

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARK, PUBLIC
SITING AND MARITIME USES

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OCTOBER 9, 2018
Start: 2:17 P.M.
Recess: 5:29 P.M.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: ADRIENNE E. ADAMS, CHAIR

COUNCIL MEMBERS: INEZ D. BARRON
PETER A. KOO
I. DANEEK MILLER
MARK TREYGER
ANDY KING

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

JEFF DUPEE, Deputy Commissioner Mayor's
Community Affairs Unit

JULIE FRIESEN, Deputy Commissioner of
Administration at the Department of
Health and Mental Hygiene

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

AURORA VELAZQUEZ, Chief Operating Office
of Animal Care Centers of New York City

VIVAN BURRIS, Coop City Resident

JASON MILLER, Coop City Resident

CEDRICK FERGUSON (SP?), Coop City
Resident

MICHELLE MALBURRY (SP?), Coop City
Resident

MARY ROSE BORDOFF (SP?), Volunteer Humane
Society of United States

MICHELLE VILLZGOMEZ, New York City
Legislative Senior Director with ASPCA

MINDA HORTON, Volunteer ASPCA

ISADORA MARTINEZ, Coordinator with
Community Engagement Team of ASPCA

FLORENCE WILLIAMS, Coop City Resident

BRIAN SHAPRIO, New York State Director
for Humane Society of the United States

BERNARD SILEC (SP?), Vice President River
Corporation

DR. ALVIN PONDER, Coop City Resident,
Member Bronx Community Board #10

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

HATTIE OVERMAN, Coop City Resident

HEATHER GREENHOUSE, On Board of Directors
of Voters for Animal Rights

JOYCE FREEDMAN, Board of Directors for
Voters for Animal Rights

DIANA VOGEL, Member of Voters for Animals
Rights

CHRISTINE GEISES (SP?), Board Member for
Voters for Animal Rights

MARY PEARSON, Coop City Director

STUARD EDWARDS, Coop City Resident

LESIE PETERSON, Coop City Resident

NELSON SWEATIE, Coop City Resident

EDITA BIRNKRANT, Executive Director
NYCLASS

ELIZABETH JENSON, Northeast Regional
Director for Best Friends Animal Society

WILLIAM SACREY, Director of Community
Outreach for the Shelter Reform Action
Committee

JUDITH LESGARTEN, Coop City Resident

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

MARGARET CHINNERY, Resident

KAREN DRAKEFORD, License Clinical Social
Worker

AARON CARNAGIE, Resident of Coop City

EVETTE VERNON, Coop City Resident

DAMIAN GREEN IYALA, Former Foster Cast

MARION KOENIG, Co-Founder Bronx Animal
Shelter Endeavor

ANN DEMPLEWOLF, Area resident

ROXANNE DELGATO, Resident of Northeast
side of Bronx

ROBERT BONELLI, runs Animal Advocacy
Group called Animals Battalion

MARILYN GALFIN, New York Voices of
Shelter Animals

CRAIG SEAMON, New York Voices for Shelter
Animals

KATARINA TROBAZO (SP?), Brooklyn Queens
Animal Save

RITA MCMAHON, Director Wild Bird Fund

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

YEN BONITA CANTANA (SP?), 120 Aldridge
Coop City Resident

SIMMON TILLEY (SP?), Resident

RICHARD DONOVAN, Coop Resident

SHARON DISCERFANO (SP?), New York City
Resident, member of New York State Bar,
New York City Bar Association Committee
on Animal Law and advisory board member
for Wild Bird Fund

CHRIS ARINELLA (SP?), Resident

BRIDGET SUPERNOVA, Resident of Mount
Haven Neighborhood

AMARI PALLADINO, Advocate Rescuer from
the Bronx

KIRSTEN CUOY, Resident

JAY HOWARD, Resident

DEBRA THOMAS, Volunteer at Animal Care
Center Manhattan Shelter as a cat
adoption counselor

RAY RODGERS, East Harlem Resident

PETER ORTIZ, Reading on behalf of Mia
Lancaster, Director of A Place for Cats

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

MARIE PALADINO, Resident

EBONY LEWIS, Bronx resident, founder of
My Pit Bull's Keeper

JUDY ROSS, 843 Forrest Avenue Bronx,
resident

LINDA MANN, Resident

RIO APOLLI, Volunteer

SUSAN BLAKE NAHAMA (SP?), Resident of
Community District #10

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MUHAMMAD ARSHAD: Test test test, this is a Subcommittee Hearing on Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses. Today's date is October 9, 2018; being recorded by Muhammad Arshad and Sarkim (SP?) Bradley. (long silence). (gavel pounding). Quiet please.

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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Good afternoon and welcome to this meeting of the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses. I'm Council Member Adrienne Adams, the Chair of this Subcommittee. We are joined today by Council Member Koo, Treyger and King. Today we will be hearing a pub... we will be holding a public hearing on LU231, an application for the site selection of property located at 2050 Bartow Avenue in the Bronx for use of the full service animal shelters, veterinary clinic and accompanying office space; however, before we commence our hearings, we will vote on two items heard at our September 17th meeting. We will vote to approve LU220, an application submitted by the Administration for Children's Service and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services pursuant to section 179C of the New York City Charter for the acquisition of property located at 888

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2 Westchester Avenue for continued use as a childcare
3 facility. The facility has been operating on this
4 site since the early 1970s in a privately owned one
5 story building. The LSN and Y Early Life Children's
6 Center II serves up to 135, three to four year olds
7 at this facility. The Childcare Center is located in
8 Chair Salamanca's District in the Bronx and he is in
9 support of the application. We will also vote to
10 approve LU219 the Landmark's Preservation
11 Commission's designation of the Boerum Hill Historic
12 District extension. The Boerum Hill Historic
13 District extension consists of approximately 288
14 buildings developed in the mid-19th Century according
15 to the LPC Designation Report the extension
16 encompasses an important commercial corridor adjacent
17 to the Boerum Hill Historic District and contains
18 cohesive erosive buildings designed in the Greek
19 Revival Italianate and other 19th Century styles
20 constructed for the working and middle class as the
21 growth of commerce, industry and transportation drove
22 development in Brooklyn around the Civil War. The
23 extension is in Council Member Levin's District and
24 he is in support of this application. Counsel please
25 call the roll to approve LUs 219 and 220.

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COUNSEL: Adams.

ADRIENNE ADAMS: I vote aye on all.

COUNSEL: Koo.

PETER KOO: Aye.

COUNSEL: Miller.

I. DANEEK MILLER: Aye.

COUNSEL: Treyger.

MARK TREYGER: Aye.

COUNSEL: The vote is for the affirmative zero in the negative and zero extension and the vote is held open.

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: We will leave the vote open. I would like to acknowledge the presence of Council Member Miller as well. We will now move on to today's hearing, Local Law 123 of 2018 requires the City to maintain a full service animal shelter in each borough by July 1, 2024. LU231 is an application submitted by New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and Department of Citywide Administrative Services seeking approval of a site selection to facilitate the development of a full-service animal shelter and veterinary medical clinic with accompanying office space in the Bronx. The non-profit contractor, Animal Care Centers of New

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2 York City has been operating shelters and admissions
3 centers across New York City since 1994 and will also
4 operate this shelter. The proposed site is located
5 at block 5141 Lot 1085 in Council Member King's
6 District. One portion of Lot 1085 is privately owned
7 by PHF, HDFC and contains a senior housing building.
8 The remainder of the lot 1085 is a city owned, is
9 city owned and is currently being used to store
10 trailers owned by NYPD. The city owned portion is
11 the development site. The project is also seeking a
12 Mayoral Zoning override to allow for development of
13 an animal shelter within a C4-3 zoning district and
14 to waive provisions of zoning resolution section 32-41
15 to permit a limited number of fenced in outdoor areas
16 for the animals. However this application is only
17 for the site selection. I now call on the Department
18 of Health and Mental Health to testify on this site
19 selection and then we will take testimony from the
20 public. Jeff Dupee, Julie Friesen, and Aurora
21 Velazquez. Before you begin Counsel, please swear in
22 the panel.

23 COUNSEL: Do you affirm to tell the
24 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in
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2 the testimony you are about to deliver and answer all
3 Council Member questions?

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JEFF DUPEE: I do.

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JULIE FRIESEN: I do.

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AURORA VELAZQUEZ: I do.

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8 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Please state your
name for the record.

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JEFF DUPEE: Jeff Dupee.

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JULIE FRIESEN: Julie Friesen.

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AURORA VELAZQUEZ: Aurora Velazquez.

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13 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very
much. You may begin.

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15 JEFF DUPEE: Good afternoon Chair Adams
and members of the committee and Council Member King.

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My name is Jeff Dupee. I am a Deputy Commissioner in
the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit. I am joined by
colleagues from the Department of Health and Mental
Hygiene as well as Animal Care Centers of New York
City, the organization contracted by the city to run
our open admission shelters. On behalf of the
Administration, I thank you for the opportunity to
testify. We are pleased to be here today to discuss
the setting of the first ever, full service animal
shelter in the Bronx which will bring much needed

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2 services to a borough that has been underserved for
3 decades. The history behind our journey here is a
4 long one but we believe before the Council is an
5 application that can successfully achieve the
6 objective of delivering a multi-unit animal care
7 operation in an efficient design on the same level of
8 nationally regarded facilities. The issue of animal
9 welfare is a priority of this administration, one
10 that like the Council we are committed to addressing.
11 I also want to take a moment to thank the City
12 Council for its leadership on behalf of animals
13 welfare toward consistent and strong commitment to
14 making sure our city is a fair place for animals. The
15 Mayor has a long record of supporting progressive
16 animal welfare reforms and during the Mayor's first
17 term the administration has worked together with the
18 City Council to enact a variety of policies to make
19 life better for the animals of this City and for the
20 people who care about them. We have worked closely
21 with the Council to regulate pet shops so they only
22 sell spade and neutered dogs and cats, no longer sell
23 rabbits or dogs and cats from puppy mills or kitten
24 mills. We have required new pet shops in 24
25 veterinary clinics to have life-saving fire

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2 sprinklers. We have also ensured that animal crimes
3 are appropriately addressed by implementing the
4 Animal Abuse Registry and creating NYPD Animal's
5 Cruelty Investigation Squad. With the support of the
6 Council, we have increased the operating budget for
7 the City's Open Admission Animal Shelters to a record
8 level so they can save more animals and be a model to
9 open admission shelters across the country. Finally
10 in 2015, the Mayor announced our intention to bring
11 full service animal shelters to all five boroughs.
12 With the support of then, Health Committee Chair, now
13 Speaker Johnson, \$1.2 million was included in the
14 physical year 2016 budget to develop plans to meet
15 animal sheltering needs of the Bronx and Queens. \$59
16 million was then added to the Capital Budget to
17 design and build and Bronx Shelter. This funding was
18 determined by the O&B Capital Project Scope
19 Development Study performed Mott McDonald working
20 with Shelter Planners of America to address the
21 specific animal care needs of the Bronx. And just
22 four months ago, on June 7th after the ULERP had
23 begun the City Council voted unanimously to pass, to
24 pass a bill requiring full service shelters in all
25 five boroughs. The Mayor eagerly signed the Bill

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2 with the understanding that we were already well on
3 our way to making this Law begin a reality. This is
4 what brings us here today. The selection of this
5 Bronx site represents a multi-year process involving
6 the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the
7 Department of Citywide Administrative Services, the
8 Department of Design and Construction, the Office of
9 Management and Budget and City Hall. It included a
10 surge of both private and public sites throughout the
11 Bronx and was guided by a comprehensive set of
12 criteria to ensure we were concerning all avenues in
13 developing sound and thoughtful proposal. We
14 enlisted the help of Bronx residents, Land Use
15 Experts and others to solicit ideas and after, and
16 after all the work we successfully found the site
17 that would allow us to move forward. The site in
18 question is a city owned property currently used for
19 NYPD storage. It is situated along a commercial
20 corridor among the stores of Bay Plaza Mall and
21 across the street from the Barton Mall Shopping
22 Center. Having an animal care center in a commercial
23 zone will raise its profile, provide additional foot
24 traffic for local businesses from employees and
25 visitors and make it easier for the residence of the

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2 Bronx to take advantage of the services being
3 provided for the first time. Behind the Barton Mall
4 Shopping Center is the southern border of Coop City.
5 During our Community Engagement during the ULERP, we
6 have heard objections to this siting from some Coop
7 City Residents. They have made it clear that they
8 would rather the site be used for a community center.
9 We have taken these concerns to heart and have been
10 engaging with residents to discuss how we can expand
11 youth, adult and senior programming as part of this
12 Land Use Application and we are eager to meet the
13 needs as part of the site selection process while
14 addressing animal care needs of the entire Bronx and
15 complying with the Law passed by the City Council in
16 June. I will work to ensure that animal welfare is
17 ongoing and our goal is to make sure that all animals
18 of the City of New York are treated with dignity.
19 Thank you again for this opportunity to testify. I
20 look forward to discussing with the Council ways to
21 continue to work for the betterment of animals of New
22 York City while ensuring local residents needs are
23 also met. You will now hear from Julie Friesen,
24 Deputy Commission for Administration at the
25 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene the

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application on this ULURP as well as Aurora

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Velazquez, the Chief Operating Officer of Animal Care

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Centers of New York City. Following Aurora's

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testimony my colleagues and I will be happy to take

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your questions, thank you.

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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very

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much Jeff, just to let you know, we did not receive

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your written testimony, the Committee.

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JEFF DUPEE: I will send it over as soon

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as this is over, my apologizes.

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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you.

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JULIE FRIESEN: Good afternoon,

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Chairperson Adams, Council Member King and members of

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the Land Use Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting

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and Maritime Uses. My name is Julie Friesen, I am

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Deputy Commissioner of Administration of the

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Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Thank you

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for the opportunity to testify here uhm on our

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application, the Department's application for site

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selection for a full service animal shelter at 2050

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Bartow Avenue in the Bronx. The Health Department is

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charged is charged with managing and caring for the

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city's population of owner surrendered, abandoned,

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homeless and lost animals. In 1995, the city created

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2 a nonprofit entity, now known as Animal Care Centers
3 or ACC to operate the animal shelter system. The
4 services the Health Department carries out through a
5 contract with ACC include receiving and sheltering
6 animals, providing medical services and animal
7 placement. ACC also performs a vital public safety
8 function by handling potentially dangerous animals,
9 accepting suspected rabid animals for observation of
10 preparation for testing and working with city and
11 state agencies and wildlife management. ACC performs
12 these services by operating full service animals
13 shelters in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Staton Island,
14 admission centers in the Bronx and Queens which
15 transfer animals to the Manhattan and Brooklyn
16 shelters daily and field operations throughout the
17 city. ACC is required to accept all animals without
18 regard to their condition, age, temperament or
19 adoptability. On June 26, 2018, the Mayor signed
20 Local Law 123 which requires the Health Department to
21 maintain and operate a full service animal shelter in
22 all five boroughs by 2024. The proposal before you
23 today would help us meet this mandate by establishing
24 a full service animal shelter in the Bronx.
25 Currently the Bronx has only an Admission Center

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2 which is too small to adequately support the current
3 intake of animals. This new shelter will add
4 critical capacity to the citywide system, allowing
5 for an additional 6,000 animals to be cared for in
6 the Bronx every year. The full service shelter will
7 provide counseling services to help people keep their
8 pets and provide adoption services for people to
9 adopt new pets. This proposed project will also
10 include an animal medical clinic, the first in the
11 city's animal care system. This application is years
12 in the making as Jeff said. Starting in 2014, the
13 Health Department worked closely with the Department
14 of Citywide and Administrative Services or DCAS and
15 ACC to carry out an exhaustive search to find a site
16 in the Bronx that would accommodate all of the
17 programmatic needs of the proposed animal shelter.
18 We also worked with the Department of City Planning
19 to evaluate these locations for zoning requirements.
20 In the first round of our search, we identified and
21 considered 21 sites that met our minimum criteria.
22 Upon this initial review, 10 of those sites were
23 eliminated because their lot size was too small or
24 they were only available for lease, therefore they
25 would not be appropriate candidates for the

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2 significant capital renovation needed to build a full
3 service animal shelter. In the second round of our
4 search, the 11 remaining sites were further reviewed
5 using the following criteria. First, a city owned
6 versus private lot. The ideal site is a city owned
7 lot, preferably vacant to avoid demolition, speed up
8 construction and reduce the time and cost of land
9 acquisition. Secondly, lot size. It is critical
10 that we identify at least an 80,000 square foot lot
11 to accommodate all the needed functions of the
12 project. This includes approximately 30,000 square
13 feet of ground floor built area to avoid moving
14 animals on elevators and minimize the spread of
15 disease. It also requires external space for dog
16 runs to facilitate animal exercise and good health,
17 sufficient parking for clients and staff and loading
18 bays for animal transfers. Third, location. To
19 reach the greater number of potential adoption
20 customers, the animal shelter needs to be in an
21 easily accessible, highly visible and well trafficked
22 commercial corridor, much like a retail store. And
23 fourth, accessibility. The site should be accessible
24 by a car and public transportation, convenient to
25 Bronx residents and located within zoning districts

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2 where animal shelters can be as of right such as in
3 District C-8, M-1, M-2 or M-3. Based on the criteria
4 above, the 2050 Bartow Avenue site was the ideal fit
5 for the needs of a full service animal shelter. It
6 is city owned. It is currently a vacant lot being
7 used to store NYPD police trailers at 88,200 square
8 feet, it is large enough to accommodate all animal
9 shelter functions and critical HVAC or heating,
10 ventilation and air conditioning infrastructure on a
11 single story with plenty of space for dog runs,
12 parking, aesthetic improvements added to the
13 surrounding built environment. It is also accessible
14 to Bronx residents via car, 11 bus lines and a 15-20
15 minute walk to the subway. Finally, it is located
16 virtually in the middle of the Coop City Shopping
17 Center, a busy commercial thoroughfare which will
18 bring foot traffic as well to provide, as well as
19 provide shopping and retail opportunities for the
20 staff and visitors of the animal shelter. This last
21 feature is key as a highly visible location can
22 increase animal adoption rates by 100%. As you can
23 see by the renderings behind us here, the proposed
24 design for the Bartow Avenue site is both
25 aesthetically pleasing and functional. It would fit

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2 well into the mix of commercial, residential and
3 industrial land uses in the surrounding neighborhood.
4 Additionally, the final design. This is a conceptual
5 design. The final design would be subject to
6 community input and approval by the Public Design
7 Commission and we would be pleased to work closely
8 with the community during that process. We are
9 looking forward to bringing this intricately designed
10 state of the art animal shelter online to serve the
11 1.4 million residents of the Bronx in the near
12 future. If this site, if this site were not to move
13 forward we would begin our search again, delaying our
14 timeline for completion by several years and well
15 past the 2024 deadline set by this Council under
16 Local Law 123. At 2050 Bartow Avenue we are able to
17 serve the health and welfare of the city's abandoned
18 and surrendered animals while providing a much needed
19 service to residence of the Bronx. Thank you again
20 for the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to
21 answer questions after my colleague Aurora completes
22 her testimony.

