CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES
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Start: 12:57 p.m.
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HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Gale A. Brewer
David M. Carr
Elsie Encarnación
Amanda C. Farías
Simcha Felder
Lincoln Restler
Yusef Salaam
Justin E. Sanchez
Lynn C. Schulman
Shanel Thomas-Henry

SERGEANT AT ARMS: This is a mic check for the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. Today's date is June 25th, 2026. We are located in Chambers, and this is being recorded by Mike Kane.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to today's New York City Council vote for the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. At this time, please silence all electronic devices. Just a reminder, no one may approach the dais at any time. Thank you. Chair, we are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [GAVEL] Good afternoon and welcome to a meeting of the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. I am Council Member Farah Louis, Chair of the Subcommittee. This afternoon, I am joined by Council Members Farias, Schulman, Salaam, Felder, Encarnación, Thomas-Henry, Carr, and J. Sanchez. Stand at ease.

Okay, today we are scheduled to vote on 3 proposals. We will vote on LUs 72 through 77 regarding the Dewitt Clinton Park North Proposal, which actually consists of two separate development sites. These sites are located on the west side of Manhattan in the northern part of Hell's Kitchen and are in Council Member Brewer's district.

The first site is located at 801 11th Avenue along 11— sorry, 801 11th Avenue, along 11th Avenue, and there the applicant is seeking to develop a mixed-use residential building that will have approximately 477 apartments, of which approximately 125 will be permanently affordable.

The second site is located at 629 West 54th Street along 12th Avenue, and the applicant is seeking to develop another mixed-use residential building that will approximately- that will have approximately 617 apartments, of which approximately 162 will be permanently affordable.

The proposed developments would seek a transfer of floor area from the commercial park piers in Hudson River Park in exchange for approximately $297— $200— $229.7 million payment to Hudson River Park Trust that would support improvements in capital maintenance in the park. Both sites require the same set of, of actions.

The 11th Avenue site is requesting a Zoning Map Amendment to change the existing manufacturing M2-3 zoning district to a commercial C4- district, which has a residential equivalent of an R10 district. The 12th Avenue site is also requesting a Zoning Map

Amendment to change the existing manufacturing M2-4 zoning district to a commercial C4-7 district.

Second, a Zoning Text Amendment would map a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing area on both sites, as well as an update— the special Hudson River Park District rules to reflect the new granting and receiving sites for a floor area transfer from Hudson River Park and clarify the affordable automotive-related use provisions for C4-7 districts, as well as applicable bulk rules and the applicability of the special Clinton District regulations.

The third action, again, applicable, applicable to both sites, is a special permit to allow the transfer of a development right from Hudson River Park to the development sites and to provide bulk waivers to facilitate the proposed design of the mixed-use buildings.

We are recommending the following modifications: the removal of the street wall location waiver granted by CPC for the 11th Avenue site, which will provide a more consistent streetscape along 11th Avenue. For the 12th Avenue site, the modification is to reduce the building height from the

CPC-approved 550 feet to a maximum of 520 feet, consistent with the intent of having the height of buildings decreased from 11th and 12th Avenue in order to create less of a barrier along the waterfront.

Council Member Brewer supports these applications as modified. I, I now recognize Council member Brewer for a statement.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Um, these two buildings, as you suggested, are being considered together in the area of 54th Street and 11th Avenue. Uh, they are separately owned. Most of— most of the discussions were with Mr. Friedland and not the Chapman organization when we spoke to them. And they are getting what we call FAR, which is basically height, from Hudson River Park Trust. It's a good, uh, project where Hudson River Park Trust, which, you know, every time you look at a pier that needs assistance like Pier 76, it's millions and millions of dollars.

So the least that these buildings will pay Hudson River Park Trust is $29 million, which is around $200 a square foot. We also think that maybe they should

pay more, but that's what it is at the moment, and they'll have to work it out.

There have been many, many meetings between Community Board 4 and the developers, and I participated in them. Both in person at the community board and then Zoom discussions with these parties as well as the Council Land Use staff. And I certainly want to thank Paul Devlin and Joe Resticchio from Board 4 as well as the Council Land Use staff here.

CB4, which is a bill— uh, a very sophisticated board, with all due respect to all other 58 community boards, nobody else has the expertise like Board 4. The people on it have been doing this for a long time, particularly Joe Bastigia. They support housing at this site, but just so you know, at the full board meeting that I was at, they issued a negative declaration unless certain milestones were met, as opposed to a yes, but, which is what they would have liked to, because the owners were so reluctant to make any concessions for the community.

