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you so much. Now we'll hear from Iniko Carter. Okay.

INIKO CARTER: Good afternoon, Council. Hi, I'm Iniko Carter. I'm a proud union member, Local 79. I'm in support of the Monitor Point because I'm worried about the access to housing for working people. More union jobs mean more Brooklyn families can actually afford to live here. Existing landlords and people who bought real estate in Greenpoint might be concerned about the views and the changes that come to the neighborhood. But if you're lucky enough to live in Brooklyn, you should know the means of coexisting together, sharing our parks, sharing community space, and welcoming in more people. That is city life. We don't keep people out. Thank you for your time and have a good day.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Now, Arthur Kirms.

ARTHUR KIRMMS: My name is Arthur Kirmms from East New York, and I have been involved with the Greenpoint Monitor Museum for many years. I support the Monitor Point proposal because it will give the museum a permanent home where it can continue and expand its mission. The USS Monitor was a successful defender of the Union fleet against the Confederate ironclad Merrimack during their epic Battle of 1861. The Monitor was constructed at Greenpoint's Continental Iron Works and docked along the Bushwick Creek in Greenpoint during the Civil War. In Greenpoint Monitor Museum via its traveling road show, I've been sharing the story of the Monitor with local schools since 2001. I've participated in the museum's road show as an instructor and musician. My entire formal education from high school to graduate school was in the arts and music. The museum's school program has allowed me to introduce Civil War music to students through my piccolo, recorder, and guitar, as well as Civil War songs. Over the years, the road show has continued to present comprehensive and educational programs under the director of President Janice Loreta Weinman and Vice President George Weinman. These programs have been included live

concerts and major public events, which I have attracted interest, support from the local community, as well as from state and national historic groups. The museum requires a building to continue and expand its work. Where best to found this museum but the building on land donated to the music by Motiva Enterprises in 2003, which is located at the Monitor's construction launch site. The museum has wanted to construct this building for many years, and this proposal finally will allow us to do so. We don't want this opportunity to pass us by. We have— the Greenpoint Monitor Museum will stand up to show New York, our nation, and visitors from every land just what our people can do with the support we have gained. We ask that the City Council help us achieve this goal. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Arthur. Now Maria.

MARIA SILVA: Good afternoon, council members. My name is Maria Silva. I'm a concierge in a downtown Brooklyn residential building and for the last 17 years a proud member of 32BJ. For the last 30-plus years, I lived in Brooklyn, I raised my kids in Brooklyn, and I imagine spending the rest of my

life in Brooklyn. Unfortunately, like many New Yorkers, I was priced out of the city. I still commute to Brooklyn to come to work, and I am trying my hardest to come back to this city. This is why I support the project, because it will create 460 affordable homes for families like mine, and I'm trying to stay in this city and come back to the borough that we love. We need to create affordable homes all across the city to be sure that those of us who work every day to keep the city safe, clean, and secure, can afford to live and stay here. Thank you for your time, and on behalf of all my union members and brothers and sisters, we will urge you to support this project.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. If you could stand at ease, Council Member Restler has questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thanks so much. Firstly, just for the gentleman from the District Council of Carpenters and Maria, is that right, from 32BJ. Thank you both for your testimony. From Laborers, would I have that wrong? You're from Laborers? Sorry, I- no, oh, Mason Tenders District Council. I'm sorry. Even with my glasses on, I'm

useless. So thank you for being here. I appreciate you. I appreciate both of your testimony. You know, and Maria, thank you for your work in downtown Brooklyn. We really appreciate that. You know, you both spoke to just the challenges of affording to live in Brooklyn today, which I- somebody born and raised in Brooklyn, fully see and appreciate just how much we've seen the neighborhood change, our community change over the course of my lifetime. Um, if we were able to secure more affordable housing in this project, is that something that you would both like to see?

INIKO CARTER: Yes, definitely. That's why we stand behind the development of Monitor point. No- just for my family history here, we have about almost two centuries here in New York. I'm Brooklyn born and raised, so.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: That's beautiful.

MARIA SILVA: Absolutely, it will bring me back home.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: That's what I'm talking about.

MARIA SILVA: Brooklyn is home.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: And Miss Carroll, you know, you testified to the dynamics that the market rate units cross-subsidize the affordable units. The developer testified earlier that he was anticipating units renting as high as $9,500 a month. When we see these extreme rents, these, like, you know, astronomical rents for the market rate units, does that help allow us to further subsidize affordable housing above and beyond what's required?

LOUISE CARROLL: So when we did the financial analysis, and we worked with a financial advisor for over a year, we found that at a certain point it doesn’t matter how high you go, you can't increase the affordability because the cost of the low-income housing cannot be cross-subsidized after a certain point. And so 30 percent of the floor area was the most that it would- it would support. This is getting to 40 percent.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: No, there are 25 percent in the MIH building. In the— it's— they have a separate affordable building. That's not- just clarifying the record.

LOUISE CARROLL: So— but there's a toggle, right? If you could get to 30 percent, you had to

increase the AMIs. So there's a toggle between how low you can go with AMIs, right? So if you— the lower AMIs, the less floor area you can afford, and the higher AMIs—

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] I completely understand my instructions one, two, and three.

LOUISE CARROLL: the more floor area you can afford.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I- my point is slightly different though. You're- just to make sure that I understand the analysis that you conducted, and it was some years ago under different- with different tax incentives available. But at that time, you're saying that if a market rate apartment was $2,500 or $3,000 a month versus $9,500 a month— it has no impact?

LOUISE CARROLL: That's not what— That’s not I'm saying.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I just want to make sure that's clarified.

LOUISE CARROLL: No, that is not what I'm saying.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay.

LOUISE CARROLL: First of all, the tax exemption that was in existence back then is better than it is now.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Yes, I'm-

LOUISE CARROLL: [interposing] So in fact buildings are less well off.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I understand. That's why I—

LOUISE CARROLL:[interposing] Interest rates are worse, right? So buildings are less well-off. Insurance and other expenses are increasing. So when we did this analysis, we were in a perfect—

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] But the analysis you did was predated [inaudible]

LOUISE CARROLL: We were in a perfect economic world, which we're not in right now. So it—so putting that aside, what we're saying is when you look at the cost of this, of producing a unit per square foot, right, you need a certain rent to cover that cost. If you're going to lower the rent, right, as you lower the rent there's a gap in the cost of operating that per square foot. So you have to make

it up on the other side. You're going to do a rent study.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Right.

LOUISE CARROLL: And bring it to a bank.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: In the intervening years of the— you mentioned some of the changes that we've seen in Greenpoint and Williamsburg. We've seen rents increase by over 60 percent just since the pandemic. They've gone up even higher since MIH was passed. They more than doubled. So we've also seen significant changes on the other side. There's an apartment renting across the street for $14,420 a month for a two-bedroom. The average rent for a two-bedroom in Greenpoint is $7,000. In the waterfront luxury new building like this one, it'll be higher, as the developer testified. You're— that— I just want to be clear, that helps cross-subsidize more affordable housing so the people, like the people sitting to your left-

LOUISE CARROLL: [interposing] Well, you-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: to your right, will be able to live here.

LOUISE CARROLL: have to look at- you have look at the numbers, right? When you— so I'm not the lender on this, on this building.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I understand, but you're testifying and offering your expertise, so I'm going to—

LOUISE CARROLL: [interposing] but I'm telling you that the corresponding rents and the affordability, they have to be able to work together or else the building will not be financed. So-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] Math has to math, I'm not disagreeing.

LOUISE CARROLL: Exactly, so-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] I'm just trying to say that if the apartments are renting for $9,500 a month-

LOUISE CARROLL: [interposing] But no- but-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] then we should ask the developer for more.

LOUISE CARROLL: No, that's not correct. The— what you have to do is you have to look at the math, right? You have to put in the amount of rent you're getting on the affordable side, the amount of

rent you're getting on the market side, the cost of financing, the cost of materials. You have to do a whole analysis. That is too simple a statement to make. It sounds good to the people here, but that's not how this works.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Carroll. Do you have any more questions for this panel?

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you so much for your testimony.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright, this panel is now excused. Thank you. Now we'll hear from Luz Rosero [sp?], Rolando Guzman, Matthew Tromp [sp?], and Natasha Bent [sp?]. After this panel will be Sean Cahill, Tina McGeever [sp?], Baruch Stern [sp?], and Sarah Roberts.

UNIDENTIFIED: Luz Rosero left already. She had to-

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] No problem. So we'll start with Rolando Guzman, and you may turn on your mic to start.

ROLANDO GUZMAN: Good afternoon, Chair Louis, Councilmember Restler. Thank you so much for having me here. My name is Rolando Guzman, and I'm the Deputy Director for Community Preservation at St.

Nick's Alliance. My department works in North Brooklyn preventing the displacement of low-income families from their units. We provide one-to-one counseling and we organize tenant associations in fight against displacement. Big shout out to Council Member Restler for fighting shoulder to shoulder with us and working with so many tenant associations in North Brooklyn that are facing displacement, and we really appreciate you and all your ongoing support and commitment. I'm here today though, because many of the clients that come to our office either being displaced or their family members, they grew up and they are trying to find affordable housing and they cannot afford being in North Brooklyn anymore, as everybody has stated, with the rents. Monitor Point is the first project during my 20-plus years of experience working in North Brooklyn, that they came to the community, especially to a partner organization called United Neighbors Organization, a grassroots group, and they presented about this project. And actually, they were- they were very receptive. They heard about two issues. One is that we needed deeper affordable housing, inclusive affordable housing and a higher percentage of

housing. This project, despite difference with other projects, is providing 40 percent of inclusive affordable housing on site. No portsmen [sic] door. Tenants will receive the same type of amenities. And the last thing is that we cannot wait any longer. We need this affordable housing right now. I thank you all for your time.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from Matthew.

MATTHEW TROMP: My name is Matthew Tromp, and I am a New York City resident. I'm here speaking on behalf of no one but myself. I thank the Council for giving me this chance to speak in favor of the proposed Monitor Point housing project. Our city is in the midst of a housing crisis. Often we speak of the housing crisis as though the problem is that rents are too high. This is wrong. The problem is that there are not enough homes. If we lived in the Soviet Union, we would experience this as long waitlists and rationing. In medieval England, we might experience it as only the politically favored or the local nobility being able to find housing. But we live in a market economy, and so we experience the housing crisis in the form of high prices. But the

underlying problem is very simple, and it does not depend on our economic system. There are too many people to house and not enough homes for them. If we do not build more homes, then some of these people will go without. Some are concerned about how high the market rate rents will be in this building. I think it needs to be clarified: the building does not determine what market rate rents will be. The market does. The price of housing is high because there is not enough supply. Why is there not enough supply? Perhaps it has to do with the fact that it takes over six years and 1,000 concessions before a project like this can be built. We live in a world of madness. We have people desperate for housing. We can tell they are desperate for housing because they are willing to spend $6,000 a month for a one-bedroom apartment. We have developers desperate to build housing. We can tell they are desperate to build housing because they are willing to spend six years in rooms like this. And yet between them stands this Council. If this council truly wants to make housing affordable, there is a simple solution, and I beg you to consider it. Get out of the way.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Now we'll hear from Natasha Bent.

NATASHA BENT: Good afternoon. My name is Natasha Bent, and I'm a proud member of Local 79 and 32BJ. I just want to say I definitely do support the vision for the Monitor Point for two reasons. For the simple reason that I work in that community, and come September, my son will be going to school in that community. Right now, me and my son is facing eviction from our community. We live on OC Chai [sp?] community. That's, that's the community that we lives in, OC Chai, and we are being displaced out of that community, and where I work at- where I work at, I don't want to be displaced out of there, because if I'm displaced out of my community, that means I have to leave my job, because I don't know where they're going to put me. They can put me in the Bronx. I don't know. So to me, affordable and the numbers that Gotham was speaking about, it looks like me all the way. I can't pay $7,500. Me and my kid, we cannot do that. I can definitely pay, $1,400. I can definitely pay- as far as the listing that he had with all the jobs that we do, I can definitely afford that. But $7,000, $8,000, I cannot afford that. And with me not

being able to afford that, I don't want my son to be displaced and now go to school in Brooklyn. This is where we at. This is where we live at. This is- you know, I mean, over 35+ years, this is where we've been at. And I just see like it's so difficult for my son to say, "Ma, where are we gonna end up next?" You know what I mean? This is the school he loves. This is the friends he know. This is the teachers that know my son. They don't just know him by a number. They know him by his name. And that's what community is. And I think you guys should really support this and just, just go back and see what community is. And I think Gotham is trying to, like, make us get back into community, guys. Please, like, just for me and my son, and my son is young. Like, let's try to move forward with this project for everybody. Like, let's, let's try to, like, come on to some common ground so y'all won't lose us as residents of Brooklyn for real.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Natasha.

NATASHA BENT: No problem.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: There's one person that we missed, Neil Sheenan [sic]. You could- you could, Neil.