23 AURORA VELAZQUEZ: Good afternoon
24 Chairperson Adams, Council Member King and members of
25 the Land Use Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting

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2 and Maritime Uses. My name is Aurora Velazquez and I
3 am the Chief Operating Office of Animal Care Centers
4 of New York City. Thank you for the opportunity to
5 testify today. ACC is grateful for the commitment of
6 Mayor de Blasio toward ensuring the success of ACC in
7 our shared mission to end Animal Homelessness in New
8 York City through the construction of a full service
9 animal shelter in the Bronx. We believe the addition
10 of an animal shelter in the Bronx will provide more
11 services to a greater number of New York City
12 residents looking to engage with our organization and
13 further protect and promote the health and safety of
14 the community and its animals. ACC was incorporated
15 in 1995 as a 501c3 not for profit organization
16 dedicated to the health and welfare of pets and
17 people in New York City. For over 20 years, ACC has
18 been the city's sole contractor charged with
19 operating the existing municipal animal shelters and
20 providing animal rescue and welfare services to all
21 five boroughs seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Our
22 mission is to end animal homelessness in New York
23 City. 20 years ago, only 25% of animals entering the
24 shelter system were placed and programs were minimal.
25 Today ACC is a dramatically different organization

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2 and in 2017 achieved an unprecedented placement rate
3 of 93% for cats and dogs. We offer a full compliment
4 of services and programs that benefit not just the
5 animals but people and communities as well. By
6 contract with the City, ACC operates under an open
7 admissions model. This makes ACC unique among all
8 other animal welfare organizations in New York City
9 because we accept any animal brought to our five
10 locations whether the animal has been abandoned,
11 surrendered, found as a stray, brought in by the
12 public, NYPD or animal rescue teams and regardless of
13 age, health status, breed, species, temperament or
14 physical condition. We offer three city owned full
15 service animal care centers located in Manhattan,
16 Brooklyn and Staton Island and two admission centers
17 located in the Bronx and Queens that provide limited
18 services to help find lost pets, taken in surrendered
19 pets and offer surrender prevention alternatives.
20 ACC currently employs over 250 staff across 13
21 departments, each with a specific role as it relates
22 to our overall admission. We have staff at all
23 levels of qualification including individuals with
24 excellent skills in animal handling, customer service
25 and social work as well as advanced degrees and

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2 experience in animal welfare, veterinary and shelter
3 medicine and not for profit business. We are a
4 national leader for open admission shelters and have
5 been recognized for our progressive compassionate
6 life-saving approach to animal welfare. We engage
7 over 500 active volunteers who not only support the
8 work we do but who also experience very real benefits
9 as individuals on a personal level, something that we
10 hope to extend to Bronx residents through this new
11 facility. In addition to providing basic animal
12 services to the city of New York we also provide many
13 community enhancing programs which we strive to
14 position and deliver in a way that is responsive to
15 the needs and wishes of the communities in which we
16 are located. These programs aim to be inclusive and
17 relevant to New Yorkers with varying interest in
18 priorities. Through the Community Kids program, ACC
19 acts as an educational resource and an inspiration
20 for kids and teens in New York City by providing
21 valuable experience through the lens of working with
22 animals while providing meaningful enrichment to
23 animals, programs such as reading to cats also helps
24 promote literacy and comfort in public speaking for
25 school aged children among other benefits. With the

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2 local, state of art shelter, ACC will be able to
3 educate and inspire many more young residents of the
4 Bronx with the added benefit of investing their
5 efforts into their own communities. In addition to
6 participating in the variety of volunteer positions
7 offered by ACC, ACC is developing specifically
8 tailored programs for seniors. This programming will
9 include visits to senior centers by ACC
10 representatives with some of our easiest going
11 animals and opportunities to assist with elements of
12 the Community Kids Program which will realize the
13 benefits of pets therapy as well as help keep our
14 seniors active and engaged in their communities.
15 Through our Community Pet Program, ACC hosts popup
16 clinics throughout the Bronx providing free
17 vaccinations for cats and dogs as well as microchips
18 and referrals for free spade and neuter surgeries.
19 At these Community Pet Clinics, ACC strives to learn
20 more about other concerns that citizens may have and
21 connect them with resources that are offered as part
22 of our overall program. Through this program and in
23 partnership with local pet trainers, ACC also offers
24 free workshops for dog owners to help create safe
25 neighborhoods. These kinds of offerings support

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2 maintaining stable family units, inclusive of pets
3 which yield benefits not only to the individual
4 families but to their greater communities as well.
5 all of our programs have been developed in part as a
6 response to needs we hear within the community. ACC
7 has been operating animal shelters in New York City
8 neighborhoods for over 20 years. We are next to
9 churches and schools and we pride ourselves in
10 developing good relationship with small businesses
11 and neighbors. While our mission may be animal
12 centered, we also recognize that our activities must
13 be positioned appropriately to serve the entire
14 community which is what we hope to do in the Bronx.
15 We plan to engage this community in particular in
16 ensuring things like our adoption approach, our
17 future program development and services are
18 integrated into this communities particular needs and
19 requirements. On behalf of everyone at Animal Care
20 Centers of New York City thank you for the
21 opportunity to testify today in support of building a
22 full service animal shelter in the Bronx. ACC
23 welcomes the chance to expand our full, our full
24 compliment of animal and community services to the
25 Bronx and better meet the needs of those residents.

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2 The physical layout of a state of the art care center
3 combined with programmatic expansion would make New
4 York City and in particular the Bronx a model for
5 Animal Sheltering nationwide.

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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very
7 much for your testimony. Uhm we need a copy of your
8 testimony also, this committee did not receive it.

9

AURORA VELAZQUEZ: Yes, we have it,
10 apologizes.

11

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you before
12 we go to questions from the Committee, I now
13 recognize Council Member King to offer a statement?

14

ANDY KING: Good afternoon and thank you
15 Madam Chair. Deputy Commissioner Friesen I want to
16 say thank you for your testimony today. Uhm but I
17 will say this is a very serious conversation that we
18 got to have for the residents and of the north Bronx
19 as well as our Animal Rights Activist and I take it
20 very seriously, uhm against doctor's orders I'm here
21 nursing a fractured foot as well as being in a
22 hospital until 4 o'clock this morning with my wife.
23 So yeah I'm a little, I'm a little sensitive right
24 now, Jeff and Aurora when you come here you don't
25 bring your testimony for us to read at the same time

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2 you know is just part of the process. I'm a little
3 disappointed in it and seriously these people felt
4 that you figuring out how to get out your testimony
5 to us.

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JEFF DUPEE: My apologizes.

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8 ANDY KINGS: So uhm so it, it takes me to
9 a different place, because at the end of the day, the
10 residents and Coop City residents in the north Bronx
11 as I told them and I put on the record that I will
12 stand with the residents in the north Bronx in being
13 able to make sure that whatever we build on this New
14 York City site is conducive, is pleasing and it is
15 also in line with what that neighborhood looks like
16 so far. I grew up with animals. I love my dogs. I
17 love animals and I am not an an... I do not not like
18 animals; however, I want to make sure that we passed
19 the law, want it to be in compliance and I want to
20 make sure that we have a respectable conversation so
21 to everyone who was in this room whether you love
22 cats, dogs, fish, llamas, cows, it doesn't make a
23 difference. At the end of the day, we got to have
24 the right conversation and I'm going to ask us to be
25 respectful in this conversation today because at the
end of the day whatever gets built there, whether

1
2 it's how we manifest this use for animal use, senior
3 use, youth use, whatever it is, whatever community
4 use that we have to we have to be respectful towards
5 one another. That's what today's conversation must
6 be and has to be and as the representative for this
7 space, once this facility, whatever is built there,
8 we have to deal with the traffic. We have to deal
9 with any other things that happen in that surrounding
10 geographical area while the activists who may not
11 live in the area or someone who is driving from White
12 Plains or Yonkers or someone from another borough
13 utilizes this space; we have to deal with all of that
14 that comes with us. So I am asking us to be really
15 respectful and mindful regardless of our agendas that
16 we are respectful to the other side and listening to
17 how do we do right by the people of the north Bronx
18 and the people of the Bronx while we comply with the
19 Law. That's what's today's conversation is. This is
20 just one of many that will happen and I promise as
21 an, as an elected leader with the committee that we
22 are going to have the right conversation. Emotions
23 are going to fly today but I am asking as we fly our
24 emotions in the air that we are respectful to the
25 next person because in order for us to make this

1
2 work, there has to be some give and take and I want
3 to once again put on the record if we can't figure
4 out a meaningful give and take, I have no choice as
5 the representative of this, location, to be with the
6 residents who live in the location. So I am asking
7 us to be mindful, respectful and figure out how do we
8 formulate a plan that we comply with the law as well
9 as building on a space, whether it is implementing
10 some animal use, and I have suggesting something for
11 some animal use, give some alternations of how do we
12 make this spot make sense, as well as providing
13 services for our youth and our seniors that everyone
14 can welcome, not one side loses, one side wins. It
15 has to be a total commitment by everyone who is
16 sitting at the table whether we all live in the north
17 Bronx as I do or if you are an activist who don't
18 live in the neighborhood and you are just fighting
19 because you agenda says I got to fight for it. So I
20 want us to have the right conversation, being on
21 right of right and if we can do that at the end of
22 this process we have complied with the law and
23 everyone can walk away and say we did right by the
24 residence of the Bronx. Madam Chair thank you for
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1

2 this time today I am looking forward to hearing
3 everyone's testimony. Thank you.

4

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very
5 much Council Member King. Thank you. Uhm just a
6 question, how engaged has the community been in the
7 process? So far, just for clarity?

8

JEFF DUPEE: Uhm as thank you for the
9 question. As part of the ULUPS process we have had
10 countless conversations with residents of the Bronx,
11 residents of Coop City uhm with the Community Board.
12 Uhm it's, it's been a fairly extensive conversation.

13

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Has this been over
14 a number of years, months, when did, when did these
15 conversations around this matter happen?

16

JEFF DUPEE: We've been talking to
17 residents of the Bronx about their interest in having
18 a full service animal shelter for many, many years
19 now. Uhm as we went through the process of looking
20 for a site that would be suitable for this. Uhm as
21 Julie mentioned, we started out with 21 sites,
22 narrowed it down, narrowed it down further, once we
23 landed on this site and registered the ULURP we
24 started the conversations with the local, community
25 in sort of full swing.

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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: You mentioned the
Community Board. I'm a past Chairperson of a
Community Board. Was this brought in a Community
Board meeting? Was there input from the Community
Board?

7

JEFF DUPEE: Uhm I testified at the Land
Use Subcommittee at the Community Board, they, they
opened up for some limited comment there. I had a
lot of conversations in the hall as well. Uhm and
then also at the full Community Board where they
actually shot down testimony uhm after a handful of
people, a handful of people. So we did engage with
the Community Board on two different occasions with a
packed room, uhm and ultimately the Community Board
voted it down.

17

18

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: How long ago was
that?

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21

JEFF DUPEE: How long ago was that? I
don't have the date of that in front of me I can
follow up.

22

23

24

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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Was it three
months ago, four months ago? Was it hot outside, was
it cold outside?

1

2 JEFF DUPEE: Thereabout, yeah, it was
3 very hot that day.

4

 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Very hot, okay.
5 Inside and outside?

6

 JEFF DUPEE: There yes inside and
7 outside. It was, part of the, the, ULURP process on
8 the application.

9

 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Okay thank you
10 very much. Committee are there any questions?
11 Council Member? Council Member Miller?

12

 I. DANEEK MILLER: So what I, good
13 afternoon to everyone, and certainly to the panels
14 and those from the community and otherwise who have
15 taken their time and come this afternoon. Uhm and
16 certainly this is important to everyone as you know
17 the Council, this body has voted to ensure that each
18 borough is represented in terms of animal shelter
19 and, and by the way we don't have one in Queens.
20 With that being said, as, as it pertains to this
21 particular location here, what are the possibilities
22 uhm or a mixed use venture for this 88,000 square
23 feet at this location?

24

 JEFF DUPEE: Thank you for the question.
25 That's something that we explored early on uhm when

1
2 we were looking at sites and thought what else can we
3 do with this site. Uhm, zooming out a little bit,
4 uhm we worked with, with experts in shelter planning
5 and they made it abundantly clear to us that in an
6 ideal world we would have a much, much larger
7 property than what we were able to find in this site.
8 This was the largest suitable site that we were able
9 to find. One of the reasons that they want larger
10 sites is because it's, it's crucial to have all of
11 the animals on one floor uhm and that's to prevent
12 disease as well as other reasons that Julie can
13 expand on in a moment. And then we added a second
14 floor for administrative purposes for additional and
15 then also plan to the, the corporate headquarters for
16 ACC to that site as well. If we added a third floor
17 to it, not only would it increase the cost
18 dramatically uhm the DDC estimate is about \$10
19 million it would require additional parking which
20 would then shrink the footprint and make us need to
21 put animals on the second floor and sort of shift
22 everything up from there. Uhm if we added a fourth
23 floor to it uhm we would then be required to build a
24 parking garage which would further shift the
25 footprint upwards. So we, we looked at it

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2 extensively and these are sort of some intricacies
3 that, that.

4

I. DANEEK MILLER: So, so my question
5 again was mixed us as it related to community
6 benefits and not necessarily whether or not that's,
7 having an administrative aspect uhm attached to this
8 brick and mortar would constitute mixed use. Right.
9 So I wanted to know whether or not there was an
10 opportunity for outside of this. I am certainly not
11 saying that having the animal shelter and potentially
12 education component attached to it is not a community
13 benefit but a community benefit that uhm perhaps had
14 been agreed upon by the community itself. Is there,
15 so certainly you have taken into consider, models,
16 not just locally but nationally, are there models
17 anywhere throughout the country where there are mixed
18 use facilities.

19

JEFF DUPEE: I would like to answer that
20 two different wants. Uhm our intention to build a
21 full service, a state of the art, full service animal
22 shelter in the Bronx is following models in other
23 areas, other areas have dedicated uhm full service
24 animals shelters. I am not aware. And Aurora maybe
25 you can chime in if you have an answer but I am not

1
2 aware of any full service animal shelters in other
3 municipalities that have different community
4 programming; however, it is important that people
5 understand that the services that will be provided by
6 ACC as Aurora mentioned, while animal focused, won't
7 solely be for the animals. There is a variety of
8 community programs right now that exist within the
9 ACC and after engaging in communications with, and in
10 conversations with community members we have heard
11 loud and clear that they have an interest in
12 additional community programming. So in talking with
13 Council Member King, he asked what else could we do
14 to expand uhm sort of educational purposes at this
15 site uhm and had a variety of suggestions as we
16 mentioned. Uhm so that's something that we took to
17 heart and had dug into uhm very rapidly uhm and have
18 a suite of ideas and that's uhm you know in ongoing
19 conversation that, we need to have some off line and
20 with the community. We are also looking for other
21 ways to expand the community programming, uhm on or
22 around Coop City. Uhm so we've been talking to
23 residents of Coop City about that as recently as
24 Friday night. I was up in Coop City meeting with
25 residents, talking about some specifics, hearing

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ideas from people about what their vision was for

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this. Uhm as we see with all New Yorkers, a lot of

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people have a lot of different ideas about what they

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want and it is our interest I mean, we are very

6

committed to making sure that the needs that have

7

been vocalized from the, the local residents are met

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as part of the this Land Use Application.

9

I. DANEEK MILLER: And finally I know that

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you were looking for space that, that required

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somewhere in the area of 80,000 square feet. Is that

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consistent with the, of the other boroughs that you

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have in the outer boroughs as well or is this is a,

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kind of a, a new state of the art, adding some, some

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programming that don't exist in the other and if so,

16

what, what does that look like?

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JEFF DUPEE: So uhm thank you for the

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question. Let me start off and then I will hand it

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over to, to Julie to answer. Uhm the current state

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of animals shelters uhm in other boroughs is far from

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ideal which is why we are undertaking a wholesale

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improvement of animal shelter system. You will hear

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from advocates later today who aren't happy with,

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with the state of affairs. Uhm and the reality is

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that ACC has done absolutely incredible work with

1
2 subpar facilities, uhm reaching 93% live release rate
3 is unprecedented and these are in facilities that are
4 not built to the animal shelters. One used to be a
5 factory I think. I don't know what the others were
6 but they, they started out in an era that they truly
7 were the pound. Right. Animals were swept off the
8 streets, waited for a few days and then put to sleep.
9 That's not the case anymore. These really area
10 vibrant places now. And the shelter that we are
11 planning in the Bronx is going to be the shining gem
12 of the shelter system. It is going to be a world
13 class facility and we are very excited about bringing
14 that to the 1.4 million residents of the Bronx.

15 JULIE FRIESEN: If I could just add to
16 that, just uhm what Jeff said is right. It would be
17 larger than the shelters than the shelters in
18 Manhattan and Brooklyn currently and as Jeff said
19 those were both kind of retrofitted into old
20 warehouse kind of factory buildings. This would be
21 the first and only shelter in, in the city that would
22 be purpose built with four different areas. The only
23 one with a veterinary clinic facility as well as you
24 know a separate adoption area, community education
25 area and administrative area.