The height— community wanted the max height to come down, but the most that we could get was a reduced 30 feet from 550 to 520. They wanted to

bring it down even more because— don't understand— these buildings are facing the river. You wanna have as much light and air on the river as possible for the fish and other, uh, aspects of marine life, but we were not able to get it down even further.

Another issue. DeWitt Clinton Park is right across the street. This is not the Hudson River Park. Hudson River Park is on the river. The Hudson River— er, DeWitt Clinton Park is a city park. It's right across the street from these buildings. I know it well. It includes ball fields, leisure areas, playgrounds, and more. The Parks Department sent us a memo indicating that bathroom renovation is a little over $6 million, and a play area also needs the same renovation at about $6 million. And understand that the many, many units in these buildings, thousands of units, will of course look over the park, number one, and two, use the park. But the most we could get out of the owners was $200,000 over a few years, so it comes in depending on the CFO or the temporary CFO, despite the request for more; $6 million plus $6 million.

Then of course, there's the issue of affordability. By law, as you heard from the Chair,

uh, 25 to 35— 25% to 30%, depending on Option 1 or Option 2, are mandated to be affordable and to be low income. That's based on law and based on the state.

Community Board 4 has always advocated this, er, unlike other boards, what I call workforce housing, which is basically higher income teachers, firefighters, police, et cetera. And we wanted to add another 5%, so it would be 30% total. We can't— we started to compromise at 2.5%, meaning 165% AMI workforce housing, make it additional to the, what was there, MIH mandated. But we ended up after much nickeling and diming is what I would call it with 1.25%, maybe 12 to 13 units additional, but they are permanent.

The owners wanted to have just housing that would be affordable for the life of the property tax abatement, which is usually 35 to 40 years. But having been around for 35 or 40 years, I've seen housing disappear and become a market in some of the buildings on the Upper West Side.

So it's less units. They do mirror and track with the other units in the building. You cannot build all studios. You have to be consistent with the 1, 2, 3 studios and 1 bedrooms with the rest of

the buildings. So it can't be on the ground floor, it has to be moved around in the other buildings, and it has to track the same size.

Um, so, uh, the other issue is, I guess Mr. Friedland, along with everybody else in the development world, hates 485X. They don't like this new property tax exception that, uh, was, uh, negotiated and passed in Albany. Let them figure it out what's going to happen. That's not my problem. But it— owner has stated that if 485X property tax is not re-renovated— I shouldn't renovate it— is not enacted in a different way, he's not gonna build.

Right now there's a, a good, uh, in— storefront, meaning there's a ground floor auto repair, auto sales, which is an excellent— union jobs, and there's a commercial building on one of the sites. So it's active currently. It's not like they're vacant lots. So I don't know what's gonna happen, if this thing will ever get built. It all depends on 485X. They don't like— they, the developers, don't like the union portion of that bill, and they don't like that you have to be 100 units, and then above that you gotta follow 485X labor law.

So I think a lot of folks are building at 99 units, but not here. So I support— because we've been working with the community board to come up with this, but I do wanna say to the City of New York, to HPD, having been Borough President for 8 years, it is so darn hard to get any kind of affordable housing in these high-income areas and it makes me crazy. The schools are excellent. The transportation is excellent. The parks are excellent. It doesn't seem right that every time I ask for support, subsidy if needed, that we are told it's cheaper land in the Bronx. We're going to the Bronx, Gale. We're not gonna stay in Manhattan. And that's what's happening here. I mean, if HPD or others wanted to say, if the developer's not gonna do this, then we should find other ways to subsidize this apartment building. These should have more affordable housing than what we're able to negotiate, um, number one.

Number two, I'm a big supporter of all of the unions, but when I call 32BJ, and to the credit of the developer, they'd be, you know, they're working in terms of long-term 32BJ jobs, as they should. But 32BJ should say, we want 5% affordable, we want the extra workforce housing. They don't, they say, they

go along. That's not right. Every unit in the city should be stating we need more workforce housing. And so I'm here also to say I think HPD is gonna work with us to make sure that once the abatement is over, if a family moves out, that market, that union, those few 12, 13, 14 units, they need to stay rate stabilization. I have to be very, very clear on that so it's written into law and they should be rent stabilized. Not equivalent rent stabilized, but actual rent stabilized.

