

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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February 15, 2017
Start: 10:24 a.m.
Recess: 11:11 a.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: JULISSA FERRERAS-COPELAND
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Ydanis A. Rodriguez
James G. Van Bramer
Vanessa L. Gibson
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Laurie A. Cumbo
Corey D. Johnson
Mark Levine
I. Daneek Miller
Helen K. Rosenthal
Steven Matteo

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

Chris Goddard, Executive Director
Neighborhood Development
Department of Small Business Services

Jennifer Kitson, BID Program Director
Department of Small Business Services
Department of Small Business Services

Michael Milano, Senior Program Manager
BID Development and Senior Analyst
Department of Small Business Services

Maria Esposito, President
New Dorp Merchants Group,
Owner of Norman Heil Insurance

Carmine De Santos, Attorney
With office on New Dorp Lane

Steven Grillo, First Vice President
Staten Island Economic Development Corporation

2 [sound check, pause]

3 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Good

4 morning and welcome today's Finance Committee
5 hearing. I'm Council Member Julissa Ferreras-
6 Copeland, and we've been joined by Minority Leader
7 Matteo and other members will be joining us shortly.
8 Today the committee has several items on the agenda
9 including a resolution, six land use items and BID.
10 First the committee will consider a resolution—a
11 resolution considered by the Speaker Melissa Mark-
12 Viverito—sponsored sorry—by the Speaker Melissa Mark-
13 Viverito, which would authorize the Speaker to file
14 or join Amicus briefs on behalf of the Council and
15 litigation challenging any president or President
16 Donald's Trump Executive Order relating to
17 immigration. As the Trump Administration continues
18 to target immigrant families through executive
19 orders, and other actions, New York City has
20 committed to standing along side the other three
21 million immigrant men, women and children that call
22 our city home. We will defend them against any
23 attempt to deny them their constitutional protections
24 and protect them against any effort to tear their
25 families apart. I am proud to support this

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2 resolution. Next we will consider the package of
3 Land Use items. These are all part of the SHIVA
4 Portfolio containing six projects for which HPD is
5 seeking—seeking partial 30-year tax exemptions to
6 preserve their long-term affordability. The first
7 project 795 St. Nicholas Avenue is a single building
8 with 57 residential units located in Harlem. Council
9 Member Dickens gave her support for this exemption
10 prior to leaving the Council. The next three
11 projects are located in Council Member Gibson's
12 district, 12040 Walton—1240 Walton Avenue located on
13 the Concourse section of the Bronx is a single
14 building with 157 residential units and one
15 commercial unit, 288 East 168th Street also located
16 in the Concourse is a single building with 28
17 residential units, and 1130 Anderson Avenue located
18 in the Highbridge neighborhoods. It is a single
19 building containing 43 residential units. Council
20 Member Gibson supports all three projects. The final
21 two projects in the portfolio are located in Council
22 Member Salamanca's district, 424 and 430 Grand
23 Concourse are two buildings containing 56 residential
24 and four commercial units located in the Mont high-
25 Mott Haven neighborhood, and 838 through 850 Stebbins

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3 Avenue is a single building with 71 residential and 7
4 commercial units located in the Longwood
5 Neighborhood. Council Member Salamanca supports both
6 of these projects. Lastly, we will hold a public
7 hearing on Intro 1454, which would establish the New
8 Dorp Business Improvement District in Council Member
9 Matteo's district. On February 1st the Council
10 adopted Resolution 1357 to set today as the hearing
11 date to hear from individuals who may be affected by
12 the proposed establishment of the BID. The New Dorp
13 BID would be located in an area with a commercial
14 strip containing restaurants, boutiques and other
15 specialized retail, health, legal and real estate
16 services as well as the Staten Island Railway
17 station. The commercial area surrounded by a low
18 density residential neighborhood. The BID projects a
19 first year budget of \$135,000 with which it proposes
20 to offer such things as rent, sanitation programs to
21 supplement city sanitation services, marketing and
22 promotion services, beautification, economic
23 development initiatives including free WiFi,
24 storefront façade design and Heritage Museum links
25 and advocacy. First we will hear from any witnesses
who wish to testify. Once we've heard any testimony,

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2 we'll then adjourn the hearing for at least 30 days
3 to allow any property owner within the proposed area
4 of the BID to file an objection to the establishment
5 of the BID with the City Clerk. In the absence of
6 the objections filed either by a majority of all the
7 impacted owners, or by property owners owning a
8 majority of the assessed value of the property within
9 the proposed BID, the committee and the full Council
10 may adopted the legislation established in order to—
11 this is— In order to do, the committee and the full
12 Council must be prepared to answer the following four
13 questions in the affirmative: [coughs]

14 Were all notices of the hearing for all
15 hearings required to be held, published and mailed as
16 so required?

17 Does all the real property within the
18 district's boundaries benefit from the then—the
19 establishment of the district except as otherwise
20 provided by the law.