NEIL SHEEHAN: Okay. Hello, uh, this— my name is Neil Sheehan. I'm a lifelong resident of Greenpoint. I'm the founder of the Pete McGuinness Senior Center. I'm the co-founder of the North Brooklyn Angels. I'm the President of the Vincent DePaul Society. I was going to come and give my regular testimony, but I'm going to take a chance and do something different. This community needs to come together. We have real needs in two different places. One of them is in our parks. For 20 years, I've watched my neighbors, good people behind me, fight to see their park fixed. I've watched our councilman step up and work real hard for them. Oh, and I- and, and what I know is that most of the people who need affordable housing want a park and they want to support that park. We need to get both things done. We need everything done. You know, luckily we have a councilman who we're going to ask to do everything and you know what, if anyone can do it, it'll be him. But the community needs to come together. People need to understand that we're losing people every day, all kinds of people, young people, brilliant people who volunteer in our community, people who are growing up and can't leave their families. Other people whose

wonderful landlord dies and they're gone. We need it. And Gotham, Gotham's got to sit down. We're in the endgame. They got to sit down with the Lincoln. And guess what? Yesterday I read this wonderful report. It's called the New York City's Affordable Housing Report. It was put out by this administration. There's good people. There's smart people around here. We need to get together. We need to up our game, and the people in the park need to understand that we want that park done. But you can't just simply say you want the park and you don't want people to have a future in their community. We need to get together. And, you know, Lincoln takes— we— people— Lincoln will take this, I think. This is— this is not about crumbs.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Neil.

NEIL SHEEHAN: This is about people.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you.

NEIL SHEEHAN: And he'll do his best for us. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Do you have questions for this panel, Council Member?

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Yeah, briefly. Natasha, where's your son- where are you going to school?

NATASHA BENT: Oh, he goes to Uni— yeah, he goes to Unity, but he's going to be going to Unity High School on Bedford Avenue.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, absolutely.

NATASHA BENT: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Well, congratulations. I hope it's a great experience for you in high school, and I really appreciate your thoughtful testimony and the need for more affordable housing to keep Brooklynites in Brooklyn. So thank you for that. I, you know, just want to underscore, if we could secure more affordable housing to work in this project, is that something that you would want to see?

NATASHA BENT: Yes, sir.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: And Rolando, same question to you. If we could secure more affordable housing in this project, is that something you would want?

RONALDO GUZMAN: We need more— as more affordable housing as we can.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: And Matthew, is that something that you would support as well?

MATTHEW TROMP: No, but I'm weird, so—

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay. And Neil, is that something—

NEIL SHEEHAN: Oh yeah, yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, good. I thank you all for your testimony.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. This panel is- okay.

NATASHA BENT: I also want to say, like, definitely union jobs.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: And union jobs, absolutely. You know-

NATASHA BENT: Definitely union-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] To the developer's credit, that has been in their proposal from the beginning, and that's an important thing to know.

NATASHA BENT: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you all.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. This panel's excused. Thank you all for making time to be here. Now we'll hear from Sean Cahill, Tina McKeever

[sp?], Baruch Stern, and Sarah Roberts. And the next panel after this will be Bianca Medina, Jonathan Jackson, Shanique Sha- okay. Oh yeah, he was here earlier. Okay, we'll start with Sean. You can turn on your microphone. Thank you.

SEAN CAHILL: Okay. Good afternoon, my name is Sean Cahill. I live in Greenpoint. I'm a small business owner, active member of the community, and I'm here on behalf of Brooklyn Community Kitchen at St. John's Lutheran Church. I'll just say I have a lot of social anxiety, so this is quite a lot. So anyway, I've been attending the meetings about Monitor Point in 2026, listening carefully, observing both sides. I'm here to clearly and unequivocally say no to Monitor Point without conditions. What is being proposed here is the wrong vision for Greenpoint. Greenpoint historian Jeffrey Cobb wrote that after the 2005 rezoning, the question facing the neighborhood was whether it would preserve its working-class waterfront character or become what he quoted, "Dubai on the East River." In 2005, Jane Jacobs, legendary urban scholar, warned Mayor Bloomberg a couple months before she died, quote successful city revitalization does not result from

gigantic plans, show-off projects. It builds up gradually and authentically from diverse human communities. This waterfront carries real history. This history deserves to be honored in a way that is alive. Repurpose a ship, create something with soul that communities can experience together beside a beautiful park, not a massive museum in the belly of a sterile luxury tower. What Monitor Point currently offers is not soul, it's a real estate project. Gotham is polished suits, $300 shoes, scrolling on their phones, telling us they're listening. I do not believe luxury towers casting shadows over our streets and parks for generations to come honors the spirit of the community. Council Member Restler, I was relieved to hear you, you know, state publicly opposition to Monitor Point. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Sean. Now we hear from Tina.

TRINA MCKEEVER: Good afternoon. My name is Trina McKeever, and I've lived in Greenpoint for over 35 years. I've served for over a decade on CB1, on the Parks, the Land Use, and the Environmental Committees. I'm also a co-founder of the Friends of Bushwick in the Park, and I stand with the over 5,000

petition signature— signatories from Greenpoint and Williamsburg to oppose the Monitor Point project. Monitor Point is a rezoning of a rezoning in which the developer is asking to build four times the current R-6 zoning. The intention is to build the third tallest— Lincoln, it is the third tallest building in Brooklyn. The tallest tower will rise 640 feet, a height surpassed only by Brooklyn Tower. It's at 9 DeKalb and Brooklyn Point at 138 Willoughby, both in downtown Brooklyn, not at the edge of a public park with no setback. The 2005 rezoning mandates that residential developments along the East River, buildings that rise 40 stories, not 60 stories include a setback of 40-foot public esplanade, a waterfront access zone. Monitor Point is on the Bushwick Inlet, not the East River, and does not include a setback. Bushwick Inlet Park in essence becomes the public esplanade for the luxury development, a thin— the thin, magnificent 50-foot sliver of the park, which just opened last— which just last month opened to the public. To the west of the towers, where the developers are offering open space, they're asking the ULURP— in the ULURP to reduce the public access from 40 to 30 feet. The

adjacent acre of land included in the Gotham proposal was donated in 2003 by the Motiva Corporation to a nonprofit Monitor Museum, and it imposed— and with the- with the gift imposed significant deed restrictions, basically that the land be used for public good. Instead, Gotham plans to massively upzone the museum's land to R8, both creating and transferring 340,000 square feet from the rezoned lot to the largely luxury development, allowing for the towers to rise 20 feet over the other East River developments. Furthermore, the contaminated, unstemmed—

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] Thank you, Trina. We'll now hear from Baruch.

BARUCH STERN: Good afternoon. My name is Baruch Stern. I'm a lifelong Brooklyn resident. Uh, been in Greenpoint for about three years now. Greenpoint has one of the least amount of green spaces in the entirety of New York City per capita. I represent a small community garden that's located around the proposed building site. And with the size of the towers, the shadow that this building will cast will cover our garden and kind of limit the availability for us to educate and grow. This

building can be built in other places. This is a very contentious piece of land just because of the history that comes with it. The only reason they don't want to build in other places is because you can get the most return on investment on a waterfront property. And I mean, I understand people's want for affordable housing and I want affordable housing. I actually- I live in an affordable housing unit. I live in a building in that example that's segregated. The entire affordable housing is segregated from the actual building that it, like, is blended with. And I will say that that is a fault of developers because I don't- I'm not able to share any of the amenities that people in the other buildings are able to share in. And if they wanted to truly represent, like, affordable housing, they would blend the affordable housing more into the other buildings and, like, create, like, a more even and diverse space so that people can share in that. And also, so people that are paying $1,100 to $1,200— sorry, $11,000, $12,000 for their units can be— could be share— share in the perspective of people who are not as well off as them, people that do not have the benefits that they do, so they can be educated and, like, expand their

perspective on what it is to come from places that are of less privilege. I would love to see a blend of more affordable housing with the regular units and maybe a decrease of the size of the building.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Baruch. We'll now hear from Sarah.

SARAH ROBERTS: Good afternoon. My name is Sarah Roberts, and I'm a five-year resident of Greenpoint, where I live with my partner, who is a 5th generation resident. I'm also a DEC-licensed rehabber and a part of the group Save the Inlet. Before my career in education and wildlife conservation, I worked for an LHITC housing project where deeply affording— deeply affordable housing can actually thrive. I'm also one of the— this was as of an hour ago— 5,674 individuals who opposed this project for many reasons. However, for my oral testimony, I'm opting to share a part of Jeff Cobb's book that Sean had mentioned, and that's a letter that was actually written 21 years ago in April, and I'm hoping to inspire that the City Council is able to make right of what happened with the 97A plans. But the proposal— but the proposal before you by the city staff is an ambush containing all those

destructive consequences packaged very sneakily with visually tiresome, unimaginative, and imitative luxury project towers. How weird and sad that New York, which has demonstrated successes in lighting to so much of the world, seems unable to learn lessons from itself. I will make two predictions for utter consequence. Again, this was 21 years ago. One, if you follow this community's plan, you will harvest a success. Two, if you follow the proposal before you today, you will enrich a few heedless and ignorant developers, but at the cost of an ugly and irretractable mistake. Even the presumed beneficiaries of the misuse of governmental powers, the developers and the financiers of luxury towers may not benefit. Misused environments are not good long-term economic backs [sic]. Come on, do the right thing. The community really does know what's best. Sincerely, Jane Jacobs. As of April, this year was penned 21 years ago. City Council, respectfully, we can't undo what has happened after Miss Jacobs' letter and after her death, but you can stop public land—

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] Thank you, Sarah.

SARAH ROBERTS: from being built upon during a climate emergency. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you all for your testimony today. You have— okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you, Sarah, Baruch, Trina, and Sean, for your testimony. Trina, if you'd like to share your written testimony with me, I'm happy to read it. Baruch, you mentioned you're with the community garden at 61 Franklin.

SARAH ROBERTS: We both are.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: And so we'll take a look at the shadow impacts and circle back with you on that. Thank you for raising it.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. This panel is excused. We will now hear from Bianca Medina, Jonathan Jackson, Shashank Shamasbhad, and after that panel will be Juan Ramos, William Wilkins, Chuck Brass, and Kirk Goodrich. You can, you can begin.

JONATHAN JACKSON: Hi, Jonathan Jackson, Greenpoint resident. Local 52 union member and recently, a public schools substitute teacher. Lived in Greenpoint for 25 years. Do I have to keep my finger on this? Oh. When you watch a car commercial on TV, you see a sleek, fast-moving car driving

through the Rocky Mountains or down a clean city street, but one thing you don't see is another car or a traffic jam. That is the context of my opposition to this development, that this is not about one development but the accumulated effects of all the other residential towers that have already been built along the waterfront as part of the 2005 rezoning. There have been over nine high-rises, 26 units built on the Greenpoint waterfront in the last 15 years. In fact, there is one tower going up as we speak that is less than 100 feet from where Monitor Point is proposed. There has been plenty of affordable housing built along the waterfront within this time, even buildings with geothermal innovation, but not on state land that I know of, none that ask for extended air rights that I know of, and none that is on a promised city park. To be honest, whether it's Monitor Point or some other development, building so close to the Bushwick Inlet, a unique piece of shoreland shaped by the tides of the East River, is a big no for me and a tipping point for the area. I suggest before you decide on the fate of this building, you go and visit the park for yourself. It was recently opened for the first time for- well, as

far as I know, 20 years last month, and offers a totally new vision for the city. Building another residential tower the size of Godzilla not only compromises the ecology of the intellect but will continue the downward trend of the open space enjoyed by all the residents that live in the area. To my point, we're being sold the new car but not the traffic jam.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Jonathan. Go ahead.

SHASHANK SHAMSHABAD: Thanks. Good afternoon, uh, my name is Shashank Shamshabad from the New York Building Congress. The New York Building Congress represents more than 500 constituent organizations and 250,000 skilled tradespeople and professionals dedicated to the growth and prosperity of our city. We write in support of the Monitor Point project and urge its approval. Monitor Point is precisely the kind of forward-looking investment New York needs at this time. The $700 million proposal will transform an underutilized, nonconforming MTA warehouse into a vibrant mixed-use waterfront community, unlocking public access, delivering much-needed housing, and creating a pipeline of

well-paying jobs. During its construction phase, the project will generate hundreds of union construction jobs. Once complete, it will create permanent positions in building operations, retail, and community services. Housing is at the heart of the Monitor Point project, and this plan calls for approximately 1,100 new apartments and is an essential contribution at a moment when the city's housing shortage is at crisis levels. We need approximately around 500,000 homes by 2030, and this project helps us get there step by step. These homes will provide Greenpoint residents with safe, modern homes near transit and new open space. The project also delivers meaningful environmental and resiliency benefits by remediating contaminated land, strengthening the shoreline, and incorporating on-site renewable energy systems. Monitor Point sets a high bar for sustainability, climate-ready development, and much more. Moving the existing warehouse to an appropriately zoned industrial area further reduces conflict between industrial activity and residential life while opening the waterfront for public enjoyment. At the Building Congress, we believe good jobs and strong communities are needed

for a good city. Monitor Point exemplifies that principle. Marrying economic growth with affordable housing, public space, and environmental stewardship, and is a win for Brooklyn and a win for New York City. Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Is Bianca Medina here? Okay. Council Member, you have any questions for this panel? Alright, this panel is now excused. We will now hear from Juan Ramos, William Wilkins, Chuck Brass, and Kirk Goodrich. Thank you. You may begin.

KIRK GOODRICH: Greetings Chair Louis and my, and my Council Member, and greetings, Council Member Restler. It's always good to see you both. I'm here today to testify in support of Monitor Point and the Gotham organization. So the development, I think, is the kind of development that we ought to be supporting in the city is really large. I know, Council Member Restler, the conversations about the level of affordability are ongoing. I think you're doing what you ought to do as a steward and representative of folks in the community. I'd like those conversations to happen, and be concluded more quickly so we could get this underway. But I think– I

think in good faith, I believe in the Gotham organization, partners with them. I believe that the project creates the kind of scale that we need to deliver affordable housing and the amenities that are really important. I always say housing is a bundle of goods and services. It includes not only the space you live in, but essential amenities to make the community livable. And I think you need scale to deliver that, and I think Monitor Point does it. I also think that questions about affordability, while the right questions, I think often can slow projects down. And I think in this particular case, you know, the need to deliver affordable housing faster in the midst of a crisis really should take precedence. So I'll stop there.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from Juan.