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2

I. DANEEK MILLER: Thank you Madam Chair.

3

Thank you for the answer.

4

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you Council

5

Member. Council Member Koo did you have a question?

6

Okay Council Member King?

7

ANDY KING: Uhm I'll be brief because

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we've met, we sat down and we spoke and we've talked

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and we will continue to talk and we will continue to

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figure out how do we develop on this space, whether

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it was an animal shelter or as a reduced form of what

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we are looking at today but I want to know for the

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record, uhm Council Member Miller asked about what

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does this shelter compare to as a cost of the same as

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across the United States. The question would be why

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so large?

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JULIE FRIESEN: So uhm because the, we

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would like to keep the animals on one level and so we

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would need a site that is that large to be able to do

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that, to accommodate the, the volume that we expect

21

which is based on a census and analysis that was done

22

by our consultant.

23

ANDY KING: Okay, so I'll end with this.

24

I would ask as we continue to have more conversations

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because uhm I heard testimony of making sure that we

1
2 had enough administrative and office space, so we are
3 going to figure out how to navigate this location, if
4 we are designing it basically whether it is a llama
5 or a cow or a it's a stingray or a dog and a cat
6 maybe we might consider uhm downsizing some of the
7 human components so we can make sure that we have
8 that type of animal component if we are really
9 interested in trying to make it work as opposed to
10 making sure we have enough space for the human being.
11 If we want to see animals in here and I'm talking
12 about different not just the regular pitbull and a
13 meow, meow, we got to think differently. So I'm us
14 to continue to look at this project differently
15 because again the residents here who live in the
16 neighborhood have a problem with an animal shelter.

17 JULIE FRIESEN: Okay.

18 ANDY KING: So we need to make sure
19 whatever we do to comply with the law does not
20 violate the thinking, the feeling and existence of
21 the residents who live across from Bartow Avenue.
22 Thank you.

23 JULIE FRIESEN: Understood.

24 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you Council
25 Member.

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JEFF DUPEE: Just to, follow up on that, I want to reiterate that we uhm we've taken to heart your, your suggestions and have made a suite of suggestions about how we could increase the educational components and increase community use in that space as well. I just wanted to share that with you.

9

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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Okay I'd like to thank the panel very much for your testimony today. Thank you.

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JEFF DUPEE: Thank you.

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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Okay we know that we have a lot of members of the public who wish to testify on these items. So we are going to call up, we are going to call up members of the public. Before we do that, I just like to remind everyone who would like to testify today, there are a large number of you who want to testify today, you will be on a two minute clock, we will hold you to those two minutes. We are looking right now at over 55 people that want to testify. We are going to call us Vivian Burris, Jason Miller, Cedrick Fergus (SP?), Michelle Malburry (SP?). Before we begin I would like to

1

2 mention that we have been joined by Council Member
3 Barron.

4 INEZ BARRON: Thank you.

5 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: And the vote is
6 still open Council Member Barron.

7 COUNSEL: For items um LU219 and 220,
8 Council Member Barron?

9 INEZ BARRON: I vote aye.

10 COUNSEL: The items are approved by a
11 vote of five in the affirmative, zero in the negative
12 and zero extensions and recommended to the full Land
13 Use Committee.

14 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very
15 much. I would like to thank you all for being here
16 today. Will you please state your names for the
17 record.

18 VIVIAN BURRIS: Vivian Burris.

19 JASON MILLER: Jason Miller.

20 CEDRICK FERGUS (SP?): Cedrick Fergus.

21 MICHELLE MALBURRY (SP?): Michelle
22 Malburry.

23 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very
24 much, you may begin.

25

1
2 VIVIAN BURRIS: Uhm I'm actually a little
3 surprised to be up first. I thought I had signed up
4 last, but okay. Uhm good afternoon Council. I just
5 wanted to say that while many people here are going
6 to be bringing up their opposition, I want to say
7 that I, I come not only to talk about opposition to
8 this particular site for this animal shelter but to
9 also hopefully bring or air out a possible
10 alternative that I have heard mentioned in a hearing
11 that we had in our community. I heard it was
12 mentioned at the Borough President Hearing but I have
13 not really heard any formal discussion on it. Uhm
14 and that property is actually the Baychester Square
15 property. Uhm Council Member King is familiar with
16 that, yes. Uhm that particular property is actually
17 on the west side of I-95 just opposite our location.
18 Upon until last year it was under proposal for a
19 development as a shopping center and senior housing.
20 Your Council actually voted along with Councilman
21 King not to use that site. So before I make my
22 observations let me just confirm, uhm was that site,
23 still, did the sale go through to the property owners
24 that they were going to sell it to? The private
25 developer that they were going to sell it to?

1

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ANDY KING: The MTA is still responsible for managing that site so we are in conversations to figure out how to utilize that best and I do recommend the support if we can develop this site in a reasonable amount of time, yeah the animal shelter might be a good location for it. It doesn't offend anyone in Coop City.

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VIVIAN BURRIS: Okay that said, that said then let me just say uhm I had always heard that that site was being managed by the MTA so assumed as a Community Member that the site itself was owned by the state; however, in poking around on the internet I came across something from the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination when you were originally uhm discussing what to do with that site and what I found out was and it says here, I'm reading directly from it, the disposition of the project site as a surplus property leased to the Metropolitan Transit Authority but it's owned by the City of New York so I understand that it probably didn't make the short list when the city was originally looking for properties for the animal shelter because it was you know formerly being looked at to develop commercially

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2 but now that that proposal has been eliminated, why
3 not consider that site for the animal shelter?

4

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: We are going to
5 have to wrap up right there. We will take everything
6 that you said into consideration. Thank you so much.

7

VIVIAN BURRIS: May I ask, I wasn't aware
8 that we could put in written statements, so can I
9 submit one after this hearing?

10

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Most definitely.
11 Thank you. It does need to be submitted within 72
12 hours. Very good. Thank you.

13

JASON MILLER: Uhm good afternoon, uhm my
14 name is Jason Miller. Uhm Coop City resident, uhm
15 also a former employee of animal control and current
16 employee of the Mall at Baychester. I have come on
17 their behalf somewhat. Uhm I just wanted to bring up
18 the fact that uhm ACC has and the Department of
19 Health has not reached out to Bay Plaza, in fact they
20 did not know that the mal.... that the shelter is
21 even being put near their property. As a result, I
22 have explained the situation with them and they do
23 not feel comfortable with the fact that there will be
24 an active shelter in which they have to provide
25 security as well as provide uhm a combination of

1
2 preventing traffic jams and other situations. I
3 would ask if the Council could please speak with them
4 as well as have ACC or the Department of Health talk
5 to them. We would really appreciate that. I would
6 also like to express safety concerns as I have
7 actually worked with ACC for years and have
8 experienced this myself. Uhm these animals that
9 sometimes brought to us are not always brought in the
10 best conditions or the best mindset. They are
11 scared. They are trying to run away sometimes and
12 sometimes the owners don't provide proper handling
13 for them and if an animals does get loose it runs
14 into the mall or into the Coop City area and ACC
15 unless the animal is providing some, is causing some
16 problems, they will not physically go out there to
17 get the animal, that will have to be the police's
18 issue. Uhm also they do not take care of poop and
19 other stuff that animals leave behind, that would be
20 for the grounds department and they don't feel
21 comfortable with that either. Thank you.

22 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very
23 much.

24 CEDRICK FERGUS (SP?): Yeah hi I'm
25 Cedrick Fergus (SP?) and uhm I have a couple of

1
2 points just to make to, two people did a very good
3 job. I'm concerned about the location there is a lot
4 of traffic on Bartow Avenue. A lot of traffic. Also
5 the train is very far away. The bus service, service
6 lines there are chaotic. Uhm just the location is
7 the problem not the idea of the shelter. And intake
8 area is a great idea, good location. I also worry
9 about the kids, there are a couple of schools around
10 the area, as well as Coop City. That is an issue
11 also concerned about the animals getting loose. Also
12 in the mall, there is a lot of stuff. Between the
13 (INAUDIBLE) and the nursing home so that kind of
14 makes no sense in of itself to put it there.
15 Thinking about the community and Coop City doesn't
16 have animals in there anyway. We have service dogs
17 but not animals. So it's not a good location for
18 animals. One good place to probably start would be
19 on Soundview or maybe in south Bronx because there
20 are a lot of animals in those areas. That's all I
21 have to say. Thank you.

22 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you.

23 MICHELLE MALBURRY (SP?): Good afternoon
24 panel, thank you so much for the opportunity to
25 speak. My name is Michelle Malburry (SP?) and I am a

1
2 47 year resident of Coop City. I was a child when we
3 moved there and now I'm an elder and the first thing
4 that comes to mind is when Councilman King spoke and
5 said that we had, we need to adhere to the Law. Uhm
6 I I keep thinking of the size and the span of this,
7 of this shelter and if, and also the location. The,
8 I think the Law states that it is supposed to be
9 centrally located. Coop City is the very northeast
10 tip of the Bronx. You spit and you are, you are in
11 Westchester. So uhm there are so many other more
12 centrally located areas that can be utilized for this
13 project. Uhm that's, that's my first point. The
14 second is the changing of the, of the, the members of
15 the ACC talked a lot about the changing image of the
16 ACC and state of the art and this and that and what
17 have you but that has nothing to do with the needs of
18 Coop City and its residents. Uhm I have nothing
19 against animals but I am for bridging the gap between
20 our elders and our youth which must be, which much
21 come, come first. We are the people who live there
22 and like I say I am an elder now and the, and the
23 children coming up behind us who are our future is
24 who we are thinking about. Uhm as I said, my
25 generation when kids we moved in Coop City. Now we

1
2 are seniors, we are part of the largest naturally
3 occurring senior community in the City and our
4 children and grandchild deserve what we have proposed
5 over 20 years ago. Not a state of the art facility
6 for animals but a state of the art facility for our
7 youth and elders to progress forward and co-exist
8 with what is our to help govern.

9 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very
10 much. Thank you so much panel for your testimony
11 today. Thank you. Calling up the next panel, Mary
12 Rose Bordoff (SP?), Brian Shapiro, Michelle
13 Villagomez, Mindy Forton, Horton and Isadora
14 Martinez. Please step up.

15 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you. Good
16 afternoon panel, please state your name for the
17 record.

18 MICHELLE VILLAGOMEZ: Michelle
19 Villagomez.

20 ISADORA MARTINEZ: Isadora Martinez.

21 MARY ROSE BORDOFF (SP?): Mary Rose
22 Bordoff.

23 MINDY HORTON: Mindy Horton.
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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: You may begin,
please remember to turn the microphones on prior to
speaking. Thank you very much you may begin.

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MICHELLE VILLAGOMEZ: Good afternoon, I'm
Michelle Villagomez New York City Legislative Senior
Director with the ASPCA. I'm going to skip through
my testimony, I have submitted a copy for the sake of
time but the ASPCA has long advocated for full
service animal shelters in all five boroughs. Uhm
combined with funding for the development and
renovation of full service animal shelters, the plan
to build a state of the art animal shelter in the
Bronx at the 2050 Bartow Avenue Location it is clear
that New York City is increasing its commitment to
protecting the lives of its at risk animals. Nearly
the entire City Council agreed and supported
legislation and dedicated funds to build and operate
shelters in all five boroughs. Building a full
service shelter in the Bronx will alleviate
overcrowding in existing shelters, increase
opportunities for people to adopt animals,
opportunities to reunite lost pets and their owners,
decrease the number of dogs and cats euthanized as
well enable animal care centers of New York City to

1
2 save more lives and prevent animal suffering. The
3 ASPCA has recognized that the people of the Bronx
4 need access to the types of services a full service
5 animal shelter would provide to the boroughs, pets
6 and people. In 2017, the ASPCA performed 8,900 spay
7 and neuter surgeries and treated 986 patients at our
8 primary pet clinic in the Bronx. To date, this year,
9 we have performed over 7,000 spay and neuter
10 surgeries and have seen 2600 patients at our primary
11 pet clinic. These figures show that there is a clear
12 need for animal welfare services in the borough.
13 This lack of a key resource has short changed tax
14 payers for far too long, depriving them of a basic
15 municipal service in their own community. The proof
16 of ACCs effectiveness is in its numbers. As was
17 mentioned, they have a 93% placement rate and they
18 have been focusing on pet retention. In 2017, the
19 shelter system was able to keep over 2500 pets with
20 their families. We have partnered with ACC on
21 virtually every program and we find that its
22 leadership is steadfastly committed to helping pet
23 owners access care and ensuring that New York City
24 Animals lead better lives. Uhm we will continue with
25 work with ACC, the Department of Health, the Council

1

2 and the rescue community in hopes of creating a more
3 humane New York City. Thank you.

4

ISADORA MARTINEZ: Good afternoon

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Council, my name is Isadora Martinez. I am a

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coordinator with the Community Engagement Team at the

7

ASPCA. A big component of the work that we do is

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case work. We provide free services for pet owners

9

in all five boroughs. In an effort to improve

10

animals welfare and living conditions. Currently our

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program has a very, very strong focus in the Bronx as

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it continues to be a very highly underserved area and

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that translates from Human Services as well as Pet

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Services, pet owners don't have access to doggie

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daycare and other services that are needed to

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maintain their animals healthy and happy in the home

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and that's something that we provide. Uhm currently

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in the south Bronx in doing outreach, we have worked

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with clients that are in the process of being evicted

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as centrifugation is pretty wide spread in the Bronx.

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Uhm in many cases, they don't have the option to take

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their animals with them and as a result they are

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forced to leave their animals behind which has legal

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repercussions, a lot of these cases can be avoided.

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Uhm if there is an ACC in the Bronx. I am an

1
2 employee of the ASCPA but I am also a resident of the
3 Bronx. I am currently living in the Longwood area of
4 the south Bronx. A lot of my pet owners... my
5 neighbors that are pet owners are elders that are
6 living on fixed incomes uhm and would benefit from
7 the food pantry services that are offered at ACC. In
8 general ACC, and ACC shelter at the Bronx can be a
9 resource to the community where people of all ages
10 including children, grandchildren, anybody who is
11 interested in having exposure to the animal welfare
12 fields can have what. Thank you.

13 MARY ROSE BORDOFF (SP?): Good afternoon
14 Council, my name is Mary Rose Bordoff (SP?). I'm a
15 volunteer with the Humane Society of the United
16 States and well when this came up I started thinking
17 and I said well you know we are in a civilized city.
18 How is it that in a civilized City like New York not
19 one shelter for each of its five boroughs. The Bronx
20 has almost 1.5 million residents yet not one shelter.
21 Bronx families already have access to daycare, senior
22 centers, hospitals, schools, low income housing,
23 condos and coops but nothing for families that
24 include four legged members. It is wrong to keep
25 excluding these families from their own borough.

1
2 This animal shelter would be more than just for the
3 animals. It would also provide over 100 jobs for
4 Bronx residents as well as volunteer opportunities
5 for youth and senior citizens. Many of the studies
6 out there has shown that there is a huge positive
7 impact when working with animals so this would b
8 something that would be quite beneficial to our
9 young, our youth and our seniors. It is time to take
10 care of each and every citizen in our civilized city
11 New York.

12 MINDY HORTON: Good afternoon my name is
13 Mindy Horton. I am a volunteer as the ASPA. Animals
14 often get placed either through adoptions, free
15 adoptions or through intake of strays in very low
16 income areas. Uhm the situations. On behalf of the
17 animals who have no voice and the guardian who gets
18 so much benefit out of having a pet as a companion it
19 is critical to both to have easy accessible low cost
20 resources in the Bronx for any reason but especially
21 for animal related medical and behavioral issues. It
22 is imperative for people in the Bronx community that
23 we allow them to keep their pets healthy, cared for
24 and so that their pets can continue to be in loving
25 homes and the guardians get just as much if not more

1
2 out of having a loving pet. Uhm only by having a low
3 cost resource for veterinarian, shelter and adoption
4 pre and post services can we hope to achieve a safe,
5 happy and healthy community for humans, pets and
6 strays. It's heartbreaking when people, have,
7 guardians have to surrender their pets because they
8 don't have these resources. It's heartbreaking and it
9 is very important to their mental health and physical
10 health to be able to keep them. Thank you.

11 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very
12 much so we have one person from the Bronx. Anyone
13 else on this panel from the Bronx or Coop City?
14 Just the one. Okay thank you very much for your time
15 today. I appreciate your testimony. The next panel,
16 Florence Williams.

17 FLORENCE WILLIAMS: Oh okay.

18 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Sorry.

19 BRIAN SHAPRIO: It's okay.

20 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Please state your
21 name.

22 BRIAN SHAPIRO: My name Brian Shapiro.
23 Chairperson Adams and Council Members. Thank you
24 very much. My name is Brian Shapiro, New York State
25 Director for the Humane Society of the United States.

1
2 I am speaking today on behalf of our members and
3 supporters in New York City and Bronx County. The
4 HSUS enthusiastically supports the full service
5 animal shelter at the designated Bartow Avenue
6 location. Our organization receives dozens of calls
7 and emails every year from residents of the Bronx
8 seeking information and assistance with animal care
9 related issues. There is a dire need for animal care
10 services in this historically underserved borough.
11 All New Yorkers deserve and are legally entitled to
12 equal access to animal care services as the current
13 Bronx Resource Center on East Bordum Road does not
14 meet the needs of the community. Following a thorough
15 review the City Planning Commission through the ULURP
16 has found that the proposed shelter and adoption
17 center would not have a significant environmental
18 impact and of course you know that also takes into
19 account social and human factors as well. Failure to
20 support the CPCs recommendation will leave this
21 project in limbo for years. This is something that
22 the residents of the Bronx cannot afford. There is a
23 dire need for a pet food pantry, low cost vet clinic,
24 dog training, surrender prevention counseling and
25 other essential community services the proposed

1
2 modern state of the art facility would provide. The
3 Humane Society of the United States and our members
4 and supporters in the Bronx respectfully urge the
5 City Council and speaker and members of this body to
6 vote in favor of the proposed location at Bartow
7 Avenue and I will simply share a personal
8 observation. I was the Executive Director of the
9 County's Animal Shelter in Ulster County in Kingston,
10 New York for many years and I did find that it was a
11 benefit to the community. I think Council Member
12 King spoke very well to that issue and my own
13 observations are that it does benefit members of the
14 community and the good people from Coop City who are
15 here today. Thank you for this opportunity.

