

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

STATED MEETING

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November 13, 2008
Start: 1:57 pm
Recess: 4:03 pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
BETSY GOTBAUM
Public Advocate

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.
Maria del Carmen Arroyo
Tony Avella
Charles Barron
Gale A. Brewer
Anthony Como
Leroy G. Comrie, Jr.
Bill de Blasio
Inez E. Dickens
Mathieu Eugene
Simcha Felder
Lewis A. Fidler
Helen D. Foster
Daniel R. Garodnick
James F. Gennaro
Vincent J. Gentile
Alan J. Gerson

A P P E A R A N C E S

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Eric N. Gioia
Sara M. Gonzalez
Vincent Ignizio
Robert Jackson
Letitia James
Melinda R. Katz
G. Oliver Koppell
Jessica S. Lappin
John C. Liu
Melissa Mark-Viverito
Miguel Martinez
Michael E. McMahon
Rosie Mendez
Hiram Monserrate
Michael C. Nelson
James S. Oddo
Annabel Palma
Christine C. Quinn
Domenic M. Recchia, Jr.
Diana Reyna
James Sanders, Jr.
Larry B. Seabrook
Helen Sears
Kendall Stewart
James Vacca
Peter F. Vallone, Jr.
Albert Vann
David I. Weprin
David Yassky

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

Raymond Aalbue
Public Affairs Officer
Department of Veteran Affairs

Dr. Antonio Saliba
Director of the Emergency Department
Veterans Administration Medical Center

Joseph Magdaleno
Vice President for the Division Of Student Affairs
Lehman College

Elliott Dawes
Director
Urban Male Initiative

Chelli Devadutt

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2 SPEAKER QUINN: ...Get started with
3 our first of three ceremonials. The first one is,
4 Council Member Mike Nelson.

5 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down,
6 please, keep it down.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: [off mic]
8 thank you, Madam Speaker.

9 SPEAKER QUINN: Yep.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Madam
11 Speaker, my colleagues, as we're all aware, we
12 just celebrated Veteran's Day honoring those brave
13 men and women who have protected us throughout the
14 years. Indeed, we could not be in here doing the
15 business that we're doing if it was not for the
16 veterans throughout our centuries. And today
17 we're specifying it towards the VA Medical Center
18 of Brooklyn. And is to--oh, thank you, Christine--
19 -and there's two gentlemen here today that run it
20 'cause they fight, they come back, those who are
21 lucky enough to do so, some don't come back in the
22 greatest of health and it's gentlemen such as
23 these two that make sure that they receive the
24 best amount of health possible. And I'd like to
25 introduce Raymond Aalbue, public affairs officer,

1
2 Department of Veteran Affairs, and Dr. Antonio
3 Saliba [phonetic], the Chief Emergency Department.
4 Gentlemen, thank you very much, thank you.

5 FEMALE VOICE: [Off mic] read the
6 proc?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Oh yes.

8 SPEAKER QUINN: And if the clerk
9 could read the proclamation.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Right.

11 COUNCIL CLERK: Council, City of New
12 York proclamation.

13 WHEREAS, in observance of Veterans
14 Day, the Council of the City of New York is proud
15 to join all Americans in celebrating the
16 extraordinary and vital service of the Veterans
17 Administration Medical Center in Brooklyn; and

18 WHEREAS, on May 13th, 1938, the
19 United States Congress made the 11th day of
20 November of each year a legal holiday dedicated to
21 the cause of world peace. Ninety years later,
22 veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam,
23 Afghanistan, Iraq, and other conflicts continue to
24 remind us of the tremendous service and sacrifice
25 that men and women of our nation's Armed Forces

1
2 have provided to defend the freedom of their
3 fellow Americans. There are more than 23 million
4 veterans living today and all of them deserve our
5 most profound gratitude; and

6 WHEREAS, the VA Medical Center
7 Brooklyn is to be commended for offering direct
8 and essential support to the men and women of our
9 nation's armed forces.

10 Now, therefore, be it known that
11 the Council of the City of New York salutes and
12 honors the tremendous service and contributions of
13 the Veterans Administration Medical Center
14 Brooklyn.

15 Christine C. Quinn, Speaker for the
16 entire Council; Michael C. Nelson, Council Member,
17 48th District, Brooklyn.

18 MALE VOICE: Oh, okay.

19 SPEAKER QUINN: [Off mic] speak [off
20 mic]

21 DR. ANTONIO SALIBA: Thank you,
22 thank you very much. Unfortunately, Mr. John
23 Donnellan and, our director at the VA campus in
24 Brooklyn was not able to attend today. On his
25 behalf, Mr. Raymond Aalbue, the Chief of Public's

1
2 Affair and myself, Dr. Antonio Saliba, the
3 Director of the Emergency Department, we're very
4 pleased for this proclamation. I'm sure Mr.
5 Donnellan will be very pleased with this
6 proclamation as well and he will share it with
7 everybody who has made possible the fact over this
8 year that we have seen about 300,000 outpatient
9 visits and 18,000 emergency room visits, making
10 our commitment for the VA mission more stronger--
11 and that's basically to improve the health care
12 among all our veterans. Thank you very much.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Thank you.

14 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: [Off mic]

16 MR. RAYMOND AALBUE: I would just
17 like to add, I'm a veteran and I work for the
18 Veterans Affairs so I've come full circle and I'm
19 honored to be there.

20 All the health care professionals
21 that work in the Brooklyn campus, the New York
22 campus, and all the veterans hospitals across the
23 country are passionate about their work. How can
24 you not when you're serving those who served. So
25 on behalf of them, I want to thank the City

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2 Council--thank you, thank you, Councilman Nelson.

3 And thank you, Brooklyn, for this honor.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Thank you,
5 guys.

6 SPEAKER QUINN: Congratulations.
7 Thank you. You have pictures [off mic]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Yeah.

9 SPEAKER QUINN: Okay. Thank you.

10 - -

11 SPEAKER QUINN: Next one is, Council
12 Member Larry Seabrook. Council Member Seabrook.
13 If we could just--great.

14 FEMALE VOICE: [Off mic] a map up.

15 SPEAKER QUINN: It's a map of where
16 there used to be a picture--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: You're
18 taking them down.

