

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS,
PUBLIC SITING AND
MARITIME USES

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December 2, 2014
Start: 11:35 a.m.
Recess: 12:24 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway, Committee Room -
16th Floor

B E F O R E: Peter A. Koo
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Annabel Palma
Maria Del Carmen Arroyo
Rosie Mendez
Stephen T. Levin
Inez D. Barron
Ben Kallos
David Greenfield

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

LaRay Brown
Health and Hospitals Corporation

Sydelle Knepper
SKA Marin

Beth Greenberg
Architect with Dattner Architects

2 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Good morning. Good
3 morning. This is Council Member Peter Koo. I'm Chair
4 of the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting and
5 Maritime Uses, and joining our committee is Council
6 Member Arroyo, Council Member Mendez, Council Member
7 Levin, and Council Member Kallos. The first item is
8 LU 135. It's the application for the Bronx Real
9 [sic] Community Justice Center, which is in Council
10 Member Mealy's district. The applicant, the Mayor's
11 Office of Criminal Justice withdrew this application
12 on November 20th--on November 13th, 2014. Therefore,
13 we will have a vote on the motion to file this matter
14 pursuant to council removes to remove it from our
15 calendar. We're going to have a vote on this first.

16 COUNCIL CLERK: Chair Koo?

17 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Yes.

18 COUNCIL CLERK: Council Member Arroyo?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Of course.

20 COUNCIL CLERK: Council Member Mendez?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Yes.

22 COUNCIL CLERK: Council Member Levin?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Yes.

24 COUNCIL CLERK: Council Member Kallos?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Aye.

2 COUNCIL CLERK: By a vote of 5 in the
3 affirmative, 0 abstentions and no negatives, motion
4 to file Land Use Item Number 135 is approved and
5 referred to the Full Land Use Committee.

6 CHAIRPERSON KOO: The second item is Land
7 Use Item Number 138, which is Application Number 205.
8 No, I'm sorry, 20155169 HHM, Draper Hall, which is in
9 Speaker Mark-Viverito's office. And we have LaRay
10 Brown, Senior Vice President of HHC here to testify.

11 LARAY BROWN: Just me.

12 CHAIRPERSON KOO: So, you can begin,
13 yeah.

14 LARAY BROWN: Good morning. My name is
15 LaRay Brown and I'm the Senior Vice President for
16 Corporate Planning, Community Health and
17 Intergovernmental Relations at the New York City
18 Health and Hospitals Corporation or HHC. Thank you
19 for the opportunity to testify this morning in
20 support of LU 0138 2014. This is a proposed lease
21 agreement between HHC and Draper House Housing
22 Development from Corporation Inc. to develop housing
23 for low income elderly and/or disabled individuals.
24 I am joined this morning. Is Sydelle in the room?
25 You should come up. I'm joined this morning by

2 Sydelle Knepper the Chief Executive Officer of SKA
3 Marin, the proposed developer of this project. SKA
4 Marin is an experienced developer of affordable
5 housing for seniors and disabled tenants with whom
6 HHC has had a long and positive relationship. If
7 approved by the City Council, HHC would enter into a
8 long term lease with SKA Marin for the renovation and
9 expansion of Draper Hall which is on East 99 Street
10 and First Avenue in Manhattan, across the street from
11 Metropolitan Center. The Enlarged structure would
12 contain approximately 203 units of housing. The
13 units would be a mixture of studio and one bedroom
14 apartments with an apartment for a live-in
15 superintendent. As the committee knows, in New York
16 City there is an acute shortage of affordable and
17 accessible housing for low income elderly and
18 disabled individuals. HHC and the developer have
19 been working in conjunction with several city
20 agencies on the financing and development of this
21 project, including the New York City Department of
22 Housing, Preservation and Development, HPD, the New
23 York City Housing Development Corporation, HDC, and
24 the New York City Housing Authority, NYCHA. We have
25 also been engaged in ongoing communications about

2 this project with local elected officials,
3 particularly our Council Speaker Viverito, Community
4 Board 11 and Metropolitan Hospital's Community
5 Advisory Board. This project also received two
6 million in funding from the New York City Council in
7 this current fiscal year's budget. In accordance with
8 HHC's Enabling Act, a public hearing was conducted on
9 September 10th, 2014 with respect to this proposed
10 long term lease. HHC's Board of Directors authorized
11 the proposed lease on September 25th of 2014. I
12 thank you for the opportunity to testify on this
13 important project and I can address any questions
14 that you may have. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you, Ms. LaRay.
16 What kind of--no questions? What kind of lease is
17 this? Can you give me some--

18 LARAY BROWN: [interposing] Sure.

19 CHAIRPERSON KOO: details on this lease?

20 LARAY BROWN: Yes, this would be a long
21 term, basically this is a parcel that is under the
22 auspices of Metropolitan Hospital Center, or HHC, and
23 so this would be a long term lease for a term of 99
24 years. We likely would have it be a 25 year and then
25 an extended period up to the 99 year period, which is

2 essentially the kind of lease that we have when we
3 are leasing unused HHC parcels or buildings.