16 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very
17 much for your testimony. Okay we are going to
18 continue on with the next panel, Florence Williams,
19 Bernard Silec (SP?), Dr. Alvin Ponder and Hattie
20 Overman. Please come up. Thank you. Okay as a
21 reminder you have two minutes on the clock. Thank
22 you for coming in today, you may begin.

23 FLORENCE WILLIAMS: Hi good afternoon, my
24 name is Florence Williams. I am a resident of Coop
25 City in the Bronx. We in Coop City are not against

1
2 an animal shelter in the Bronx. I agree it is much
3 needed; however, the location that you are proposing
4 is not appropriate for the area. We are a community
5 of over 55,000 residents, besides the residents that
6 come in daily. The place is really congested, even
7 crossing the street is difficult. The area at the
8 Baychester Square would be a larger lot, you could
9 build out instead of up and you could have a lot more
10 space to accommodate the animal shelter. As far as
11 the buses are concerned, I would need to know the
12 numbers of the 11 buses, because I'm not aware that
13 there are 11 buses running in and out of Coop City
14 and also uhm the first time that we were told about
15 an animal shelter was at the Community Board Meeting
16 in May and then we had another one in June where they
17 told us there was no B plan, that that's the final
18 site and that was it.

19 BERNARD SILEC (SP): Bernard Silec Vice
20 President of River Corporation. First let me commend
21 the uhm Council for adopting the resolution to create
22 these five shelters, animal shelters. Is there an
23 equivalent program to build community centers
24 throughout our City. I want to remind the Council
25 that during the height of the depression, 11 major

1
2 community centers and swimming pools were built in
3 the City of New York and today we are haggling over
4 one community center to serve our residents. We are
5 now celebrating our 50th Anniversary of the existence
6 of Coop City; yet all of these years we have been
7 battling for, demanding that we get a community
8 center in the City of New York. And I want to remind
9 the Council that early 2000 there was actually a Bill
10 adopted by the Council, appropriating \$7 million for
11 a community center precisely on this property. We
12 don't know what happened to it, when, it went down
13 the tube evidently. Somebody dropped the ball on it,
14 we have 8,000 young people, 19,000 seniors. Yet we
15 are haggling over a piece of property that should be
16 out rightfully serving the community. Now we are not
17 opposed to animal shelters as all of our fellow
18 members of Coop City indicated but why, what is the
19 problem with building the animal shelter in an
20 abandoned golf range that's twice as big as the one
21 property that we talk about. And yet we learn
22 tonight that it is actually city owned. Why is the
23 planning commission provoking a battle between two
24 pe... two groups of people who should be working
25 together against Trump instead we are fighting each

1
2 other on a piece of property. It's a, it's, it's
3 indecent. It's indecent and it doesn't give credit
4 to the Council nor to Mayor de Blasio.

5 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very
6 much.

7 BERNARD SILEC (SP?): We have to come up
8 with a compromise and a compromise is yes, we need
9 that for a community center and yes let's build the
10 animal shelter at the former golf range.

11 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you.

12 DR. ALVIN PONDER: Good afternoon, my
13 name is Dr. Alvin Ponder. I am a long-time resident
14 of Coop City and a member of Bronx Community Board
15 #10. As a resident, I am here today to testify in
16 opposition to the city siting of the animal shelter
17 at 2050 Bartow Avenue. City Law requires an animal
18 shelter in each of the five boroughs in New York
19 City. To date, both the Bronx and Queens have no ACC
20 animal shelters for homeless, stray, abandoned or
21 unwanted animals. The Bronx is the borough most
22 populated with stray dogs and cats and the dire need
23 for an animal shelter is without question but the
24 decision which puts an animal shelter ahead of people
25 is perplexing. Coop City residents have long hoped

1
2 the city would devote the lot of 2050 Bartow Avenue
3 to a community center for the youth and senior
4 citizens. The first requirement of an animal shelter
5 should be that the community has to agree to it. In
6 this case, Coop City does not agree. Instead of
7 placing the Bronx animal shelter far away from
8 everything in an isolated area. The city plans to
9 build on a lot in the mall in the setting of a
10 restaurant and senior citizen facility in Coop City.
11 The site selection group should be seeking and
12 isolated area or industrial area like the one in
13 Brooklyn where people can walk the dogs outside to
14 exercise without bothering everybody. Potential
15 barking of dogs being exercised is a great concern to
16 Coop City seniors. Additionally, there is no
17 evidence that the businesses in Bay Plaza Mall
18 welcome the animal shelter. I myself stand on the
19 principals of the greater good for the greatest
20 number. We are urging that people's needs be given
21 this space with no malice to our four-footed fellow
22 creatures. Let this space become a social benefit
23 for everyone living in Coop City let's ask the city
24 to seek other sites in the Bronx. The City can do
25 better.

1
2 HATTIE OVERMAN: Alright good afternoon,
3 I am reading this uhm statement of the behalf. My
4 name, first of all my name is Hattie Overman and I'm
5 from Coop City and I'm reading this statement of the
6 behalf of Rod Saunders a Second Vice President of the
7 River Bay Board of Directors of Coop City. Okay he
8 says "I want to... Dear Council Member, I want to
9 submit my written objection to the proposal by the
10 City of New York to build a 47,000 square foot
11 structure that will house an animal shelter across
12 the street from Coop City. Coop City is a No Pets
13 Policy except for service animals. Only on May 24,
14 2018 meeting at the Community Board #10 we first
15 found out about this proposal to build an animal
16 shelter, only thing. With busses being the only
17 means of public transportation in Coop City, this
18 animal care center will serve only to increase the
19 uhm traffic congestion that we have. We have over
20 8,000 children, youth in our community and therefore
21 a community center would be best served in this
22 location. We also had of our colleague Councilman
23 Andy King wrote a letter in opposition as well as the
24 New York State Michael Benodetto, our State Senator
25 Jamal Bailey (SP?) and US Elliot Ingall (SP?). But

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2

what's most important here is respectfully submitted

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are copies of zoning map 4A in section 25 of the

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Zoning Resolution indicating that the proposed

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property falls within C4-3 Zoning District and that

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the intended use animal shelter is permitted only

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within a C8 Zoning District and is therefore out of

8

compliance." Uhm and so we are, he is stating that

9

uhm, okay. And I will be turning this document into

10

you.

11

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very

12

much, just for clarification, the application is for

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Zoning Override so it would be in compliance. Thank

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you all for your testimony today. Thank you. Okay

15

the next panel is Heather Greenhouse, Joyce Freedman,

16

Diana Vogel, and Christina Geises (SP?). Okay.

17

Thank you.

18

HEATHER GREENHOUSE: Hi. Hi my name is

19

Heather Greenhouse. I am on the Board of Directors

20

of Voter's for Animals Rights. Uhm I'm here to urge

21

you to approve the Bartow location of the Bronx

22

Animal Shelter. Uhm I truly believe the shelter will

23

benefit the community it so many ways. Uhm in fact it

24

is a community center because it will provide so many

25

volunteer opportunities for the community uhm but in

1
2 addition it will save 1,000s of animals lives and
3 also uhm will uhm provide pet owners in the Bronx
4 with services that they are currently lacking such a
5 low cost vet, for vaccinations, well-checks, spay and
6 neuter clinic, pet food bank, free dog training and
7 pet surrender prevention counseling. Uhm if the
8 community really truly will benefit from this in so
9 many ways. Uhm the opposition will have you believe
10 that they want to build some other community center
11 here such as a youth center but the truth is that a
12 youth center was already voted against by River Bay.
13 There will never be a community center here in all
14 the years the site remains vacant because corporate
15 interest want this site for condos, that's it.
16 Council Member Andy King is representing them and he
17 is misleading the community to oppose this animal
18 shelter in false pretenses. He is purposely hiding
19 the benefits that it will provide to the community
20 for selfish corporate profits. River Bay has even
21 put flyers up advertising for a bus for people to
22 come here and oppose this shelter. But where was the
23 bus for people to come here from the community to
24 support the shelter. There are many in the community
25 who do support this shelter and they are not being

1
2 fairly represented. Uhm they are telling the
3 community such lies as dogs are going to escape and
4 attack you. This has never happened at any other ACC
5 location and it will not happen here. We are here
6 simply because we do want what's best for the
7 community and for animals. We have nothing to gain,
8 no money, the opposition has profits at stake and the
9 power to manipulate and deceive the residents to
10 further their profit driven agenda. The bottom line
11 is the Bronx won't have a shelter by 2024 if we do
12 not approve this location.

13 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you.

14 HEATHER GREENHOUSE: An idea location
15 that was scouted for for three years.

16 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you.

17 HEATHER GREENHOUSE: Okay.

18 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Yes.

19 JOYCE FREEDMAN: Good afternoon,
20 Chairperson Adams, Council Member King and Community
21 Members. My name is Joyce Freedman I'm on the Board
22 of Directors for Voter's for Animal Rights. I am
23 also a long-term social worker and professional in
24 the animal field. Relevant to this discussion, I am
25 a manager of the Former Safety Net Helpline, a New

1
2 York City pet surrender prevention program which
3 assisted over 10,000 people with resources they
4 needed to care for their pets. You may hear those
5 who oppose this shelter location say that we must
6 people ahead of animals. Please don't accept this
7 inaccurate framing of the issue. The full service
8 center will provide a multitude of services to Bronx
9 residents, thereby helping people and the animals
10 they love. It's not either or let me explain. I am
11 testify in support of this location because if the
12 location is denied this will hurt many thousands of
13 people in the Bronx and I know this because for the
14 seven years that I managed the Safety Net Helpline we
15 received thousands of requests from pet owners in
16 need of free and low cost resources and a very
17 significant portion of these calls are from Bronx
18 families who were desperate not to give up their
19 beloved pets while struggling through a crisis. One
20 of the callers was an elderly woman named Sharice.
21 She lived alone with her 10-year-old beloved dog
22 Petunia who was her only companion. When Petunia got
23 an infected paw, Sharice was unable to afford vet
24 care or travel to a vet. Because Petunia was in pain
25 she also started nipping and while Sharice knew that

1
2 she didn't mean it she was getting worried how to get
3 a handle on this. Our program which longer exists
4 now provided her with a low cost vet, transfer to the
5 vet and free dog trainer to address the nipping.
6 When Petunia the dog was back to normal, Sharice told
7 us in tears she had thought she had to give up her
8 companion and was terrified of how lonely and
9 depressed she would become. I can share hundreds of
10 Sharice type stories which demonstrate the lack of
11 pet services that lead to the otherwise unnecessary
12 surrender of beloved pets. This shelter will provide
13 these very services to the thousands of Sharice's in
14 the Bronx who are not necessarily sitting here today
15 who will benefit from this shelter's pet food bank
16 and other services people have already mentioned.
17 Please support this shelter for the community both
18 humans and pets. Thank you.

19 DIANA VOGEL: Hello. My name is Diana
20 Vogel and I am a member of Voter's for Animal Rights.
21 I am reading this statement on behalf of the Board of
22 Directors of Voter's for Animal Rights. Voters for
23 Animal Rights represents more than 60,000 supporters
24 in New York City. Our Board of Directors and
25 Advisory Board, represents a cross section of current

1
2 and former staffers of numerous animal welfare
3 organizations and experience local restorers of cats,
4 dogs, rabbits, birds and reptiles. Voter's for
5 Animal Rights enthusiastically supports the
6 construction of the city mandated full service Bronx
7 Animal Shelter at the chosen location of Bartow
8 Avenue. We are extremely concerned if this location
9 is not approved. The delay of many years before
10 another suitable location is found and approved will
11 needlessly cause a housing shortage for thousands of
12 dogs, cats, rabbits, birds, reptiles and other
13 animals and will cause tremendous heartache to Bronx
14 families who are so in need of pet support services
15 which this modern expertly designed animal shelter
16 would provide. What is truly disturbing is that the
17 Real Estate interest who are opposing this
18 wonderfully community oriented animal shelter are
19 completely misleading Coop City residents and being
20 insincere when they tell them such falsehoods such as
21 all the pit bulls will escape the shelter. Never has
22 this absurdity happened to other ACC locations and
23 that the alternative will be a youth center. The
24 alternative will be condos instead of programs youth
25 and seniors can enjoy such as those at the animal

1
2 shelter. As well, the frequently uttered statement
3 that Coop City has a no pet policy except for service
4 animals is irrelevant. Residents can still volunteer
5 at the shelter and other local Bronx residents can
6 adopt. Coop City and Bronx residents and all
7 involved need to know the truth that the opposition
8 to the shelter are purely profit driven deceptive and
9 do not have the community's best interest at heart.
10 In order to meet the mandate of a Bronx and Queens
11 full service animal shelter by 2024 we need to get
12 moving on this Bartow Avenue location. Homeless
13 animals and Bronx pet owners cannot wait another
14 several years with a sure risk that there will not
15 even be a completed by the mandated 2024. Please
16 approve the Bartow Avenue location for the modern
17 state of the art full service Bronx Animal Shelter.
18 Thank you.

19 CHRISTINA GEISES (SP?): Good afternoon
20 Chairperson Adams and Council Members. My name is
21 Christine Geises (SP?) and I have been a New York
22 City resident for 32 years of my life. I am also a
23 Board Member for Voter's for Animal Rights and an
24 animal welfare professional who has worked and has
25 worked with some of the largest animal organizations

1
2 in the city. I first want to start by thanking the
3 committee for allowing the public to be a part of
4 this process and hearing our voices. I do want to
5 say this isn't about putting animals before people,
6 this is about building a center that would be of
7 service to both animals and people. As someone who
8 has worked in the South Bronx directly with community
9 members and their animals. I know there is a great
10 need for an animal shelter in this area. My work was
11 focused in this area because statistically there is a
12 pet desert with an enormous need for services such as
13 spay and neuter, pet surrender prevention and pet
14 resources. According to the Bureau of Labor
15 Statistics there is one bed to every 89 dogs in the
16 borough of the Bronx. Manhattan and Brooklyn are two
17 of ACCs locations and in those areas of New York City
18 there is an astronomical difference Manhattan has one
19 veterinarian per 20 dogs and very similarly Brooklyn
20 has one vet to every 31 dogs. I think this paints a
21 very clear picture. I know the shelter will become a
22 safe haven for Bronx residents who do not know where
23 to turn with their animals when they've hit a road
24 block with their animals medically and behaviorally,
25 and then on a personal level as well. I know that a

1
2 shelter in this location can alleviate the community
3 cat epidemic. I know this shelter will save
4 thousands of animal's lives. The City needs this
5 proposed shelter and we need it now. Voting no today
6 will delay this shelter from moving forward leaving
7 Bronx community residents stranded and the countless
8 New York City animals in their homes and in the
9 streets. I respectfully urge you today to vote yes
10 to proposal site 2050 Bartow Avenue for animal care
11 center's full service animal shelter and veterinary
12 clinic. Thank you.

13 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you all for
14 your testimony and your time today. Thank you so
15 much. Thank you. Hold on please, we do have a
16 question.

17 ANDY KING: I just have one question for
18 and thank you for your communications today as well
19 as all the animal activists. I just like you to
20 think and ask and answer the question, whether you
21 can answer it now. There has been a conversation
22 about not, not just building an animal shelter on the
23 site but a proposal that the MTA, the city site
24 that's managed by the MTA that could be a possible
25 suggestion that it doesn't "infringes on the

1

2 residents who live in Coop City." How come I haven't
3 heard any conversation of maybe looking at this
4 alternative as opposed to saying that everyone is
5 having a trickery conversation on this location?

6

HEATHER GREENHOUSE: We know that the
7 city took three years to choose this site and over,
8 they looked at over 50 sites and this is the one that
9 they chose and I have faith that all the criteria
10 that they use to choose this site were met. Uhm I
11 met there were people from the Mayor's Office earlier
12 and the Department of Health who explained this.

13

ANDY KING: No that's, that's not my
14 question. My question is why hasn't there been any
15 advocacy to ever look at a new location, the site,
16 the golf course is free and vacant and is not
17 imposing on any other residents in Coop City.

18

HEATHER GREENHOUSE: Has this been?

19

ANDY KING: I'm asking, yeah it's, it's
20 been, it's been suggested to the City so I'm asking
21 you all have been a part of these conversations so I
22 am asking how come no one has ever looked at this
23 site and said "hey this could be a possible site?"
24 and then now we are not having a fight with the

25

1

2 residents who live across the street from where this
3 first proposal. That's my question?

4

HEATHER GREENHOUSE: But there will be
5 residents who live near that other site who will also
6 have problems with it. No?

7

ANDY KING: Okay so I won't go into a
8 debate with you but across from the MTA site is a
9 strip mall so but that's okay you gave me an answer,
10 anybody else?

11

JULIE FRIESEN: Thank you for the
12 question, uhm my understanding is sort of repeating
13 what Heather said is we were told by the Mayor's
14 Office and the Department of Health that all
15 potential sites in the Bronx were looked at and this
16 and and various criteria made those other sites not
17 applicable whereas this one is. I wasn't part of the
18 looking process though you know but this is what that
19 we understand and we believe and we trust that over
20 three years is a very long to be looking and
21 examining a lot of sites.

22

ANDY KING: Okay anybody else want to
23 answer that question? Okay well thank you, and
24 anybody else who comes up, any advocates I would like
25 to hear your thoughts on that too because it was

1

2 proposed to the City, it was possibly looking at this
3 MTA site after the first plan fell apart and uhm we
4 are still looking for that answer.

5

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Okay we are going
6 to call the next panel, Hattie Overman.

7

ANDY KING: She is already spoke.

8

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Oh she did. Ms.
9 Overman you are representing yourself now?

10

HATTIE OVERMAN: Yes.

11

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Okay I just want
12 to be clear. Two for the price of one. Mary
13 Pearson, Stuart Edwards, Leslie Peterson and Nelson
14 Sweetie. Please come up. We are on a clock today.
15 Are all the names that I just called present, are we,
16 is the panel set, are we still? Okay before we begin
17 I am going to ask you once again to please be mindful
18 of the two minute clock, it is right before you so I
19 ask that you, as you speak, please be mindful of the
20 two minutes on the clock. You may begin.