19 SPEAKER QUINN: We're just sprucing
20 it up, Charles, don't get [off mic]

21 MALE VOICE: Don't get excited.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: Obama is
23 next week, man [off mic] Madam Speaker, today one
24 of the things that we wanted to do is that this
25 Council has been instrumental in doing something

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2 unique.

3

4

SPEAKER QUINN: Can we have them
come up [off mic].

5

COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: Yes.

6

7

SPEAKER QUINN: Why don't you guys
[crosstalk]--

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9

10

11

COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: That these
young men and women who are involved here are from
Lehman College and they are a part, that's right,
from God's side of the country--

12

FEMALE VOICE: The Bronx.

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14

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COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: --the
Bronx. And that they are here today, the Urban
Male Initiative, because, as you know, that there
was a tremendous decrease in the number of
African-American males going to college. And so
this Council saw fit to be involved in an
initiative that talked about how best we deal with
this and deal with retention, and deal with the
future of them going on and beyond and becoming
productive citizens.

23

24

25

And so we're here today with the
head of the Initiative, the Director Elliott
Dawes--where's Elliot? Come on, Elliott,

1

2 Elliott's over here--Elliott needs to be here
3 because he and I served on the faculty at John Jay
4 College for many years and I know of his
5 commitment of this.

6 And we also have with us today the
7 Vice President of Lehman College who is here
8 today, the Dean of Lehman College who is here
9 today to show their strong commitment, and their
10 Director Mr. Deas who is here to show their
11 commitment. And we have representation, of
12 course, from the Bronx delegation who is committed
13 to this program and we also have the chairman of
14 the Higher Education Committee--where's Charles?
15 He's in the back? All right, stay there. But
16 anyway, and we have the co-chairs coming up--you
17 all coming up here--of the--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [Off mic]
19 the Lehman [off mic]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: Lehman,
21 this is an alma mater and she's here, Maria del
22 Carmen, and we also have Robert Jackson, who is
23 one of the vice chairs and a strong supporter and-
24 -co-chair, I'm sorry--and the speaker of the--I'm
25 a vice chair--and the Speaker of the City Council,

1
2 who is committed to this program and assuring that
3 it happens and that it stays there.

4 And they have 25 programs now, 25
5 programs, which mean a lot and in this day and age
6 it is very important. And I just wanted to bring
7 them down here so that people will see that in the
8 Bronx and at Lehman, because some people do
9 believe that is only one borough--but anyway, it's
10 in the Bronx too and that we're here and we wanted
11 to say to all of you all that we are very proud of
12 you all.

13 So, Madam Speaker, I'm going to
14 turn it back over to you.

15 SPEAKER QUINN: Well let me turn it
16 over actually to the Clerk to ask him to read the
17 proclamation.

18 And thank you, Council Member
19 Seabrook, for pulling us all together to celebrate
20 this important initiative, but more importantly
21 the tremendous accomplishments of the young people
22 from Lehman, who are here today. And I'll just
23 say their accomplishments are significant and they
24 are just representative of many other young people
25 like them at CUNY institutions all throughout our

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2 city and SUNY institutions all throughout our
3 state. So thank you all for all of your hard
4 work. And if the clerk would read the
5 proclamation.

6 COUNCIL CLERK: Council, City of New
7 York, proclamation.

8 WHEREAS, the Council of the City of
9 New York is proud to honor the Center for Urban
10 Male Leadership for its outstanding contributions
11 to New York City's future; and

12 WHEREAS, in the fall of 2004, CUNY
13 Chancellor Matthew Goldstein established a
14 University Task Force on the Black Male
15 Initiative, which presented convincing evidence
16 that black males in New York City and beyond face
17 patterns of ongoing discrimination in many aspects
18 of their lives, particularly in education, in
19 treatment by the criminal justice system, and in
20 employment. To empower Black and Latino students,
21 the Division of Student Affairs at Lehman College
22 established the Center for Urban Male Leadership;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, with the tireless support
25 from Joseph Magdaleno, Vice President for the

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2 Division Of Student Affairs, John M. Holloway,
3 Associate Dean of Student Affairs, and Michael
4 Deas, Director, and many others, the Center of
5 Urban Male Leadership continues to grow in
6 strength and purpose.

7

8 Now, therefore, be it known that
9 the Council of the City of New York most
10 gratefully honors the Center for Urban Male
11 Leadership for its outstanding contributions to
12 the community and the future of New York City.

12

13 Christine C. Quinn, Speaker for the
14 entire Council; Larry Seabrook, Council Member,
15 12th District, and many other Council Members.

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SPEAKER QUINN: There we go.

16

[Off mic]

17

18 MR. JOSEPH MAGDALENO: Good
19 afternoon. On behalf of Dr. Ricardo Fernandez,
20 the President of Lehman College, and the entire
21 Lehman College community, we want to thank
22 Councilman Seabrook and each and every member of
23 the City Council who has supported the CUNY Black
24 Male Initiative over the past several years. Your
25 investments in the future of our young people are
paying dividends and, over the long run, they're

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2 investments that are going to benefit the city and
3 the state of New York and the entire country. We
4 are good stewards of the investments, the
5 important investments that you're making in the
6 future of our young men and women at Lehman
7 College. Thank you so much.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: Thank you.

9 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you very much.
10 Thank you for all your work.

11 [Off mic]

12 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you, thank
13 you.

14 MALE VOICE 1: Good job.

15 [Off mic]

16 MALE VOICE 1: Good job.

17 [Off mic]

18 SPEAKER QUINN: We have one more
19 ceremonial, but I'm just going to wait a few
20 minutes, it's to honor and recognize and thank the
21 late Walter Stafford for all of his work on behalf
22 of our city and the Council. So I just want to
23 wait until we have a few more members in the
24 chambers, so we're going to wait a couple of
25 seconds.

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[Off mic]

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MALE VOICE: [Off mic] oh.

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SPEAKER QUINN: There you go.

