

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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June 14, 2016
Start: 11:20 a.m.
Recess: 11:37 a.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm
14th Fl

B E F O R E: PETER A. KOO
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Annabel Palma
Deborah L. Rose
Rosie Mendez
Stephen T. Levin
Inez D. Barron
Ben Kallos

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

Lauren George, Director
Intergovernmental Affairs
Landmarks Preservation Commission

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2 [sound check, pause]

3 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Good morning everyone.

4 I'm Council Member Koo, Chair of the Subcommittee of
5 Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Use. We are
6 joined by Council Members Barron, Kallos and--and
7 Palma, yeah. We will be holding a public hearing and
8 voting on one item today, Land Use Item 383, the Land
9 Use-the Landmark designation of the East New York
10 Savings Bank. If approved, this application will
11 affirm the designation of the East New York Savings
12 Bank Building as a historic landmark. This building
13 was originally built in 1928, and is located on the
14 low east corner of the Eastern Parkway, and Utica--
15 Utica Avenue in Council Member Cumbo's district. I
16 will now open the public hearing for Land Use Item
17 No. 383, and we have Michael Hogan and Lorraine
18 George from the Landmark Preservation Commission to
19 testify. [pause] Yeah, you may start after you
20 introduce yourself.

21 LAUREN GEORGE: Pardon me. Thank you.

22 Good morning, Council Members. My name is Lauren
23 George, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs at
24 Landmarks Preservation Commission. I'm here today to
25 speak with you about the East New York Savings Bank,

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2 which you just introduced, and as you said, it's 1117
3 Eastern Parkway at the corner of Utica Avenue in
4 Brooklyn as an individual landmark. On June 28,
5 2011, LTC held a hearing on this proposed designation
6 of the East New York Savings Bank Building and the
7 related landmarks site. The hearing was advertised
8 in accordance with the provisions of law as usual.
9 On person spoke in favor of this designation, a
10 resident of the Historic Districts--Historic
11 Districts Council, and there were no speakers to
12 attest. Council Member Laurie Cumbo has been
13 supportive, and sent a letter of support as
14 designation of the bank. The Commission offers a
15 support letter from the New York a support letter
16 from the New York Landmarks Conservancy. This
17 designation was approved unanimously by the
18 Commission at a public meeting on March 8, 2016. The
19 East New York Savings Bank Building is located at the
20 northwest corner of Eastern Parkway and Utica,
21 Dempser (sp?) at the junction of Weeksville and
22 Brownsville in Brooklyn. Originally called the
23 Parkway Branch, it faces Eastern Parkway and New
24 York's scenic landmark that runs from Grand Army
25 Plaza to Brownsville. As one of the most impressive

2 structures along the parkway's tree-lined route, it
3 was short--it was built shortly after the opening of
4 the IRT Subway, which attracted considerable
5 commercial activity to Utica Avenue. Construction
6 began on November 20, 1927 and it was completed in
7 December 1928. At the time of construction, the
8 structure would be the bank's second and most ambitious
9 branch. It was designed by the firm of New York City
10 architects specializing in bank design. The bank was
11 built in a neo-romanesque style with art deco
12 details display classical effects--effects such as the
13 use of symmetry and a prominent bracketed cornice.
14 The design of this bank was influenced by the
15 landmarked Bowery Savings Bank on East 42nd Street in
16 Manhattan with a similar recessed archway. This
17 dramatic architectural feature served as the bank's
18 main entrance giving the branch an impenetrable
19 fortress like quality. Rene Paul Chambellan who
20 created architectural sculptures for many New York
21 City landmarks including the Chanin and the Daily
22 News Building as well as the fountains at Rockefeller
23 Center, designed our remarkable bronze doors that
24 face Eastern Parkway as well as the commerce and
25 industry reliefs in the valiums (sp?) along the

2 facade. The east facade facing Utica Avenue is
3 decorated with bees and honey combs as well as
4 depictions of men hauling full satchels. In 1929,
5 the Design Journal Meadowlark described the building
6 a delightful and one of the finest bank structures of
7 its kinds. After completion, a special appreciate
8 dinner was held to honor the 250 plumbers, masons,
9 painters, contractors, architects and carpenters who
10 participate in the building's construction. The East
11 New York Savings Bank is a grand building celebrating
12 Brooklyn's commercial past in an area with few
13 recognized individual landmarks. Accordingly, the
14 Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm
15 this designation, and I'd be happy to ask--answer any
16 questions you might have about the project.