So I'm here to be supportive, but I'm also here after, what, 25 years, 200 and some ULURP's I've done. This is really nickeling and diming, and it's not building affordable housing the way that we should be doing it. And so I hope that this is somewhat of a lesson, and then I think it's sort of putting everybody on notice that, uh, good intention is not good enough. What is— the only way that we build affordable housing is to actually build it. If you want to put in subsidy, fine, but nickeling and diming is not the way to go. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Council Member Brewer. The other vote concerns LU 66, 67, 68, 69,

and 71 related to the Monitor Point Rezoning Proposal in Council Member Restler's district. The applicant is seeking to develop a mixed-use residential project in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, that would consist of a museum building, a market-rate building with MIH permanently affordable housing known as the West Building, and 100% affordable housing building known as the East Building.

Let me first address the affordable housing component of this project. This is a unique project for two reasons. The majority of the development site consists of a publicly owned land controlled by the MTA. Although there has been a lot of housing development along Greenpoint waterfront in the past decade, the area was rezoned prior to the city's Mandatory Inclusionary Housing requirements.

As a result, the affordable housing built to date has been at income levels that are not affordable to low-income New Yorkers. This large publicly owned site is a unique opportunity to build hundreds of units of affordable housing that low-income New York— New Yorkers can actually afford in an area that has been overwhelmingly— that has an overwhelming amount of market-rate housing.

This project is also unique because it provides the opportunity to pair affordable housing with green space. Since I have been Chair of the Subcommittee, you have heard me state the importance of providing the needed infrastructure and services for the new housing units we approve. The proposed project will have over 1 acre of open space and connect to a larger waterfront open space plan in Greenpoint and Williamsburg, providing a unique opportunity to provide affordable housing with direct access to waterfront green space. Where affordable housing can be paired with the community improvements, we, we should maximize the amount of affordable housings built.

As originally proposed by the applicant, the project would have a total of 1,150 apartments, of which 460, 40%, were proposed to be permanently affordable. Based on the modifications to the project that we are recommending, which I will describe in more detail, and the leadership of the Council, the project will now have an additional 202 permanently affordable apartments for a total of 662 affordable units.

In addition, there will be over 1 acre of open space on the site, and the site will include a museum and educational space to commemorate the USS Monitor, a warship launched from Greenpoint that played a pivotal role in the Civil War. This is truly a one-of-a-kind project. The proposal initially involved 5 land use actions. However, the applicant has withdrawn its application regarding LU-70 for a special permit modifying the applicable loading berth requirement, and it is no longer needed, and we will vote to file that action.

There are 4 remaining actions. First, a Zoning Map Amendment to change the existing manufacturing M3-1 zoning district to a residential R6 and R8 district with a C2-4 commercial overlay.

Second, a, a Zoning Text Amendment to map a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing area, modify the density, bulk, and park designation regulations for waterfront blocks located in the Greenpoint-Williamsburg Waterfront Access Plan, and certain waivers available for a large-scale general development.

Third, a special permit to create a large-scale general development and modify bulk regulations that

would otherwise apply to the proposed development, including a reduction, a reduction in the required width for a portion of the waterfront publicly accessible area along the project shoreline.

The fourth action is a change to the city's map to remove the previous parks designation over the western portion of the development site, which is privately owned by the parties that will oversee the Monitor Museum.

In order to maximize both the affordable, affordable housing on this publicly owned site and the amount of open space, we are recommending the following modifications: changes to the special permit drawing for the large-scale general development, which will allow the developer to increase the number of affordable apartments provided. This is achieved in several ways: by converting previously proposed commercial space to residential space, by reallocating some of the space previously allocated to the museum to more housing, by extending the development site to include all the MTA-controlled land, and by providing additional height to the east building. Stand at ease.

We are also modifying the waiver granted to decrease the width of a portion of the required waterfront publicly accessible area, which will maximize the amount of public open space on the site. Council Member Restler supports this application as modified, and I recognize Council Member Restler for remarks.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you so much, Chair Louis. And I, I just want to apologize to every member of the Committee for my tardiness, and I'm sorry to keep each of you waiting. I really apologize. Uh, we just, uh, moments ago were able to reach a final agreement on this project. Um, about 5 years ago, it was July or August of the summer of 2021, shortly after I won my primary, and I remember screaming on the phone to Will Schwartz at the MTA about how, uh, this— I thought this project was a total non-starter. Um, and it's come an extraordinarily long way, and I am pleased today to express my support for the amended proposal for a majority affordable housing development known as Monitor Point at 40 Quay Street in Greenpoint.