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MALE VOICE: Thank you, Madam

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Speaker. My colleagues--ladies and gentlemen, if

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I could have your attention, we have some very

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special guests here from the gymnasium [phonetic]

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in Moscow--and gymnasium is, of course, high

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school for Humanities, which means you're going to

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the University and its gymnasium number 1567?

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Yes? So I'd ask you all to please--they are

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exchange students with Staten Island Tech High

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School in Staten Island, which, as you know, being

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in Staten Island, of course, is one of the number

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one high schools in the world, because they are in

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Staten Island and they have a great program where

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Russian is the prime language that every student

18

learns and we have exchange students here,

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primarily 15 and 16 years old from Moscow. I'd

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ask them all to please stand up and let's give

21

them a round of applause, and we thank you for

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your visit and we say Do svidaniya.

23

SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you. We're

24

just going to wait a couple more seconds, until we

25

1
2 get a few more members to do the Walter Stafford
3 ceremonial.

4 - -

5 SPEAKER QUINN: Let me give the mike
6 to Council Member Al Vann.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down,
8 please. Keep it down.

9 [Off mic]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Yes, thank
11 you, Madam Speaker. Before I bring a few brief
12 remarks regarding Dr. Walter Stafford, I'd like to
13 ask his family to come forward, his wife, Chelli
14 Devadutt; her daughter, Gita; and as a
15 representative from the Women of Color Policy
16 Network, Jody, if you would come up.

17 Ladies and gentlemen, I'm really
18 honored to have this moment, this opportunity,
19 this very profound moment, to present on behalf of
20 our City Council a memorial at this point in time
21 as we lost Walter earlier this year.

22 Dr. Walter Stafford, I would have
23 to believe began to formulate his--

24 SPEAKER QUINN: [Interposing] If we
25 could just get quiet in the chambers in the

1
2 balcony, I think it's a very, very important
3 ceremonial and I want to make sure Council Member
4 Vann's remembrances of Professor Stafford are
5 heard loud and clear. And so if we could just try
6 to get as much quiet in the chambers in the
7 balcony and take conversations outside, please.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Yeah, thank
9 you, Madam Speaker.

10 Ladies and gentlemen, I have to
11 assume that Dr. Stafford began to formulate his
12 worldview, his value system based on his young
13 adult experiences in Student Nonviolent
14 Coordinating Committee. As you know, this was the
15 army behind the civil rights movement. The Dr.
16 King and the Dr. Abernathy and all of our leaders,
17 as respected and renowned as they are, there were
18 those there were the soldiers, there was the army,
19 it was [off mic] for the most part and others, and
20 Dr. Stafford was among that army. So I'd have to
21 assume that experience, that struggle, helped to
22 create in his mind, his direction and what he
23 wanted to do in this world. So he furthered his
24 education obviously, he became a Ph.D.

25 Now we know that most Ph.D.'s they

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2 go into the ivory tower and they publish and they
3 do what they do and that's very important, but
4 then there are those special people, who it's not
5 enough for them to have a degree and to write and
6 publish, their work has to be made relevant to the
7 struggle. And so he was driven, he was dedicated
8 to fight injustice, injustice for people of color,
9 injustice for women--this was his focus.

10 And so it was almost ordained or
11 preordained that at some point in time he would
12 find himself dealing with those who make public
13 policy. He came into the City Council--I would
14 like to think I made that introduction, but it
15 doesn't really matter--he came into our City
16 Council and we relied upon him, his work, his
17 research, his insight, his expertise, to help us
18 to craft legislation, if you will, or programs and
19 initiatives to go out to affect the people that he
20 was most concerned about.

21 So, as he was a blessing to all of
22 you, I am sure he was also a blessing to this
23 Council and we are blessed that we had the
24 opportunity to spend some time with him. The City
25 is blessed because he had an opportunity to make

1
2 his input and his imprint on policy and programs
3 that went out to support, again, those who were
4 least served by us, both people of color and of
5 women.

6 So we take this opportunity to say
7 thank you to his family, thank you to his
8 colleagues, thank you to anyone who was associated
9 with this great man, and may peace be upon him.
10 Thank you. Speaker.

11 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you very much,
12 Council Member Vann, and you did in fact make that
13 introduction.

14 And it is the fruits of that
15 introduction, I think are seen in so much of the
16 Council's work and policy and I know will be seen
17 in future policy 'cause the works of Professor
18 Stafford will be drawn upon in so many different
19 areas and so many of the different issues we're
20 going to do work on.

21 So I just want to thank you all so
22 very much for being with us today and giving us
23 this opportunity to thank you for sharing
24 Professor Stafford with all of us and the City
25 Council.

1
2 And before we hear from you, if I
3 could just ask the Clerk to please read the
4 proclamation.

5 COUNCIL CLERK: Council, City of New
6 York proclamation.

7 WHEREAS, the Council of the City of
8 New York is proud to posthumously honor Walter
9 Stafford for his distinguished contributions to
10 greater justice in New York City and the nation;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, a native of Atlanta,
13 Georgia, Walter Stafford was raised in Tuskegee,
14 Alabama, and Lafayette, Louisiana, and earned his
15 Ph.D. in Public and International Affairs from the
16 University of Pittsburgh. Before he passed away
17 on September 13th, 2008, he dedicated his life's
18 work to securing greater social, economic, and
19 political equality for people of color and for
20 women; and

21 WHEREAS, Mr. Stafford began his
22 work as an activist in the civil rights movement
23 of the 1960s as a member of the Student Nonviolent
24 Coordinating Committee with Donald Hall, Frank
25 Smith, and others; and

1
2 WHEREAS, in Mr. Stafford's most
3 recent role as the renowned Professor of Public
4 Policy and Planning at the Wagner Graduate School
5 of Public Service, New York University, he served
6 as our city's foremost analysts of the impact of
7 urban policies on the poor.

8 Mr. Stafford's numerous
9 publications included "Race, Gender and Welfare
10 Reform: The Need for Targeted Support" and "Women
11 of Color in New York City: Still Invisible in
12 Policy." He wrote more than 100 papers in these
13 areas and also founded the Women of Color Policy
14 Network to create new generations of women policy
15 advocates; and

16 Now, therefore, be it known that
17 the Council of the City of New York is proud to
18 honor the life and legacy of Walter Stafford for
19 his extraordinary and indelible contributions to
20 New York City.