21 Is all real property benefitted by the
22 district included within a district, and is the
23 establishment of the district in the best interest of
24 public.

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3 If the committee and the full Council
4 find it in the affirmative one on these four
5 questions and the number of objections required to
6 prevent the establishment of the BID are not filed,
7 then the legislation can be adopted. For further
8 details on the establishment of the New Dorp BID,
9 please refer to the committee report. The City
10 Planning Commissioner Report, and the BID's proposed
11 district plan, representatives from the Department of
12 Small Business Services and the New Dorp BID are here
13 to provide testimony. Before their testimony, I will
14 turn over the mic to Major-Minority Leader Matteo for
15 a chance to speak on the proposed bill, and after the
16 testimony on the BID, I will ask Billy Martin to call
17 the roll.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Thank you, Madam
19 Chair. I just want to start on the outset that
20 obviously I'm in full support of the BID. Back in
21 2014 when I first got into office, one of my first
22 initiatives was to start the New Dorp Merchants
23 Group, and the New Dorp Merchants Group had a goal
24 of—a simple goal and that was bringing Staten
25 Islanders back to New Dorp Lane. New Dorp Lane is a
wonderful commercial strip in my district. That

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2 could be considered any time USA, and we want to
3 bring life back to New Dorp Lane. We wanted Staten
4 Islanders to come back and—and visit our—our local
5 merchants, our wonderful small businesses, and—and
6 stay there and come back and bring their families.
7 Something that we believe that wasn't the case for a
8 while. New Dorp Lane if you—and I'm sure you heard
9 from the testimony, it wasn't always consensus that
10 we were going to get to where we are now through a
11 lot of hard work, through the Merchants Group through
12 my office. I think we've changed the perception that
13 government is not in the way of New Dorp lane, that
14 we are here to help, that we are partners, and for
15 the merchants group to turn into a New Dorp Business
16 Improvement District is a huge successful, and a
17 testimony to the hard work of—of the steering
18 committee led by Millie Esposito who is here, Staten
19 Island EDC, SBS and my office. We've had very much
20 success with events in the last three years, with
21 cleanups. With bringing people back to New Dorp and
22 that was the ultimate goal, and I couldn't be prouder
23 to be here to be one step closer to its passage. And
24 I look forward to the testimony of Maria and all the

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2 others that are here today. So I'll send it back to
3 you, Chair.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you
5 very much Minority Leader. We now hear from SBS
6 followed by any of the public that is here to testify
7 on behalf of this BID. [pause]

8 LEGAL COUNSEL: Can you raise your right
9 hand, please. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the
10 whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your
11 testimony before the committee today, and to respond
12 honestly to Council Member questions?

13 CHRIS GODDARD: I do. [pause] Good
14 morning, Chair Ferreras-Copeland and members of the
15 Finance Committee. I am Chris Goddard, Executive
16 Director of Neighborhood Development at the
17 Department of Small Business Services. I am joined
18 by our BID Program Director Jennifer Kitson, our
19 Senior Program Manager for BID Development and our
20 Senior Analyst Michael Milano. We are here to
21 testify in support of the proposed New Dorp Business
22 Improvement District. At SBS We are working hard to
23 open doors for New Yorkers across the five boroughs
24 focusing on creating stronger businesses, connecting
25 New Yorkers to good jobs and fostering thriving