4 CHAIRPERSON KOO: So, how much the
5 developer has to pay the corporation for this lease?

6 LARAY BROWN: At this juncture, we're
7 still negotiating that amount. Essentially, our
8 board of directors requires that we do, we get
9 appraisals for the--what we would be able to get for
10 the purposes of this type of use. And generally,
11 depending on the building and more often depending
12 upon the amount of the cost of remediation, for
13 example, there's a lot of asbestos in buildings of
14 this age. That--those costs offset the lease amounts
15 that HHC is paid. So we're still negotiating on that
16 dollar amount. In addition, because of the use of
17 this building and in this case as I have described,
18 all these apartments would be for low income elderly
19 individuals and/or disabled individuals and we are
20 actually working very closely with the Speaker's
21 Office to assure that there would be a significant
22 portion of those individuals who live in Community
23 Board 11. We also use the sort of social policy use
24 of an HHC building or parcel as an offset to lease
25 payments that we would incur.

2 CHAIRPERSON KOO: There's no dollar a
3 month?

4 LARAY BROWN: I would--at this point I'm
5 not sure whether we have a final dollar amount.

6 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Well, we don't have a--
7 we don't have final numbers yet. I would say just to
8 add onto this that the project is going to have 100
9 percent project-based section eight, which means we
10 expect to have tenants who are at the very low end--

11 LARAY BROWN: [interposing] Lowest level.

12 SYDELLE KNEPPER: lowest levels of
13 income, because as you know, the section eight allows
14 you to bring--people will pay no more than 30 percent
15 of their income for rent, but their income, we
16 typically find seniors, low income seniors are at
17 very low levels.

18 LARAY BROWN: Very low levels of income.

19 Let me just add in terms of the dollar amount. We
20 usually negotiate, you know, the final negotiation in
21 terms of lease after we've gotten the Council's
22 approval and that's why its open-ended at this
23 point. But just to underscore, it's been the policy
24 of the HHC Board of Directors to not go for highest
25 and best use of the parcels of land or buildings that

2 are used by for HHC in the use of development of
3 housing, because it is, we believe, consistent with
4 the city's policy of affording the access to
5 affordable housing throughout the city of New York,
6 that HHC as part of the city's contribution is to
7 ensure that if we have land that can be used to
8 develop housing and in particular for individuals
9 with the lowest income and/or disabled individuals
10 that we see that as our partnership with the
11 developer, but also with our city agency partners.

12 CHAIRPERSON KOO: So what's the incentive
13 for the developer to build these housing projects if
14 there's no money that remains?

15 LARAY BROWN: I'll let the developer speak
16 to that.

17 SYDELLE KNEPPER: I think in affordable
18 housing there's quite a large number of people in
19 industry engaged in affordable housing. We've been
20 exclusive affordable housing providers. We've never
21 done any market-rate housing, and our specialty has
22 been on supportive and senior housing over many, many
23 years. We've developed in Brooklyn quite a number of
24 projects, and as well, quite a number of 202
25 projects. So, of course, there is, you know

2 financial--we're a private sector developer, but I
3 think that we have a purpose in developing this niche
4 of business. We think there are many, many seniors
5 throughout the city who are aging in place who cannot
6 afford to stay where they are or who are disabled and
7 cannot afford to be in let's say a walk-up apartment
8 and need the housing, and you know, we find that our
9 last project was in Brownsville. We developed 115
10 units of senior housing. We had several thousand
11 people who were on the--for the lottery, and so we
12 find there's a need throughout the entire city of New
13 York for this type of housing.

14 CHAIRPERSON KOO: So, I may have one more
15 question and I'll ask my other members of the staff,
16 of the committee to ask questions. So, Ms. LaRay--

17 LARAY BROWN: Yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON KOO: How do you pick this
19 developer? Is there a process?

20 LARAY BROWN: Sure. I would say, my
21 goodness, several years ago HHC in collaboration with
22 our colleagues at HPD we did a request for expression
23 of interest for several parcels of land and/or
24 buildings that HHC would have available because of
25 our rebuilding our hospitals or consolidating the use

2 of the campuses, and as part of that RFEI, we
3 received responses from several developers for
4 different parcels. In this case, SKA Marin actually
5 responded to--that was interested in developing both
6 the Draper Hall Building as well as a parcel on East
7 99th Street, which came in front of this committee I
8 think a couple years ago. That parcel, some of you
9 may recall, was for 175 units expressly for patients
10 from HHC's long term care facilities or acute
11 hospitals who are essentially languishing in those
12 settings for want of affordable housing and
13 accessible housing. So we had originally had engaged
14 in this being a combined project. Because we gave
15 priority to the completion of East 99th Street, we
16 separated the two and are now bringing this parcel as
17 a separate project development to this committee.
18 But the process was a RFEI working with HPD.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: We have new
20 microphones. Pretty cool. They're heavy. Good
21 morning, LaRay.

22 LARAY BROWN: Good morning.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Nice to see you
24 again as always.

25 LARAY BROWN: Thank you, same to you.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: A couple of
3 questions. Did you indicate the total cost of the
4 project?

5 LARAY BROWN: The cost of the project is
6 about 84 million dollars.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: To what, retrofit
8 or are you knocking it down and building--

9 LARAY BROWN: [interposing] No, we are
10 basically keeping the existing structure and adding
11 onto it. In fact, if you were to look at the big
12 board, the one at the farthest right there, it shows
13 the Draper Hall building and then there's an add-on.
14 You see the little area.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: I can't see that.
16 David's big head is in the way.