JUAN RAMOS: Good afternoon, Council Members. Chair Louis, thank you for having us today. I'm here as the Executive Director of Southside United. You've heard from my colleagues, you've heard from some of my neighbors, you've heard from some of my friends in the community on why they support this project in the same way we do as an organization. The

reason we support this project is because of the many nuances to the project that we believe are going to take us to a place where we haven't seen something like this on the waterfront in our community, which is achieving a 40 percent affordability. But even more so the income bands that are skewed there at 40, 50, 60 to 70, 80 percent AMI, all those income bands are going to make sure that people in our community have a real chance at achieving an apartment in those buildings. The reason we also support this project is because countless times, countless days, countless hours, I sit in my office and I see many people walk through the doors of our office, and every day I hear someone saying about how they've been displaced. I hear families tell me they want to come back to the community they love, but I've seen a lot of those families also say we can't afford to go back there. And we have an opportunity here on the waterfront to really state and present an option that says any developer that comes after this has to start at 40 percent or higher, if we can get there. And I want to set that precedent as an organization. I want to set that precedent as a community member. I want to ensure that the people that we count— this—

countlessly fight for have an opportunity to stay in their homes. You know, many things could be true at the same time. We need parks, we need green space, but we also need affordable housing. Countless years in our 53, 54-year history, we have seen people in our community displaced. We've seen people in our community come from the very beginning playing in lots filled with garbage, syringes, and things of that nature. They couldn't afford a park. They couldn't have a park, but they wanted housing, and that's why they continued to fight in order for us to create the affordability we have today.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We appreciate your testimony. William?

WILLIAM WILKINS: Once again, it's Zulu time. Zulu time is a geographical measured time across all time zones. Today, we don't need military police, we need Monitor Point. My name is Bill Wilkins. I consider myself Brooklyn royalty by being conceived in Kings County and of course born and raised in Crown Heights. I'm the Executive Director for four not-for-profits, LDC, a BID, and two HDCs with over 700 units of housing in our portfolio. Every day, my team and I go to work for three

reasons: grow businesses, change lives, and strengthening communities. This project aligns perfectly in those three buckets. I'm an expert in economic development and housing, by— which gives me a keen interpretation and perspective on a lot of the different variables. Normally I can challenge, exploit, and poke holes in a project, but today I cannot. Monitor Point checks all of the boxes simply because it incorporates the ideas, suggestions, and opinions of numerous stakeholders. Gotham's proven willingness to work with local assets will create a $1 billion development in Greenpoint by recycling dollars locally. This is a micro stimulus plan. Today you have the authority to support waterfront development that will create an urban oasis and will be studied and replicated in years to come. I yield the rest of my time to Councilman Restler.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Chuck?

CHUCK BRASS: Yeah. Is it on?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: It's on. You can be—

CHUCK BRASS: My name is Chuck Brass. I recently retired after 45 years of devoting my professional life to the creation of housing in New York City, during which I helped to structure the

financing of approximately 50,000 units of housing in the city while at HPD, the Housing Development Corporation, where I helped establish HDC as the leading financer of affordable housing in the country. Community Preservation Corporation as a consultant at Forsyth Street Affordable Housing, where I assisted clients in the creation of more than 600 units of affordable housing on the Greenpoint waterfront over the past decade. I'm here today to support the Monitor Point project. It's the most ambitious development proposed for the Greenpoint waterfront, which will create more than 1,100 units of housing, 40 percent which will be affordable to low and moderate-income families. That is, the project will create 450 or more units of affordable housing. It's truly remarkable that the Gotham Organization, one of the oldest and most respected builders in the city's history, is able to achieve this level of unprecedented affordability, which far exceeds the requirements of MIH. As only 18.5 percent of the total units are being directly subsidized by HPD and HDC, Gotham will do so with a minimum— with minimum scarce public subsidies on land for which they are paying the MTA, and while also agreeing to

fund the creation of maintenance of badly needed public available open space. These costs, along with relocating the current MTA facility, being borne almost entirely by the mixed income building. To require additional subsidy- additional affordability will require large amounts of public subsidies so badly needed to support affordable housing developments in other areas of Brooklyn and the city, which cannot support the creation of affordable housing through cross-subsidization of market-rate units, which I might add the city also desperately needs, as they've lost tens of thousands of taxpaying residents since COVID started- since COVID. So, that's why I support this project.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you so much. Council Member, do you have questions for this panel? Thank you all. This panel is excused. We will now hear from Zoe Raphael, Kate Yourke, and Christopher Leon Johnson. That's Zoe Raphael, Kate Yourke, and Christopher Leon Johnson. Kate, we— sorry, yeah, we'll start with Kate. You may begin.

KATE YOURKE: Good afternoon, my name is Kate Yourke. I have lived in Williamsburg for over 40 years, during which time I helped design and

implement the process for Williamsburg and Greenpoint's 197A plans for the waterfront, fought garbage transfer stations to create a waterfront park, served on the steering committee for the coalition that stopped the power plant at Bushwick Inlet and took on many battles for environmental justice, public education, and affordable housing, working closely with some of the same community organizations that support this Monitor Point project. The 2005 rezoning success in elevating Williamsburg real estate to an instrument of international investment has turbocharged the luxurification [sic] of what was once a brownfield. The low-income community that remains was secured by our local nonprofits years before developers were clamoring for property along the East River. We worked to free this waterfront from the burden of noxious industry while disinvestment left us to serve the needs of our community with our own hard work. Now that the area is swimming in investment dollars, we're expected to cheer this massive overdevelopment as the only route to affordable housing. And this leads me to the question, how many luxury towers will it take to make housing affordable? I'm writing to

express my profound disappointment that this unique parcel of publicly owned waterfront could become three enormous luxury towers, and not two, because I think there's some kind of misrepresentation that two towers are actually one, so they don't have to comply with corridor legislation. But I'm not sure about that. Anyway, so yeah, three luxury towers and a block of flashy retail. Gotham's presentation minimizes the scale of this development. It is massive, accelerating and exceeding the area's ongoing overdevelopment. Bushwick Inlet is a shallow, partially dredged inlet on the East River in Brooklyn, part of a tidal strait where high tides often exceed five feet. The East River currently regularly exceeds five knots. The intersection of these dynamic systems is where Gotham is proposing to build their massive development. The majority of the area is in the 100.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you so much. Zoe?

ZOE RAPHAEL: Hi, I'm Zoe. I live on West Street in Greenpoint in a housing lottery unit that I can barely afford, where the landlords segregate us, gave us subpar finishes, zero amenities, and ignore

resident and building issues. The proposed project, Monitor Point, is egregious, and the fact that they are incentivizing people who already work for them to come from other neighborhoods to rally for them, sending them to speak even during other projects' testimony time is shady at best. They are taking advantage of the fact that they don't live in North Brooklyn and don't care about the current residents or what we actually need. I'm a member of the community garden at 461 Franklin Street. This proposed building's complex— building complex height would cast shadows all over Greenpoint, specifically putting our small garden at major risk of losing all its sunlight when Greenpoint is already starved for more green space. This construction project would not only make living on West Street incredibly uncomfortable for the next 10 years, but it would also seriously impede the inlet's newly, finally open public green space. The photos I saw show them building a wall quite literally into the inlet, completely disturbing the natural life there and delaying, again, the use of a park that North Brooklyn has been rallying for, for over 20 years. Not to mention it will cause more flooding, which is

already an issue in the area. With 67 West and 90 West now sold, the whole waterfront will become unrecognizable soon if we don't act. Many small businesses are being pushed out, and the little architectural detail and history that we have left are already in jeopardy of being bulldozed away by people who don't care about this neighborhood or its current residents. The claim that we need more housing— they claim that we need more housing, but they just want to capitalize on the popularity of North Brooklyn like all the other landlords who've built huge towers on the waterfront. This project will only serve to raise rent prices for everyone, price more Native New Yorkers out of their homes, and most of the affordable housing units should be the whole building if they want to take public land. They should have to open the rest of the unopened park and invest in the unopened green space that we have been fighting for. Prices around us have already increased exponentially, and this will make it worse. This would also add a bunch of construction noise and hazards.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you so much. Christopher?

CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: [inaudible] going. Hello, my name is Christopher Leon Johnson. I oppose this project. I want to make this clear, I used to be a 32BJ shop steward, and I'll say this right now, that my union is getting paid by this developer and the consultants to push this project through. All these unions are. All they care about is their little BS little $20-hour jobs, which ain't nothing in the city of New York. I want to say this right now, that these nonprofits like Southside United don't do shit for the communities at all, and they're getting paid by that developer to push this project and to pull a hard— to pull the heartstrings of the community, make it like, oh, it's about displacement. But these— those nonprofits don't do nothing for the people anyway. I'll make this clear that this project is— it looked disgusting. It's a disgusting thing. You put it by the waterfront, which destroys the view of Greenpoint. I love Greenpoint. It does nothing at all. This is a disastrous idea. I'm going to say about the park, I love Bushwick Inlet Park. We need to save that park 100 percent. This is nothing but a land grab by these corrupt developers to line their pockets up. And all these

nonprofits and all these organizations, Open New York for All, and all these organizations and unions, all they care about is lining their pockets at the expense of the communities. Look, I understand that the unions like Local 79 and, you know, the building trades want their jobs, but what's the point of having these jobs and you can't live in the buildings that you building? Even though 32BJ, they're like the worst, making— they sell- they'll sell their own community off and make $20 an hour. It's disgusting. I say this right now that I oppose this project 100 percent, and Mr. Reynoso, be on record that— and you, Restler, need to be on record that you work- you stand hand in hand with Los Sures, Southside United, and you need to be on record with that, Mr. Restler. I know you oppose the project. But you need to be on the record saying that you stand with them time to time, especially at those nonsense rallies outside City Hall Park when they talk about stop displacement. But these are the same nonprofits that was silent about the City of Yes plan, and these are the same nonprofits that are pushing for COPA, which is another land grab opportunity for the developers. So I make that clear that I oppose this project and

no to this project, and save Bushwick Inlet Park. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you so much. This panel is now excused. We will now hear from Frank Lang, Robert Brunotte, Jerson Azcona, and Roxanne DeCres [sp?]. You may begin.

FRANK LANG: Hi, my name is Frank Lang. I'm the Director of Affordable Housing Policy and Advocacy for St. Nick's Alliance. And despite some of the recent comments to defame the nonprofits and others, I think that what's been said here is creating a false binary choice. That, as Neil Sheehan said, we don't have to have parks versus housing. There— we can have both. I think that, you know, the- there are more than 4,200 signatures in support of this project. And so this project has got a lot of support. St. Nick's Alliance and Los Sures, Southside United have been fighting for the residents of this community, and we're not getting any big payoff from this project. We are working very hard because the residents have been pushing for this. It is unique to be able to have 40 percent low-income housing here. And many of the speakers in support of the park, we support them when we work close together, like with

Kate Yourke. So, we want the City Council to support this project. We think that this can work. And to the council member who has asked repeatedly, do we want more affordable? Yes, we would like to have that, but we understand the constraints of what's being asked here. And if the city, which has the tools to be able to help make that project even more affordable, we would welcome that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Robert?

ROBERT BRUNOTTE: Good afternoon, Council. First and foremost, I would like to say my name is Robert Brunotte from Local 79, lifelong Brooklyn resident. No, none of us from Local 79 are being paid to be here. Me, neither myself or none of my laborers from journey members are being paid to be here. I just want to set that record straight. Okay. Alright. Alright, so I've lived in Brooklyn most of my life, and we urge you to vote yes on a Monitor Point project. The project meets the mayor's affordability agenda and the Brooklyn Borough President's comprehensive plan first objective to build new houses of all types at affordability levels while not displacing any existing residents. Greenpoint was identified in this plan as a new capacity priority

area. The Borough President also found that building only parkland or affordable housing are not viable development alternatives for this site given the site's constraints, development costs, and the need to relocate the empty MTA facility. Projects like Monitor Point help make sure the people who build and keep the city running can still afford to live here, especially those who have lived here their entire lives and watched it change over the years. Construction workers are community members. We need development that serves New York families, not just wealthy homeowners. This project gets polluting trucks— truck traffic off our streets and replaces it with housing and an accessible waterfront, and will create union jobs for people of the neighborhood by the neighborhood in this process. For those of us who already live here and are lucky enough to have a roof over our heads, we cannot be exclusionary and pull up the ladder behind us. We have to build a community for everyone. Blocking housing in the name of the environment without offering real alternatives is just nimbyism with better branding. Thank you. I– we urge you to support the Monitor Point Project. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Jerson?

JERSON AZCONA: My name is Jerson. I was born, raised, and live in Brooklyn, New York. I'm a proud Local 79 member. I attended and graduated from Automotive High School. I support the Monitor Point project. Right now there's a huge industrial building blocking people from getting to the East River. This project will actually going to open up the waterfront and increase the amount of green space, while the MTA and museum will continue to own the land. I'm excited to bring my family here. People need housing and open space right now. We can't wait another 20 years. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Roxanne?