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2 neighborhoods. We believe that the vitality of the
3 city's commercial corridors is a key part of
4 achieving this goal, and BIDs have been valuable and
5 proven partners in revitalization and economic
6 development across all five boroughs. In addition to
7 our role overseeing and supporting the city's
8 existing 73 BIDs, SBS supervises the BID formation
9 and expansion process serving as an advisor and
10 resources for communities interested in developing or
11 expand BIDs. We are careful to ensure that each
12 steering committee we work with adheres to our
13 planning process, and policies, solicits robust
14 community input and performs excessive outreach to
15 collect and demonstrate broad based support across
16 all stakeholder groups. Moreover, we are cognizant
17 of the unique nature of each community that we
18 assist, and we aim to empower local stakeholders to
19 make determinations on proposed services, boundaries,
20 budget size and budget size that best suit their
21 community's needs and appetite and ability to pay
22 assessments. While we always impart strong planning
23 principles and share data and best practices from
24 across the BID network, when working with any BID
25 formation effort we recognize that the power and

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2 effectiveness of BIDs rests in their unmatched
3 understanding of local news and issues. Like other
4 recent BID formations that SBS has overseen, the New
5 Dorp Formation effort has involved numerous meetings
6 and consultations with local stakeholders throughout
7 the planning and outreach phase. After each-or
8 excuse me-after extensive outreach effort and close
9 coordination with all key parties, SBS determined
10 that the documented support among all key
11 stakeholders over 50% of the area's commercial
12 assessed value providing written support in favor was
13 sufficient to submit this application to the City
14 Council. As required by law, the New Dorp Steering
15 Committee mailed the summary of the City Council
16 Resolution no less than 10 days and no more than 30
17 days before today's hearing to the following parties:
18 To each owner of real proper within the proposed
19 district at the address shown on the latest city
20 assessment roll, to such other persons as-as are
21 registered with the City to receive tax bills
22 concerning real property within the district, and to
23 tenants of each building within the proposed
24 district. SBS has arranged for the publication of a
25 copy of the summary of the resolution at least once

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2 in the city record. It is important to note that
3 this BID formation proposal is supported by Staten
4 Island Community Board 2 and additionally I like to
5 acknowledge and thank Minority Leader—Minority Leader
6 Steven Matteo for his ongoing support with this
7 effort. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge that the
8 BID formation effort is represented here today by the
9 New York BID Steering Committee who will testify and
10 be able to address any specific questions that I am
11 unable to answer. At this time, I'm happy to take
12 any questions. Thank you.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Thank you. I
14 just want to just for the record just to make sure
15 that all the—the policy and everything that we have
16 to go through to answer the four questions that SBA—
17 SBS hasn't see any problem or problems as we go
18 forward in the next 30 days?

19 CHRIS GODDARD: No Sir.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: That's it.

21 [background comments, pause]

22 LEGAL COUNSEL: We will next hear from
23 Maria Esposito, Steven Grillo and Carmine DeSantos

24 [pause]

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2 MARIA ESPOSITO: Good morning. My name
3 is Maria Esposito, and I am the President of the New
4 Dorp Merchants Group, and I'm also a proud property
5 owner and owner of the Small Business Norman Heil
6 Insurance. For the past 15 years I've been actively
7 organizing the merchants in New York and through our
8 recent partnership with Councilman Steve Matteo and
9 the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation we
10 have finally achieved the level of organization
11 necessary to secure the future of our neighborhood.
12 The New Dorp Business Improvement District will
13 further solidify the sustainability of our
14 organization and I am proud to present our proposed
15 BID to you on behalf of our steering committee. I
16 was born and raised on Staten Island very close to
17 New Dorp. In the '60s I could remember very clearly
18 my Saturday outings to the Lane. We would take a
19 one-stop train ride and shop for the day, and
20 sometimes take in a family feature at the Lane
21 Theater. We would walk down the Lane and back up
22 again, stopping in many of the retail stores along
23 the way. Looking back at it now, it reminded me of
24 something that you would see on the Hallmark Channel
25 today. In 1978, I started working on the Lane in the

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2 business I own today, and have seen many changes
3 through the years. Due to the advent of big box
4 store development and the opening of the Staten
5 Island Mall in the '70s, New York and other main
6 street areas on Staten Island have severely suffered.
7 The decline has only increased over time and we had
8 more and more vacancies, less foot traffic and little
9 desire for anyone to open up a small business.
10 However, over the past three years since we have
11 started this new merchant organizing effort, we have
12 seen a significant change. A diverse array of
13 businesses have opened up. Our streets are cleaner
14 that ever, and people about New York all over Staten
15 Island. This momentous shift in outlook has
16 encouraged my fellow property owners and merchants to
17 take measures to make sure that this revitalization
18 continues to occur. Some of our accomplishments have
19 been the addition of private sanitation,
20 beautification, holiday lighting and holiday events,
21 street pole banners and flower planters that are
22 doing our sidewalks. We have created a state-of-the-
23 art website and merchant video series, and we have
24 hosted ten events drawing over 10,000 attendants to
25 our neighborhood. Our annual restaurant call has