17 LARAY BROWN: It's blocking. So we're
18 going to--we want the Drap--maybe push it back. Can
19 you see it? Yeah. We're keeping the structure. You
20 may recall, it's a big wide structure.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Yes.

22 LARAY BROWN: And they're--yes, that one.

23 [off mic]

24 LARAY BROWN: Thank you.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: That's princess
3 to everyone.

4 LARAY BROWN: So, perhaps, Sydelle, you
5 want to describe what we're doing with the building.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: That's the
7 existing structure?

8 SYDELLE KNEPPER: No, it also includes an
9 addition.

10 LARAY BROWN: If you see the little set
11 back, there's a little narrow part if you can see
12 that. That is an addition onto the current building
13 structure.

14 SYDELLE KNEPPER: So, the building is
15 basically right now a dorm, an old dormitory and it
16 has like little rooms. Think of an old college dorm
17 with kind of osang [sic] toilets and single tiny
18 small rooms. And in order to accommodate, this
19 building will be primarily one bedrooms, 200 one
20 bedrooms and two studios. We are adding onto it onto
21 the north end of the building a structure tower,
22 which will enable us to have much better apartments
23 for seniors.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: So how many of
25 the 203 are new?

2 SYDELLE KNEPPER: All of them are a
3 combination of new and old.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Rehabed old.

5 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Rehab.

6 LARAY BROWN: Yeah, this is a total gut
7 renovation and then the add on of a tower.

8 SYDELLE KNEPPER: And then there's a two
9 story podium, what we call a podium. It's this
10 building here, which currently had all of the
11 facilities for, you know, for a residence, for a
12 student residence, and we are converting the
13 auditorium will become the community room, and we are
14 hoping that we will have some community facility
15 space for a senior center or other uses that would be
16 adaptable and work with this population.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Now, how can you
18 assure us that the selection of the tenants and the
19 community preference is going to stand and that at
20 the end of the process, what percentage will be
21 community residents?

22 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Well, I can't assure
23 anything right now. I mean, I understand that the
24 Speaker's office has been in close consultation with
25 HUD and working on the concept of having a community

2 preference of a certain percentage for the building,

3 and I couldn't tell you how the process will work.

4 Typically, when we have lotteries and there is a

5 community preference there are two lists that are

6 prepared in the lottery. One would be for the

7 community preference. The other would be for general

8 lottery, and those lists would be continued as

9 through rent up until they finish.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: So, why don't you

11 bring the application back when you know the answer

12 to that question?

13 LARAY BROWN: Because we believe that the

14 current discussions with HUD, and I should say that

15 it is our understanding from the Speaker's Office

16 very specifically that the current discussions with

17 HUD are optimistic. We, in fact, have not--we

18 actually delayed bringing this project to this body

19 until that level of comfort was reached by the

20 Speaker's Office. She was at a point where the

21 discussions are progressing and she has allowed us to

22 come in front of you today.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: So, are we voting

24 this out today, Mr. Chairman? No? Okay. So, the

2 support services for the population, who's going to
3 provide it?

4 SYDELLE KNEPPER: The--this is an
5 independent senior housing project. We expect that
6 as people age in place they will have their--some
7 support service available. In a project of
8 independent senior housing, support service is not a
9 given into the project. It is not an assisted living
10 project. We expect that, of course, across the
11 street with Metropolitan Hospital, they'll be liaison
12 with the hospital and we expect that there'll be some
13 community facility in the building that will help,
14 potentially a senior center, but not at this point
15 selected.

16 LARAY BROWN: So, Council Member, as you--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [interposing] I
18 don't like that answer.

19 LARAY BROWN: Well, let me--as you know,
20 for independent--

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: I--

22 LARAY BROWN: [interposing] No, I was
23 just--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [interposing]
25 We're looking at 300--203--

2 LARAY BROWN: [interposing] 203.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: units for elderly
4 and disabled individuals. Both populations come with
5 great deal of need, and who is going to make sure
6 that many individuals in this development are going
7 to be well taken care of?

8 LARAY BROWN: These are independent--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [interposing]
10 They're on their own basically.

11 LARAY BROWN: No, no, no, no they're not.
12 Let me--if I may answer this. Part of the synergy of
13 having independent housing developed either on an HHC
14 campus or in proximity to an HHC facility is that
15 there is assurance that the individuals have access
16 to healthcare and other support services that an HHC
17 facility can provide. That said, this is not a
18 nursing home, nor is it assisted living.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Supportive housing
20 is not nursing home.

21 LARAY BROWN: This is not supported--

22 SYDELLE KNEPPER: This is not supported
23 housing.

24 LARAY BROWN: Just to clari--
25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [interposing] Mr.
3 Chairman, I'm done. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you. Next we
5 have Steve, Steve Levin.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Hi, thank you very
7 much. I just--I'm curious a little bit more about
8 the structure of the funding through HUD. So is this
9 a--is this a 202 project?

10 LARAY BROWN: No, it's not.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: It's not a 202
12 project?

13 LARAY BROWN: This is a project that's
14 tax exempt bonds through HDC.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay.

16 LARAY BROWN: With HPD financing.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay.

18 LARAY BROWN: And pri--the HUD part of it
19 is the project based section eight.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay, but they're
21 not putting capital into it like a 202 would?