21 Christine C. Quinn, Speaker for the
22 entire Council; Albert Vann, Council Member, 36th
23 District, Brooklyn.

24 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you very much.
25 And if I could give you the mic.

1

MS. CHELLI DEVADUTT: Thank you.

2

3 It's really appropriate that the proclamation is--

3

4 SPEAKER QUINN: [Interposing] A

4

5 little higher, closer to your mouth.

5

6 MS. DEVADUTT: --proclamation is on
7 the same day that you honored Lehman--

6

7

8 SPEAKER QUINN: Yes.

8

9 MS. DEVADUTT: --CUNY's Urban Black
10 Male Initiative. Someone said that Walter was
11 surrounded by women and was loved by women, his
12 students, and was helped by a lot of women in his
13 work, but he loved his brothers. So this is
14 really appropriate, and I thank you. This would
15 have been very humbling for Walter, he was shy in
16 his own ways and would have been somewhat
17 embarrassed by this, but I'm not and I thank you
18 very much for this honor.

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19 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you.

19

20 [Off mic]

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21 SPEAKER QUINN: Did we get a picture
22 of her? Great, thank you very much.

21

22

23 [Off mic]

23

24 MALE VOICE 2: Ladies and gentlemen,
25 at this time, can you please turn all cell phones

24

25

1

2 and pagers to vibrate. Will all non-council
3 employees and lobbyists please leave the main
4 floor of the chambers. If you do not have a
5 Council I.D., you have to leave the main floor of
6 the chambers. Thank you.

7

[Off mic]

8

9 pull it up. That's good.

10

[Off mic]

11

12 are you?

FEMALE VOICE 1: Hi [off mic] how

13

MALE VOICE 4: Nice to meet you.

14

[Off mic]

15

16 school, yet [off mic]

FEMALE VOICE 1: Not out of high

17

MALE VOICE 4: How are you?

18

MALE VOICE 4: Not yet, not yet.

19

20 fine, I couldn't be better, actually.

FEMALE VOICE 1: How am I? I'm

21

[off mic]

22

[Phone ringing]

23

24 off. Hello? Hi [Off mic] City Council, so I'll

FEMALE VOICE 1: Better turn this

25

have to call you back [off mic] Right, I just

1

2 [off mic] that's fine, whatever you guys think is

3 [off mic]

4 [Off mic]

5 FEMALE VOICE 1: [Off mic]just wants
6 to see you [off mic] up for anything.

7 - -

8 FEMALE VOICE 1: Okay. Perfect.

9 How's Charles doing?

10 [Off mic]

11 MALE VOICE 4: I'm closer to 30 than
12 I am to 20.13 FEMALE VOICE 1: Okay. Are we
14 ready? I got to go[off mic]15 MALE VOICE 4: Good, good, good,
16 good.17 FEMALE VOICE 2: You could be one of
18 those undercover guys that they send into high
19 school.

20 [Off mic]

21 FEMALE VOICE 2: After you're doing
22 your vocation [phonetic] [off mic] that that she's
23 going to talk about and then [off mic] start the
24 actual meeting [off mic]

25 [Off mic]

1
2 FEMALE VOICE 2: After you start the
3 actual meeting, when she starts--she's the
4 preside--

5 FEMALE VOICE 1: Hi, how are you?

6 FEMALE VOICE 2: This is Betsy
7 Gotbaum, she's the Public Advocate.

8 [Off mic]

9 FEMALE VOICE 2: Yeah, you sit--
10 watch me.

11 [Off mic]

12 FEMALE VOICE 1: Sorry, I'm sorry, I
13 apologize.

14 [Off mic]

15 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet, please.

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,
17 please. Will the [off mic] Stated Meeting of
18 November 13th come to order. All rise.

19 [Off mic]

20 FEMALE VOICE: I pledge--

21 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: All rise, rise.

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: I pledge
23 allegiance--

24 To the flag of the United States of
25 America and to the Republic for which it stands,

1
2 one nation under God indivisible, with liberty and
3 justice for all

4 SPEAKER QUINN: Roll call.

5 COUNCIL CLERK: Addabbo.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ADDABBO: Here.

7 COUNCIL CLERK: Arroyo.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Here.

9 COUNCIL CLERK: Avella.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: Here.

11 [Off mic]

12 COUNCIL CLERK: Baez.

13 MALE VOICE: That's progress.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BAEZ: [No response.]

15 COUNCIL CLERK: Barron.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Here.

17 COUNCIL CLERK: Brewer.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Aye, here.

19 COUNCIL CLERK: Como.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER COMO: Here.

21 COUNCIL CLERK: Comrie.

22 [No response.]

23 COUNCIL CLERK: De Blasio.

24 [No response.]

25 COUNCIL CLERK: Dickens.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Here.
3 COUNCIL CLERK: Dilan.
4 [No response.]
5 COUNCIL CLERK: Eugene.
6 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Here.
7 COUNCIL CLERK: Felder.
8 [No response.]
9 COUNCIL CLERK: Fidler.
10 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Here.
11 COUNCIL CLERK: Foster.
12 [No response.]
13 COUNCIL CLERK: Garodnick.
14 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Here.
15 COUNCIL CLERK: Gennaro.
16 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Here.
17 COUNCIL CLERK: Gentile.
18 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Here.
19 COUNCIL CLERK: Gerson.
20 COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: Here.
21 COUNCIL CLERK: Gioia.
22 [No response.]
23 COUNCIL CLERK: Gonzalez.
24 COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: Here.
25 COUNCIL CLERK: Ignizio.

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[No response.]

COUNCIL CLERK: Jackson.

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: James.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Katz.

COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Koppell.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Lappin.

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Liu.

COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Mark-Viverito.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Martinez.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: McMahon.

COUNCIL MEMBER MCMAHON: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Mealy.

[No response.]

COUNCIL CLERK: Mendez.

[No response.]

COUNCIL CLERK: Monserrate.

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[No response.]

COUNCIL CLERK: Nelson.

COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Palma.

COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Recchia.

COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Reyna.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Sanders.

[No response.]