You know, I've been clear over these 5 years that any development of this publicly owned land must be

primarily in the public interest. And I'm grateful to the hundreds, actually thousands of neighbors who've reached out to me and my office to share their perspective.

In direct response to our feedback, the applicant, Gotham, has amended their proposal to increase the share of permanently affordable housing from about 25% of the units to 50% of the units, nearly tripling the number of actual affordable housing units that are gonna be built in our community.

At my insistence, this development will include 662 affordable apartments in this 1,300+ unit development. 50% of those affordable units are gonna be deeply affordable. So to give you a sense, a family of 3 making $76,300 a year will be able to rent a 2-bedroom apartment at $8— $1,822 a month. That is deep affordability. 26% of the apartments will be for moderate-income households, 172 units. 161 of the affordable homes will be designated for seniors, and we all know the need for affordable housing for seniors. That means that a senior making $34,600 a year can rent a 1-bedroom apartment for just $911. And 30% of the units— and this was very

important to me personally— 110 apartments will be supportive housing.

That's deeply affordable housing for formerly homeless individuals with on-site services to ensure that we are actually meeting the moment of our homelessness crisis. This development will also yield significant green space benefits for our community and strengthen resiliency. This project is adjacent to Bushwick Inlet Park, a long-promised 27-acre park that was a central promise of the 2005 rezoning. The vast majority of the park remains unremediated and fenced off. The mayor visited the future park site with me and told me that he is committed to fulfilling, uh, the, the promise of this park and completing Bushwick Inlet Park.

The developer will be contributing $300,000 annually for the extent of this agreement, which I believe is 99 years, to maintaining and operating Bushwick Inlet Park. And dedicated funds will go to the North Brooklyn Parks Alliance, a local conservancy group, to help maintain that space.

The project will include more public green space than originally proposed. The waterfront esplanade will now be 40 feet wide, resulting in a total

addition of 52,000 square feet of publicly accessible waterfront space linking Greenpoint directly to the Motiva parcel of Bushwick Inlet Park. There will also be 2 new public bathrooms in the, ah, in the East Building for park users and neighbors who just gotta go. And as was promised 20 years ago, the MTA emergency response unit will be relocated, finally, from the promised Bock Street Park in the northern tip of Greenpoint to East Williamsburg.

The MTA is, is going to be responsible for demolishing the build— their building at Bock Street Park, and paving over that land to make way for the final section of that promised park.

The development will help us— will help protect against flooding by building a new bulkhead along the waterfront edge and by building stormwater retention systems to decrease the load on our local sewer systems. The buildings and the green space will also be built at an elevation to help mitigate inland flooding. And we have secured consequential investments to ensure our infrastructure can meet this moment and the growing needs of our community. There will be a new— the Nassau Avenue G station will now be fully accessible with a new elevator going in

Uh, that is an approximately $60 million project, um, and it will be executed in the current MTA capital plan. There will also be 2,700 square feet of community facility space for local nonprofits in the Monitor Point development.

Look, most importantly, this project will add, uh, good— well, let me add, this project will add good union jobs. Uh, we're partnering with the laborers on construction and partnering with 32BJ once these buildings are built. I wanna thank both of those unions for their support of this project. And I also wanna thank the Monitor Museum, uh, for partnering with, uh, the applicant to make this happen. And this project will yield a new 18,000-square-foot museum, uh, and I wanna thank George and Janet for, for helping in that regard as well.

But look, most importantly to me, in a neighborhood where we have seen rents skyrocket, where we've lost 15,000 Latino residents in the last 50 year— 15 years, where we've seen rents increase by 60% in just the last 6 years, This development will finally add desperately needed affordable housing that our community can actually afford, and it will

help some of our most vulnerable neighbors, um, access housing as our city suffers from a historic affordability crisis.

I know that many of my neighbors will be disappointed in this outcome, but I believe this is ultimately a positive project for our community, and that's why I'm supporting it. Uh, this was far and away the hardest negotiation I've had to be a part of in my 5 years on the Council, um, and I just want to say a handful of thank-yous. Um, first and foremost to Speaker Menin. Uh, she had my back every single step of the way on this project. Uh, we discussed what I could support. She said she agreed with me and then supported me and her and her team, uh, were phenomenal. We would not have gotten to this outcome without her help. I really want to thank the Chair of this Committee, Chair Louis, for leading a great hearing and for her support. And especially want to thank the Land Use Chair, Kevin Riley, um, for coming out with me to tour Monitor Point, to see the site, to understand why this was so important to me, and for helping us get to the right place.