ROXANNE DECRES: Good afternoon, counselors. My name is Roxanne. I live in Brooklyn on Bedford Avenue. I was a participant of the St. Nick's Alliance community-based organization in the district. I've worked all around Brooklyn doing construction, including the Domino Sugar Factory on the waterfront. This was before I became a proud Local 79 union member. I've seen the difference between a dead-end job and a union career. This project will offer good wages and benefits for

workers, which means more people can afford to live in their communities. The best way to prevent displacement is to build more housing. Change is a part of the life in New York. Everyone should be able to share in what makes Brooklyn special, not just existing homeowners. This is why I support Monitor Point. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright, thank you all for testifying. This panel is now excused. I will now call Irak Rivas, Donato D'Agosto— I'm sorry for butchering your name— Jonathan McKenna, Janice Lauletta, and Randy Pierce [sp?]. Also, just point of reference, we have 17 speakers remaining here in-person before we switch to online. We will start with Irak.

IRAK RIVAS: Hello, thank you so much. Thank you, Chair Louis, Council Member Restler, and members of the Subcommittee of Zoning and Franchises for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Irak Cehonski-Rivas, New York City Director of Policy at the New York State Association for Affordable Housing. We represent the for-profit and not-for-profit affordable housing industry stakeholders. NYSAFA strongly supports the Monitor

Point application for you today. This proposal delivers approximately 460 units of affordable housing, 40 percent of the residential space for families earning an average of 60 percent of AMI. That level of affordability goes far beyond mandatory requirements and is a genuine important commitment at a time when construction costs remain challenging. For Council District 33, these units will make a meaningful difference for working families. The Monitor Point proposal uses the right amount of city resources by bundling affordable housing with MTA modernization, waterfront improvements, open space, and a cultural museum all in one site. We avoid the need for multiple separate city investments across different locations. That means more public benefit for every dollar on every zoning tool we authorize here. Monitor Point is a model of coordinated public benefit. These applications allow the city to tackle housing, transit, open space, and cultural preservation together in a time when these type of investments are critical, rather than waiting until these issues have become too large. This is exactly the kind of smart multi-benefit project our city needs to address its housing crisis while

strengthening infrastructure and community assets. We respectfully urge you to vote yes on these applications and move this vital project forward. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Donato?

DONATO D'AGOSTO: Hello, my name is Donato, and I'm born and raised in Brooklyn for over 30 years. My family is now third generation of residents in Williamsburg and Greenpoint area. I'm a proud card-carrying member of Local 79. I'm here on my own, not by paycheck. I'm here to show support to Monitor Point project since the beginning. I've been here since the first Zoom meetings. This project from the start will offer many of my brothers and sisters from the Local 79 the chance to make a paycheck to support their families and also a way to build a place to call home for new generations. This is a project that will house many present and future residents of this great borough at a reasonable costs. The housing crisis is real. More and more New Yorkers are finding it hard to keep up with the living costs. I understand there may be minor concerns when it comes to this project. I say minor because frankly, that's what they are. Maybe some

people have fear for the new look of the neighborhood. Some people want change but won't allow change in their own neighborhood. They're sitting in a rocking chair expecting to move forward by squeaking back and forth. We can work out the minor disagreements, but we can't afford to say no to hundreds of new homes. If Gotham is offering us an umbrella in a rainstorm, we can't sit there and complain that we don't have a tent. I believe this project is the right decision to go forward with. I believe that this project will help bring a brighter future to many of those that only seen darkness while struggling to live here. Thank you for giving me time to speak. I hope you will consider the transformation potential of Monitor Point project and the working-class for Brooklyn.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from Jonathan.

JONATHAN MCKENNA: Hi, my name is Jonathan McKenna. I'm a Williamsburg resident since 2020, much better than my hometown of Boston, so happy to be here. And my rent has gone up in an uncontrolled manner, as have my neighbors, many of whom have been forced out of my neighborhood. I'm not speaking in

any official capacity, but I'm a board member of the North Brooklyn Angels. Our mission is to help ease the challenges of gentrification and help those fighting food insecurity. Our volunteers have felt these pressures of out-of-control rents so that they cannot live or serve the community they love. Then they move to other neighborhoods that fit their budget, raising the rents and pricing out the residents there and causing a negative cascading effect of gentrification. Now, I'm not here to hold water for developers. I'm also an ambassador for the Billion Oyster Project and not speaking on their behalf either. So I want as much remediation, flood protection, waterfront park access as possible. And to proactively answer a possible question here, I support as much affordable housing as possible, especially a compelling annual median income levels. And I want to be realistic. That way, we can keep the stewards of their communities in the places they belong and allow our neighbors to help our neighbors. And as such, I support the Monitor Point development.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Janice?

JANICE LAULETTA-WEINMANN: Good afternoon, Council Members. My name is Janice Lauletta-Weinmann.

I am President and Co-founder of the Greenpoint Monitor Museum. I retired from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 2023 after 35 years of service as a civil structural engineer. For the past 30 years, the museum has educated Greenpointers about the USS Monitor and how the people of Greenpoint helped save the Union during the Civil War. That's why the community members were actually building the USS Monitor. We teach students history, engineering, and pride in their community through the story of the Monitor. I have a master's degree also in education. Since 2001, I served as an instructor for the museum's roadshow school program. We now have our own classroom at MS-126 John Ericsson Middle School, which is named for the Monitor's designer and engineer. The museum has owned its land since 2003 when Motiva Enterprises donated the land to be the site of a future Greenport Monitor Museum building at the launch of the Monitor. Since then, we have been fighting to make that goal a reality. In 2005, we learned that the city planned to acquire the museum's land by eminent domain. The museum spent the next 12 years fighting the condemnation action. Today the Parks Department has confirmed in three separate

letters that the city has no intention of taking the Monitor's property. We are tired of fighting off threats to the museum's land. We want to focus on our educational mission. This is a critical moment for the museum's future. Please help us secure a permanent home for the museum on its land. Please vote yes for Monitor Point and the Greenpoint Monitor Museum. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: We're gonna call Randy Pierce. Last call for Randy Pierce? Alright, and if you're not here, Randy, you could submit your testimony online. Council Member Restler?

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thanks so much. The gentleman from NYSAFA, you testified that this would be significant additional housing for residents in District 33, is that right?

IRAK RIVAS: Correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: So this project, do you know what the percentage of the units will be for people who live in District 33?

IRAK RIVAS: Yes. It's about 40 percent.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: The affordable units, what percentage of those affordable units will be for residents of District 33?

IRAK RIVAS: No-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] 15 percent. 15 percent of the affordable units will be for people who live not in District 33, in District 33 or District 34, in Greenpoint and Williamsburg. So 85 percent of the affordable housing will go to people who live across the city of New York. 15 percent of the affordable housing constructed would be in this for this community. So I just want to correct your statement for the record. This is not a significant amount of housing for new— for the residents of District 33. Significant amount of affordable housing, yes, but not for the people who live in our community today who are being priced out and displaced, who are facing enormous pressures of gentrification. I'm surprised— does NYSAFA support additional affordable housing in this project?

IRAK RIVAS: Yes, definitely, we will support that. But, you know, I have to say, we'll look at it here. As a former budget director for a Borough President, I think all these conversations should be grounded on, you know, on the public funding availability. And also by acknowledging when you take those public funds to a particular site,

you're— you are actively taking those funds away— excuse me— you're taking those funds away from another project, and you could be jeopardizing that project in the city elsewhere.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: And I would presume that NYSAFA would agree that on public land there should be a different threshold and expectation for affordability than on a private ULURP application?

IRAK RIVAS: In prin— again, in principle, yes, but we need to acknowledge the reality of the economics.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay. Thank you all for your testimony, and Janice, thank you for your years of advocacy and work with the Monitor Museum. We appreciate you and George very much.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. This panel is excused. Point of reference, we have 15 people left to testify before we go online. Now we'll hear from Eduardo Medina, Israel Rodriguez, and Irwin Denny. Eduardo Medina, Israel Rodriguez, and Irwin Denny. You could turn— okay, you may turn on your mic and begin.

IRWIN DENNY: Good afternoon, Council. My name is Irwin Denny. I'm a North Brooklyn resident and Local 79 laborer. I support Monitor Point because I believe new housing and union jobs for local workers will help the community. I've seen this area change from when I was growing up. I've seen decades of people being pushed out and towers going up with no local workers or community benefit. But now that there's finally a project where workers like me and low-income families can actually be part of it, now all the new people who moved to this neighborhood are saying no. I bring this up because we're talking— if you look at the MTA bus depot, that alone, people are talking about birds and trees, and you have people who work three shifts in the MTA depot that's pretty much a piece of crap, but nobody is mentioning that. And just to have this project taken off will help a lot of people, including the MTA workers who sit there three shifts a day. This is what the community needs. This project can provide stability for workers who look like me and families who are getting pushed out. Please say yes to this program, to this project. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Eduardo Medina, last call. Okay, he's gone. Alright. Stand at ease. Alright, now we'll hear from Jason Thomas, Charles Liero— Lario [sp?], sorry. I'm reading from my computer— George Wellman [sp?]. Okay, well, he went already, so these— okay. And Jack Connors. And Jack Connors. Jack Connors? Alright, we're going to start with Jason Thompson.

JASON THOMPSON: Oh, that's good, you can hear me. Okay, my name is Jason Thompson. I work for Green Cedar Management. I'm the leasing manager of Jamaica portfolio. I just want to say I'm writing to express my strong support for Monitor Point development and its meaningful investment in the Brooklyn community.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Alright, microphone check. There we go, we're back. For those that are online, we're standing at ease. Alright, we're back. Alright, so Jason Thompson, you could begin. You can start from the top. Let's restart his time. Thank you.

JASON THOMPSON: Again, my name is Jason Thompson. I work for Green Cedar Management. I'm the leasing manager for the Jamaica portfolio. I'm

writing to express a strong support for Monitor Point development and its meaningful investment in the Brooklyn community. I have seen many efforts of business to support the neighborhood where they operate. This proposal stands out because it goes beyond economic development. It creates real opportunity for very— work for— work for the very workforce that keeps the Brooklyn— that keeps Brooklyn running to maintain it in the community they know and love. The project is expected to generate nearly $1 billion in construction-related economic activities, creating hundreds of well-paying union construction jobs over several years. Once completed, it will also provide approximately 70 permanent on-site jobs across retail, restaurants, property management, and the service sector, further strengthening the local economy. Equally important is the project's commitment to affordable and stability. This inclusion of housing for residents earning 40 and 60 percent of the area median income, with 40 percent of units designated for affordable— designated as affordable, will help assure the essential workers can live near where they work. At a time when many long-term residents are forced out due

to the rising costs, this level of affordability is crucial. Brooklyn continues to face severe housing shortage with a citywide residential vacancy rate of just 1.4 percent. Monitor Point directly addresses this crisis by delivering approximately 1,150 homes, including 460 permanently affordable units. This is the type of large-scale housing production necessary to meet the urgency of the moment. The project also plays an important role in preventing displacement by increasing the supply of housing, particularly affordable housing. It helps stabilize—

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from Charles? Okay, you can start, Charles.

CHARLES LIRIO: My name is Charles Lirio. I support the monitor point application because I am a longtime supporter of the Greenpoint Monitor Museum. I am excited for the museum to finally have a permanent home in its land. As a former United States Army Reserve and son of a World War II Navy veteran, I am passionate about the United States military history. Particularly the history of the Civil War. I am an associated member of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War and used to be a Civil War reenactor. My love of history drew me to the

Greenpoint Monitor Museum. Over the years, I have helped with the museum's annual awards ceremony and students and assisted with special events at the museum land, often while wearing my Civil War reenactors uniform. I'm also a former MTA employee. I appreciate how this application will move the MTA Mobile Watch Unit facility to a proper industrial area. Once the facility is moved, the MTA land and Monitor Point can be transformed into homes for thousands of New Yorkers. These New Yorkers will be the neighbors of the museum. Their children will grow up in place named USS Monitor. They will live and breathe its history. I ask the honorable council members to remember Memorial Day.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. I appreciate your testimony, Charles.

CHARLES LIRIO: A place where-

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] You could submit the rest of your testimony for the record. We'll now hear from George.

CHARLES LIRIO: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, George. You may begin.

GEORGE WEINMANN: Good afternoon, Chair Louis and Councilman Lincoln. My name is George Weinmann and I'm the Vice President of the Greenpoint Modern Museum. I was born and raised in Greenpoint where my family has lived since the 1840s. Many of my ancestors fought the Union— for the Union during the Civil War. I even had a relative who served on the USS Monitor, Assistant Surgeon Grenville Weeks [sp?]. I am a proud- I'm proud to be part of Greenpoint and even prouder to help carry forward the legacy of the USS Monitor. Over the years, we have worked very hard to care for the museum's land on Bushwick Inlet and to share the Monitor's story with the community. Since 2001, we have taught thousands of children who have- who have children and grandchildren that attend our classroom. They see me and Janice on the street, and they remember us as the Monitor people, and they ask us, when will the Monitor, the museum be built? We have told them that we are going to build a museum on the land that shares the launch site of the USS Monitor, the ship that saved the Union, and we don't want to let them down. If we do not vote yes today, there will be no museum building or open space on the museum's land. Under the current R-6 zoning on the

MTA site, a developer could build a luxury building with no or very little affordable housing, but the museum would get nothing. Its land will remain closed off. A no vote does not create anything for the community, but a yes vote will create affordable housing, open space, and a home for the museum. After the Monitor sank, my ancestor, Assistant Surgeon Grenville Weeks wrote, "So long as we remain a people, so long will the work of the monitor be remembered and her story told to our children's children." That's what we do. Please help us keep telling that story to the people of Greenpoint and the world. We vote— please vote yes for Monitor Point.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: You may submit the rest on the record.