COUNCIL CLERK: Seabrook.

COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Sears.

COUNCIL MEMBER SEARS: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Stewart.

COUNCIL MEMBER STEWART: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Vacca.

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Vallone.

COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Vann.

COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Here.

COUNCIL CLERK: Weprin.

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COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Here.

2

3

COUNCIL CLERK: White.

4

[No response.]

5

COUNCIL CLERK: Yassky.

6

[No response.]

7

COUNCIL CLERK: Oddo.

8

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Here.

9

COUNCIL CLERK: Rivera.

10

[No response.]

11

COUNCIL CLERK: Speaker Quinn.

12

SPEAKER QUINN: Here.

13

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: We have a

14

quorum. All rise for the invocation given by

15

Reverend Jevon Caldwell-Gross--quiet, please.

16

REV. JEVON CALDWELL-GROSS: Let us

17

now pause for a moment to send our hearts and

18

minds for a word of prayer.

19

Dear God, you are not one whom we

20

can feel with their hands nor see with our eyes,

21

yet give us the assurance that you are indeed here

22

with us.

23

This is indeed a day that you have

24

made, let us rejoice and be glad in it, for the

25

joy that we seek is not found in what we have, but

1

2 what we have been called to do. Shower us not
3 with the things made of gold, but with the wisdom
4 to lead and to serve.

5

6 Lord, you formed our arms to
7 embrace, our hands to reach out, our lips to speak
8 out, and our legs to stand up. Help us today to
9 speak with truth, to walk with integrity, and to
10 serve with compassion, and to boast not of our own
11 work.

12

13 On this day, we give you of
14 ourselves for the work that needs to be done, for
15 we live in a world that is starving for answers:
16 why has kindness become outdated and selflessness
17 a sign of weakness? Where has love decided to
18 flee? Why does mercy hide its face? Shall peace
19 one day rise again? We seem to cry out to you,
20 yet at times, you seem so far away. For such a
21 time as this, you have called us to give light to
22 a dimmed world.

23

24 We lift up those today who have
25 lost hope, those who no longer look forward to a
new day, for those who have been left out, cast
out, and thrown out, Lord, hear their cries. For
those that have no voice, Lord, hear their

1
2 silence; for those who are anxious, Lord, ease
3 their fears; for those who are affected by AIDS
4 and HIV, for those that have lost a job, for those
5 that have lost a home, we call out to you.

6 In this season of thanks, we are
7 mindful of all that we have and all that we can
8 give. Ready us now for the work at hand and yet
9 when we have exhausted ourselves trying to do your
10 will, let us be wise enough to rest.

11 With love, we do ask of all these
12 things; in your name, we do pray. Amen.

13 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Amen.

14 Motion to spread the invocation, Council Member
15 Vann?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: So move to
17 spread the invocation in full upon the record.

18 SPEAKER QUINN: And, Madam Public
19 Advocate, if I could ask our colleagues to please
20 rise again.

21 [Pause]

22 On October 22nd, 2008, Sergeant
23 Deon Taylor, 30, of the Bronx, he lived in Council
24 Member Arroyo's district, died of wounds suffered
25 when his vehicle encountered an improvised

1
2 explosive device while serving in Afghanistan.
3 Sergeant Taylor was assigned to the 27th Infantry
4 Brigade Combat Team of the New York Army National
5 Guard base out of the Syracuse, New York.

6 In addition to serving in the
7 National Guard, Sergeant Taylor was a New York
8 City undercover narcotics officer who joined our
9 force in 2005. He was due to return home next
10 month and marry his fiancée, Caitlin Casey
11 [phonetic], next August. At Deon Taylor's
12 funeral, Mayor Bloomberg said that quote when a
13 member of New York's finest dies, whether on the
14 streets of New York or 7,000 miles away in a
15 foreign country, a part of our city dies with
16 them. Sergeant Deon Taylor is survived by his
17 father, Dion, Sr., his mother, Pamela, his eight-
18 year-old son, his fiancée, Caitlin, his
19 grandfather George Lewis, many cousins, friends,
20 and fellow members of the New York City Police
21 Department.

22 On Tuesday, November 11th, 2008,
23 probationary firefighter James Spears, 33, who
24 joined the fire department in July, died after
25 falling unconscious after finishing a training

1

2 drill at the Fire Academy on Randall's Island.

3

4

5

6

Jamel Sears was a Navy veteran and a lifelong Bronx resident. He is survived by his wife, Sherita, a member of the NYPD, and his son and daughter, ages 12 and 8.

7

8

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10

On Wednesday, November 5th, 2008, Danny De Francesco, 68, the former longtime Executive Director of the New York City Board of Elections passed away.

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Danny Daniel De Francesco joined the Board Of Elections in 1967 as a driver to its president and rose to the top position of Executive Director in 1988, where he served until his retirement in 2002. Even after his retirement, he continued to serve as an adviser to election administrators throughout the state. Danny De Francesco is survived by two children and several grandchildren.

20

21

22

23

24

On Sunday, November 2nd, 2008, Terrence Tolbert, 44, a kind, caring, and compassionate public servant for our city, died of a heart attack in Las Vegas while serving as Director of Barack Obama's campaign in Nevada.

25

In order to work for the campaign,

1
2 Terrence took a leave of absence from his job with
3 the Bloomberg Administration as the Chief Lobbyist
4 in Albany for the Department of Education.

5 Terrence's work on behalf of civil
6 rights, police community relations, and education
7 issues leaves behind a legacy of extraordinary
8 public service that has impacted the lives of so
9 many New Yorkers.

10 President-elect Barack Obama said
11 in a statement that he sent to Terrence's funeral,
12 quote, Terrence was a strong force in this
13 campaign with a positive outlook that brought
14 people together. His enthusiasm, talent, and warm
15 heart will truly be missed.