21

HATTIE OVERMAN: Good afternoon, thank
22 you again for accepting me on my behalf. My name is
23 Hattie Overman and I'm, I'm, oh okay, my name is
24 Hattie Overman and I reside in Coop City, the Bronx.
25 I am writing to object to the building of an animal

1
2 shelter at 2050 Bartow Avenue. Something that we
3 haven't thought about, the proposed animal shelter to
4 be built will be built in the midst of three
5 restaurants, not one but three thereby concerns of
6 safety and health issues. As a result, the animals
7 could be put at risk of eliminating themselves due to
8 nervousness, unable to control themselves
9 particularly if stuck in traffic gridlock which we,
10 could happens at anytime on Bartow Avenue. It
11 happens on Bay Plaza Mall and the surrounding
12 vicinity. This location in my opinion is not a
13 proper site for the transportation of animals on a
14 daily basis in congested traffic. The 2050 Bartow
15 Avenue site is in the northeast Bronx and is not
16 centrally located as specified by the City's proposed
17 requirement. This location is also adjoined to Coop
18 City Community which is as we understand it is that
19 uhm the City Planning and animal shelter in the
20 community of Coop City did not contact Coop City nor
21 involved us in the planning process. Not even to let
22 us know that they was proposing an, an animal
23 shelter. As a matter of principal and respect, our
24 community should have been told about this since it
25 was two years in planning. So in my conclusion,

1
2 Councilman Andy King and City Council, Coop City will
3 be celebrating 50 years of existence yet we have no
4 space of facility or a facility for our youth of our
5 community of 55,000 plus. Thank you for listening.

6 NELSON SWEETIE: Good evening, my name is
7 Nelson Sweetie. I'm a Coop City resident for over 30
8 years. The first meeting I recall was on May 24
9 about this animal shelter which is 2018. Okay by the
10 Community Board. In my opinion I feel that the
11 community was disrespected in many ways. The
12 community was disrespected and because of the fact
13 that we were never told about this community shelter.
14 We were informed and this was going on for over three
15 years. Therefore I'm appalled because the first time
16 we heard about it was May 24. Not only that Coop
17 City has a no dog policy so you are going to put an
18 animal shelter where there is no dog policy. That's
19 my opinion. So.

20 MARY PEARSON: Hi my name is Mary Pearson,
21 I'm representing Coop City, I'm one of the directors,
22 we have several here. Uhm I want to take exception
23 to the first speaker who said that it was on the
24 southern border of Coop City, they don't even know
25 the location. 2/3 of Coop City is north of the

1
2 location and 1/3 is below it. Uhm, uhm, the second
3 speaker it will allow residents to keep their pets,
4 we are a no pet community. Everyone who goes to Coop
5 City signs no pets with the exception of service and
6 support animals. Support animals have been as you
7 know, there's lots of lawsuits. Support animals are
8 getting out of control because there are really no
9 restraints for anyone saying I need a support animal.
10 Uhm next location, accessibility. We can barely get
11 home to our own communities via bus. We are fighting
12 for new bus routes. It is really very inaccessible.
13 If you say it's near subways, you are wrong. The 6
14 train, you have to go over entrance ramps to
15 interstate I-95 to be able to get to the uhm, to Coop
16 City to get into it uhm from the subway station. Uhm
17 so we are not accessible. Many people kept saying
18 it's a benefit to the community, again we are a no
19 pet community. It is not a benefit to us. As Mr.
20 Sweetie said, it was incredibly disrespectful, we
21 were not asked about it. There was no plan over the
22 years speaking to the residents, first time we heard
23 about it as Mr. Overman said was May 24, we called an
24 ADHOC meeting, we were told, we were informed that we
25 were going to have no plan B this is where it should

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2 be. We fought that, we won the next EB meeting, we
3 won, the borough President we won, then it went to
4 the Nonemotional Community Planning Board that's put
5 together by the Mayor who has the necessity of
6 getting an animal shelter in each borough. We want
7 an animal shelter uhm sorry, in the Bronx but not
8 where we are.

9 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you.

10 STUART EDWARDS: The uhm, my name is
11 Stuart Edwards and I'm a 45 year resident of Coop
12 City and as long as I've been living there we've
13 always been and all of our organizations agree that
14 we should be a build a youth and a senior citizens
15 center because that's what keeps people uhm going and
16 our youth out of trouble. You know because ever
17 night I read in the papers or should I say on Channel
18 12 on TV about our youth getting into trouble because
19 they don't have anything else to do and now one of
20 the worst things that happens to youth is that they
21 have a lot of energy and the energy should be put to
22 something positive. A youth center is positive. I
23 know because I grew up in a Youth Center and I've
24 never gotten in trouble until I got to this problem
25 that we got today. So what I want to say in

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2 reference to that is that we need a youth center and
3 that's what we've been working for and that we, we
4 deserve it because this is a Democratic place where
5 we leave. We run it. We have voting rights. We
6 have all kinds of rights in Coop City and so we
7 should have a right to decide that is moved into our
8 community. Especially at this state, when they are
9 dumping things on us that we don't want and certainly
10 we have a, over 95% agreement among our residents
11 that we don't want an animal shelter in Coop City at
12 any, at any part of Coop City because we are like
13 they say a dog free community and we only allow dogs
14 to be allowed in there unless they are comfort dogs
15 and that's the only case and it should remain that
16 way. Thank you.

17 LESLIE PETERSON: Okay good afternoon my
18 name is Leslie Peterson. I've just been taking out
19 stuff here to try to fit within the two minute time
20 frame. Uhm I am here in support of the Coop City
21 community, my home. During this process, the New
22 York City Community Affairs Unit has been doing much
23 of the presenting regarding this issue. However, the
24 Community Affairs Unit never bothered to reach out to
25 the community. Additionally they did not reach out

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2 to our Community Board 10 or our borough President.
3 Still I am proud of the Coop City Community who have
4 stayed the course during the uniform land use review
5 procedure in order to have a say about their quality
6 of life. As we stated before, we are located in the
7 extreme Northeast Bronx. During their presentation
8 the Community Affairs Department and Animal Care
9 speaker said a criteria for this selection was its
10 location. This location is neither centrally located
11 nor easy to get to. In fact, this location is away
12 from adequate public transportation and would be
13 especially difficult for those living in the west
14 Bronx. Our Borough President has stated what is key
15 is a more centralized location to maximize
16 accessibility for Bronx residents. There should be
17 boundaries between commercial and residential
18 establishments. The facility again as mentioned
19 before is located between a Red Lobster and a senior
20 facility. What the animal shelter is proposing is
21 8,600 square feet for an exterior courtyard and
22 outdoor run an outdoor dog run for open air space.
23 You cannot dictate where the animals will relieve
24 themselves so between that and the barking, lodged
25 next to Red Lobster and a senior facility is

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2 inconsistent with the character of the community and
3 the rights of those nearby and should be taken into
4 account. Our Borough President, Ruben Diaz, Jr. said
5 that had he been aware that this process was
6 underway, a suitable site that satisfies all
7 stakeholders could have been identified. I would
8 like you to give our Borough President and our
9 Councilman that opportunity. There is also a golf
10 range owned by MTA. (laughing). Uhm let me just
11 say, can I.

12 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Go ahead, I love
13 your delivery.

14 LESLIE PETERSON: Okay, can I just say
15 this, we respect the ethics of the city and
16 especially our Council Members on advocating and
17 passing a Law for an animal shelter in every borough.
18 There are approximately six years left before this
19 Bill must be fulfilled so we are not in a phase of
20 complete, give our borough an opportunity to find a
21 more suitable, accessible location. Thank you.

22 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: You are very
23 welcome. Thank you, thank all of you.

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MARY PEARSON: Can I get Stuart's 17
seconds and Nelson's 5 seconds, may I. I want to
pass this in.

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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: We are going to
have to dismiss the panel and call up the other panel
but thank you so much for your testimony. Thank you.
Good try too. Trading, that's good. Okay we are
going to call up the next panel real quickly is it,
is it Edita Birnkrant, yes, okay, Elizabeth Jensen,
okay, William Sacrey and Judith, Judith Lesgarten.
You may begin.

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EDITA BIRNKRANT: My name is Edita
Birnkrant and I'm the Executive Director of NYCLASS
an animal advocacy and political action nonprofits
with supporters and activist chapters in all five
boroughs including the Bronx. The Bronx desperately
needs a full service animal shelter but it won't get
one unless this committee votes yes on the Bartow
Avenue site. As was mentioned, it took the city
three full years to select this site as the location
after visiting 50 other locations, denying this
proposal would mean a shelter cannot possibly be
built by 2024 and perhaps not ever. And in addition
to enabling thousands more homeless animals to be

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2 saved and adopted each year and relieve the severe
3 overcrowding at the other three animal care centers
4 it would also provide much needed services to the
5 community members such as low cost veterinary care,
6 care for vaccinations, wellness checks and a spay
7 neuter clinic, a pet food bank, free dog training and
8 pet surrender prevention counseling to prevent pets
9 from being surrendered due to lack of resources.
10 There is a critical need for these services in the
11 Bronx. Many residents of the Bronx consider their
12 pets their family members and they deserve adequate
13 access to pet care resources which this shelter would
14 provide. Every time there are low cost or free
15 mobile spay neuter vet clinics in the Bronx there are
16 extremely long lines of community members waiting to
17 treat their beloved pets and many waiting often
18 cannot even be served because there is not enough
19 time or the ability for the vet clinics to handle
20 everybody waiting so this shows the dire need for a
21 full service animal shelter and the resources that go
22 along with it and it is unfair to deny the people in
23 the community who need these resources desperately,
24 the shelter. In addition, these resources, the Bronx
25 shelter would provide over 100 jobs ranging from

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2 managerial to union jobs to minimum wage jobs many
3 with excellent career path options and the Bronx
4 shelter would also provide youth and senior volunteer
5 programs and it's well established that such programs
6 offer positive impacts on those involved so please
7 vote yes on this shelter.

8 ELIZABETH JENSEN: Hi my name is
9 Elizabeth Jensen I am the Northeast Regional Director
10 for Best Friends Animal Society. We are a national
11 organization dedicated to ending the killing of dogs
12 and cats in shelters and our mission is a better
13 world through kindness to animals. I was born in
14 Queens, a first generation American and when I got my
15 first decent paying job and it was time to buy a home
16 uhm I bought an apartment in the Bronx and one of the
17 reasons that I bought that apartment is because there
18 was a dog park there. And that was a long time ago
19 and I am definitely not in a position to tell the
20 residents of the Bronx what they should be doing.
21 Uhm I honestly am listening to the people here
22 speaking about their community and feeling their pain
23 about not hav... feeling they had an adequate voice
24 in this. I think as a resident of the Bronx I would
25 have been upset if people were telling me I wasn't

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2 allowed to have an animal where I lived but that's a
3 separate issue. Uhm but I'm really just here to give
4 resources and information and share that and see if
5 that's of any value. Uhm the American Medical
6 Association and the American Medical Veterinary
7 Association uhm got together and did a lot of work
8 around this idea of one health and how the health of
9 people in the community and their animals are
10 inextricably linked and as an outcome of that there
11 was a study done by the University of Denver, uhm in
12 2017 on Austin. And the reason that they choose
13 Austin is because Austin had recently put its stake
14 in the ground and really decided that it wanted to
15 have an amazing progressive community uhm and part of
16 that involved animal welfare and the stake in the
17 ground they put in that and so the study uhm really
18 was that the impact of doing this and what they found
19 was that over a six year period, Austin, doing that
20 and showing that commitment and putting forth the
21 work that took that to happen uhm generated a
22 positive end cap over \$160 million that was brought
23 to Austin as a result of that endeavor and I don't
24 want to overstay time. I have a lot of information
25 that I share about how it creates jobs and creates a

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2 brand awareness to make the Bronx a place that people
3 will want to be for generations to come. Thank you.

4 WILLIAM SACREY: Good afternoon, I'm Bill
5 Sacrey, Director of Community Outreach for the
6 Shelter Reform Action Committee and thank you very
7 much to the committee for the opportunity to speak
8 today. Now today the stars are in alignment for
9 Bronx residents. Finally there is a possibility that
10 they may actually get their own animal shelter.
11 However 18 years of unfulfilled promises has this
12 come to fast. First, we have a City Council that
13 passed a law requiring shelters for all five
14 boroughs.

15 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Is your microphone
16 on?

17 WILLIAM SACREY: I hope so. Yes it is,
18 it is. Second key Council Leaders are heeding the
19 charge to enforce that law and third for the first
20 time in New York City history we have a Mayor who has
21 made the shelters for every borough a key plank of
22 his administration. And fourth the city has
23 identified a site that checks off a host of the must
24 haves for an animal shelter so let's be clear, it's
25 now or never for the Bronx. If the Bartow Avenue

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2 site is not approved, odds are that none of us here
3 today will live long enough to see a Bronx animal
4 shelter. Please do not let real estate developers
5 derail a \$60 million state of the art facility that
6 will serve not only Bronx residents but all New York
7 City residents and their pets. We so appreciate your
8 consideration of the Bartow Avenue Facility Site and
9 seek your support to ensure its approval. Thank you.

10 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: I just want to
11 since there is a little time left on his clock to
12 answer the question that was asked by multiple people
13 about the golf course. That is owned by the
14 Department of Transportation and it is not suitable
15 or available to be an animal shelter so that's not on
16 the table so that's the reason that it was not picked
17 as a site and it can never be an animal shelter. I
18 just want to get that on the record, not possible.
19 Thank you.

20 JUDITH LESGARTEN: My name is Judith
21 Lesgarten. Year after year, decade after decade,
22 administration after administration, broken promises,
23 blind eyes and deaf ears to this business arena and
24 it's a business just like every other business that
25 exists, in fact, it's an enormous business yet it's

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2 never gotten that acknowledgement, "oh they are just
3 animals." It's enough already. Every business needs
4 to be handled and handled responsibly. Sadly they
5 depend on human beings to protect them, treat them
6 properly, responsibly as they are otherwise
7 defenceless against human hands and minds. Why do
8 you feel they don't matter? Because they don't have
9 a voice? Because they don't vote? We are it. Bronx
10 has the highest population of animals therefore it
11 makes the most sense logically that there is an
12 animal shelter in the Bronx. The people in the Bronx
13 shouldn't have to travel lengths to adopt an animal.
14 Here is the bottom line for you, June 2018, Council
15 Member Paul Vallone passed Legislation mandating that
16 every borough in New York City has to have an animal
17 shelter. The Bronx residents wants this shelter.
18 The Bronx has had years to do something with this
19 property and let it sit. They said they did little
20 to nothing, now, now, that it's on the table to build
21 a proper animal shelter which again has now been
22 mandated, everyone has something to say. Again, you
23 had years to do something, you did nothing, barely
24 any talk. Youth Center was voted against by River
25 Bay's Board of Directors, River Bay Board of Directed

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2 wanted to rent it to stores and there is already a
3 youth center nearby by the way, and still absolutely
4 no action. This space has remained vacant. This
5 will provide jobs. It will provide a place for youth
6 and seniors to volunteer at. It will provide
7 adoption, veterinary and education services. It will
8 provide low cost spay neutering which will prevent
9 unwanted litters for all of your constituents. Do
10 you know the studies on animals, and seniors and
11 children have you read any? You are discounting the
12 value of these animals as well as the business. A
13 Bronx shelter when put in the proper paper... blah,
14 blah blah hold on. The Bronx is the perfect example
15 that New York City is in the gutter when it comes to
16 homeless animals. We need to get this taken care of
17 and...

18 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you I'm
19 going to remind you again, we can, we can take your
20 written testimony within 72 hours. I'm going to
21 encourage you to send it to us as well.

22 JUDITH LESGARTEN: We need, we need a
23 fair negotiation.

24 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: We are go to have,
25 we have to, thank you, thank you very much. We have

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2 to ask you step down. Please do submit the written

3 testimony, we are going to call the next panel.

4 Margaret Chinnery, Karen Drakeford, Aaron Carnagie,

5 Evette Vernon and I think it's Damian Green is it

6 Iyala. Please come up.

7 DAMIAN GREEN IYALA: Testing one two,

8 testing one, two, test.

9 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: We have four out

10 of five. Okay. Okay, very good you may begin. Thank

11 you.

12 MARGARET CHINNERY: Good afternoon and

13 thank you for this opportunity to speak. On the

14 matter of the animal shelter, things have now gone

15 from bad to worse.

16 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Can you please

17 identify yourself for the record?

18 MARGARET CHINNERY: Oh I'm sorry,

19 Margaret Chinnery.

20 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you.

21 MARGARET CHINNERY: Things have now gone

22 from bad to worse. In stating that, we the residents

23 of Coop City do not want an animal shelter in our

24 midst. We have opened ourselves up to persons with

25 the intent to intimidate. Even the sla... even the

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2 slavery issue has been brought up. We have been
3 photographed, questioned by the opposition and have
4 been called a community of old people who do not need
5 a youth center. Please be advised that we have four
6 schools in our community. Serving the children of
7 Coop City. A youth multi-functional cen, center is
8 urgently needed to enlighten, train and occupy our
9 children. The center could also be used for our so
10 called old people to use when the community
11 facilities are closed and on holidays and weekends.
12 The center was not voted down by River Bay, please
13 remember that, it was not voted down. There are many
14 places in the borough of the Bronx that would be a
15 perfect location for animal shelter for example, the
16 Hunt's Point area, the Port Morris area, the old golf
17 course driving range that is owned by the City and
18 leased to the Department of Transportation and
19 Veseriga (SP?) Industrial Park. All of these areas
20 are not within a residential no pet community and
21 have access to transportation. So let the powers that
22 be know that we will fight this proposal despite
23 intimidation. We say our children and seniors come
24 first. Thank you.