GEORGE WEINMANN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. And last call for Jack Connors. If you're not here, you can submit your testimony online. Council Member if you have questions for this panel— Alright, this panel is excused. Thank you for your time. We'll now hear from Debbra McAllister, Eugene Travers, Jim Su, and Howard Slatkin. Last call for Debbra McAllister, Eugene

Travers, Jim Su, Howard Slatkin. Which one is he? Oh, Eugene. Okay, let them know. You may begin.

DEBBRA MCALLISTER: Good afternoon, Council Members. I'm Debbra McAllister, Vice President at the New York City Housing Partnership. I'm here on behalf of the Housing Partnership in support of the Monitor Point project. The Housing Partnership is a nonprofit organization that has been in existence for 43 years. It was founded by David Rockefeller and Mayor Edward Koch to advance middle-class housing throughout New York City. Today, the Partnership's mission remains the same, and for that reason, we are thrilled to partner with Gotham on the Monitor Point project, which will create much-needed affordable housing for working-class families who are being driven out of the Greenpoint neighborhood because they can no longer afford to live in it. The rents are too high. In North Brooklyn, there is a severe housing shortage. This project would contain over 1,150 new homes, including 460 permanently income-restricted units. The project is considered the largest investment in affordable housing in North Brooklyn waterfront. With this project, there are several benefits to the community:

over 45,000 square feet of public access to waterfront open space, a new home for the Greenpoint Monitor Museum, safer streets, neighborhood retail spaces, and jobs. One of the positive results of having a Monitor Point development on this site is that no one will be displaced from the site, because currently the MTA site has no housing units. As a matter of fact, public safety would improve with the relocation of the MTA site, resulting in a residential neighborhood. We can all agree that there is a housing crisis in New York City. The Monitor Point project would increase that housing supply. Families making minimum wages would be able to afford an apartment at Monitor Point, resulting in economic diversity. As stated in Mayor Mamdani's newly released plan, let's build a city where working-class people—

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] Thank you, Debbra. We'll now hear from Jim Su. You could submit the rest online. You may begin, Jim.

JIM SU: I'm Jim Su. I'm an architectural interior designer, working in Long Island City. I know the inlet pretty well. Anyway, my testimony is- includes several drawings which I'll show you later.

It's against the mega high-rise proposal and take advantage of linear acreage by proposing clusters of low rises that cascade down into housing units. The upper 13 to 14 floors will be co-op and condos with expansive roof decks that has various amenities like pools and jacuzzis and restaurants. The housing below will provide every resident's outdoor patios with solar panels. All these housing— and at least has a series of indoor and outdoor skywalks too, similar to the High Line— will connect the housing units to the proposed Makers Park, which is the new park that the- we like to build, and have a spoke with its inner circle to look like, a cog and wheel of sort of a maker's mark steampunk material. The future phase would also include biodomes that look out into tower hexagonal platforms that would jut out, forming future floating, miniature cities. Yeah, I kind of proposed to have hexagonal, like, floating cities, which is also maybe used in Tokyo Bay. I see this project as a future- a future city, city of the future in the area. I have drawings here, but it's a lot of- and the idea is to show how the one area will connect to the other area, the Greenpoint area as well as Williamsburg. The floating city will be the

future area with where the water is. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Now we're going to hear from Howard Slatkin.

HOWARD SLATKIN: Good afternoon. Excuse me, Chair Louis, Council Member Restler. My name is Howard Slatkin. I'm a planning and housing professional today testifying in my personal capacity. 21 years ago in 2005, I was the project manager for the city planning initiative that rezoned this waterfront and the adjacent neighborhoods. And a story for another time, I actually named Bushwick Inlet Park. I have a keen appreciation for the deep frustrations within the Greenpoint-Williamsburg community about the extended delays in achieving the full open space objectives, objectives of that plan. This is what makes the Monitor Point proposal such an important one. Relocating multiple MTA facilities, environmental cleanup and build-out of public open space, the completion of Box Street Park and Greenpoint, adding over 400 more affordable homes, and creating a home for the Monitor Museum. This is the first proposal in all these years that can actually achieve all these things. The idea of making

the project even more affordable is an obviously appealing one, but I urge the council as it considers this issue to adopt an eyes-open approach to the trade-offs of adding public subsidy to a proposed development. More subsidy for one project directly reduces the amount of subsidy the city can use in other members' districts, particularly in lower-income communities where public subsidy is the main source of new housing. This proposal reflects a pragmatic effort to address numerous long-standing public policy objectives, and I encourage the council to approve it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from Council Member Restler.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Mr. Slatkin, if you were to go back 21 years ago when you were the project manager on this fateful rezoning and realized that the vast overwhelming majority of the open space had not been realized over 20 years later, how would you— would you still have supported the rezoning?

HOWARD SLATKIN: I appreciate the question, Council Member. I am not going to speculate on time travel-based hypothesis.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: No, it's a- it's a great question.

HOWARD SLATKIN: It’s a great question, and actually-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: 20 years ago, adding 30,000 units of housing, being promised 40-odd acres of parks, seeing almost none of it constructed, would you have supported that rezoning if you were told that the deal the community was getting was totally an empty promise and that none of the core commitments of the rezoning were achieved?

HOWARD SLATKIN: So again, not just the time travel aspect, but I will reject the premise of the question because it's not a choice between whether to do something or not, but it's how to do it right. And I think that there's certainly many ways-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] So, has this been done right?

HOWARD SLATKIN: in which-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] Has this been done right?

HOWARD SLATKIN: I'm sorry, I'm trying to speak. Thank you. There are certainly many ways in which the implementation of the open space plan has

not gone as planned, and there are incredibly dismaying aspects of that. In particular, the condemnation costs for the acquisition of the park were dramatically underestimated. An adverse court proceeding inflated that cost substantially. This is something that has deep history and roots in the neighborhood.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I'm aware.

HOWARD SLATKIN: You're aware of all these issues. The ability to implement the plan on an ongoing basis depends on the ability to adapt and make new decisions and bring more resources. There have not been enough resources to achieve full implementation of that, and this is an opportunity to bring some of the resources that are necessary. There are not other opportunities that I am aware of to bring the resources necessary to achieve—

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] Your testimony was that this would knit together promises of previous open spaces and achieve the initial plans of the rezoning. And I just think that's pretty wildly misleading. This would address 15 percent of Brock Street Park being available for design and construction. It is unfunded at this

point, but it would allow for that 15 percent of that park. It would have no other impact on promises made from the 2005 rezoning on open space. So we're talking about a small portion of one park that this would facilitate construction, and that's it in terms of the 2005 promises. There's no commitment to anything beyond that at this stage.

HOWARD SLATKIN: I appreciate your— I think it was a question— I appreciate your point, your question. I think that the implementation of the continuous open space objectives of the plan, this is completely consistent with that, and that achievement of the additional connections to the waterfront and the open access is part of the plan.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I think that sure, there's esplanade space that would move forward if this would happen, as with any development along the waterfront, but overall, this does nothing to actually follow through on. We have no commitment from now a 4th mayor in a row to actually make happen the promises that you shepherded through with this failed rezoning. So yes, we got the housing. We didn't get any of the promises that were made to our community. 16 percent of the units are affordable,

and many of those units at totally unaffordable levels to the people who lived in Williamsburg and Greenpoint at the time of the rezoning. And none of the open space except for the stamp of a Park WNYC transmitter, which is about the size of this room has been achieved. So I- you know, you'll have to forgive me for the level of frustration on the broken promises of this rezoning.

HOWARD SLATKIN: I- if I can just respond briefly. I do appreciate the frustration, and I think that that is all valid and important. I think figuring out the most important way to go forward to enact, uh, elements of the plan is the answer.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. This panel is excused. These are our last two in-person public testimonies. If you would like to testify, please identify one of the Sergeant-at-Arms to submit a card before we transition online. So this is the last call: Francisco Zarate and Steve Flack. You may begin.

FRANCISCO ZARATE: My name is Francisco. I'm from Williamsburg, and I'm a proud Local 79 member. I support the Monitor Point proposal. Growing up here, it was difficult to find good job and

opportunities and keep up with the cost of living. I used to work on Foodtown off of Bedford Avenue, Lincoln Market on Box Street, but it was difficult to survive. It was— it was a Local 79 apprenticeship program that led me to a middle-class career. Union apprenticeship programs are lifelines to low-income communities of color. This project is more than just a building. It is an engine for economic growth and community investments. This project will bring housing and union opportunities that'll actually sustain families and help us stay in the neighborhood. Empty lots don't support families. Empty lots don't fix the shoreline. This project does. Thank you. Keep it nice, short.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Steve?

STEVE FLACK: Hello, my name is Steve Flack. I'm a fourth-generation New Yorker, born and raised in Williamsburg. Growing up, the North Brooklyn waterfront was a wasteland of closing factories. The fact that it's currently a place that people want to live is still shocking to my family who fled to the suburbs in the '80s. Currently, New York City has a 1.4 percent vacancy rate, which is unsustainable. We have people so desperate for homes

they are bidding up on rents, something I saw a friend fall victim to in a sketchy one-bed in Crown Heights this weekend. When I told my friends that I was going to be here today, I was contacted by multiple friends asking if I had a connection that would help get them an apartment. Otherwise, they are on the verge of leaving the city. These are people who wanted to raise families here. We need a city that welcomes them, and the only way to do that is with more housing. Turning a waterfront MTA warehouse into hundreds of affordable homes is a boon to the city. New York City is in a housing crisis. Decades of disinvestment has led to a missing middle class— the missing middle that won't come around until we build it. I was lucky to be born here, but New York City isn't a place just for natives. It's a place built by and for people who want to live here and want to put roots down in the greatest city in the world. Monitor Point helps get that done.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Steve. We're now going to transition on- this panel's excused. Thank you. We're now going to transition online. I'm going to step out for a few minutes, and I'm going to turn it over to Council Member Restler.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will start the online testimony in just a minute.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Great. The first panel will be Barbara Hertel, Ida Max, Andrea Odezinka [sp?], and Rob Solano from Churches United for Fair Housing. The Sergeant will unmute you.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Barbara Hertel, you'll be up first, hopefully.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

BARBARA HERTEL: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Oh, great. Barbara, can you hear us?

BARBARA HERTEL: Can I hear, okay, alright. Good. I'll get my picture up there somehow.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Feel free to get started. We can hear you.

BARBARA HERTEL: Okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Oh, now we can see you too. Nice to see you, Barbara.

BARBARA HERTEL: Hi, nice to see you too. Alright, so, Bushwick Inlet Park should not be used for luxury housing. It is a good project, but not for the inlet. It is a delicate area in the park. The

state and city and others should build the Monitor Museum. Also, the rezoning is not correct. They should keep the zoning the same. And the MTA should talk to the Parks Department about their land. So please say no to this project. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you, Miss Hertel. We appreciate you and your street safety advocacy. Next up, Ida Marks.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

IDA MARKS: Sorry, sorry. Good afternoon. My name is Ida Marks, and I'm a Greenpoint resident and a lifelong New Yorker. I'm strongly opposed to the Monitor Point project. In the past seven years, over 10 new oversized towers have been built in Greenpoint, mostly on the waterfront. That doesn't count dozens of other developments all over Greenpoint, all favoring the wealthy. The working people of Greenpoint are being falsely portrayed by those on the developer's payroll who give testimonials claiming the local community is trying to prevent affordable housing. This is untrue. The Greenpoint community is trying to prevent our cost of living from going up even more. Our rents and overall cost of living have risen over 60 percent since 2020

due to the massive, primarily luxury overdevelopment we have experienced. And to be clear, the units Gotham proposes are not specifically for local residents. This is not a way to keep people in the neighborhood who are being pushed out. The housing lottery pulls from all boroughs, and you don't necessarily have a choice of where you end up. Working people, senior citizens, and those of us who are not wealthy are being pushed out of Greenpoint in droves. The claim that the affordable housing, which isn't even affordable to many of us, will help is untrue. Actually, the opposite is true, as you can see from the data, that this additional luxury housing will continue to drive up rents in the neighborhood. How can anyone responsible for city planning approve yet another structure without considering the effects of our trans— on our transportation, gas, electric, and our daily quality of life by adding hundred- thousands of people into a relatively small area. And now Gotham proposes an even bigger structure with even more negative impact on the environment, cost of living, and quality of life for Greenpoint. This neighborhood has become a playground for the wealthy, and unfortunately, this

means many of us who are working people, senior citizens and lifelong residents are being forced out.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired

IDA MARKS: Please oppose the Monitor Point project. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you, Ida. Next up, we'll hear from Andrea Odysinska. I'm sorry, Andrea, I think I butchered your name.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

ANDREA ODYSINSKA: Hello, good afternoon. Um, I am also a Greenpoint- longstanding Greenpoint resident, and I was here for the fights in '05 when we were beating back the power plants away from the waterfront. Thank you, Councilman Restler, for standing up for us. I must say it's a bit disheartening to see that the rest of the subcommittee is sort of not there. I don't know whether they will watch it later, watch testimony later. And it was also incredibly disheartening when the borough president left before the last meeting even started at City Council. Hardscaped circular driveways of luxury towers and hardscaped esplanades are not open space. They are not a park. They don't feel the same when you walk through them. It is

simply just not open green space. I recently went to Bushwick Inlet Park. My whole family went. It was amazing to be there. You could feel the energy. The entire neighborhood is just— it's a palpable thrill that that is finally open. There were horseshoe crabs, various, exotic birds and waterfowl. The fact that a luxury tower that is that incredibly tall would be in certain places about 10 feet away, is in— it's just wrong. It's It's kind of an outrage, really, that there's no other place that that can be built. We, as somebody else mentioned, are completely underserved for open space. It's a flood zone. And we have already accepted, 30,000 new residents. So I am- I'm really hoping, but although I don't know where the rest of them are, that this subcommittee has more pointed questions beyond AMI facts and figures over and over again. There was one person on the subcommittee that asked about flood mitigation, and then obviously some pointed questions. Thank you, Councilman Restler. But it's just amazing that, you know, that—

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time expired.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Now we're going to hear from Eric Benderman, Michelle de la Uz [sp?] and Jasmine Smarr [sp?] and Kendra Chu [sp?].