16 Terrence is survived by his wife,
17 Freida Foster-Tolbert, and his mother, Caroline.

18 And I just want to add, some of us
19 I think have seen on different occasions the dance
20 group, the Celtic Dreams come and sing, they're
21 the group of dancers from a school in the Bronx,
22 they've been taught Irish dance there and they're
23 mostly young Latino and African-American children.
24 And, Terrence, when he met these dancers and
25 learned of my enthusiasm for their dance troupe,

1
2 they had the opportunity to go to Ireland and
3 dance for the president--and you can only imagine
4 the red tape involved sending a group of
5 schoolchildren from the Bronx to Ireland to dance
6 for the president. And Terrence thought this was
7 the greatest thing he ever heard about, he cut
8 through all of the red tape and took care of these
9 children going to Ireland as if they were his
10 very, very own and was so unbelievably proud of
11 them. And at their funeral, one of the little
12 dancers was there in her dress and she brought me--
13 -if anyone wants to see them--the copies of the
14 letters they wrote to Terrence, when their
15 teacher, Caroline Duggan, told them that he had
16 died, and they're just a lovely documentation of
17 the difference one person can make in our city and
18 in the lives of children.

19 And I just wanted to say personally
20 Terrence, during some difficult times in my life
21 had gone out of his way to call me, to e-mail me,
22 to tell me he was still with me and would always
23 be with me every step of the way whatever I did,
24 and I know I speak on behalf of all of us when I
25 say, we will miss Terrence, and his work at the

1

2 Department of Education.

3 On another sad note for our Council
4 family, on November 6, 2008, former Council Member
5 Phil Reed passed away at the age of 59. He died
6 at St. Luke's Hospital.

7 Phil served in the Council from
8 January 1998 through 2005, when he was unable to
9 run again due to term limits. Phil was a dear
10 friend to countless New Yorkers and a passionately
11 dedicated public servant. An ardent and tireless
12 pioneer for LGBT rights, Phil Reed was the first
13 openly gay black member of the New York City
14 Council.

15 During his years in office, he made
16 an extraordinary difference in the quality of life
17 of all New Yorkers, especially with his work to
18 reduce asthma, increase affordable housing,
19 improve neighborhood parks, and keep local museums
20 and cultural institutions in Harlem.

21 Council Member Reed is survived by
22 his twin sister, Eleanor Reed, of Manhattan.

23 Through his passions serve as an
24 example, Phil will always be remembered for the
25 tremendous mark he left on our city.

1
2 There is a private funeral for Phil
3 on Saturday, there will be a public memorial and
4 we will share the information on all of that with
5 everyone and that'll most likely be in December.

6 I just want to say, and I think I
7 speak for all of us, you know, Phil was nobody's
8 pushover. He was tough when he was in this
9 Council, I'll never forget the hearing in the
10 committee room when Mayor Giuliani wanted to move
11 the Museum of the City of New York to the Tweed
12 Courthouse, Phil literally made mincemeat out of
13 the people from the administration who came to
14 testify. And he was no pushover in the many, many
15 years really decades he battled cancer and other
16 ailments. He was really a tremendous, tremendous
17 power of example about just the force a life can
18 have in sustaining oneself and making a
19 difference.

20 And I know Council Member Mark-
21 Viverito would agree with me, if you drive through
22 Phil's district or, what is now her district,
23 you'll see his deep love for children manifest
24 through all of the parks that he had redone.

25 And when we are lucky enough

1
2 recently to have a recognition of Phil at the
3 Museum of the City of New York and he was there,
4 they did a slideshow and it was just filled with
5 all of these great pictures of Phil surrounded by
6 children in the parks that he had helped do and
7 redo in his district.

8 And Phil made his presence very
9 much known to me in my office--I know all of us,
10 even since he left the Council, sending ideas and
11 suggestions in a very Phil Reed way to the office
12 of what we should be doing and it goes without
13 saying how much we will miss him. It seems a lot
14 to have lost Terrence and Phil all in one week.

15 And I just want to open up the mike
16 if anyone has any remembrances.

17 [Pause]

18 Minority leader Oddo.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Phil Reed was
20 my friend. If you randomly selected channel 74
21 cross works [phonetic] video from just about any
22 committee hearing from 1999 to 2005 at which Phil
23 Reed and I were in attendance, it's very likely
24 you would find the two of us sitting next to each
25 other talking, debating, and always laughing. His

1
2 friendship and even the process of becoming his
3 friend helped me overcome the limitations and
4 ignorance of my own small world.

5 A few years ago, in the City
6 Council speaker's race, the four member Republican
7 delegation let it be known to the candidates and
8 the various power brokers that we were open to
9 Phil Reed's candidacy for Speaker. Think about
10 that. While behind the scenes, some other
11 specific constituencies who often preach tolerance
12 and open-mindedness were privately saying no way
13 to his candidacy because of his orientation, the
14 party often maligned as closed-minded was more
15 supportive and willing to embrace his candidacy
16 than some of our friends on the left.

17 In retrospect, our openness to
18 support Phil was a precursor to the Republican
19 delegation aggressively and successfully
20 supporting another openly gay candidate for
21 Speaker a few years later.

22 Some people didn't quite understand
23 how Phil Reed and I hit it off so well, after all,
24 Phil was black, progressive, openly gay, from East
25 Harlem, and I was this white Catholic, Reagan

1
2 conservative from Staten Island. But our
3 friendship underscored the wonderful diversity of
4 this body, and as we've heard on the chamber
5 floors previously, that diversity could be this
6 institution's toughest challenge, but it actually
7 has served as its greatest strength. For,
8 although the City Charter inherently favors the
9 executive, it is the collective value and purpose
10 of the divergent perspectives of 51 of us that
11 must as a check on the views of one person who
12 occupies the other side of this building as
13 learned as he or she might be.

14 Phil embodied what James Madison
15 espoused, that diversity of interest, far from
16 being a liability, is the handmaid to liberty;
17 that where multiple interests compete, no single
18 interest can dominate. And I wouldn't honor Phil
19 properly if I did not speak candidly in saying
20 that I think we need to do a little bit of a
21 better job in living up to that.

22 Phil played this game of politics
23 as well as the next pol when he had to, but he was
24 true to himself and spoke out even when keeping
25 quiet might be the easier path. I will try to

1

2 follow his example, I will do so with his spirit
3 squarely in mine.

4

5 Goodbye, my friend, thanks for
6 making this a fuller Council, thanks for making
7 this crazy job a little more fun, and thank you
8 for making a better person. You can rest easy now
9 wrapped in God's loving embrace.