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KAREN DRAKEFORD: Good afternoon, my name is Karen Drakeford, I am a licensed clinical social worker. I have been a social worker in the school system for almost 40 years. I have lived in various parts of the Bronx as well as worked all over the Bronx and have lived in Coop City for almost 20 years. I am very familiar with all the different dynamics of different communities in the Bronx. It is interesting to me that they keep speaking in regards to the Bronx community. We have very many different subcultures within the Bronx. Coop City is one of those subcultures. In the beginning of this hearing, uhm we talked about respect. This hearing really is not about dog lovers versus non-dog lovers, it's about respect. When one step in the community dictates to another one that they know better than we do what we need, they decide better than we do what we want and how we want it. I invite those who are hiding under this traverse of being pro-animals and we are against animals to come to our community, come visit us, talk to us for real, come walk the streets, see how our children are hanging out, getting into trouble. I have lost many of my students to the streets because there is not such a facility. I have

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2 seen many elders begin to uhm deteriorate because
3 they don't have the stimulation. There is nothing,
4 we should not be pitting animals against human
5 beings. First of all, we are all human. Our dignity
6 should be considered. And to talk about and at a
7 community instead of with a community is very, very,
8 insulting. This country as a whole has tended to do
9 that. If you look at the complexions of those who
10 feel they know better than the complexions of those
11 of us who have come to try to speak up for our
12 rights, speaks volumes of the politics going on in
13 this country as a whole and how this is a sub-country
14 of it. No one in this room would appreciate it if
15 any sub-community went to theirs and dictated to them
16 what they needed and what was best for them. Thank
17 you.

18 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Sir.

19 DAMIAN GREEN IYALA: Hi my name is
20 Damian. Alright let me find the page that I'm on.
21 Don't...

22 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: What's your last
23 name sir?

24 DAMIAN GREEN IYALA: My last name is
25 Green Iyala so a lot of people know me as Iyala or

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2 Green or Green Iyala, no one really knows how to
3 pronounce my name so that's my name. Uhm so let me
4 begin. Alright I am a former foster case of the
5 Bronx, there's, their youth program. I am resident
6 of Kingsbridge Jackson South Bronx Park, South Bronx.
7 There is your affirmation. My hamlet sob story is
8 limited to this revised testimony because I am a new
9 student of Bio Diversity and (INAUDIBLE) and don't
10 let my introduction fool you, I am just as offended
11 as any Coop resident that they would side with the
12 real estate conglomerate at their benefit, out of
13 their benefit to send a progressive project to an MTA
14 allocated golf course stresses the same conflicts we
15 as animal activists as New Yorkers and activists have
16 as the opposition. You don't like five minute, you
17 don't like waiting 30 sec... like hours for a six
18 string, we don't either. But this side shouldn't end
19 at animals and building an animal clinic won't. It
20 will create jobs, it constitutes opportunities and
21 growth for thousands of aspiring and practicing vets,
22 doctors and students. We are talking about our youth
23 and our and our elders, okay, let's include them.
24 They are not excluded in this, no one is. This is a
25 great opportunity for everyone in the Bronx.

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2 Everyone and that's what we should be looking at
3 right now. We are not friends of capitalism or
4 gentrification. No animal activist in here is.
5 Everyone needs a home. Everyone needs a place to
6 stay but that doesn't stop at humans. We are not
7 friends of capitalism or gentrification, we are
8 friends of artists, cooks, doctors, construction
9 workers, we are friends of the Bronx and we are
10 friends of animals.

11 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you sir.

12 AARON CARNAGIE: My name is Aaron
13 Carnagie. I was born and raised in Coop City. I am
14 still a resident of Coop City. I teach tennis to the
15 youth of Coop City. We have been asking for a sports
16 complex in Coop City forever and if anyone here
17 thinks that River Bay voted down anything, you are
18 mistaken. Also we have other spots in Coop City,
19 football, uhm little league, basketball. We don't
20 need an animal shelter in Coop City. The golf course
21 is a perfect location for the animal shelter. It is
22 four times as big. If that computer screen would
23 work I could show you how big it is but that, that's,
24 that's golf course is where this place should be. If
25 you put that shelter in Coop City you are essentially

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2 raping our community. You are forcing a building in
3 our community while the community is telling you no,
4 no, no. This is not the first time that we have been
5 here saying no. This is the third or fourth time
6 that we've come in front of people saying no. Common
7 sense should tell you that we need to change the
8 location. Common sense we just found out today that
9 this city owned land is the golf course. Why can't
10 someone go tomorrow and check it out. There is no
11 big delay. If people do their jobs, there is no
12 delay. That's all I have to say.

13 ANDY KING: Thank you.

14 EVETTE VERNON: Which one do I do? Turn
15 this, just go. Okay. Hello my name is Evette Vernon
16 I am a 43 year resident of Coop City, I, I am opposed
17 to an animal shelter. Uhm one of the questions that
18 I have or I'm going to make a statement. I've
19 listened to several, I've listened to a lot of the
20 advocates but do any of these advocates live in the
21 Bronx or even live in Coop City? You know, that, you
22 know that if they live in Coop City I could
23 understand them advocating uhm uhm, an animal shelter
24 but they don't so one of the other things is that it
25 was thrust upon us to actually, by thrust upon us in

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2 May to, to uhm, excuse me. About regarding the
3 animal shelter. We had no idea that it, that the
4 animal shelter was going to be built and ever since
5 then we have been pushing to ensure that it, that it
6 does not get built in our community. There is a
7 place, the golf course, the golf course is ideal.
8 One of the other problems that we have, this, an
9 enormous amount of traffic. Adding that, that animal
10 shelter would create a big problem for us because
11 we've already got problems with the Plaza Mall. The
12 other thing is that the animal shelter is right
13 between a Red Lobster and an assisted living,
14 assistant living, uhm community. That makes no
15 sense. And also Coop City is a no pet community.
16 What sense does it make for us to have a, a, pet, an
17 animal shelter across the street from us. Uhm as far
18 as an alternate site, what was the alternate site
19 that was, that was, that was requested? Where is
20 plan B? I never saw plan B. Thank you very much.

21 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you, thank you
22 all so much for your time today. We appreciate you.
23 Thank you. Okay our next panel, Marion Koenig, Ann,
24 Ann Demplewolf, Roxanne Delgato, Roberto Bonelli,
25 please step up. You may begin thank you.

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2 MARION KOENIG: My name is Marion Koenig,
3 I am a co-founder of the Bronx Animal Shelter
4 Endeavor. I am a resident of the Bronx. As an
5 animal rescuer, I am seeing up close on the streets
6 of the Bronx the desperate need for this. I have a
7 speech here that I was going to repeat the Law and
8 many of the things that have been said here. So I
9 just can say that to Coop City there is, yes a
10 restaurant on one side and a senior citizen, we think
11 that's fantastic because the restaurant may get a lot
12 more business and the senior center is going to have
13 wonderful bill activities. We are going to be giving
14 all sorts of training and educational programs there.
15 Okay we know it's a Law, we believe that the need and
16 funding for a full service animal shelter in the
17 Bronx has been attained. An exhaustive multi, multi-
18 year search on approximately 20 properties, city and
19 privately owned was presented to the DOH and this
20 site is the only one that actually fits the full
21 criteria with no municipal impact to surrounding
22 areas. Uhm the shelter like we said, is going to
23 offer jobs, greater for the youth. It's going to
24 offer educational programs. Can you imagine instead
25 of learning bad things of using cats for target

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2 practice which I've witnessed or dog fighting,
3 imagine a world without that, without dog fighting
4 because young adults have learned love and
5 responsibility at all of our programs. We absolutely
6 cannot in good conscience deny our Bronx Animal
7 Shelter this location which is not slated for any
8 other project or development, no matter what local
9 Law makes or local Councilmen say, prolonging this
10 obvious decision only endangers animals in all five
11 boroughs by continuing to overcrowd the three
12 existing shelters with Bronx animals. Thank you.

13 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you.

14 ANN DEMPLOWOLF: Hi my name is Ann
15 Demplewolf and I am just going on the record to say
16 that I live within the Community Board 10 of the
17 Bronx. I am not just an activist from elsewhere.
18 You know I live within the community and I am 100%
19 for this much needed shelter and this shelter will
20 serve the entire Bronx. It is easily accessible by
21 public transportation and by cars. There is, I
22 thought there were six bus lines but I heard there is
23 11 that go there. The highway exit is right there.
24 There is going to be ample parking. The shelter is
25 not just for Coop City. I understand they don't

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2 allow dogs there but their beef should not be with
3 us. You know if they want dogs you know or cats that
4 should be with their Coop Board. Why are they
5 blaming us? It's not just for that one area. They,
6 they wanted stores there but the buil.. the place
7 stayed vacant and then they wanted a youth center and
8 that was shot down. It will never be a youth center
9 there. Don't be fooled. This will never be a youth
10 center and it will never be a senior center. Real
11 estate developers are looking to put condos there.
12 That's what's going to be there if the, if the
13 shelter isn't there, there will be condos. Talk
14 about traffic, that will be much more traffic with
15 those condos there than with the animal shelter.
16 Thank you.

17 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you.

18 ROBERTO BONELLI: Hello my name is
19 Roberto Bonelli, I run an Animal Advocacy group
20 called the Animals Battalion. I am also on the board
21 of a local not for profit cat rescue in Queens.
22 Though I focus on animal advocacy I also assist in
23 animal rescue by fostering, trapping and neutering
24 community cats. I am here today because I have
25 adopted five cats, all of them rescued from the

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2 streets of the Bronx. Each of these cats were in the
3 care of a Bronx resident who was a rescuer. Rescuers
4 are overworked by the abandoned animal epidemic in
5 that borough. I have been able to develop these
6 friendship with these rescuers because they regularly
7 come into my borough in Queens. It is well know that
8 the Bronx is a pet services desert that lacks the
9 resources that we have in the other boroughs.
10 Supposedly Intro 401 mandated that every New York
11 City borough have a full service animal shelter
12 operating by 2024. Denying this proposal would mean
13 that the Bronx would not meet this subjective. I
14 hear a lot of talk about community. I would argue
15 that these abandoned animals are your community
16 members as well and by not having a shelter you have
17 failed them. I would argue that the Bronx Animal
18 Rescuers who are forced to travel to other boroughs
19 have been failed as well. The Bronx is solely
20 responsible for its abandoned animal epidemic and it
21 is time for the community to step up and solve the
22 problem of its own creation. Thank you.

23 ROXANNE DELGATO: Hi my name is Roxanne
24 Delgato I live on the northeast side of the Bronx.
25 This is a needed service for the entire Bronx

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2 including Coop City because actually Coop City has
3 the highest concentration of service pets including
4 the emotion, support, emotional pets as well so
5 despite this no dog pet policy it actually has the
6 highest concentration of service pets in the Bronx.
7 The Community Board that voted against the site.
8 This is the full scale animal shelter on the
9 statement of need. It did not list any youth center
10 for Coop City on its needs, nor did the borough
11 president nor the City Council allocated one penny to
12 any youth center in Coop City. A campaign has been
13 raised to promote a youth center but there is no
14 money budgeted for that youth center and nor is it
15 listed in any of the Community Board statement of
16 needs for any years, including this year. So for
17 almost 20 years, no action was taken or any youth
18 center in that site or of much less anywhere in Coop
19 City. Now that the City proposed the animal facility
20 at this site a youth center is promoted to create
21 competing needs to shew at developers who want this
22 site. AM New York reported the developer paid over
23 200,000 lobby fees to acquire this site for a 30-
24 story development. The Bronx surrenders the most
25 animals in the City and this overburdens the other

1
2 shelters in the City. This makes so that means there
3 is less space, less time and less care for these poor
4 animals. In fact, many animals get sick because of
5 overcrowding and also many are euthanized because of
6 lack of space. The opposition including City County
7 Member Andy King, the borough president stated that
8 they proposed the turning site but however, in every
9 meeting that we met with them they could not provide
10 any alternative site including the MTA which is for
11 the highest bidder and the golf course has been
12 already rejected as a site for the Bronx Animal
13 Shelter. River Bay has over 300 acres of land and
14 millions in the bank to build a youth center for, on
15 their property. As a former president at the River
16 Bay Fund wrote: "When River Bay Board of Director
17 approved using the Bingo Hall for the youth center,
18 not one elected official stepped up and did nothing
19 to make it happen. Now the elected officials can
20 make this animal shelter happen on Bay Plaza and also
21 help Coop City build the youth center on their
22 property." The forced narrative of competing needs
23 is political and dist, at this. May I say I have
24 over 1200, 1200 post cards, 500 were signed by Coop
25 residents, collected by Coop Resident Janco Gonzalez.

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We also have an email in support by the former
President of River Bay Fund. We also have emails
from Coop City residents and also from, from law
enforcement, of Community Board members for... uhm
current and former and there is almost 100 emails
from res, residents and I also have over 5500
signatures on Change.Org which I can submit to you by
uhm PDF there is too much to print.

10

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Okay we are going
to submit that into the record.

12

ROXANNE DELGATO: Thank you so much.

13

14

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you for your
testimony, thank you panel. Thank you. That, that's
our way to clap in the Council Chamber. We, we can't
do this, we do this. (laughter). Okay, calling
Craig Seaman, Katarina Chobano, Trabazo (SP?), Mr.
Simmon Tilley, Rita McMahon, Yen Bonita Cantana
(SP?). And Marilyn Galfin.

20

MARILYN GALFIN: I'll be on my knees when
the time comes.

22

23

ADAM SHAVER: Would you like me to wait
for the next round? Are you okay there.

24

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: You may begin.

25

1
2 MARILYN GALFIN: Hi I'm Marilyn Galfin
3 Voices for Shelter Animals, a full service state of
4 the art shelter uhm in the Bronx on Bartow Avenue
5 must be built and I ask the council to support that.
6 Bronx, the most populated and underserved New York
7 City community has been fighting for a state of the
8 art shelter for close to two decades. In spite of
9 bussing in only the opponents to attempt the deny the
10 Bronx constituents this most needed service, there is
11 a legal obligation to build it. it will take already
12 until 2024 animals, can't wait, people can't wait any
13 longer looking for another location. There are lives
14 at stake. Greedy real estate industry should not
15 trump over the lives of these sensitive beings, dogs
16 and cats lives matter. With no Bronx shelter the
17 animals are dropped at Bronx Admission Centers and
18 transferred into disease ravaged shelters in mainly
19 Manhattan. This overburdens the Manhattan facility
20 exposed to unsanitary conditions in these old
21 dilapidated buildings with bad air systems, these
22 animals catch a simple dog or cat cold from the
23 shelter and many are killed for that. This is
24 unconscionable. More animals add to overcrowding
25 which is one of the issues affecting disease control

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2 so this really is a citywide issue. A new state of
3 the art Bronx shelter with proper air system will not
4 breed disease, healthy animals will not be exposed to
5 sick animals and along with a better isolation units,
6 will limit the cycle of illness. This will also make
7 it easier to implevent, implement our vision of no
8 kill. Many rescues will pull animals if there is
9 less of a financial burden of caring for very sick
10 animals. Many stop pulling now because of this.
11 More of the foster, more of their fosters will take
12 in animals. Fostering is the main component of no
13 kill. With less intake, this will give all the
14 animals in all the shelters a better chance to have
15 the time, proper care and attention they deserve.
16 People of the Bronx community should not have to
17 suffer the emotional despair of putting their pets
18 which are family member for many of us into these
19 disease shelters where they can end up being killed.
20 They should not be denied the benefits of the state
21 of the art shelter with all its associated programs
22 like food pantry. These are their beloved pets.
23 This will save thousands of animals lives and this is
24 a benefit as was stated before by someone that. This

1
2 will be a historic moment for the Bronx especially if
3 we have a vision of it being a no kill shelter.

4 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you.

5 CRAIG SEAMAN: Hello I'm Craig Seaman of
6 Voices for Shelter Animals also. No signal entity
7 should impede the city's badly needed animal shelter.
8 While the siting of some City Services are steep and
9 controversy due to health and public safety issues.
10 There is no such tangible concern here. We must
11 democratically and proportionately represent the city
12 of 8.6 million people and an estimated 1.1 million
13 companion animals. This not only impacts the nearly
14 1.5 million of the Bronx who with the convenience of
15 a Bronx shelter can provide loving homes to these
16 animals and have access to badly needed affordable
17 veterinary care or in the more dire circumstances
18 have a place that can assist them in rehoming
19 companion animals who would otherwise face an
20 uncertain future. Certainly, currently with only a
21 drop off center in the Bronx the Manhattan Animal
22 Care Center is over burdened with intake which
23 increases the spread of disease at an adequately
24 equipped facility. This creates ripple effect
25 throughout the entire shelter system resulting in the

1
2 death of healthy, treatable animals. We are not only
3 depriving these animals of their lives, we are
4 depriving New Yorkers of those potential family
5 members. A new Bronx shelter with state of the art
6 health facilities which includes proper isolation
7 care where sick animals can heal and a proper HVAC
8 system can prevent the spread of CIRDC and URI that
9 plagues the shelter system; it will in turn alleviate
10 the burden of a less well equipped Manhattan shelter
11 and therefore increase live outcomes through the
12 entire city shelter system. The people of the Bronx
13 have been denied a promise for a centralized location
14 to adopt those family members for 18 years, since the
15 original shelter bill was passed in 2000. It will be
16 24 years by the time the Bronx shelter is finally
17 completed. Do not prolong the wait. This affects
18 all New York City constituents the obligates to both
19 human and non is to support this shelter.

20 KATARINA TRABAZO: Hello Council, my name
21 is Katarina Trabazo representing Brooklyn Queens
22 Animal Save. I support the Bartow Avenue Bronx
23 Shelter proposal and I urge the City Council to
24 approve it. Denying this proposal is depriving the
25 residents of the Bronx the basic right to have

1
2 companion animals at an affordable cost.
3 Unfortunately many Bronx residents are low income
4 citizens deprived of many resources that other
5 boroughs are privileged to have. Adding to this,
6 denying this proposal force many of these residents
7 to travel outside of the borough for vet care. We
8 should not be adding to these disparities. Everyone
9 regardless of income deserves the happiness of
10 sharing their life with a pet at an affordable cost
11 at their convenience. Having a companion animal
12 should not be a privilege. In addition, this long
13 overdue shelter would allow Bronx residents to adopt
14 an animal in need of a home. The shelter would also
15 provide affordable medical care for companion animals
16 living in this borough and a much needed educational
17 center. It is shameful enough that we have to pay
18 taxes on pet food. Furthermore this much needed
19 shelter would provide additional jobs to Bronx
20 residents. It is also appalling that some would
21 assume this is prioritizing animals when in fact
22 these same individuals forget to realize that these,
23 this is actually prioritizing humans by allowing
24 individuals and families to share their life with
25 animals or animals. Also studies have proven that

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2 having animals improves the happiness and health of
3 these, of these, of those sharing a home with a pet.
4 This is New York City, the capital of the world yet
5 we do not have an animal shelter in every borough,
6 thank you.