22 LARAY BROWN: HUD? No.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Yeah, right.

24 Because the reason I ask is that we have this huge
25 need for senior housing in New York City and we are

2 so far behind the demand, and every year we get more
3 and more behind that demand and with baby boomers
4 continuing to retire, that--the waiting list for
5 202's is like--there's like 200,000 seniors on the
6 waiting list throughout the city of New York, and
7 we're building something like 200 or 200 and--or 400
8 units a year or something like that. It's--we're so
9 far behind. So, it's interesting to see a senior
10 housing development that's affordable with project
11 based section eight as it's, you know, means of
12 afford--you know, mode of affordability or you know,
13 long term affordability, and you know, we should be
14 looking to see how we can, you know, do this in the
15 absence of, you know, a robust 202 program because I
16 don't think that, you know, a Republican Congress is
17 really going to be allocating those types of funds to
18 HUD and to New York City moving forward, and so it's
19 a big challenge. But, I mean, this is--it's
20 interesting to see and so you're saying that it's HPD
21 financing, HDC--

22 LARAY BROWN: [interposing] Bonds.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: bonds.

24 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Tax credits.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Tax credits.

2 SYDELLE KNEPPER: And project based.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: So bonds and tax
4 credits.

5 SYDELLE KNEPPER: And project based
6 section eight, and actually this model, HPD has been
7 very active in doing this model, and we did our first
8 project actually with HHC on the grounds of Kings
9 County Senior--

10 LARAY BROWN: McKinney, McKinney Nursing
11 Home.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: So it has to have
13 kind of a public component in terms of the land cost
14 being--

15 LARAY BROWN: That's exactly right.

16 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Right.

17 LARAY BROWN: And your Chairman's
18 questions were right on target in terms of the lease
19 payment between HHC, because what makes this doable
20 is the fact that the land lease is not cost
21 prohibitive.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Right, right. I
23 mean, absolutely. That's--

24 LARAY BROWN: [interposing] In a city like
25 New York.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Right, and that's
3 the challenge when we have less and less public land
4 available.

5 LARAY BROWN: Yes.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay, thank you
7 very much.

8 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you, Steve. We
9 are joined by Chairman Greenfield of the Land Use
10 Committee and also Council Member Barron. Council
11 Member Kallos to ask questions.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: So, first
13 question is just how long was this facility not being
14 used? How long was the facility not being used?

15 LARAY BROWN: The facility was being used
16 and not fully, I would say a little before Sandy. So,
17 what is that, two years now? We--HHC was using part
18 of the building for meetings and our community
19 advisory board and other public sort of meetings on
20 the ground level and the second floor for training,
21 and then there was some minimal use for podiatry
22 students. After Sandy, because of the significant
23 damage to the building, particularly to the basement
24 and the electrical utility systems, we, HHC has not
25 been using the building, but even before the storm,

2 our strategic plan was to not--to make this building
3 available for other purposes because it was really
4 not cost efficient for us to continue to manage that
5 building and make the types of structural repairs
6 that would be necessary for healthcare use.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Has--is there
8 additional funding to make sure that this is going to
9 be resilient, because the next Sandy will come, and
10 my district and the Speaker's district will flood in
11 addition to taking out a 215 million dollar garbage
12 dump they're going to be putting a couple of blocks
13 from the senior residence, the senior residence will
14 also be in jeopardy.

15 SYDELLE KNEPPER: The building will be
16 designed to meet all the flood standards. We are
17 raising--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: [interposing] For
19 which--yeah.

20 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Yeah, for--we are
21 raising basically the utilities above the first
22 floor.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Okay.

24 SYDELLE KNEPPER: They'll be a generator
25 in the building. It'll be on the top floor. EMS, I

2 should add, is currently in the building and they
3 will stay in--they're in the back of the building.
4 So, we will be also making their portion of the
5 building resilient. They moved back in right after
6 Sandy. The building took about eight feet of water.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Okay, and you
8 don't see anyone having trouble with moving in next
9 door to a garbage dump that the Mayor's putting in
10 there?

11 SYDELLE KNEPPER: I can't comment on
12 that.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: No problem. So
14 then the next piece. So it's 100 percent section
15 eight. It's all seniors or disabled. So, it's both--
16 it's 203 units. How many one bedrooms? How many
17 studios?

18 SYDELLE KNEPPER: 201 bedrooms and two
19 studios.

20 LARAY BROWN: And one apartment for the
21 super--live in superintendent.

22 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Yes.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: And--

24 SYDELLE KNEPPER: [interposing] Two
25 bedroom.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: And two bedroom
3 for the super and two studios. How many people per
4 one bedroom? Is it two or one or more?

5 LARAY BROWN: Typically it's either, it
6 could be two or one. I mean--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Any one bedroom
8 where we're going to have three people or?

9 LARAY BROWN: It's really, it's a HUD
10 requirement, so I don't think so.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: So we could have
12 up to about 400 or so seniors living, seniors and
13 disabled there.

14 LARAY BROWN: Uh-hm.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: And so what
16 happens to a--so, this is straight senior
17 independent, senior and disabled independent living
18 and so is there a plan to make this progressive
19 living where they receive progressive support, or?