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2 become a huge event that draws thousands in of
3 itself. Our steering committee has acted
4 thoughtfully and decisively through this process. And
5 we have created a plan that is not only fair to our
6 mom and pop store owners, but it is also in line with
7 our long-term goals. I encourage you to support this
8 grassroots effort that property owners and merchants
9 like myself have worked so hard to achieve. We have
10 brought a tremendous amount of increased activity and
11 positive-positive awareness to the Lane and Plaza and
12 we look forward to continuing our efforts. I can
13 clearly say that we have put New York back on the
14 map. Thank you. [background comments]

15 CARMINE DE SANTOS: Good morning. My
16 name is Carmine De Santos and I'm an attorney with an
17 office on New Dorp Lane since 1997. I'm a native
18 Staten Islander who has lived on the island my entire
19 life. New Dorp Lane and the connecting New Dorp
20 Plaza have long perceived as center of business on
21 Staten Island. When I was growing up in the 1960s, I
22 distinctly remember coming to the lane with my family
23 to shop and eat. Buster Brown with its coin operated
24 mutascope and Bacci's Restaurant are involved in many
25 of my early childhood memories. When I was a little

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2 older the Lane Theater, Pizza Town and Dougherty's
3 were some of the best places to gather with friends
4 and family. Sadly, these iconic locations began to
5 fade when the Staten Island Mall was built in the
6 1970s and New Dorp Lane lost its place as the
7 island's premier shopping destination. I have
8 personally witnessed the changes in New Dorp over the
9 last several decades. When I first moved my office
10 to New Dorp, I immediately became involved in a
11 loosely organized business group that called itself
12 the New Dorp Merchant Association. The meetings were
13 few and far between and rarely addressed the concerns
14 of local merchants. The only initiative of the group
15 was to collect for the Christmas lights. Due to—due
16 to its ineffectiveness, the group disbanded within a
17 few years. Over the last three years, New Dorp
18 business owners began meeting to address a number of
19 issues that plagued the Lane. With the support of
20 Councilman Matteo and the guidance of the Staten
21 Island Economic Development Corporation, the group
22 evolved into a formal organization with regularly
23 scheduled meetings. This allowed merchants to get to
24 know each other on both professional and personal
25 levels. The new relationship led to the discussion—

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2 to the discussion and development of initiatives that
3 were designed to market the businesses in the area.

4 This led to street banners, window posters, a

5 business director, a social media presence, and—and

6 an impressive website. Perhaps most importantly the

7 shared goal of bringing increased foot traffic to the

8 area was realized through mutual support and unified

9 effort. One of the most impressive accomplishments

10 of our merchants group has been the community events.

11 This included a number of Christmas tree lighting

12 events, Columbus Day Festival, Dog Day Afternoon and

13 restaurant calls. I personally spoke with the

14 residents from New Dorp and other towns who were very

15 impressed, and excited about these events. With the

16 partial closing of New Dorp Lane and carnival like

17 atmosphere, I noticed an energy that I had not

18 experienced on Staten Island in decades. Our New

19 Dorp Merchant Association has made a significant

20 impact on the New Dorp community. The fact that our

21 association has adequate funds to underwrite these

22 projects cannot be underestimated because it allowed

23 us to pay for the necessary components of a

24 successful public event. The fact that we didn't

25 have to solicit contributions from more than 180

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2 merchants was a critical factor in enabling us to
3 accomplish our goals. This clearly underscores the
4 need for a reliable source of funding to build on the
5 impressive efforts our merchants have put forth to
6 date. I thank you for your time and consideration
7 for the New Dorp BID and look forward to bringing the
8 local merchants and surrounding community together
9 for years to come.