7

8 RITA MCMAHON: Hi can you hear me? I am
9 Rita McMahon and I am the Director of the Wild Bird
10 Fund. I would like to speak about possibilities and
11 truth more than an argument. The Wild Bird Fund is
12 New York City's one and only wildlife rehabilitation
13 center. We are not for profit that serve the people
14 in all five boroughs. In 2017, we treated 6,000
15 birds and animals brought in by thousands of caring
16 New Yorkers. How do we do this? It's not easy.
17 Mostly it's ACC that has allowed this to happen as
18 well as all the people who work and try to help
19 wildlife. Our mission is two-fold. The Wild Bird
20 Fund mission is two-fold, first to provide medical
21 care and rehabilitation for the injured, ill and
22 orphaned wildlife of New York City so that they can
23 be released back to the wild. The second is to
24 educate New Yorkers, particularly the young about the
25 rich diversity and environmental needs of the city's
wildlife. Over the past decade, wild bird fund has

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2 worked in tandem with ACC. In large part it is
3 thanks to ACC that we are able to serve all five
4 boroughs. When a compassionate New Yorker finds an
5 injured wild bird, squirrel, anything they will first
6 think of ACC, they call, often ACC goes to pick up
7 the animal and ACC then will bring it to the wildlife
8 rehabilitators so we have thousands of animals that
9 have come from ACC. Thousands of animals that have
10 come from New Yorkers. In the Bartow I want to talk
11 about. I know ACC for these 10 years and how they
12 have helped us by bringing the animals and we help
13 them. We've trained them how to deal with wildlife
14 how to give it emergency care and so the numbers of
15 surviving has gone up so much. They work hard, they
16 have a heart. In the Bartow Center, if the Bartow
17 Center became a reality. We would offer, I'm so
18 sorry.

19 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: What is your name?
20 Okay.

21 RITA MCMAHON: Thank you we will offer
22 the full array of our educational programs through
23 ACCs community engagement center and we have a big
24 array of programs that we do out of the Manhattan
25 Center. Michelle is in fact one of our educators, so

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2 I thank you Michelle. Uhm the second part of our
3 mission is to educate New Yorkers, particularly the
4 children about the rich diversity of the wildlife and
5 what are their environmental needs in the City. The
6 Bartow site is an exceptional opportunity for
7 wildlife programming because nature's ideal classroom
8 is less than a mile away, just 16 blocks. The Thomas
9 Pell Wildlife Sanctuary and Pellham Bay Park would be
10 phenomenal and how it could be used with the schools.
11 The programs at the Bartow Site would be a truly
12 unique opportunity for the underserved Bronx.
13 Nowhere else could we bring together ACCs extra Ts
14 and support the Wild Bird Fund outreach and community
15 involvement in the north Bronx Wonderfully Wild
16 Nature Sites. We have a tremendous opportunity here
17 that would make it a signature part of the city, uhm
18 our Signature Programs we have Pigeon Academy for
19 preschool and first graders, the Bird Academy second
20 to fifth graders, we do educational components where
21 we have internships for college and high school
22 students and programs, we've had a program for at-
23 risk teens since 2013. Every year, every semester we
24 have more at-risk teens. I have included a letter
25 from the Bronx Guild. It is now renamed, we will do

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2 business with them where they call our program Gold.

3 There is nothing like what we offer and we would do

4 the same going on just simply. We are also served

5 Gotham Collaborative High School, the Bronx Lab,

6 Mosholu Montefiore Community Center and Center of

7 School. The Wild Bird Fund with the help of ACC

8 would be able to present that to all of them, to the

9 north Bronx. Thank you very much. Thank you.

10 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you for your
11 testimony. Thank you.

12 YEN BONITA CANTANA (SP): I thank you
13 very much but my bus is waiting outside. Uhm my name
14 is Yen Bonita Cantana (SP?) I'm from 120 Aldridge and
15 I think maybe what I am going to say has been said
16 but I didn't hear it so I will say it again. Uhm I
17 live in Coop City to close to 50 years, and I have
18 seen my community go from suburban to 42nd Street.
19 Uhm I'm not against animals but I think the animal
20 shelter should go in a different location without
21 exagger... making our traffic congestion worse. Uhm
22 we have a hotel that is coming in the near future in
23 the area, we have Burlington that is coming. There
24 are several other stores more that are coming. We
25 have our own police, our own fire department and I am

1
2 concerned because we also have a housing for the
3 elderly next to the shelter and I am concerned for
4 their lives because I don't know with the congestion
5 that this is all going to hit them in uhm that our
6 lives would not be lost due to the fact that our fire
7 department and our police will not be able to
8 navigate our community. I thank you very much.

9 JUDIO SIMMON TILLEY (SP?): For the
10 record, Judio Simmon Tilley (SP?) I'm sorry that
11 Councilman King left and some of the residents left
12 because we wanted to discuss some of the traffic
13 issues that was mentioned and as the, the lady that
14 just spoke she mentioned how many other stores are
15 coming to Coop City. Coop City is the largest, the
16 largest mall in the Bronx and probably the City of
17 New York and it is growing every year but here they
18 talk about traffic. The hotel you just mentioned, a
19 hotel a half a block away on the same side is being
20 proposed. Six story over 2 million square feet, 160
21 units but no meetings, no public hearings have been
22 held. Mr. King has not held one public hearing, one
23 discussion of how this hotel, it might be a good
24 hotel, it might be a hot sheet motel, it might be a
25 contract for city for homeless, we don't know but

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2 there is no hearing. Madam Chair there is only one
3 individual that is preventing this shelter, animal
4 shelter to be located in the Bronx and that is Mr.
5 King and the bottom line is it's politics. I've said
6 it when he wasn't, I've said it to his face, I said
7 it to other hearings and I'm sorry he is not here to
8 say it but it is all politics. It's \$200,000 of
9 lobbyist, Patrick Jenkins, one of the District
10 Leaders I believe at Brooklyn is one of the biggest
11 lobbyists in New York City and he has received over
12 200,000 and when his client who has the home, who has
13 the building right next door. He has been trying to
14 get this piece of property. It has not happened, it
15 will not happen. The Mayor will not give this
16 property over, it's for an animal shelter and I hope
17 you move this project in a favorable way, Madam Chair
18 I think it is only fair.

19 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you for your
20 testimony. Thank you panel. We are going to call
21 the next panel.

22 MAN: And I'm from the Bronx.

23 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Sharon Discerfano
24 (SP?), Chris Arinella (SP?), Richard Donovan, Bridget
25

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2 Supernova. And it just says here Palladino. You may
3 begin.

4 RICHARD DONOVAN: I'll go first. Hi uhm
5 my name is Richard Donovan. Uhm first off I would
6 like to thank the Committee and Members, uhm the
7 members that were here and are here now for making
8 this hearing possible. Uhm I do find it a little
9 disheartening that the main uhm opponent of this
10 plan, uhm Councilman King gets up in the middle after
11 talking about how distribial, about respect and
12 listening and he gets up in the middle and leaves for
13 an hour and then ever, everyone else leaves so I
14 think that says a lot. When I was in Corporate
15 America, if I left a meeting that meant a lot to me,
16 I would probably get fired. I just want to put that
17 out there. We have all seen the gut wrenching
18 commercials on TV, the ones with the sad Sarah
19 McLaughlin songs showing cats and dogs scared and
20 trembling in cages, they're cringe worthy. I think
21 most people turn the channel because they feel
22 helpless. It begs the question, how can we help
23 these animals, they are innocent victims. When you
24 peel back the curtain it's imperative to acknowledge
25 that we have an overpopulation of unwanted dogs and

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2 cats in New York City. The current shelters in
3 Manhattan, Staten Island and Brooklyn can't handle
4 the load anymore. This is where the Bronx can make a
5 statement and help and something to be very proud of.
6 The proposal to have a Bronx shelter on Bartow Avenue
7 can help tens of thousands of animals while enriching
8 the community, offering affordable pet care as well
9 as spay and neuter programs will dramatically reduce
10 the number of unwanted animals in our city. The
11 center will provide jobs in addition to offering
12 youth and senior programs where shelter animals can
13 visit hospitals and cancer wards. Anyone that has
14 experienced a human animal bond knows that our
15 animals heal our souls and Bronx, the Bronx should be
16 a part of that experience. I've heard some concerns
17 from the opposition along the lines of people before
18 animals. That's a very disingenuous and false
19 narrative. This is clearly not a choice of animals
20 versus people rather an opportunity to help the
21 community and help the voiceless. I would hope those
22 with that mindset would look at the big picture here
23 and realize this is a big win. Finally I saw
24 something online to the fact that, to the effect that
25 the pit bulls will escape and attack the

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2 neighborhood, that's good fodder for a Sci-fi movie
3 but if you look at the other centers in Manhattan,
4 Brooklyn and Staten Island there has been no such
5 stories. These animals are counting on us, we hold
6 all the cards, let's do the right thing. Thank you
7 so much.

8

SHARON DISCERFANO (SP?): Good afternoon,
9 my name is Sharon Discerfano (SP?) I'm a New York
10 City Resident, member of the New York State Bar of
11 the New York City Bar Associations Committee on
12 Animal Law. I am also an advisory board member for
13 Wild Bird Fund. I am here today testifying in a
14 personal capacity in support of the Bartow site for
15 an animal shelter. As you have been hearing from
16 supporters today the proposed site will ensure the
17 humane treatment and animals and also serve a public
18 good. With nearly a million and a half residents,
19 the Bronx is long overdue for a shelter of its own
20 and the benefit extends to New Yorkers beyond the
21 borough as this shelter will relieve overcrowding in
22 other New York City Shelters. In addition to noting
23 the impact on our human population, I want to add
24 that the animals of the Bronx are deserving of their
25 own shelter. These nonhuman New Yorkers deserve a

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2 local safe haven where they can receive essential
3 care and the opportunity to be adopted into loving
4 homes. The Pet Food Pantry and programs that ACC
5 offers will be a resource for humans and animals of
6 the Bronx and even work toward reducing the intake of
7 animals in the first place, a win-win as it serves
8 animal welfare while also reducing the city's burden
9 overall of care and re-homing. The opposition we have
10 heard today however has more to do with the proposed
11 location than legitimate function of animal shelters
12 in society. And I empathize with those living in
13 Coop City and feeling their resistance to change in a
14 community. It is always hard. But specifically and
15 clearly to support the proposed site with respect to
16 animal shelter services, the Bronx to date is an
17 underserved community. There is no where nearby
18 offering the services needed and on the scale that it
19 is needed. The proposed site will be suitably access
20 in terms of proximity to Bronx residence and
21 availability via public transportation. With its
22 recent vote mandating each borough have its own full
23 service shelter by 2024, City Council recognizes
24 specific needs of our communities. Approving this
25 proposed site puts the City on track for fulfilling

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2 this need in the Bronx. Not approving the location
3 will result in the delay of several years so
4 especially with the mandate such a delay is simply
5 out of bounds. For these reasons I support and I
6 want to thank Council Members and all those whose
7 efforts have gotten us to this point today.

8

CHRIS ARINELLA (SP?): Hi I'm Chris
9 Arinella. I am going to read a letter that I wrote.
10 It is not always possible in life to vote for
11 something which would benefit so many, as is the case
12 of the proposed animal shelter on Bartow Avenue.
13 Here is your opportunity. In other countries I've
14 seen animals lying in the street after being hit by a
15 car and left to die as well as sick, pregnant or
16 victims of sadistic abuse. These dogs and cats we
17 consider to be found in third world countries, yet
18 these same cases can be found right here in the
19 Bronx. Are we here in the Bronx not more humane
20 and evolved as humans so as not to allow this to
21 continue. To support the proposed animal shelter is
22 to do the right thing for our residents and our
23 innocent animals. Not supporting a shelter is
24 tantamount to living in the dark ages when there were
25 no safeguards to protect the less fortunate. Each

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2 year dogs and cats are killed by the thousands in
3 borough shelters due to lack of space for them. This
4 is insanity. Imagine for a moment that your own pet
5 got out of the house, and couldn't find its way back
6 home. Your pet would be subject to all the
7 atrocities I listed and could end up killed in a
8 shelter in another borough. The proposed shelter
9 would benefit pet owners in the Bronx with low cost
10 uhm vets, spay, neuter programs, food banks, vaccine
11 clinics as well as volunteer opportunities for at
12 risk youth and seniors. It would be a win-win for
13 all concerned. Uhm I would also like to know how
14 55,000 residents of Coop City could so determine what
15 happens in the Bronx.

16 BRIDGET SUPERNOVA: Good afternoon my
17 name is Bridget Supernova. I am here as a resident
18 of the Mount Haven Neighborhood in the South Bronx.
19 I have fostered over 200 felines and I offer local
20 rescue as a place for injured, ill and special needs
21 cats for rehabilitation before placing there in the
22 care of new homes. In my experience, the worst cases
23 of animal neglect and abuse come from underserved
24 overpopulated communities lacking resources and
25 advocacy for pet care and animal welfare. By

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2 bringing in open access to full service animal
3 shelters to the Bronx the City would be providing
4 opportunity to lower unwanted populations, curb
5 animal abuse and nurture a healthy, equitable
6 community for both humans and animals. The Bronx is
7 home to the City's largest population of stray and
8 abandoned animals as well as pets not sterilized to
9 prevent unwanted litters. A comprehensive animal
10 shelter in the Bronx could be about so much more than
11 about intakeing dumped and found animals. No
12 domestic abuse shelter in the City will take in
13 victims with animals. (sobbing). The City's
14 homeless shelters also do not allow animals and pets.
15 The only emotional support and unconditional love
16 some people know. The Sue Shelter has an opportunity
17 for the City to step and better serve its people with
18 crisis services. A trap neuter release program
19 initiative would help lower cat feral populations
20 which are highest in the Bronx. Low cost vet
21 services can help even keep our beloved bodega cats
22 kept well, employed and in their shops. The Bronx is
23 home to about 1.4 million people many of whom are pet
24 owners or who encounter animals in need of human
25 intervention and assistance. A shelter offers an

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2 opportunity for Bronx residents to participate in
3 animal care and advocacy to engage in community
4 responsibility and to develop compassion for other
5 beings. City Council person Andy King does not
6 represent the entire borough. He does not represent
7 me. He does not represent the over 200 independent
8 animal rescues and community caretakers who are
9 scraping up the pieces for thousands of abused,
10 abandoned, neglected and stray animals the city fails
11 to help every day. With no other viable option to
12 meet the 2024 deadline I support this Land Use.

13 AMARI PALLADINO: I am Amari Palladino.
14 I am advocate rescuer. And I live in the Bronx. So,
15 the majority of the animals come through that Bronx
16 and I am somebody who goes before the ACC quite
17 frequently and well I do. I try to take animals that
18 are adoptable.

19 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Excuse me, we just
20 need for you to just put that microphone a little bit
21 closer so that.

22 AMARI PALLADINO: Oh I'm sorry. Okay.

23 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: So you can be
24 heard.

25 AMARI PALLADINO: Not that close.

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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you.

AMARI PALLADINO: So I frequent the ACC board on a stand outside and try to rescue animals before they get surrendered to the facility. I could be there all day and have 1,000 animals in you know in a couple of days. The point is that that facility is too small. For the demands and the resources both medical, vet, pantry, spay and neuter. Let's say an animal that comes in that needs to be euthanized right there and there you know they have no, you know a really severely injured animals they have no resources there. And by the way, that facility uhm holds four employees and it is as big as that box there, so the new shelter would provide all services mentioned that I just mentioned and the shelter is, is, is a community in need accommodation. The new shelter would lower death rates due to the lack of space at the in Manhattan which is no bigger than that. It's true. People have a problem commuting from the Bronx to the other facilities, it's a, its needed for an overabundance of animals coming in. In New York City, I think in the Bronx there is like 25,000, you know don't quote me. As of, I'm done already. I just got my notes. Okay thank you.

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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you so much
for your testimony. Thank you panel for, for hanging
out today. Thank you for your testimony.

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SHARON DISCERFANO: Can I say just one
quick thing. I just want to acknowledge, it's
unfortunate that they left, I want to acknowledge
some of the people who spoke here from Coop City,
some of them spoke about the lack of diverse
representation in the animal advocacy and they are
not wrong about that. I think this animal shelter is
an opportunity to bridge that gap. Thank you.

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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you. We are
going to call up the next panel, Stacy Michelle, Jay
Howard, Debra Thomas, Kirsten Cuoy and Ray Rodgers,
please come up. You may begin.