10

11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Madam
12 Speaker? Council Member Gerson. Council Member
13 Gerson and then Council Member Brewer?

14

15 SPEAKER QUINN: Oh, we just had
16 Council Member Dickens first, I'm sorry--

17

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Oh, sorry,
19 okay.

20

21 SPEAKER QUINN: --Madam Public
22 Advocate.

23

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Didn't see
25 her.

26

27 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Thank you
28 so much, Madam Speaker.

29

30 I first met Council Member Phil
31 Reed, many, many years ago in the 70s when we both
32 served as district leaders, he from the upper West
33 Side, I from Central Harlem. Phil even then as a

34

1

2 district leader representing his community was a
3 fierce fighter, a fighter for human rights, for
4 civil rights, for liberties for all. He was a
5 phenomenal man, a phenomenal person that worked on
6 behalf of not only his community, but all citizens
7 of this great city. Yes, Speaker, he loved
8 children and he loved open green spaces of the
9 parks, and he fought hard for our youth, our
10 future, and he fought just as hard for our parks.

11 I'm blessed to have followed in his
12 footsteps, but it is sad that I was not able to
13 serve with him so that I could learn on the floor
14 from a person that had so much to offer.

15 Phil fought for HIV/AIDS, he fought
16 for open gay marriage, he fought for all civil
17 rights issues.

18 Thank you, Phil, on behalf of your
19 community, on behalf of all of us. God bless you,
20 and thank you for making us all work harder and
21 work to a higher bar.

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Council
23 Member Gerson.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: Phil Reed
25 was a friend to me, to my family, to my mother,

1
2 and my late cousin Bernard for many years before I
3 assumed this position. He had a keen wit and a
4 brilliant sense of humor; he was fun-loving, and
5 he was full of idealism, committed to using his
6 life to make this world a better place for
7 everyone.

8 When I joined the Council, he
9 became to me a mentor, a big brother as he has
10 been to so many on the Council and off the Council
11 from all paths which crossed with his. He was
12 committed to the issues and to the causes as my
13 colleagues have stated, but he did not forget the
14 individual, the needs and the sentiments of the
15 individuals whose lives intersected with his. He
16 reached out, he embraced, he supported, he was a
17 great friend. He made this world, this Council,
18 this city a better place, and I, along with so
19 many others, will continue with his inspiration
20 within me and within us for the rest of our lives.
21 Thank you.

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Council
23 Member Brewer.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Phil Reed,
25 and I co-chaired the Manhattan delegation. He was

1

2 a curmudgeon.

3

4

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10

Miguel Martinez, I think, has his office and there was a sofa, Assembly Member Brian Kavanagh was my Chief of Staff, he slept on the sofa, Miguel, all the time 'cause Phil gave him the code to get into the office and Brian worked 24 hours a day, so he slept on that sofa all the time. Just like Council Member Simcha Felder, he took care of us.

11

12

13

14

15

The third issue, he was really smart and he would kick ass when he felt like it, just really with this sarcastic, brilliant sense of humor, some people didn't even know they were being fried. He did it with great humor.

16

17

18

The other bill that he cared about was Stop and Frisk, he was one of the first people to think about this in a legislative fashion.

19

20

21

22

23

24

Not only did parks, he did green streets. If you go down 110th Street near that ConEd, that ugly ConEd, and a couple of okay restaurants in Melissa's districts, you'll see his green street abilities where there's a wonderful patch of green area.

25

We hung out together in Martha's

1

2 Vineyard, he knows everybody in Martha's Vineyard,
3 just like he knows everybody in this city.

4

5 We're really proud that he got to
6 vote. He went in proud and strong that day, he
7 was both product of a white and black family, just
8 like his twin sister Eleanor, and he was proud of
9 it. In fact, he only met the white folks
10 recently, we all met them together on his second
11 inauguration and he said, who are you, so we had
12 that introduction together.

12

He was my buddy, he'll be missed.

13

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Madam

14

Speaker.

15

16 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you. I just
17 wanted to leave folks with a kind of lovely memory
18 of some of Phil's last days. Gale mentioned part
19 of it. The weekend before Phil passed away, he
20 went out to California and one of his friends--a
21 male friend got married to his partner in
22 California a few days before Prop 8 attempted to
23 take that right away, and Phil got to go out to
24 this gay marriage in California, serve as the Maid
25 of Honor, deliver the toast at the wedding, he got
to return back to New York, wake up in his

1
2 hometown, go to the poll on Tuesday, vote for
3 Barack Obama. He woke up Wednesday morning, he
4 spoke to our Jim Karas, a good friend of his, and
5 said he didn't feel so good, but he wasn't going
6 to pay any attention to it, it would go away if he
7 didn't think about it, and then went to the
8 hospital Thursday morning and died on Thursday.
9 So he got to do two things that were so much of
10 who Phil was right before he died.

11 And in the end, someone who had
12 suffered so much under so many ailments didn't
13 suffer when he finally passed away.

14 And if we could all stand in memory
15 of the five individuals I just referenced and
16 particularly may Terrence and Phil rest in peace.

17 [Pause]

18 Thank--

19 FEMALE VOICE: [Off mic] Public
20 Advocate, we will.

21 SPEAKER QUINN: We will adjourn
22 today's meeting in memory of Council Member Phil
23 Reed.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Adoption
25 of the minutes. Sorry. Council Member Dilan?

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[Pause]

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Council

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Member--

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SPEAKER QUINN: I'll just--

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM:

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[Interposing] Council Member Jackson.

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COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: I so motion

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to adopt all of the minutes as part of the

11

records.

12

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So

13

ordered.

14

Messages and papers from the Mayor.

15

COUNCIL CLERK: None.

16

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM:

17

Communication from City, County, and Borough

18

Offices.

19

COUNCIL CLERK: None.

20

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Petitions

21

and Communications.

22

COUNCIL CLERK: None.

23

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Land Use

24

Call-Ups.

25

COUNCIL CLERK: M1209 and 1210.

1
2 SPEAKER QUINN: If I could get a
3 coupled Call-Up vote on those two Land Use items,
4 please.