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

ROB SOLANO: Councilmember Lincoln, am I— was wrapping up that panel. Am I ready to, or should I wait for the others to speak?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Oh, you could— you, you may begin.

ROB SOLANO: Okay, thank you. Good afternoon, Chair and members of the City Council. My name is Rob Solano. I'm the co-founder, Executive Director of Churches United for Fair Housing. We represent 20,000 working-class families across Brooklyn, New York City, who are fighting every single day just to stay in the neighborhoods they've helped build. I'm here today to talk about the Monitor Point proposal, but more importantly, I'm here to talk about political accountability. We hear a lot today, and talks in these chambers about building housing. But let's be clear, the history of District 33 has already shouldered the burden of the city growth. Over the last two decades, our neighborhood has generated and absorbed more housing

density than any other district in the entire city. We have done our part. When the people of North Brooklyn elected and reelected Council Member Lincoln Restler, we did not vote for the status quo. We gave him a clear, explicit mandate: end the era of rubber stamping 600-foot luxury towers on our waterfront, protect our communities from displacement, and defend our public land. Council Member Restler is doing exactly what his constituents hired him to do, holding the line against this project. But this isn't a local issue. This is a citywide turning point. New Yorkers just recently overwhelmingly changed the era of Bloomberg-era playbook, trading away public assets for public-private land for a tiny fraction of affordable housing while handing 60 percent of profit to luxury developers. The citywide mandate is now to build deep, systematic affordability and putting the public good first. This brings us to the double mandate that faces the City Council today. Locally, the community has said no to more luxury displacement in the waterfront, and citywide, the voters had demanded a radical shift toward true housing equality. With these two mandates combined, the City Council has zero room to hide on the Monitor Point.

This is the first major land use test on the new political era. If this council chooses to override a local member, ignore the community, and approve a project that's 60 percent luxury market on the land that belongs to the public, you're not just making a bad zoning deal, you're actively voting against the explicit democratic will of the people who put you in office.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Your time has expired.

ROB SOLANO: We're watching this closely. We expect-

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] thank you, Rob.

ROB SOLANO: [inaudible] respect the local mandated.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: You can submit the rest of your testimony online.

ROB SOLANO: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: We appreciate you.

ROB SOLANO: I appreciate you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: This panel is now dismissed. The next panel is Eric Benderman—

Bederman, Michelle de la Uz, Jamie Smarr, and Kendra Chiu. And we'll start with Eric Bederman.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

ERIC BEDERMAN: Oh, thank you. I'm Eric Bederman, Vice President at the Community Preservation Corporation. CPC is a nonprofit affordable housing finance company that was formed in the '70s to help New York City and state restore and rebuild communities that were devastated by abandonment and disinvestment. Since our founding, we've invested over $16 billion to finance the creation and preservation of more than 276,000 units of affordable and workforce housing. Now, at a time when New York City faces a historic housing shortage, the Monitor Point development proposes to address a unique mix of housing, environmental, and waterfront concerns with intention and resourcefulness. Monitor Point will deliver much-needed new housing, new open space with waterfront access, environmental protection, and resiliency. This project is informed by a public-private partnership led by Gotham Development in partnership with the MTA, HPD, and the Greenpoint Monitor Museum. Critically, the project will bring 1,150 new homes to Greenpoint, 460 of

which will be permanently and deeply affordable. This is creating much-needed new housing at rents that working families can afford. On behalf of CPC, I commend the development team at Gotham and their partners at the MTA, HPD, and the Greenpoint Monitor Museum, in addition to the hundreds of community members who have worked tirelessly to develop a new vision from Monitor Point. I respectfully urge the committee and the members of the Council to support this project, approve the land use applications, and help deliver affordable housing, open space, and resilient waterfront to the Brooklyn community. Thank you again for your time and consideration.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from Michelle.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

MICHELLE DE LA UZ: Good afternoon, Chair Louis and Council Member Restler. My name is Michelle de la Uz, and I'm the Executive Director of the Fifth Avenue Committee, a nonprofit comprehensive community development corporation whose mission is to advance economic, social, and racial justice in New York City. I'm testifying in support of Monitor Point because our housing crisis is urgent. In Gowanus,

where I was yesterday with Mayor Mamdani touring the neighborhood and seeing new affordable housing, preservation of existing affordable housing, investment in NYCHA, and mixed-income projects and investment in other infrastructure projects, all within a short distance of one another, we can see what it looks like to have community-wide solutions to some of our city's challenges. While I deeply appreciate and support Council Member Restler's comments about the need for true housing affordability on a publicly-owned site, this project is delivering multiple public benefits beyond the 40 percent affordable housing at deeper AMIs and includes critical funding for public transit and the Greenport Monitor Museum. Monitor Point would deliver 460 permanently affordable units along with publicly accessible waterfront open space, resiliency improvements, environmental remediation, and major privately funded infrastructure investments. This is a mixed-income development that uses market-rate housing to help cross-subsidize affordable homes and unlock public benefits that the community would not otherwise receive. And that the city doesn't have sufficient taxpayer dollars to fund on its own. From

a community development perspective, this is what equitable growth should look like: transforming an underutilized site into mixed-income housing, public waterfront access, safer infrastructure, and long-term neighborhood investment. Adding 460 permanent homes where none exist today is a concrete equitable growth strategy and investment in a more inclusive future. So, I urge the council to approve Monitor Point. We need this project and all that it brings without needing to use additional taxpayer subsidy. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Thank you, Michelle. Now we'll hear from Jamie.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Jamie Smarr?

JAMIE SMARR: Hi, good afternoon to the Subcommittee on Zoning. I am Jamie Smarr. I'm the President and CEO of the New York City Housing Partnership. I speak in support of Monitor Point on behalf of the New York City Housing Partnership. The New York City Housing Partnership is an organization founded by Mayor Ed Koch in 1983, and we have spent more than four decades working to expand access to true middle-class housing across New York City,

representing over 100,000 affordable units created or preserved. The North Brooklyn waterfront has changed substantially over the past three decades. What was once an industrial corridor has become one of the most desirable stretches of real estate in the five boroughs, but that transformation has not come without cost. The net vacancy rate in Brooklyn sits at 1.27 percent below the city average of 1.4 percent, and the middle-class families who built and sustained North Brooklyn to what it is today are increasingly unable to stay. No one development project can solve the housing project— the housing shortage that we face, but 460 permanently affordable homes with units reaching as low as minimum wage affordability is a meaningful contribution to middle-class housing in an area that needs it. What's more, the financing structure behind this project is the kind of creative, disciplined work that does not happen without genuine commitment from the development team and its public partners. The proposed cross-subsidy model, which is using market-rate units to finance deep affordability, is not new, but it is hard to execute very well. It requires a developer like Gotham with the experience

and frankly the willingness to structure a deal that prioritizes community benefit over seeking maximum return. Gotham's record in East New York and the Lower East Side in this city demonstrate that they have done exactly that.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Jamie. You may submit the rest of your testimony online.

JAMIE SMARR: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Now we'll hear from Kendra.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

KENDRA CHIU: Good afternoon and thank you, Chair Louis, Council Member Restler and all here for the opportunity. My name is Kendra Chiu, and I'm a director for the North Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce. We're a hyperlocal nonprofit business organization that serves Bushwick, Greenpoint, and Williamsburg. On behalf of the Chamber, I'd like to express our strong support for the Monitor Point project. We view this innovative mixed-use project as a significant opportunity for North Brooklyn that's positioned to bring lasting benefits to our business community and our neighborhood in general. In addition to providing much-needed housing

opportunities in a high-demand market, it will also deliver considerable economic benefits through job creation and small business growth. We see the conversion of a dated and underutilized industrial site, which currently blocks waterfront access and brings heavy truck traffic through residential streets, into a dynamic new development which includes housing, both affordable and market value, small businesses, hopefully with local ownership, critical environmental remediation and flood protection, and a significant amount of thoughtfully designed open space as a compelling model for the revitalization of underutilized sites into productive properties. Monitor Point reflects the kind of multifaceted development North Brooklyn deserves, and the Gotham Organization is to be commended for the professionalism and thoughtfulness they've exhibited throughout the process. We recognize that no project of this scale is without its complexity, and we respect the integrity of the necessary review processes, but we ask that you consider the full scope of its economic contributions for the workers who build it, the families who will call it home, and

the businesses that will serve it. Thank you again for this opportunity.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Council member, you have a question for this-

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: [interposing] Thank you so much. I just wanted to ask Miss De La Uz a question. You had been such an important champion on the Gowanus rezoning. There was one large public lot in the Gowanus rezoning, correct?

MICHELLE DE LA UZ: Yeah, public place.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Public place- and what's the percentage of affordable housing on that public lot?

MICHELLE DE LA UZ: It's 100 percent affordable.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, thank you so much. I appreciate- appreciate your testimony.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: The next panel, Maria Clara Golfo, Lauren Roper [sp?], Catherine— I'm going to butcher your last name— so Catherine G., and Sandra Baptista.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: We'll start with Maria Clara.

MARIA CLARA GOLFO: Good afternoon, City Council. My name is Maria Clara Golfo, born and raised in the Bronx with my family that relies on affordable housing. I currently live in Greenpoint, and I'm speaking on behalf of Save the Inlet. Thank you so much for the time to speak, and also Council Member Restler for holding the line. I appreciate you. Greenpoint is a community. Greenpoint is not Gotham City, but this is rapidly changing. Greenpoint has become completely unaffordable with every luxury tower walling off the coastline of an incredibly densely populated corner of Brooklyn that has access to one incredibly inconsistent subway line, the G ghost [sic] line. People need access to parks and open spaces in order to thrive. This land can be used as a park space for the people Gotham flooded into the neighborhood. Developers like Gotham's luxury towers lead to displacement of people like me and my family. Since these towers have gone up in Greenpoint, rents in the community have risen. They doubled since 2005 and are up over 75 percent since 2015, making it one of the fastest rising rental markets in the entire country. And they're already starting to fall apart. The luxury towers, I mean.

Furthermore, Gotham's proposal touts 40 percent affordable housing, but only 25 percent are actually MIH, mandatory inclusionary housing. My family can't afford the units that are available in that building, for what it's worth. Gotham and the MTA are bending the rules to construct an enormous building for a 99-year lease. What happens in year 101? This is a land grab. This is pure private greed and corruption winning. There are warehouses and lots across Greenpoint, and that could be used for affordable housing, and I hope that it is for 100 percent affordable housing. To the union members who are made to be here, you can work for affordable housing units in other lots that are not literally upending an irreplaceable ecological ecosystem on a flood zone. And this is during a climate crisis. Please don't be shortsighted. All of this is setting a precedent that the rich will always win against communities. This community has been passionately against this. Please do the right thing. Thank you. It's not—