20 LARAY BROWN: There is not a plan to make
21 this into assisted living. Assisted living is a
22 licensed facility.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Okay.

24 LARAY BROWN: With a different--it's a
25 different type of program.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: And in terms of
3 it for the community space, is there a commitment for
4 a senior center to provide support for those 400
5 folks or partners? Stanley Isaac's is six blocks
6 away on First Avenue. We have a NORC there. This
7 isn't quite a NORC. This is straight up senior
8 housing, but is there a commitment to have onsite
9 senior services or provided and contracted from local
10 senior centers?

11 LARAY BROWN: The DIFTA [sic] and the
12 previous Commission of DIFTA whose now the Deputy
13 Mayor had provided a letter of support for a senior
14 center in the building, and right now there is no
15 commitment to its--they have a process that they have
16 to go through if there would be a senior center to
17 have an RFP etcetera, and to pick, select any
18 operator.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: So is it possible
20 it's part of the deal to make sure that a senior
21 center is one of the pieces so that we get one and
22 the 400, the up to 400 seniors plus the surrounded
23 community have somewhere there to get services they
24 may need so that they can stay there as long as
25

2 possible? Because the other option is 15,000 a month
3 for nursing care if they're not able to stay there.

4 LARAY BROWN: Or more than that.

5 SYDELLE KNEPPER: We would--obviously we
6 would love to see a senior center in the building.
7 We've supported that. We've done one out in
8 Brownsville in our Riverway project with the senior
9 center and that model has been very successful in
10 allowing tenants to age in place and at the senior
11 center they can get some kind of referrals. There's
12 two meals a day. There's recreation. It's quite
13 successful model, and we would love to see that kind
14 of model here.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: And what is the
16 average tenancy you're expecting for your tenants?

17 LARAY BROWN: Tenants, we consider that
18 tenants move in here and we don't have any vacancies
19 unless tenants either pass or they have, they can no
20 longer remain independent. In all our projects,
21 that's the case.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: And so--

23 LARAY BROWN: [interposing] There's no--
24 there are no vacancies, maybe one a year. There's a
25 tremendous, as was mentioned earlier by Council

2 Member Levin, there's a tremendous need and people
3 stay because they can afford to, and as we know, when
4 seniors age, they have less income available, so the
5 section eight becomes even more important to their
6 ability to stay in place.

7 LARAY BROWN: And may I just add, it is
8 HHC's goal because we also have a home-care agency,
9 that as people who live in this building as in other
10 buildings that are, have been developed on our
11 campuses, that folks can get the entire continuum of
12 care including home-based healthcare services, which
13 would also add to individual's ability to stay and
14 age in place. The state Department of Health, as
15 well as the federal government, is very much focused
16 on avoiding institutional care, avoiding even in the
17 case of long term care, avoiding nursing home care.
18 So there's a lot of emphasis being focused on
19 providing home and community based services, and
20 actually for seniors, particularly those individuals
21 who are both Medicaid and Medicare to be involved in
22 managed care arrangements in which services are
23 rendered in their home to avoid individuals going
24 into nursing homes, or if they go into nursing homes,
25 for that not to be the end of their route, that they

2 might go in on a nursing home on a short term basis
3 and then return to their apartments. Because of the
4 way that this is designed in terms of the
5 affordability as well as the very close proximity to
6 Metropolitan Hospital and accessibility to other HHC
7 services, we believe that individuals will--and
8 hopefully will have a community based senior center.
9 The folks will have the requisite supports to stay as
10 long as possible in their apartments.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Ms. Brown, you
12 always say things that I like hearing, so thank you.
13 I just want to again echo the concerns brought by
14 Council Member Arroyo and Levin of just making sure
15 that what you just spoke to is part of the terms of
16 the deal, and as a Council Member who is literally
17 wraps around this project. I go to 100th Street. So
18 I'm just missing is, but it is my constituency. I
19 just--the more you can do in terms of making sure we
20 get a senior center out of that, if that's a
21 commitment from the Mayor's Office, that should be
22 part of this deal as well as your commitment that the
23 senior center be there as well as the additional
24 commitment from HHC that the funding will be set
25 aside to make sure that these people can stay there

2 for as long as they wish independently with the home
3 care they need because it so much less expensive than
4 institutionalization.

5 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Absolutely.

6 LARAY BROWN: It's not about funding set
7 aside. It's the fact that as long as HHC exists and
8 we hope that it'll exist for many years, that it's
9 our responsibility to ensure that folks have the kind
10 of healthcare services that they need, and these
11 individuals are our constituents, our patients as
12 well. And I absolutely hear Council Member Arroyo's
13 concern. I respect her concern. For a long time I
14 know how strongly she feels about the citizens of New
15 York and their getting the services they need as well
16 as yours and Council Member Levin's. And that is
17 HHC's commitment and our commitment in terms of all
18 of these types of partnerships, the creation of
19 housing as well as the provision of responsive and
20 comprehensive healthcare in those neighborhoods.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Thank you for your
22 service.

23 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Council Member Mendez?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you very
25 much. I am not quite clear what part is the new

2 structure. So if you could just touch and show me
3 what is the new structure?

4 LARAY BROWN: This is the new structure.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: All of that in
6 the front?