Uh, I know his commitment to affordable housing is deep, and I know he wanted us to get here, and I'm

thankful for his help in, in getting us there. Um, the Council Land Use team was superb. Uh, Anne, Lena, Omar were all deeply involved and did a terrific job and I especially wanna thank Brian Paul and William Vidal, um, who just offered exceptional advice and counsel, uh, at all hours of the day and night over a very long period of time to help us get here. Um, I really, uh, am grateful to all the members of the Council Land Use team, so thank you for your hard work on this.

I wanna thank, uh, the MTA that really stepped up at the end of this project to help make this happen. Uh, Sean Fitzpatrick is an old friend and a really talented guy, um, and we were lucky to have his involvement here. I was really tough on the guys at Gotham, um, and they put up with it, and, uh, you know, they said to me all along, Lincoln, we like building affordable housing. If we can make the financing work, we'll be happy to do it. And they stuck true to their word, um, and we together pushed each in our own ways, um, to get the affordable investment we needed. Um, and I really wanna thank Brian Kelly in particular for sticking with it and pushing and, uh, finding a path forward. Um, David

Pickett for his leadership, Varun, Simeon, and the whole Gotham team, uh, for being good partners. And we're looking forward to working with them in the years to come.

I wanna thank, as I did, the Greenpoint Monitor Museum folks, George and Janet. Um, I really wanna thank the Mamdani Administration. I think this was probably their first big, hairy, hard ULURP of, of, uh, er, their first 6 months. And, uh, Deputy Mayor Bozorg, uh, Genevieve, Arvind, Patrick Love, Jelani, Julia, Deputy Mayor Kirschen, and others all, um, engaged with an open mind. And even when they told me that what I was asking for was really, really difficult or maybe impossible, they kept trying to figure out a way to make it work. Um, there are many community members who pushed hard here, um, some for this project, some against, and I'm grateful to all of them.

I wanna start by just thanking the Save the Inlet folks and the Friends of Bushwick Inlet Park, Catherine Thompson, Steve Chesler, Trina McKeever, and many others. Um, nobody's been more committed to the park, um, over the last 20 years than them, uh, and, and I'm hopeful that this uh, I'm hopeful that,

um, that ultimately this is gonna be something that, that they can see adds positive benefit for our community.

Um, I also really wanna thank Rob Solano and Churches United for Fair Housing, who really fought hard with me for more affordable housing on this site. Um, and last but not least, I, I don't mean to brag, but I think I have the best team in the City Council. Um, and they are just exceptionally smart and hardworking and fun, um, and give all the best advice, and I'm really, really lucky.

So Hannah leads our land use work and is our district director and is remarkable. Um, Eliza leads all of our works on, on communications and helped us really hone our message here and Molly's my Chief of Staff. Um, they're all really great, and I'm very lucky to get to work with them.

So with that, I just want to say thank you to everybody for your patience and support, and for all the colleagues who had my back through a difficult process, and I'm pleased with the outcome that we were able to achieve. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Counsel, are there any members of— are there any Council Members with questions or remarks at this time? Members? Sorry.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No Chair.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Okay, I now call for a vote to approve modifications LU67, 68, 69, and 71 related to the monitor point rezoning proposal, LU72 through 74 related to the Dewitt Clinton Park North rezoning proposal at 801 11th Avenue, and LU75 through 77 related to the Dewitt Clinton Park North rezoning proposal at 629 West 54th Street.

And finally, pursuant to Council Rule 11.60, I make a motion to file LU70 to remove the item from the Council's calendar. Counsel, please call the roll.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair Louis?

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Aye on all and congratulations.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Farias?

COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: I vote aye on all.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Schulman?

COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Aye on all and congratulations to everyone.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Salaam?

COUNCIL MEMBER SALAAM: I vote aye on all. Congratulations.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Felder.

COUNCIL MEMBER FELDER: Aye on all.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Encarnación?

COUNCIL MEMBER ENCARNACIÓN: I vote aye on all.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Sanchez?

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: I vote aye on all.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Thomas-Henry.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Aye on all. Congrats.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Carr?

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: With congratulations to Council Members Brewer and Restler, I vote aye on all.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: By a vote of 9 in the affirmative, 0 opposing, and 0 abstention, the items are approved as described by the Chair and these items are now referred to the full Land Use Committee.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: That concludes today's business. I would like to thank members of the public, my colleagues, Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use and Council staff, and the Sergeant-at-Arms for

participating in today's meeting. This meeting is hereby 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 9, 2026