17 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you, Ms. George.

18 LAUREN GEORGE: Uh-huh.

19 CHAIRPERSON KOO: So my first question is
20 who is the occupant of this building, a popular
21 saving bank?

22 LAUREN GEORGE: Yes, it was Banco
23 Popular, and then it changed hands, and there will be
24 a Modelle' in the space.

25 CHAIRPERSON KOO: It is no longer a bank.

2 LAUREN GEORGE: That's correct.

3 CHAIRPERSON KOO: So it's Modell Sporting
4 Goods.

5 LAUREN GEORGE: Yes, a sporting goods
6 store, yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON KOO: They're taking up the
8 whole--the whole building?

9 LAUREN GEORGE: Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Okay.

11 LAUREN GEORGE: And we've recently just
12 approved a permit for their work.

13 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Okay. So who is the
14 owner of this building?

15 LAUREN GEORGE: It is--I have name.

16 MICHAEL OWEN: [off mic] It's Urban
17 Space, LLC. [on mic] Excuse me. I'm Michael Owen,
18 Landmarks Commission. It's Urban Space, LLC but our
19 primary contact is a guy named Andy Miswachi (sp?)
20 and who I've been dealing with for the past year on
21 our multiple drawings and work that they submit to
22 the Commission.

23 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Okay, so Modell and the
24 management, they agreed to keep the building in its
25 original shape or form?

2 LAUREN GEORGE: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON KOO: They won't do any
4 changes to it?

5 LAUREN GEORGE: That's correct and in our
6 working with them on the process, they've been very
7 cooperatives and we've--we've worked to make sure
8 that the permits that we issue are, you know, working
9 with them on the work that they need to do.

10 MICHAEL OWEN: Right and just to add that
11 the only change will be the signage from Banco
12 Popular to Modell's.

13 CHAIRPERSON KOO: And you feel sure that
14 they want to be entering this. They had to get
15 permission from you, right?

16 LAUREN GEORGE: That's correct. I mean,
17 right. We would have to permit anything that we need
18 a DOB permit and any exterior changes that need to
19 come before us--

20 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Okay.

21 LAUREN GEORGE: --if they have any
22 questions.

23 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Okay. So are--are
24 there members who have questions? No, are there--are
25 there any more members of the public who wish to

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2 testify? Seeing none, I will now close the public
3 hearing on this item. We will now move on a vote to
4 approve Land Use Item 383. Counsel please call--the
5 roll call.

6 LEGAL COUNSEL: Chair Koo.

7 CHAIRPERSON KOO: I vote aye.

8 LEGAL COUNSEL: Council Member Palma.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: I vote aye.

10 LEGAL COUNSEL: Council Member Barron.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I vote aye.

12 LEGAL COUNSEL: Council Member Kallos.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Aye.

14 LEGAL COUNSEL: By a vote of 4 votes in
15 the affirmative, 0 in the negative and 0 abstentions,
16 LU 383 is approved referred to the full Land Use
17 Committee.

18 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Yeah, we will hold the
19 floor open another 15 minutes in case other members
20 want to come to vote. Yeah. [background comments,
21 pause] Okay, we are joined by Council Member Rose and
22 Levin and council members, would you like to vote.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Yes.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I want to thank you
25 for holding the vote open, and I apologize for

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2 keeping you waiting. I love this building, and I
3 vote aye for land marking. Thank you.

4 LEGAL COUNSEL: Council Member Levin.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I vote aye.

6 LEGAL COUNSEL: the final vote is 6 votes
7 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and 0
8 abstentions.

9 CHAIRPERSON KOO: Thank you. The meeting
10 is adjourned. [gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date June 30, 2016