7 SYDELLE KNEPPER: All of it, yes. It's on
8 the --if you think of--the building's on First Avenue
9 and 99th Street and right nearby the HHC parking for
10 Metropolitan Hospital. So this new structure is on
11 99th Street, and this is the old structure. So--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: So the entrance
13 is on 99th Street, or?

14 SYDELLE KNEPPER: The entrance will be on
15 First Avenue where the current entrance to the
16 building is.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: And which is--
18 First Avenue is the side part that--

19 SYDELLE KNEPPER: So basically this is
20 First Avenue now, and here is the current building,
21 and then there's this new wrap around.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: And--okay. And
23 the existing structure would have held--well, the new
24 structure will add how many more units to this
25 project?

2 SYDELLE KNEPPER: The existing structure
3 was just rooms. It's very small, like dormitory
4 rooms without bathrooms. So it really, I think it
5 would have bene about 90 rooms, and so you really
6 couldn't have done--we like to do one bedrooms, and
7 the reason for that is that we find as people age in
8 place, if they want to have a homecare worker there
9 in their apartment, if they want to have family who
10 help them, it's really important to have like a one
11 bedroom. So we--that's--we wanted to create one
12 bedrooms here.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: How many stories
14 here?

15 SYDELLE KNEPPER: It's 14 stories.

16 LARAY BROWN: Fourteen floors.

17 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Fourteen.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Fourteen stories,
19 and the back-up generators?

20 LARAY BROWN: It's not a back-up
21 generator. It's actually a generator that will be on
22 top of the building. We've done one on 99th Street at
23 our supportive housing residence, and so it'll be
24 available. We hope also to hook up--right now, EMS
25 has only a kind of power they bring--it's a temporary

2 generator that they bring on. So we're going to hook
3 up our generator up for EMS as well so that they will
4 have also the benefit of the generator.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: So in case of a
6 blackout or a Sandy, and you're saying this is going
7 to be resilient, so it should not get flooded?

8 SYDELLE KNEPPER: We hope that it won't
9 get flooded. We are doing everything we can to rai--
10 to not have to have any kind of service utilities on
11 the first floor. We know that the building's basement
12 took, you know, quite a lot of water, and so we'll be
13 filling in that basement pursuant to Department of
14 Building's requirements. So it will meet all the
15 flood requirements for of the Department of
16 Buildings. And that's all I can say, you know.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: And in case of a
18 blackout, what would get powered up?

19 SYDELLE KNEPPER: All of the security
20 systems would be powered up. We haven't fully
21 designed this yet, but like on 99th Street we powered
22 up an elevator. We powered a--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: A elevator, one?

24 SYDELLE KNEPPER: In 99th Street, right.

25 LARAY BROWN: In the other building.

2 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Right, because what
3 happens is, is that these buildings are in zone A,
4 and so in the event of a flood, for example, you
5 probably have to evacuate under the requirements
6 currently for the city for zone A. So you would have
7 to be able to orderly evacuate in a couple of hours,
8 have a staging. We'd power up the community room,
9 power up the kitchen on the main floor, probably the
10 senior center to enable people to stay until
11 arrangements could be made.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. So, in
13 case of a blackout without a flood, what gets powered
14 up if the seniors--look, I had--I have a building on
15 the Bowery, senior housing, 14 floors, 150 units.

16 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Right.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: And it did not
18 flood. It was in distress. They had one super on
19 site, a couple of social workers. It wasn't enough
20 to provide the services during the blackout during
21 Sandy that they needed. So, you know, we got
22 volunteers in there.

23 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Right.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: With the super.
25 We delivered food. We got into all the apartments,

2 but the seniors could not walk down. The seniors
3 could not go get other services, and you know, south
4 of 39th Street, you know, what have you.

5 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Right.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: But just even,
7 you know, being housed in place was hard for them.

8 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Right.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: So in case of a
10 blackout, which happens from time to time, happens
11 during the summers, how many elevators do you have?
12 How many will be powered up? Will there be lighting
13 in the hallways?

14 SYDELLE KNEPPER: This is all part of an
15 emergency plan, which we will be required to do. We
16 do it for all of our buildings. We were especially,
17 just to refer to you to the building around the
18 corner which is on 99th for our supportive housing
19 facility, which also did not take water after--which
20 did not take water after Sandy, but we raised the
21 building three feet to comply with FEMA guidelines.
22 We have an emergency generator there. We have a plan
23 on what to do in case of evacuation or in case where
24 we don't have to evacuate, what will be powered up,
25 and we will have that same plan, a plan in effect

2 that we will discuss and work on with EMS among--and
3 HHC among other users, and HPD. And we will share it
4 with you if you would like to, you know, see it.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Yes. How many
6 elevators in this place?

7 SYDELLE KNEPPER: The building currently
8 has, I think, three elevators. They're of course
9 quite obsolete, and so our plan is to replace those.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Replace the
11 three?

12 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Yes.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: And they will be--

14 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Stretcher able.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Stretcher able?

16 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. What is
18 the ownership structure? Are you just leasing from
19 HHC? Is it going to be an LLP?

20 SYDELLE KNEPPER: It's a long term, 99
21 year long term lease.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: So they're
23 getting a 99 year lease from HHC?

24 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Yes, ma'am.
25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. And how
3 are you getting this to be 100 percent project based
4 section eight?