10 STEVEN GRILLO: Good morning, Madam. Can
11 you hear me? Good morning, Madam Chairwoman,
12 Minority Leader Matteo and members of the committee.
13 My name is Steven Grillo. I am the First Vice
14 President of the Staten Island Economic Development
15 Corporation and in that capacity I have overseen the
16 general management of the New Dorp Merchants Group
17 since it's conception in 2014. The New Dorp BID is
18 the third BID that the SIEDC has spearheaded since
19 2013 and once approved we will be responsible for the
20 creation of 75% of the BIDs on Staten Island. In
21 cooperation with Council Member Steven Matteo and the
22 New York City Small Business Services, we've been
23 working for the past three years to develop a
24 valuable partnership between property owners,
25 businesses and government along New Dorp Lane and New

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2 Dorp Plaza, one of the great traditional retail
3 corridors in Staten Island. The New Dorp BID
4 consists of 200-127 tax lots in the Mid-Island
5 section of Staten Island. The proposed district is
6 comprised of roughly 180 unique businesses along one
7 of the densest and best pedestrian friendly corridors
8 in the borough. The New Dorp Merchants Group was
9 founded in 2014 to organize these merchants and
10 provide services such as collective marketing,
11 private sanitation, beautification, holiday lighting
12 events and public advocacy all to enhance the
13 economic vitality of the corridor. The stakeholders-
14 stakeholders involved in the creation of the BID
15 understand the immense role that New Dorp plays in
16 the mid-island economy. However, new and expanded
17 services are required to keep this important mom and
18 pop corridor thriving. The steering committee of the
19 proposed New Dorp BID has introduced a \$135,000
20 annual budget to provide for private sanitation and
21 street sweeping, area beautification, marketing and
22 events and general administrative services associated
23 with hiring a dedicated BID director. SIEDC and the
24 local community leaders look forward to advancing the
25 New Dorp BID in the coming months and helping to

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2 expand business opportunities in the historic New
3 Dorp Town. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you
5 very much for your testimony, and I actually have two
6 questions. [laughs] I'm the Chair, right. So I'm-
7 I'm actually very proud and honored that you guys
8 have taken some time to come out today, and share
9 some of the historic relationship that you have.
10 You've mentioned Buster Brown, and I exactly
11 understand. I understood what that meant.
12 Unfortunately, my counsel here had no idea.
13 [laughter] He's like I don't know what that is. But
14 my question to you is in-when you began to organize,
15 what were the best times that you saw that works for
16 small business owners? Because for many of us trying
17 to do these things in our own districts, organizing
18 businesses is some of the most difficult things, and
19 we don't know what that magic hour is or what brings
20 them together. So obviously you've been incredibly
21 successful, and I think you alluded to that in your-
22 in your statement when you said, you know, we
23 organized in the beginning and it went nowhere, and
24 we were actually discouraged. But then three years
25 you have the council member, you have support. So

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2 what was the—what was the perfect combination or the
3 learning experience that you—that you went through so
4 that you can be here today at, you know, at the cusp
5 of creating your own BID?

6 MARIA ESPOSITO: If I may, when we first
7 started, Councilman Matteo was very—he played an
8 important role in this as to give us some funding to
9 do some events. So once we had our first event and
10 they could see the people that we brought to the Lane
11 and the increased awareness that we brought to the
12 area, a light bulb went off in their head and said
13 let's attend the meetings. The meetings we had at
14 different times. We'll have them in the middle of
15 the day at lunch time for some people, and we'll also
16 have them in the evening for others because we do
17 know that businesses are open sometimes 6:00 or 7
18 o'clock late at night. My office is on the Lane.
19 They all know where they can get me as well as
20 Carmine. So also just having a presence there and
21 knowing that they can pick up the phone and call
22 somebody is also very important to them as being
23 involved and aware. You have to have a relationship
24 with them. You have to stop in. You have to see
25 them. We both frequent the stores, eat in the

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2 restaurants everyday at lunch time. You know, we do
3 our banking there. We do our dry cleaning there.
4 We—we use the hair salons. We shop there. So it's a
5 question of they see the faces, and it became a very,
6 very important role as far as—as well as what
7 Councilman Matteo did in the very beginning to give
8 us the funds, to have those first couple events to
9 make people see what we can do with more funding.

10 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Great and
11 that made all the difference. Now, must for the
12 record, a couple days ago we had a hearing on
13 supermarkets and that we see that the mom and pop
14 supermarkets are dying across our city. But they
15 alluded to the fact that actually mom and pop
16 supermarkets employ more people than the traditional
17 big box. Big box by square footage actually employs
18 less people. So if you had to guess how many people
19 is this New Dorp corridor really employing from—from
20 Staten Island -I'm assuming a lot of them local. So
21 how, you know, how many jobs are you actually
22 providing, and it doesn't have to be exact, but like
23 just for the record because I think we tend to forget
24 the support that small businesses give not just to,

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2 you know, affordability but also a job opportunity
3 for people?