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] Thank you.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you so much. Now we'll hear from Lauren.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Lauren Roper? Lauren Roper? Alright, we'll hear from Catherine.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Catherine? Alright, we'll hear from Sandra Baptista.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SANDRA BAPTISTA: Hi, my name is Sandra Baptista and I strongly oppose the Monitor Point project. I'm a local resident here in Williamsburg. My ability to live in Williamsburg has not been an easy one. I lived here 2010 to 2013 and I got priced out. Interestingly enough, I moved to Greenpoint, but I was only able to do that because of a personal connection to a Polish couple with a building that they then sold. So I moved out of the area for seven years. I moved back to Williamsburg in 2022 because the love of my life invited me to move in with him. That was serendipitous, and I truly appreciate how lucky I am. I never saw myself as a Williamsburg resident again. In those intermittent years away, I never left Williamsburg though. I worked at

restaurants from Metropolitan Ave to Berry Street. I worked at Teddy's Bar and Grill. I do remember the New Kings Democrats, of which Lincoln Restler is a proud founding member, using the back room of Teddy's for meetings. We, the workers, never did engage in discourse with the New Kings, though, which I wish we had. I would have said to them, as I say now, that the argumentation back and forth about a baseline income of nearly $80K and a baseline number of affordable units within a luxury building is bogus. These quantitative questions don't answer the questions of how to effectively pull at the root of the housing crisis. Gotham and other developers are the root of the housing crisis themselves. I want to see more social housing owned by the city, akin to the programs in Vienna, Austria, as well as Singapore. In Singapore, the public housing board turns renters into homeowners, by the way. I can't go too much into it, so I ask all workers to turn into working-class heroes by reading up on successful social housing programs that provide a quality of life we do not see currently with the public housing program provided by New York City. It's not impossible for a government to truly take care of you

and your housing and see housing as your human right. I urge you, Lincoln Restler to defend progressive housing practices exclusively. If not now, when? Let's stop prioritizing private developers.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Sandra. You got me beat. You beat the clock. Alright, last call for Catherine. I believe your last name is Gotsredies [sp?] or Lauren Roper. Last call. Alright, this panel is now excused. We're going to call the next panel: Angela Howard, Jessica Katz, Anissa Pugh [sp?], and Alice Wong. The next panel is Angela Howard, Jessica Katz, Anissa Pugh, and Alice Wong.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may being.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: We'll start with Angela Howard.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ANGELA HOWARD: Good afternoon, members of the Subcommittee, Madam Chair. I'm here in support of Monitor Point, and I'm here from the perspective of a not-for-profit partner. I spent five years at Covenant House International where, as Senior Vice President of real estate and facilities, my work centered on one thing, and that was ensuring that young people experiencing homelessness had safe,

stable, dignified places to live. From a real estate perspective, that work required partners who understand that mission was not negotiable, and that when time, like, got hard and the budgets got tight, and the people being served could not be the ones who absorbed the loss— the Gotham organization was partner for us. Our collaboration on the new Covenant House New York West 41st Street project, delivering 120 new housing beds for young New Yorkers experiencing homelessness gave me a direct view of how they operate when the work is genuinely difficult. We had a team that stayed focused at— on the project's intended outcomes and found solutions and delivered. They never quietly walked back on any of their commitment. That experience shaped how I look at developer promises. And when I look at what Gotham is proposing at Monitor Point, 460 permanently affordable homes, units as low as 40 percent AMI, and 50,000 square feet of public waterfront open space, I recognize the same orientation towards public purpose that we experienced in our project. Responsible waterfront development is not just about what can be built, but how the public realm is treated, how environmental obligations are taken seriously, and

whether the long-term stewardship commitment is real. Monitor Point, as structured, reflects those standards. The open space is publicly accessible and maintained by the developer. The environmental work is substantive, and the MTA gets a modern facility and long-term revenue. These are not performative commitments. I've seen Gotham deliver for some of the most vulnerable people in the city, and I'm confident they will deliver for Greenpoint. I urge your support for Monitor Point.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you so much. Now we're gonna hear from Jessica Katz.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Jessica Katz?

JESSICA KATZ: Hello everybody, good morning. Thank you to Chair Louis and all the members of the subcommittee for the opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Jessica Katz. I've previously served as New York City's Chief Housing Officer, and I also spent more than a decade at HPD working on affordable housing. I've had the privilege of working with the City Council to help solve our ongoing housing crisis, and I want to thank you all for your service to the city. As some of you will remember, I

used to be a regular at these hearings in my HPD and City Hall days, but I've not been back since I left government. I'm coming out of retirement today because this project is just that important. I'm here today to speak in support of Monitor Point. New York has a housing shortage that falls hardest on working-class families. People who grew up here, work here, and are being priced out of neighborhoods that they've lived in for generations. Monitor Point delivers approximately 460 affordable apartments out of roughly 1,150 total homes, with a substantial share targeted to households at 40 to 60 percent of AMI. On a waterfront site in North Brooklyn, that level of affordability is genuinely hard to achieve. What also distinguishes Monitor Point is that it doesn't ask the city to choose between housing and other priorities. It combines deeply affordable homes with climate resiliency, environmental remediation, new public waterfront access, transit infrastructure development, and the full realization of Box Street Park, all on a site that is currently a truck depot. No project solves the housing crisis all on its own, but when a proposal delivers this level of affordability and public investment, I urge the

Council to support Monitor Point, and I thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you so much. Anissa?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

ANISSA PUGH: Good afternoon, Chair Lewis, subcommittee members. My name is Anissa Pugh, and I represent Dr. A.R. Bernard and Christian Cultural Center. I am also a proud member of Christian Cultural Center. I'm here to express my strong support for Monitor Point development. Our church has deep roots in this part of Brooklyn. Long before the skyline began to change, our congregation was serving families right here, providing spiritual guidance, stability, community for generations of New Yorkers. We witnessed firsthand the transformation that followed the 2005 rezoning. While it brought investment and growth, too many longstanding residents were left behind as housing costs surged beyond their reach. This is why Monitor Point matters. This project represents a meaningful step towards restoring balance. It will deliver deeply affordable housing for families who have been priced out or pushed to the margins, people who deserve the

opportunity to remain in the community they helped build. This is not about housing units. It's about equity, dignity, and inclusion. We are particularly encouraged by Gotham's organization track record. Through their urban village approach, they have demonstrated that it is possible to create developments that are not only financially viable but also socially impactful, places where mixed-income communities can thrive together, where residents have access to amenities, open spaces, and supportive services. Monitor Point reflects many of these same values, from its commitment to affordability to its integration with the waterfront to the creation of public spaces that can be shared by the broader community. This is the kind of thoughtful, inclusive development our city needs more of. I also want to highlight the importance of diversity along the waterfront. For too long, access to these spaces have not reflected the full diversity of our borough. Monitor Point helps change that, creating a place where families from all backgrounds can live, gather—

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Anissa.

ANISSA PUGH: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Now we'll hear Alice Wong.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

ALICE WONG: Good afternoon. My name is Alice Wong. I'm the Chief of Staff at Chinese-American Planning Council. CPC is a social services organization, and every year we support over 80,000 community members across every zip code in the city. A decade ago, CPC's board of directors decided to develop a parking lot we own in Lower Manhattan where the organization was founded. Our board of directors chose Gotham Organization as our developer, and they have been a steadfast partner to CPC. And as someone who was born and raised in the Lower East Side in affordable housing, their presence has been a community benefit to our neighborhood. Our engagement with the community during our development project stretched a year before the EULA process started and continued with monthly updates during our construction period, and feedback from both the community and our elected official partners was incorporated into the project. Together, we created over 200 affordable housing apartments, a cultural cult space for the Beth Hamedrash Hagadol Synagogue,

and a permanent home for CPC. Gotham worked with the Lower East Side Employment Network lesson to employ people from our community during our construction period and hosted one of our SYEP interns in their office. CPC has seen how communities can be strengthened when government, communities, and the private sector work together, and CPC supports the Monitor Point project. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. You have questions for this panel? Alright, this panel is now excused. We'll now hear from Leo Guttman, Mark Rosanio [sp?], Ryan McCain, and Eric Drinkwater— Erin Drinkwater. And we'll start with Leo Guttman.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

LEO GUTTMAN: Oh, thanks for the opportunity to speak today. I'm here, you know, to support the Monitor Point development. You know, this is an area— I live in Long Island City. I walk by this area regularly, and I have to say, like, there are a lot of points in—

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] Hi, Leo. Sorry to interrupt you. Did you testify already?

LEO GUTTMAN: Not for this one. I spoke earlier for-

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: DeWitt?

LEO GUTTMAN: The- DeWitt, yeah, DeWitt Clinton [sic].

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Okay. You may continue. My apologies.

LEO GUTTMAN: Yeah. I walk past this project regularly, and to me, like, this— there's a lot, you know, just in support of this project or, you know, favorable points to me. I like having waterfront access and new public spaces. I like that this helps support the MTA. That this, you know, helps, you know, create a permanent home for the museum. And most importantly, that, you know, delivers affordable housing and, you know, a transit-accessible area. To me, that's like— those are all really positive points. And the fact that it can achieve that at deep affordability levels for many of the units is also a huge win. I really appreciated hearing the expert testimony today that spoke to Gotham's track record on projects like this and, you know, explained, you know, the, you know, why some of the questions about affordability levels are— can be too simplistic. You know, I- if- to get ahead of some of the questions that have come to

other panels, if we're able to negotiate higher levels of affordability, I support it, but I also support it as it stands today. To me, this is a great project and I want to see it happen. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Leo. Now we'll hear from Mark.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

MARK RAZIANO: Good afternoon. Uh, my name is Mark Raziano and I'm here today in support of the Monitor Point Project. I know what it takes to deliver real benefits, and I know what it takes to truly—

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] Mark, we can't really hear you. Can you put up the volume, if you can? I will start you over again.

MARK RAZIANO: How's that? Sorry. Can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: If you could maybe put up the volume either in your headphones or your computer, because it's still the same.

MARK RAZIANO: How's that?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: That's perfect. You may begin.

MARK RAZIANO: Good afternoon. Sorry about that. Good afternoon. My name is Mark Raziano, and I'm here today in support of the Monitor Point project. I know what it takes to invest in the community, and this proposal stands out because it delivers real benefits for Brooklyn residents and local businesses alike. At a time when New York's housing crisis is pushing longtime residents out of the neighborhoods they serve, Monitor Point creates approximately 1,150 new homes, including around with 460 per million affordable units for working families earning 40 to 60 percent AMI. This project also strengthens the local economy. It'll generate nearly $1 billion in construction-related economic activity, create hundreds of union jobs in construction, and support permanent jobs in retail, restaurants, and property management once complete. Just as importantly, the project transforms an outdated industrial site into publicly accessible waterfront space that reconnects Greenpoint And Williamsburg brings more foot traffic to local businesses. The reality is simple. If we want to prevent displacement and support a thriving Brooklyn economy, we need to build more housing, especially affordable housing. I

urge the City Council to approve Monitor Point. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from Ryan.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Ryan McCain? Alright, now we'll hear from Erin Drinkwater.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

ERIN DRINKWATER: Hi, good morning. My name is Erin Drinkwater. I'm here today to support the Monitor Point application. I want to just raise, um, some numbers. I know the committee has heard a lot of testimony today. I was a former Deputy Commissioner at the Department of Homeless Services, under the de Blasio administration, and I saw firsthand the impacts of our housing crisis. Greenpoint is a neighborhood of broken promises since the 2005 rezoning. And while this project is not perfect, it certainly is a step in the right direction to address some of the concerns with displacement and affordable housing in the city. Last night, close to 83,000 New Yorkers spent their night in shelter. Last night, for the first time, 100 families went to PATH seeking shelter. And that

number of 100 families is pretty regular day over day. I appreciate the longstanding fight that the council member has put forward and fully agree that we need to continue to press for more affordable units. But to delay this project or for the Council to vote this project down would be a huge disservice to New Yorkers. The mayor released a housing plan yesterday. Hopefully we will be able to take advantage of some of those new tools. But we have an opportunity here to take advantage of land that was otherwise not used for housing in in the same way that the 2005 rezoning produced housing, except now we have much more tool— many more tools at our disposal to increase the number of affordable units in the project. I urge the council to support the project. I've submitted a testimony for your review and look forward to working on this project. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Erin. Ryan, if you can hear me, please press *6 so you can testify. And that's for Ryan McCain. If you can hear us, please press *6 so you can testify.

RYAN MCCAIN: Yeah, hello, sorry about that.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: There you go. You may begin.

RYAN MCCAIN: Okay, great. Yeah, I just wanted to call in and submit my support for this development. You know, there's a great need for units in the area. The rent is ridiculous the last five years, and 400 to 500 affordable units is in my opinion, a good addition to the community. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. This panel is now excused. We will now hear from John Merz, Andrew Mandelbaum [sp?], Stephanie Andrews, and Dan Miller. John Merz, Andrew Mandelbaum, Stephanie Andrews, and Dan Miller. And we will start with John Merz. You may begin.

JOHN MERZ: Hello, thank you, Chair Louis and Councilman Restler. I'm the priest of the oldest church in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, Church of the Ascension, founded in 1846. The church structure was incidentally actually built by the owner of the Monitor Museum. I'm not the owner of the museum– the builder of the Monitor ship. And I'm here today to voice my support for the Monitor Point project. I support achieving the most significant number of affordable housing units possible, particularly at

AMI bands that would allow ordinary working people a real chance to remain in the community of which they're already a part. I hope that the developer, the councilman, the council, and the mayor's office can work together to in fact reach the highest possible threshold of units at the lowest possible AMI bands. As priest of this church for 17 years, I've watched this happen again and again. Young people in the community, they fall in love with the neighborhood, or they're in the neighborhood, they find partners, they have children, they want to remain here, and then they discover that despite working hard and contributing to the life of the community, they cannot afford to stay. We all know there's a serious affordability crisis in New York City. In our local area, affordability was one of the defining issues in the last mayoral election because people feel this pressure in their everyday lives. In some ways, the issue took on almost theological significance, raising the question of whether there would continue to be room at the inn in this city. And for whom and what kind of people that room would— what room would remain available. What stands out to me about this project is not only the number of

affordable units but the fact that lower AMI bands would make these apartments accessible to ordinary working families. That means hundreds of people having the opportunity to grow their roots, raise children, remain connected to schools, churches, friendships, and the wider life of the neighborhood. As the pastor of a local congregation, I believe that community stability and coherence together with a diversity of incomes, stories, backgrounds, and experiences contribute to the vitality and richness of the tapestry of this neighborhood. The first sermon I ever preached in this church went from, let's go from why we can't to how we can.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, John. You can submit the rest of your testimony online. Now we'll hear from Andrew Mandelbaum.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

ANDREW MANDELBAUM: My name is Andrew Mandelbaum.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Okay, you may begin.

ANDREW MANDELBAUM: Third gener— can you, can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Yes, you may begin. Sorry.