5 SYDELLE KNEPPER: We applied for an RFP
6 this past year to NYCHA for project based section
7 eight, and we were awarded it.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: You applied to
9 NYCHA?

10 SYDELLE KNEPPER: They--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: [interposing]
12 That's rather interesting.

13 SYDELLE KNEPPER: The New York City
14 Housing Authority had an RFP earlier this year for
15 project based section eight for projects, and we
16 applied.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: And how is NYCHA
18 put--well, that's not a question for you, I guess.
19 Yeah. Any social workers that will be there
20 throughout the day? You mentioned something about
21 possibly a community facility, would they have some
22 case workers on site?

23 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Yes, I mean, we fully
24 expect we will have someone who will provide
25 referral, but we fully expect that there will be a

2 senior center. We hope that there will be a senior
3 center in the building, and the senior center will
4 offer various supportive services including two
5 meals.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: So you say you
7 hope, so you don't know?

8 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Well, at this point, we-
9 -it would be a DIFTA RFP.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: What is the
11 nearest senior center near there?

12 SYDELLE KNEPPER: There's one in
13 Washington Houses on a couple of blocks on 99th or
14 100th Street, and then there is one on 96th Street.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. Okay. I
16 think I have another question, but I can't remember
17 it. I'm looking at my list here. Thank you very
18 much.

19 SYDELLE KNEPPER: You're welcome.

20 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Okay, thank you.
21 Council Member Barron?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you, Mr.
23 Chair. Thank you to the panel for being here. I
24 apologize I came late. So, can you explain this
25 design? You said that it's a wrap around building

2 which will wrap around an existing building, and how
3 will they--how are the two buildings connected? Can
4 you go from one building to the next, and are the
5 elevators in the new building or in the old building,
6 or how does that work?

7 SYDELLE KNEPPER: It's a good question.
8 I would like my architect to answer that question.
9 Beth?

10 LARAY BROWN: If it's okay with--

11 SYDELLE KNEPPER: If you don't mind.

12 LARAY BROWN: If it's okay with the
13 Council. Why don't you stand near the--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: If you could give
15 us your name, and?

16 BETH GREENBERG: My name is Beth
17 Greenberg. I'm a principal at Dattner Architects,
18 and I have been leading this project.

19 LARAY BROWN: There's too many chairs.
20 We had to move them around. There we go.

21 BETH GREENBERG: So, back to the picture
22 that--a little bit difficult to see. You can see
23 there's a white building.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yes.

2 BETH GREENBERG: Very narrow, it's about
3 35 feet wide. The current configuration, there's a
4 window in the center of that, that's where the
5 corridor is now. What we're doing is moving the
6 corridor over to the north wall of the existing
7 building. We are reusing the elevators, the elevator
8 shafts that are in the existing building so that the
9 new building which is this brown colored in this
10 illustration shares a corridor with the very north
11 side of the existing building.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So the elevators
13 are already in an existing shaft. You won't have to
14 build elevators in this new building that's going up,
15 which I understand is usually quite costly to do
16 that.

17 BETH GREENBERG: That's correct.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay. So the
19 elevators that are presently there will service both
20 buildings.

21 BETH GREENBERG: Correct.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: How many
23 apartments is that?
24
25

2 BETH GREENBERG: It's 203 apartments
3 including one super, two studios and the balance are--
4 -

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing] So
6 it's a total for the two buildings--

7 BETH GREENBERG: [interposing] Correct.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: of 203
9 apartments.

10 BETH GREENBERG: Correct.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay. So to go
12 from one building to the other, it's only through one
13 corridor, it's not one at the other end as well?

14 BETH GREENBERG: Correct, yeah. It's
15 basically it's one building.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay.

17 BETH GREENBERG: It's a double loaded
18 corridor. The corridor is at the edge of the
19 existing building, we're taking down the north wall
20 of that existing building.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay.

22 BETH GREENBERG: So that will be--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing] That
24 makes it understandable.

2 BETH GREENBERG: It's basically, it will
3 function as a single building.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay, good.
5 Thank you. The other questions I have I guess are
6 for the other panel members because they're not
7 really construction. What is the income levels that
8 this--that's a target for this development?

9 LARAY BROWN: So, no tenant can pay, can
10 be above 50 percent of median income, but--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing] So
12 let's deal with dollar amounts, what's that? Is
13 that--would that be 80--based on the AMI of 80--

14 SYDELLE KNEPPER: [interposing] Based on
15 the AMI.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay.

17 SYDELLE KNEPPER: For a family of one or
18 two.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So, one or two?

20 SYDELLE KNEPPER: I think it's prob--
21 yeah.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay.

23 SYDELLE KNEPPER: And it basically would
24 follow--what we find in actuality with the section
25 eight is that we can reach very, very low levels of

2 income. So somebody who is on, for example, welfare
3 shelter allowance can be in the building. They would
4 pay only 30 percent of what their income is, and the
5 contract would pick up, the section eight contract
6 would pick up the difference. It's similar to the
7 project in your district in Riverway Apartments which
8 we developed.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right.

10 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Where we find that we
11 were able to take, for example, people from the NYCHA
12 projects like Brownsville Houses, and people were
13 willing and able to kind of move to a facility where
14 they wanted to be and were not having to take--get an
15 increase in their rent.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay. So for if
17 my chart here is correct, 50 percent of the AMI for
18 one person family is like 30,000 dollars.