4 MARIA ESPOSITO: Well, coming from an
5 economic standpoint I know Steve has numbers on how
6 many, you know, official stores and property owners
7 we have.

8 STEVEN GRILLO: What I think is great
9 about New Dorp is that there's 180 or so businesses.
10 Some are two people. Some are up to 10 people,
11 right. So, you know, let's throw a figure out.
12 Maybe there's 1,800 to 2,000 people that are employed
13 along this somewhat small corridor right?

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Right.

15 STEVEN GRILLO: But it's so densely
16 packed that we have just so many businesses, but what
17 I think is—is particularly important especially in
18 these times is it's not universal in terms of what
19 type of people are employed. We have insurance
20 agencies and attorneys and accountants, but there's
21 also restaurants that hire minimum wage workers,
22 recent immigrants. There are auto body shops, and
23 detailing. There are banks. So I think the—the
24 greater message here is not necessarily the number of
25 employees, but the amazing diversity that this—that

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2 this area does have especially being geographically
3 centered in-in the mid-island. This is a great
4 gathering place for people of different economic
5 backgrounds, different educational backgrounds and
6 different cultures all to-to work collaboratively in
7 a thriving corridor.

8 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Great. I
9 think you have three fans that are coming out to New
10 Dorp. [laughter] Thank you very much for coming to
11 testify. Matteo, do you have additional questions?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Madam Chair,
13 thank you, and thank you for that question, and I'll
14 just start with a statement, and wanted to-to thank
15 the steering committee. Thank Grillo for SIEDC. Our
16 steering committee led by Maria Esposito has just
17 done a tremendous job working with me, and sharing my
18 vision. You-you talk about times and-and for
19 meetings and events and-and part of the goal when I
20 first started in the budget groups besides the
21 necessary funding to have the events, the events are
22 great for Staten Island just to come and-and-and go
23 along New Dorp Lane and visit the restaurants and the
24 stores, but the goal is to bring them back, and to-so
25 Staten Islanders recognize if they're small

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2 businesses that they're open. The best thing that
3 we heard on a Sunday restaurant call even though some
4 of the businesses were closed and—and a lot
5 participated to 85% or so was what people who said
6 they're going to come back on Thursday and go out to
7 eat or visit a store to shop, and that was—that was
8 the goal to bring back not only to events but to
9 bring them back on a Thursday night and shop local,
10 and understand what great mom and pops stores, and
11 the are Staten Islanders, and Staten Island helping
12 Staten Islanders. Another thing we had to overcome,
13 which was important, and Maria knows this because
14 when I was staffer I remember 15 years ago having
15 meeting and—and—and a lot of the New Dorp businesses
16 were not interested in a BID or coming together. We
17 had to show that government wasn't against small
18 businesses, that we're here to work with them, and I
19 think when we provided the funds and said this you--
20 the vision is-- mine to create, but it's yours to
21 sustain. And you need to do what's best for New Dorp
22 Lane in terms of services and events, and we gave
23 them control so they---because they know what's best
24 for New Dorp Lane, and I think that is—is key, and I
25 have to thank Marias for just what she's done for

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2 three years. She's just been a tremendous help to my
3 office and to getting New Dorp Lane to this point. So
4 just two quick questions for you Maria. I'm going
5 to--obviously we funded--we--we created the New Dorp
6 Merchants Group together. Tell me the services that
7 you're using now, and the services that you would
8 like to expand to the BID?

9 MARIA ESPOSITO: Right now we have
10 private sanitation. We have a--a huge marketing
11 presence on social media as well as the website, but
12 it is extremely important to us to continue to be
13 able to use the funds for sanitation, beautification
14 and awareness. I don't want to fix something that's
15 not broken, and I think what we've done in the past
16 three years we could just keep increasing.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: And--and--and in an
18 ongoing discussion we're talking about the businesses.
19 How have they grown to the point of support for the
20 BID when 15 years or whatever it was you and I were
21 sitting in an office and 90% were against to the
22 point where we have 90--