ANDREW MANDELBAUM: My name is Andrew Mandelbaum. I'm a third generation New Yorker. Both of my parents and all four of my grandparents grew up in Brooklyn, and I care deeply about the community. Today I'm here to support the Monitor Point project. Project will bring nearly $1 billion in construction-related economic activity alone. It's hundreds of well-paying union jobs over the multi-year build, and once the project is complete, approximately 70 permanent on-site jobs in retail, restaurants, property management, and the service sector. Monitor Point brings 1,100 plus homes, including 460 permanently affordable homes, strengthens the entire business ecosystem. Project adds 50,000+ square feet of new public waterfront space, finally connecting Greenpoint to Williamsburg, and it does so by removing an outdated facility that walls off the waterfront. More people will be walking, biking, and spending time in Brooklyn, and that's good for the borough's economy. The site has been zoned for residential use since 2005. It's past time to make this project happen. Mayor Mamdani has committed to maximizing affordable housing production across the five boroughs, and I think Monitor Point

is exactly the kind of a project that delivers on that promise. If we pass on projects like this, we're not protecting the neighborhood. We're just making it more expensive, paving the way for another developer to put less affordable housing. Thank you, and I urge the City Council to approve Monitor Point.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from Stephanie Andrews.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

STEPHANIE ANDREWS: Hi, my name is Stephanie Andrews. I am a current resident of Williamsburg, and I'm here to support Monitor Point. Affordable housing has been a very important topic amongst New Yorkers and I wanted to expand on that as it pertains to the income levels and rents for families. In the current market, what is deemed as affordable isn't actually affordable for many as new units in the market have traditionally come with an income requirement of earning 130 percent of the AMI. As an example, for a three-person household in a two-bedroom apartment, this is an annual income of about $190,000 and a monthly rent starting at $4,700, which is not unrealistic for many families. Monitor Point is delivering 460 permanently affordable homes

with the bulk of the units actually for that AMI levels that are within reach for many families. Using that same three-person household in a two-bedroom apartment example, the current income requirement falls to $87,000 at the 60 percent AMI bracket and $58,000 at the 40 percent AMI bracket with rents of $2,200 and $1,400 respectively, which are actually realistic amounts that will benefit many families. Additionally, the number of affordable units that will be added by Monitor Point is 40 percent of the total unit count compared to the 20 to 25 percent that buildings in the area have traditionally included, which is a substantial addition to the affordable housing market. So for these points alone, I give my support to Monitor Point, and I hope that you can move forward to approve the proposal. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from Dan Miller.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: May begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Dan Miller?

DAN MILLER: Hi, this is Dan. My name is Dan Miller. I am a resident of Astoria, and I am in the neighborhood regularly, and I fully support the

Monitor Point project. In particular, I just want to raise the issue of, you know, who these units are for. Council Member Restler spoke earlier, and he sounded dismayed that only 15 percent of the units are reserved for District 33 residents. And I say that 100 percent of these units will go to people who will be residents of the district after they move in. I'm not sure why the council member is being so hostile to his future constituents. I think it's bad luck. I think it's unfortunate, and I think it's frankly anti-New York. We're a city that's been a haven, a city that's been a place for anyone who wants to live here. If you want to move to New York, you are a New Yorker. And we need to— we've been doing a terrible job at living up to that reputation by failing to build enough housing for the people who want to live here. We're the greatest city in the world and people want to live here and we're not building enough to make room for them. That's shameful. We can do better. And I think that building Monitor Point is one poss— is one step towards that- towards doing better on that. We can make this city and the world a better place by just giving people a place to live in the place where they want to live.

Don't condemn people to having to move outside of New York. Let's make room for everyone who wants to be a New Yorker, and let's build this project. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Dan. This panel is now excused. The next panel is Luke Lavanway [sp?], Lindsay McCormick, and Jonathan Suarez, and Remy Ziff [sp?]. Luke Lavanway, Lindsay McCormick, Jonathan Suarez, and Remy Zip. We'll now hear from Luke.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

LUKE LEVANWAY: Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Luke Levanway. I've lived in New York City for 14 years. Currently, I live in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. I believe it's very clear that what's right for the borough and the city is to approve the Monitor Point proposal. The proposal would deliver more than 400 affordable homes where today there are zero, plus additional public waterfront park space, where today there is only a dilapidated industrial facility. It's hard to imagine another way of realizing this level of community benefit at this location without drawing upon the severely limited public funds available. We should keep in mind that to vote against the proposal

is to vote in favor of the status quo. In this case, the status quo is zero homes and a waterfront which is closed to the public. The Monitor Point location is currently occupied by an industrial facility. What other proposal for this location delivers the millions of dollars of funding needed to move the facility? To deny this proposal in the middle of a housing crisis without a credible plan for something better would be a huge disappointment. To Council Member Lincoln Restler, if you vote against the proposal, I hope the Mayor, Borough President, and Speaker of the Council will overturn your vote using the new appeals process established by the ballot proposals which were passed by voters last year. This is exactly the scenario the appeals process was meant for: a proposal that is clearly right for the borough and the city, but resisted by local neighborhood residents who have secured housing for themselves and therefore do not personally feel the brunt of the housing crisis. I urge Council Member Restler to say yes to this housing and yes to this public waterfront space. To those who don't like tall towers, I urge you to join me in organizing to legalize apartment buildings of six to eight stories in every

neighborhood of the city so we can solve the housing crisis for this generation and end the years-long grind of approval processes such as this one. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from Lindsay.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

LINDSAY MCCORMICK: Good afternoon. Thanks so much for hearing all of us. I know It's not easy to sit through these long hearings. My name is Lindsay. I live in Jackson Heights, Queens. I'm like other panelists. I'm not sure where I was conceived, but that's besides the point. I am just- wanted to express my support for this project. My family spends a lot of time on the Brooklyn-Queens waterfront. I think- I want to echo what another speaker said today. This is an example of the kind of project that we can develop in other parts the city. I recognize the waterfront has had a lot of development. We need development in Central Queens and where I live. I think the 40 percent affordability is wonderful. And I would just like to close by saying, you know, I've heard wonderful things about the neighborhood that make me excited to come visit even more. The museum,

the Inlet Park, which I think will thrive with more people being able to visit it and love it. And once you've checked the math, you know, on the– making sure you can maximize affordability while making the project sustainable, please do not delay this any further. Housing delayed is housing denied. Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from Jonathan Suarez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

JONATHAN SUAREZ: Hi, good afternoon, Chair and members of the Greenpoint community. My name is Jonathan Suarez. I am a proud lifelong New Yorker, born and raised in Queens– Elmhurst, Queens almost 41 years ago now. I currently live in a 50 percent AMI affordable unit in Long Island City with our— with my wife and our two teens, and I work in Brooklyn Community Board One, just a short bike ride away from the planned site for the Monitor Point project. Speaking to you today in favor of the development on behalf of not just myself, on behalf of future residents who don't even know that they're future residents yet. There are hundreds of low-income individuals and families who will qualify

for and move into affordable units at Monitor Point who have no idea that this development is even being planned right now. Hundreds of thousands of New York City residents will read about Monitor Point for the first time when they're looking through Housing Connect and trying desperately to find buildings that accommodate their 30 to 50 percent AMI income, like mine. They don't have a voice here, but I guarantee that with deeply affordable units available, there are going to be tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of applicants on Housing Connect. And those voices speak louder to me than a petition with- I think it was mentioned, you know, 5,600 signatures. I'll never forget my log number for my building. It was just over 4,600. And, you know, the, that- it's crazy to me that we would put the wishes of 5,300 people ahead of the almost 100,000 that are almost guaranteed to be applying for this building. You know, the— before we live— before we moved to LIC in 2023, we spent 14 years underhoused and rent burdened, and I cannot overstate how much of a life-changing experience it has been to move into an affordable unit. And the last thing I want to do is pull the ladder up behind me. I want as many people

to be able to have the same experience that we have living on the waterfront and being able to afford to do so. So I strongly urge you to move ahead with—

SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time expired.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We will now hear from Remy Ziff.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

REMY ZIFF: Hi, can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Yes, you may begin.

REMY ZIFF: Okay, good afternoon. My name is Remy Ziff and I am here in strong support of the Monitor Point project. This project is a rare opportunity to deliver real public benefits for Greenpoint. The project's expected to create approximately 1,100 new homes with about 40 percent, roughly 460 units, permanently affordable. That's a meaningful level of affordability, including homes for working families and households at a range of income levels at a time when Brooklyn urgently needs more housing that people can actually afford. The project also brings major neighborhood investments beyond housing. It would create more than 50,000 square feet of publicly accessible waterfront open

space, improve shoreline resiliency, and provide a permanent home for the Greenpoint Monitor Museum, helping preserve and celebrate the area's maritime history. Monitor Point is the kind of project New York should be advancing, more affordable housing, more open space, cultural investment, infrastructure improvements, and a stronger future for Greenpoint. Please vote yes on Monitor Point. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Please stand at ease. This panel is now excused. We will now hear from Daniel Donovan.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

DANIEL DONOVAN: Thank you, everyone. My name is Daniel Donovan, and I live in the neighborhood surrounding the proposed Monitor Point development. One of my favorite aspects of the neighborhood is the well-developed Williamsburg waterfront. Domino [sic] Park is a compelling example of how thoughtful redevelopment can activate a residential corridor while also generating broader economic benefits for the community. I'm very excited by the project's potential to deliver 50,000 square feet of waterfront access, finally connecting Williamsburg and Greenpoint. The waterfront is a

beloved amenity among local residents, and redevelopment of an obsolete building to expand this amenity would greatly enhance the neighborhood. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from Lauren Mezanot, Andrew B., and N. Pinkett.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: So Lauren will go first.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Okay, Lauren Mezanot? Alright, now we'll hear from Andrew B.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

ANDREW BAROKAS: How you doing?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: You may begin, Andrew.

ANDREW BAROKAS: Hi, my name is Andrew Barokas and I am in favor of Monitor Point. I have been operating my business in Williamsburg for 25 years. We are at the base of the Edge in Williamsburg, and the idea of bringing more housing, both market rate and affordable, to the area is, you know, very needed. We definitely have a crisis on both sides. This project is currently planned as a condo project and will have, you know, $2 million,

you know, one-bedrooms and $3 million two-bedrooms here. You know, that's not what we need. We need more rentals. Both market rate are impacted by the lack of inventory. It's straight supply and demand. The amount of affordable housing here at the rents of, you know, $1,500 to $2,000 a month is exactly what the city needs to keep the diversity that makes New York what it is. So for all those reasons, you know, both myself and everybody in my business, you know, definitely wants, you know, to see Monitor Point happen. So thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Lauren Mezanite [sp?]?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Lauren? Alright, now we're going to hear from iPhone, and if you could please identify yourself.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

Okay. Maybe that's me. I don't know.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Hello, what's your name?

DARREN LIPPMAN: Darren Lippman. I don't know why it didn't populate. Sorry about that. Anyway, as a 27-year resident of Brooklyn—

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [interposing] hold on one second. Can you please restate your name and then You could— Darren?

DARREN LIPPMAN: Yeah, Darren Lippman. Can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: We can hear you. It just says iPhone, but Darren, you may begin.

DARREN LIPPMAN: No idea. As a 27-year resident and North Brooklyn Community Boathouse member, I've witnessed the 2005 rezoning process from its beginning to now. As a reminder of the rezoning was about increased height and population density in exchange for community benefits, waterfront access, affordable housing, and most importantly, parks. 21 years later– 21 years later, we still do not have the already developer-funded city promised Box Street Park. Lincoln, the community should not be held hostage by this project for an already agreed full park. As I– as much as I disagree with many aspects of this project, I'm here to fight for what I believe community organizations truly need, a boat ramp, one that is solely reserved for community organizations and volunteers who work on and support our waterways, from environmental remediation oversight, oyster

repopulation, providing the public with human-powered boating opportunities and arts performances. The closest usable motorboat ramp is around eight miles away. Do not miss this opportunity, especially because this inlet is one of the few safe places to launch a boat. Lincoln, the inlet belongs to the community. This luxury building will become an ugly wall against the community's park and frankly should not be built on the public land. It will stand beside a park that exists only because the incredible hard work the community and- of the community, and that park will be permanently blighted by this monstrosity. I understand you are under intense pressure not to strike this project down, but the least you can do is secure a concession for a community organization boat ramp, a $1 million donation to North Brooklyn Community Boathouse, along with stiff penalties if agreed-upon promises are not timely met. Okay, one more time, I want a community boathouse written into this thing. $1 million donation to North Brooklyn Community Boathouse along with stiff penalties. Like, all these promises these guys make, all these other developers did not finish all their promises-

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Darren, truly appreciate you. We will now hear from N. Pinkett.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: May begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: And Pinkett dropped off. We'll now hear from Catherine G.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin,

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Catherine G? Catherine, last call. Alright, if there are any members of the public who wish to testify regarding this proposal remotely, please press the raise hand button now. If you are in-person, please identify yourself to one of the Sergeant-at-Arms. This is the last call. Alright, the— being— okay, give it 30 seconds. Being there are no members of the public who wish to testify regarding LUs 67 through 71, okay, relating to the Monitor Point mixed-use residential development proposal, the public hearing is now closed and the items are now laid over. That concludes today's business. I would like to thank members of the public, my colleagues. Thank you, Council Council Member Restler for sticking around to the end.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you, Chair Louis for doing a great job. We really appreciate it.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I hope you don't kill me in the press and say, oh, she was against me. Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use Council staff, and Sergeant-at-Arms for participating in today's meeting. This meeting is now adjourned.

[gavel]

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 September 4, 2026