19 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Right.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So--

21 SYDELLE KNEPPER: But we could go much
22 lower. I mean, you could go to--that's the highest.
23 You can't go above that.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: You can't go
25 above the 50 percent.

2 SYDELLE KNEPPER: It can't go above it,
3 but it could go to--we have people over at 99th
4 street who have come from Goldwater Hospital and they
5 are basically on welfare shelter and SSI level.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: With the outreach
7 to persons who have those special needs, will there
8 be someone on site to provide those kinds, address
9 those supportive needs that they have? Will there be
10 someone designated to be there?

11 SYDELLE KNEPPER: The persons who are on
12 site, basically, who are the dis--who would be a
13 physically disabled population we have--would be the,
14 I think it's 10 percent set aside for physically
15 disabled under the HUD requirements and Fair Housing.
16 Five percent? Five percent. And so basically there
17 would be--the building will be designed so that it
18 meets those requirements for somebody who is
19 physically disabled for those particular apartments.

20 LARAY BROWN: But in terms, to answer
21 your question very specifically, in terms of the on
22 site services as we were explaining, the objective
23 would be to have a senior center that would be able
24 to provide those on site services, and depending on
25 the needs of the individual tenants to make available

2 home-based services such as homecare supports for
3 those individuals.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So you're
5 designing the building now so that there will be the
6 capability to house a senior center--

7 SYDELLE KNEPPER: [interposing] Yes.

8 LARAY BROWN: Yes, ma'am.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: as well as
10 community space?

11 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Yes.

12 LARAY BROWN: Yes.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: They're not going
14 to share the same space?

15 SYDELLE KNEPPER: In term--no.

16 LARAY BROWN: No. That's why, in fact--I
17 don't know if you were here when it was described
18 that this existing building had on the first floor
19 had--

20 SYDELLE KNEPPER: [interposing] Six
21 thousand square--

22 LARAY BROWN: in that podium had 6,000
23 square feet that comprised an auditorium and
24 classrooms when HHC was using it. That space will be
25

2 made available for a senior center as well as
3 community space.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So that same
5 space will be divided--

6 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Yeah.

7 LARAY BROWN: Right, the audit--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing]
9 Into two spaces.

10 SYDELLE KNEPPER: The current auditorium
11 will continue as a community residence room, which we
12 hope in the evenings could be used--

13 LARAY BROWN: [interposing] By the
14 community--

15 SYDELLE KNEPPER: [interposing] by the
16 general community.

17 LARAY BROWN: [interposing] for many
18 purposes, but there will be--the space will be
19 designed for the operations of a senior center.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay.

21 LARAY BROWN: Which would include the
22 capacity to provide meals and other types of
23 activities.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: And then for the
25 existing building, what's the purpose? How will that

2 be purposed? How will that be used? You said it has
3 basically dormitory style rooms?

4 SYDELLE KNEPPER: No, no, no, they--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing]

6 That's not--

7 SYDELLE KNEPPER: There are no longer
8 going to be dormitory.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay.

10 SYDELLE KNEPPER: The reason for--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: [interposing]

12 You're going to redesign the whole thing?

13 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Yes, exactly. The reason
14 for this add-on is because the existing building is
15 such that it was originally built many, many years
16 ago for dorms, and therefore the space is, the living
17 spaces were extremely constrained. And the reason
18 for this add-on is to be able to create those one
19 bedrooms with the levels of light and the hallways
20 and the things for apartments versus, you know,
21 cellular dorm space.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay, great.

23 Well, there is an independently operated senior
24 living facility in Queens, which you may know, which
25 is fantastic. It's called Flushing House.

2 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Yes.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: And Flushing
4 House has so many amenities for the residents who are
5 there. They have a chapel, multipurpose chapel,
6 interdenominational chapel I should say. They have an
7 arts and crafts room. They have a computer room. They
8 have a movie room, or if you just want to go watch
9 the old movies, you can stay and do that. They have
10 a beautiful rooftop garden, and I would encourage you
11 to try to see how some of these amenities might not
12 be incorporated into the design of this building as
13 it's going forward.

14 SYDELLE KNEPPER: Thank you. We will
15 look at that.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Okay. Are we done with
18 the questions? Council Member Arroyo, you want more
19 questions? No? So anyone else in the audience want
20 to testify? Seeing none, I'm going to close this
21 public hearing. We are not voting on the Draper Hall
22 item this morning. We are going to adjourn this
23 meeting and call a new meeting of the Landmarks
24 Subcommittee this Thursday, December 4th at 10:30 in
25

2 City Hall immediately prior to the Full Land Use
3 Committee.

4 COUNCIL CLERK: Let me just get her vote.

5 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Okay, yeah.

6 COUNCIL CLERK: Council Member Barron on
7 motion to withdraw LU 135?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Aye.

9 COUNCIL CLERK: The vote stands 6 in the
10 affirmative, 0 abstentions, no negatives.

11 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Meeting's adjourned.

12 LARAY BROWN: Thank you.

13 [gavel]

14 [off mic comments]

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1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING & MARITIME USES 50

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date December 8, 2014