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KIRSTEN CUOY: My name is Kirsten Cuoy
thank you so much for hearing all of our testimonies.
I do think it is very unfortunate that the residents
left especially when we are talking about respect and
uhm I absolutely heard them and I understand their
issues. I'm here, actually to speak on a behalf of a
friend of mine who is a North Bronx resident. She
does not live in Coop City but when I go to her house
I take the 6 all the way to the end and then I have

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2 to walk another 10 minutes to her house uhm and this
3 is the story of her and her dog, Cinnamon. Cinnamon
4 is a pit bull, Sierra found Cinnamon wondering along
5 Mosholu Parkway. She was initiated, her nipples were
6 swollen and sagging. She was on the brink of death
7 searching for scraps of food or a kind gesture from a
8 Bronx resident. Cinnamon had been the victim of a
9 pit bull breeder. She was artificially inseminated
10 giving birth to litter after litter until her body
11 and her spirit could no longer take the abuse. Once
12 her body was no longer viable, her breeders callously
13 dumped her on the side of the road. Cinnamon had
14 done everything her owners had required of her and
15 still she was shown no love, no mercy and when she
16 could no longer turn a profit for them. If my friend
17 Sierra had not found Cinnamon on the side of the
18 parkway who knows what might have happened to her or
19 a human that she had encountered. If she had been
20 left outside to starve any longer she might have
21 attacked someone but imagine if there had been this
22 care, this shelter that we are proposing where
23 Cinnamon's breeders could have brought her instead of
24 just dumping her on the side of the road. Uhm I've
25 heard, we've heard this rhetoric of pit bulls getting

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2 loose and attacking people as the talking point of
3 the opposition but it is already happening. People
4 are already dumping their dogs, specifically pit
5 bulls on the side of the road and Cinnamon is proof
6 of this and her case is absolutely not isolated. A
7 shelter in the Bronx would alleviate some of these
8 issues but we need this shelter and we need 10 more
9 shelters. I don't know the, the MTA site is a viable
10 site, I'm hearing it's not but we need so many more
11 and this is just the beginning and so I thank you for
12 listening and I hope that you will approve this
13 center, the shelter.

14 JAY HOWARD: Hi my name is Howard. I am
15 a New York City resident and today I'm reading a
16 statement on behalf of Diane Hue, Director of the
17 Humane Society of Westchester. This is what she
18 says, "I am speaking in support of the creation of a
19 Municipal Animal Shelter in the Bronx, with an
20 estimation in 2018 of 1,471,160 people. It is
21 absolutely unacceptable that the Bronx does not have
22 an animal shelter to service the community. Humane
23 Society of Westchester New Rochelle often gets
24 animals brought to our shelter by someone saying they
25 were found in the Bronx or in Pellham. We believe

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2 that some of the dogs said to have been found in
3 Pellham may very well have been found in the Bronx.
4 The person who found the animal is reluctant to bring
5 them to the Bronx believing that the animal's fate
6 there is not good and that they have a much better
7 chance of being adopted at our shelter. Some of the
8 dogs may in fact be owner surrendered, people who
9 cannot keep their dogs but again do not want to bring
10 them to a drop off facility in the Bronx. The Humane
11 Society of Westchester does take some of these dogs
12 from the 19 communities and their contact area.
13 People who lost their dog in the Bronx may have no
14 idea to contact the shelter in Westchester which
15 means they may never be reunited with their pet.
16 Those we cannot take may very well become stray,
17 abandoned animals which is cruel and inhumane. Again
18 urge a full animal service shelter be built in the
19 Bronx. One which will relieve overcrowding at other
20 NYC shelters and provide desperately needed services
21 including an adoption center, low cost vaccinations,
22 a spay and neuter clinic and other vital assistance
23 to NYC animals in need. Thank you." I got 20
24 seconds I'll give it to one of these guys.

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2 DEBRA THOMAS: Thank you. Good afternoon
3 my name is Debra Thomas and I'm a long time volunteer
4 at the animal. Thank you I am Debra Thomas I am a
5 long time volunteer at the Animal Care Center
6 Manhattan Shelter and I volunteer there as a cat
7 adoption counselor. Uhm I, I am here today to speak
8 in support of the plan to build a full service animal
9 shelter in the Bronx. A lot of what I was going to
10 say has been said many times today so I will try to
11 cut to the chase. Uhm animal advocates including
12 myself have fought for this to take place for a very
13 long time and a full service shelter in the Bronx
14 would accommodate cat, dog and rabbit adoptions which
15 would lessen the overflow of animals in the Manhattan
16 Shelter and would keep the Manhattan animals from
17 getting sick because of overcrowding and also the new
18 shelter would provide jobs to the community, multiple
19 volunteering opportunities, school tours, animal
20 training classes and other public services to help
21 educate the community about animal care and animal
22 issues. I would like to ask Council Member Andy King
23 and the Coop City residents to keep an open mind
24 regarding this issue because a new animal shelter in
25 their midst would only be an asset and it would not

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2 cause animals running on the sidewalks, dirty
3 sidewalks and all of this other stuff that people
4 seem to think is going to happen. Uhm I understand
5 that a community center is wanted but I want to ask,
6 are there definite plans for a community center?
7 Have funds been approved for a community center?
8 Because there are definite plans for a shelter and
9 funds have been approved and the animal loving
10 community of New York City has fought for full
11 service shelters for many, many years and I would
12 like to urge the City Council to please continue with
13 support of this very important project because many,
14 many four-legged lives are depending on it. Thank
15 you very much.

16 RAY RODGERS: My name is Ray Rodgers, I
17 live in East Harlem around the corner from an animal
18 shelter. An animal shelter that has great benefit to
19 our community. I believe it is the one that you that
20 you uhm volunteer in. I support transforming 2050
21 Bartow Avenue into the long planned and desperately
22 needed full service animal welfare center. I do not
23 support the shenanigans of First Hartford Realty
24 Corporation to grab this location with a phoney claim
25 of wanting to build affordable housing which might

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2 include a community center. In June AM New York
3 reported that Hartford Realty has spend years paying
4 hundreds of thousands of dollars to influence
5 political decisions made on developing Bartow Avenue.
6 This has been explained earlier by some others. In
7 fact, one lobbyist as mentioned earlier, Patrick
8 Jenkins was paid \$200,000 since 2016 and they have
9 lobbied Council Member King and Bronx Borough
10 President Ruben Diaz Jr. to oppose the animal welfare
11 center. I would like to know have Mr. King and Mr.
12 Diaz received any campaign contributions from
13 Hartford Realty or any of its lobbyist. Has River
14 Bay or any members of its boards received any favors
15 from Hartford Realty or its lobbyists. Animal
16 shelter is not placing animals above people as other
17 people described here. In fact animal center will
18 greatly benefit both people and animals. Seniors,
19 children, people with disabilities particularly
20 benefit from these animals and these animal centers
21 where they can also go as many people do in my
22 community, take those animals for a walk, pet those
23 animals, visit those animals, help those animals out
24 and let me tell you something, human beings get more
25 from the animals than we will ever give to them. And

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2 lastly, we had some busses brought down, I understand
3 one or two busses from Coop City to speak out against
4 it. There is 55,000 people in Coop City I don't that
5 was very representative of Coop City because one of
6 my closest friends in Coop City if I knew about the
7 hearing and there were any busses for me to come down
8 on I would come down and be on the other side and I
9 believe most people in Coop City have a sense enough
10 to stand up and say we support this center. Thank
11 you.

12 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you very
13 much. Thank you panel. It looks like we are down to
14 the final panel of the day, oh we are not, I spoke
15 too soon. Calling up Peter Ortiz, Marie Paladino,
16 Ebony Lewis and Judy Ross. We will also call up
17 Linda Mann and Christopher, Christine I'm sorry.
18 Christine I cannot read your last name, I apologize.
19 Yami, Yani. Is that you?

20 JUDY ROSS: No I'm Judy Ross.

21 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Is there Christine
22 here? No. Thank you. Then we will call up is it
23 Rio Apolli. Apolli yes, thank you. Since we just
24 have one more we will, we will ask for Susan Blake
25 Nahama (SP?) as well.

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JUDY ROSS: Oh you moved over that way.

CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: You may begin when
you are ready.

PETER ORTIZ: Hi my name is Peter Ortiz
and I am happy to be reading this testimony on behalf
of the Animal Rescue Organization called A Place for
Cats. This testimony is from Mia Lancaster who is
Director of A place for cats. "A Place for cats is a
401c3 rescue and adoption organization founded in New
York City in 1990. Since 1990 we've rescued and
found homes for approximately 1400 felines. A Place
for Cats is a partner in Mayor's Alliance for New
York City Animals and in New Hope and Adjunct
Organization to the New York City Animal Care
Centers. Having been in rescue for decades I can
attest to the vast number of stray cats in the Bronx.
Every week we get calls from people in the Bronx who
find strays in their yard or on the street and want
us to come get them. Based on Manhattan we are a
tiny group and we are not able to accommodate the
huge number of cats in need that inhabit the Bronx
about whom we receive calls from concerned citizens.
Many of these citizens would like to do the right
thing but due to time, distance or age cannot easily

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2 travel with a stray animals down to Manhattan to
3 surrender the found animal. The Bronx is in dire
4 need of its own shelter, a real facility and not a
5 weigh station where Bronx residence would have the
6 option to pick up that stray found in their yard or
7 on the street and transport it locally to the nearby
8 shelter instead of calling small rescue groups
9 scattered in other boroughs hoping that one of the
10 small groups would have the resources to travel and
11 collect animals seen on the streets in a local, in a
12 location distant from our base. The Bronx
13 desperately needs its own shelter. Would you please
14 help to see that it gets one. Thank you for your
15 time." And hope five seconds.

16 SUSAN BLAKE NAHAMA: Susan Blake Nahama I
17 live in Community District 10 very close to Coop
18 City. I am not an animal active but let me tell you
19 what goes on in our neighborhood on Pellham Parkway.
20 Uhm I live right by Mount Sinai Hospital give people
21 a geographically area. Uhm it is full of feral cats.
22 I mean every day uhm I talked about getting injured.
23 This MRI was from walking my dog and another feral
24 cat came by and these are not, people don't own these
25 uhm, uhm pets and what we have to, what people do in

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2 the neighborhood when kittens are born we have to
3 call outside uhm non, uhm non-profit organization to
4 come capture those cats. But they can't do it all,
5 they can't capture every feral cat and I would say my
6 neighborhood, I would say there is at least 40 or 50
7 of them living in it near Pellham Parkway. I
8 understand people are upset about the noise. I live
9 near a hospital, 20 ambulances come by a day. Uhm we
10 have people who litter on the Pellham Parkway which I
11 live on, nonstop, diapers, beer bottles,
12 unfortunately that is the part of living in the Bronx
13 along with bad transportation but it is needed. I
14 live there and I was just Councilman King has anyone
15 done a census of the number of pets that do live in
16 Coop City? Okay I was just curious because I see
17 them. I shop at the Stop and Shop there and I do see
18 people walking their dogs and stuff when I am there
19 and people are talking about the central park uhm the
20 central section of the Bronx as a solution.
21 Parkchester is in the central, they don't allow dogs
22 in their condo complexes either. So I understand how
23 Coop City residents are uhm arguing to them to put a
24 shelter in an area that is going to have the same
25 arguments they are. That's all I have to say. I'm

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2 just a resident that's just what goes on in my
3 neighborhood I'm not activist.

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EBONY LEWIS: My name is Ebony Lewis I'm
5 a founding of My Pit Bull's Keeper. Uhm I actually
6 live in the Bronx right by the Park Chester area and
7 I founded My Pit Bull's Keeper to educate the public
8 and help bring training services to the Bronx
9 community. I am 21 years old and I have over 100
10 clients so far and I worked with these Bronx dogs day
11 in and day out. I go to school full time I'm in
12 college and I can tell what these dogs go through.
13 This shelter is needed, this shelter is needed like I
14 cannot explain to you. I have set up with my
15 foundation I have set up youth programs, I have set
16 up kids programs, dog safety talks I do all of this
17 by myself. New York City can do this when a 21 year
18 old is doing this, y'all can do this. Uhm and on the
19 other note they all left, they all left but I lived
20 in the Bronx. I grew up there, I grew up in Long
21 Island as well and I was in high school, in middle
22 school, all of that, my parents put me through all
23 youth programs, library programs, sports and yeah I
24 did good. I'm a three pete champion in track but I
25 also was running the streets and the only thing that

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2 stopped me from running the streets was because I got
3 a mentor in dog training and from that time on I
4 never touched the streets again because of dogs and
5 that is it because of these dogs, I grew up in life.
6 I went to college, I graduated, I am not going to
7 school to become a professional dog trainer but I am
8 already doing dog training. I already started my
9 business like I said I already started My Pit Bull's
10 Keeper where we bring hay rides, we have hay rides
11 all month right in Park Chester we use the utilized
12 Bronx parks and we bring sporting events, we bring
13 talks, youth programs, dog training to these
14 communities. I cannot do this by myself so an animal
15 shelter would help a lot, not another condo place,
16 thank you.

17 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: I think I would
18 have heard her a lot better without the celebration
19 so I am going to ask again to please refrain from the
20 clapping and all of that and for you I just want to
21 commend you for your testimony today. I think you
22 are the youngest entrepreneur that we have seen today
23 so I commend you for all of your good work and please
24 do keep it up. Thank you for your testimony today
25 Ebony.

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LINDA MANN: And a very hard act to follow I will say. But good afternoon I am here to speak on behalf of the thousands of homeless animals and beloved pets and urge the City Council to support the Bartow Avenue Bronx Shelter proposal. This full service shelter will not only help the animals but will help the people of the Bronx who love them by providing much needed resources such as low cost vaccinations, wellness checks, free dog training and one of the most important things spay neuter clinics. The opposition says that they are putting people before animals. I say that this carefully chosen shelter puts people alongside their animals and allows for the Bronx community to join in the historic legislation mandating that every borough have a full service animal shelter operational by 2024. The Bartow Avenue Bronx Shelter will accomplish this and accomplishes something else as well. Sometimes it is also about what increases our humanity as a City. This is most certainly one of those cases. Thank you and I would like to thank Chair Person Adams and the Council for your attention to all of us so thank you.

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JUDY ROSS: Thank you, oh Hi. I am Judy Ross of 843 Forrest Avenue in the Bronx and I am also a long time volunteer of Bronx based rescue groups where I answer emails and telephone calls and I have to say one of the most frequent questions I get is how can I volunteer. There is a real need for a strong desire for people in the community who can't have pets of their own because of some financial restrictions or property restrictions where they live to want to interact with, get back and love animals and I think the Coop City kept saying that they don't allow pets which is interesting because I, well I would say that there are probably lots of kids in that 50,000 community who would really appreciate the advan... the opportunity to interact with animals in their neighborhood so I would really strongly say yes to this shelter and that location. Thank you.

RIO APOLLI: Hi my name is Rio Apolli, I am a volunteer and a New Yorkers. I want to start off by thanking the committee for, I want to give my thanks and appreciation for the both of you for giving us the opportunity to speak, for staying so long to listen to all of our voices and making sure that we are all heard with your open ears and open

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2 minds as well. Uhm we spoke about respect yet I only
3 now after missing over an hour welcome Andy King back
4 into the discussion. Uhm I am here today to show my
5 support for the building of the needed animal shelter
6 in the Bronx. For the past two years I have watched
7 our current administration put the frivolous wants of
8 the rich above the fundamental rights of the poor. I
9 have listened to the false promises spouted from the
10 lips of politician until they no longer both to veil
11 their lives at all. Our voices, nay or pleas have
12 fallen on deaf ears but I stand before you now to
13 make this declaration. I am mad as hell and I am not
14 going to take it anymore. The topic of a golf course
15 keeps getting brought up yet it was not approved.
16 That's the end of that discussion. I publicly call on
17 Andy King to answer his constituents rather than the
18 lobbyists he is lining in his pockets. Taking a
19 \$200,000 lobbyist fees from real estate lobbyists
20 Andy King is denying the Bronx something that they
21 desperately need. Reclaiming my time. Something
22 that they desperately need, a shelter that would help
23 thousands of animals annually 100 permanent jobs to
24 the neighborhood, a youth outreach programs, a senior
25 citizen program and an opportunity to help the

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2 residents of the Bronx. Those who line up around the
3 block to wait for affordable veterinary care just to
4 be denied because of overcrowding and lack of
5 resources. You swore an oath as a public servant to
6 serve the needs of your citizens, so hear us as our
7 message is very clear, we are overdue for a shelter
8 in this area of the Bronx and we will not wait
9 another three years for another 50 sites to be
10 surveyed. This land might be your land but the land
11 is also my land to embody the meaning of Woody
12 Goldstreet's famous words, this land is our land and
13 we demand it for the people and the animals of the
14 Bronx. Thank you.

15 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you panels.
16 Thank you for your time.

17 RIO APOLLI: Wait can I answer his
18 questions? You had a question.

19 CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: You our panel is
20 done so we are going to ask you step down but Council
21 Member King does have final remarks and then I will
22 make mine but thank you so much panel.

23 ANDY KING: First I just want to thank
24 everyone who came out this afternoon to give their
25 thoughts, their conversations, their ideas and their

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2 opinions on the proposed site to build an animal
3 shelter off of Bartow Avenue. While this
4 conversation is very spirited I would ask us all to
5 stay within the spirit of the goal of the Law and
6 that is to accomplish building an animal shelter in
7 every borough. That means us having true
8 conversations and figure out how do we deliver on the
9 Law, not spinning truths, making up new truths, as
10 someone told me, altered alternative facts to the
11 conversation. We have a commitment in the Council to
12 deliver on an animal shelter in the Bronx whether it
13 is on Bartow Avenue or whether it is any place else.
14 Our goal is to accomplish that and stay in compliance
15 with the Law. So I thank everyone again regardless
16 of where you live in the borough of the Bronx or the
17 City of New York. New York is one that we ask
18 everyone to participate in this Democracy which we
19 offer here at City Hall but I ask us all to be
20 respectful and true in any conversations so that we
21 don't mislead ourselves and mislead others that can
22 confuse the agenda to deliver on this animal shelter
23 in the borough of the Bronx. With that all being
24 said, I want to thank you Madam Chair for hosting
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2 today's conversation and we are looking forward to
3 continuing the conversation. Thank you everyone.

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CHAIR ADRIENNE ADAMS: Thank you Council
5 Member King. I just want to thank everyone who
6 stayed the past many hours today to hear this very
7 important hearing on this very important subject.
8 You stuck it out with us, we appreciate it. I want
9 to make sure that everyone has been heard. Is there
10 any other member of the public who wished to testify
11 on this item but did not have an opportunity today.
12 Seeing none I now close the public hearing on LU231
13 and it will be laid over. This concludes our public
14 hearings for today. I want to thank the members of
15 the public, all of you once again for being here
16 today my colleagues, Council and Land Use Staff for
17 attending today's hearing. This meeting is hereby
18 adjourned. (gavel pounding).

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARK, PUBLIC
SITTING AND MARITIME USES

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARK, PUBLIC
SITTING AND MARITIME USES

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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 November 10, 2018