23 MARIA ESPOSITO: [interposing] Again I--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: --a 90%
25 improving.

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3 MARIA ESPOSITO: --I just think that
4 they've--they've grown in leaps and bounds by--by
5 seeing what we're doing, seeing what we could provide
6 for them. Years ago and Carmine mentioned that--that
7 we tried to collect small dues to put Christmas
8 lights up. We couldn't even collect those dues from
9 people where the past couple of years, they came to
10 me and brought their check. So, you could see that
11 they're appreciative as to what we're doing, and I
12 think they're just realizing that we could just
13 increase on this as well.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Right thank you
15 and just lastly, the--the cleaning services has been--
16 played a huge as well. No one wants to see a
17 commercial strip that--that is riddled with litter.
18 So I do want to thank the Sanitation Department for
19 working with us on clean-up efforts, and I'll--I'll
20 wear the term Clean Team and--and the business. New
21 Dorp Lane has really transformed in the last three
22 years, and we're very proud to move forward, and look
23 forward to its passage in the next months. So I want
24 to thank Steve Grillo from SIEDC, Carmine and Maria
25 and back to you, Madam Chair.

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2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank you
3 very, very much. Thank you for coming to testify
4 today. We will now hear from Council Member Gibson
5 who will speak on land use item. Thank you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you. Thank
7 you very much, Madam Chair, and good morning to all
8 of my colleagues. I certainly wanted to speak in
9 support of the three items on the agenda that are
10 currently owned by Langsam Properties in Council
11 District 16, 1240 Walton, 1130 Anderson and 288 East
12 168th Street. Over the years while I've been in the
13 Council as well as being in the State Assembly, I've
14 had great opportunity to work closely with Langsam
15 Properties. They own many, many buildings in my
16 district, and I've been very impressed with a lot of
17 the work they have been, the investments they've been
18 making, and really overall enriching the quality of
19 life of many of the families that live in these
20 particular buildings. And I had a chance recently to
21 meet with them about this proposed Article 11
22 proposal and I was very happy to hear that with the
23 new regulatory agreement, most of the residents,
24 actually all of the families will be maintained at
25 their current 50% AMI, which is very important to me

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2 to maintain the affordability in these buildings, and
3 with any turnover there would be a slight increase in
4 the AMIs going closer to 70 and 80. As the Council
5 Member representing a district of low-income families
6 on a fixed income, and also with the projected Jerome
7 Neighborhood Rezoning plan that we're facing very
8 shortly in the district it is extremely important for
9 me as the council member to preserve affordable
10 housing. With any construction we want opportunities
11 of economic and income diversity, but we want to
12 maintain the character of neighborhoods and the
13 people and the families that have lived in these
14 buildings for many, many years deserve to stay, and
15 through this new Article 11 application they will be
16 able to stay and their rents will not be increasing.
17 So I'm very proud of the work that Langsam has been
18 doing, and I encourage all of my colleagues to please
19 vote in support of these items. Thank you very much,
20 Madam Chair.

21 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Thank
22 you. Thank you very much and we have a quorum so we
23 will ask Billy Martin to call the roll

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2 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk,
3 roll call vote Committee on Finance. Chair Ferreras-
4 Copeland.

5 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: I vote
6 aye.

7 CLERK: Van Bramer.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye.

9 CLERK: Gibson.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Aye on all.

11 CLERK: Rodriguez.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye on all.

13 CLERK: Levine.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Aye.

15 CLERK: Miller.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Aye.

17 CLERK: Rosenthal.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Aye.

19 CLERK: Matteo.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: I am voting no on
21 the Amicus Brief the Preconsidered Reso and aye on
22 the rest. [pause]

23 CLERK: By a vote of 8 in the
24 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,
25 all items have been adopted with the—with the

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2 Preconsidered Reso in relation to the Amicus Brief-
3 Brief has been adopted by a vote 7 in the
4 affirmative, 1 in the negative and no abstentions.

5 Thank you. [pause]

6 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Did
7 everybody vote? Oh, that was fast. Okay. So we'll
8 keep it open for another ten minutes. We'll keep the
9 vote open for another ten minutes. Thank you.

10 [background comments, pause]

11 CLERK: Final vote Committee on Finance,
12 all items have been adopted by the Committee 8 in the
13 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions.
14 With the Preconsidered Reso regarding the Amicus
15 Brief being adopted by a vote of 7 in the
16 affirmative, 1 in the negative and no abstentions.
17 Thank you. [pause]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: [gavel] This
19 hearing is adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date February 28, 2017