5 COUNCIL CLERK: Addabbo.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ADDABBO: Aye.

7 COUNCIL CLERK: Arroyo.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Aye.

9 COUNCIL CLERK: Avella.

10 [No response.]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: This is Land
12 Use Call-Ups?

13 MALE VOICE: Yeah.

14 COUNCIL CLERK: Baez.

15 [No response.]

16 COUNCIL CLERK: Barron.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Aye.

18 COUNCIL CLERK: Brewer.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Aye.

20 COUNCIL CLERK: Como.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER COMO: Aye.

22 COUNCIL CLERK: Comrie.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Present,
24 aye.

25 COUNCIL CLERK: De Blasio.

1

[No response.]

2

COUNCIL CLERK: Dickens.

3

COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Aye.

4

COUNCIL CLERK: Dilan.

5

[No response.]

6

COUNCIL CLERK: Eugene.

7

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Aye.

8

COUNCIL CLERK: Felder.

9

COUNCIL MEMBER FELDER: Yes.

10

COUNCIL CLERK: Fidler.

11

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Yes.

12

COUNCIL CLERK: Foster.

13

[No response.]

14

COUNCIL CLERK: Garodnick.

15

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.

16

COUNCIL CLERK: Gennaro.

17

COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Yes.

18

COUNCIL CLERK: Gentile.

19

COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Aye.

20

COUNCIL CLERK: Gerson.

21

COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: Yes.

22

COUNCIL CLERK: Gioia.

23

COUNCIL MEMBER GERSON: Excuse me,

24

yes, and, Madam Public Advocate, with permission

25

1
2 of my colleagues, I'd like to vote yes at this
3 time on all matters on this meeting's agenda.

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So
5 ordered.

6 COUNCIL CLERK: Gioia.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GIOIA: Present.

8 Yes.

9 COUNCIL CLERK: Gonzalez.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: Aye.

11 COUNCIL CLERK: Jackson.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Aye on all.

13 COUNCIL CLERK: James.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Aye.

15 COUNCIL CLERK: Katz.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Yes.

17 COUNCIL CLERK: Koppell.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I vote yes
19 on the Land Use Call-Ups, I ask unanimous consent
20 to vote yes on the--to vote on the General Orders
21 calendar.

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So
23 ordered.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I vote aye,
25 and I also ask unanimous consent to vote on

1

2 resolutions, and I vote aye on all resolutions.

3

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So

4

ordered.

5

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Thank you,

6

Madam Public Advocate.

7

COUNCIL CLERK: Lappin.

8

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Aye on the

9

Land Use Call-Ups and I request unanimous consent

10

to vote aye on the General Order calendar as well.

11

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So

12

ordered.

13

COUNCIL CLERK: Liu.

14

COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: Yes.

15

COUNCIL CLERK: Mark-Viverito.

16

COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Aye

17

on all.

18

COUNCIL CLERK: Martinez.

19

COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Aye on

20

all.

21

COUNCIL CLERK: McMahon.

22

COUNCIL MEMBER MCMAHON: Aye on the

23

Land Use Call-Ups and I request unanimous consent

24

of my colleagues to vote yes on all General Order

25

items.

1

2

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So

3

ordered.

4

COUNCIL CLERK: Mealy.

5

[No response.]

6

COUNCIL CLERK: Mendez.

7

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Aye on all.

8

COUNCIL CLERK: Monserrate.

9

COUNCIL MEMBER MONSERRATE: Aye on

10

all.

11

COUNCIL CLERK: Nelson.

12

COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Madam Public

13

Advocate, with permission, I vote aye on all Land

14

Use Call-Ups and all coupled General Orders.

15

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So

16

ordered.

17

COUNCIL CLERK: Palma.

18

COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Yes.

19

COUNCIL CLERK: Recchia.

20

COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Aye on all.

21

COUNCIL CLERK: Reyna.

22

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Aye on all.

23

COUNCIL CLERK: Sanders.

24

COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Yes to all.

25

COUNCIL CLERK: Seabrook.

1

2

COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: Aye on

3

all.

4

COUNCIL CLERK: Sears.

5

COUNCIL MEMBER SEARS: Aye.

6

COUNCIL CLERK: Stewart.

7

COUNCIL MEMBER STEWART: Yes.

8

COUNCIL CLERK: Vacca.

9

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Aye, and I

10

ask permission to vote aye on all General Order

11

calendar items.

12

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So

13

ordered.

14

COUNCIL CLERK: Vallone.

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COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Aye.

16

FEMALE VOICE: Hi there.

17

MALE VOICE: Hey, what's up?

18

COUNCIL CLERK: Vann.

19

COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Aye.

20

COUNCIL CLERK: Weprin.

21

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Aye.

22

COUNCIL CLERK: White.

23

[No response.]

24

COUNCIL CLERK: Yassky.

25

COUNCIL MEMBER YASSKY: Aye.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Avella.

2

COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: Yes.

3

[Pause]

4

COUNCIL CLERK: Oddo.

5

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Yes.

6

COUNCIL CLERK: Speaker Quinn.

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SPEAKER QUINN: Yes.

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[Pause]

9

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Today's

10

Land Use Call-Ups were adopted by a vote of 43 in
the affirmative, 0--sorry, zero negative.

11

12

Communication from the Speaker?

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SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you, Madam

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Public Advocate. We are voting today on two--

15

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,

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please.

17

SPEAKER QUINN: --very, very

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important Land Use items. Together, these
represent an incredible step forward as it relates
to affordable housing and economic development for
all five boroughs, but a particularly significant
day for the Borough of Queens.

19

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23

The first Land Use item that I'm

24

talking about is the Willets Point redevelopment.

25

1
2 I want to thank Amy Levitan, Carol Shine, Gail
3 Benjamin of our staff, all of our Land Use staff
4 who worked on this. I also want to thank Chuck
5 Meara, my chief of staff and particularly thank
6 Ramon Martinez of my office for all of his work on
7 this.

8 I want to recognize that we're
9 joined today by the former Queens Borough
10 President Claire Shulman and I want to thank her
11 for her many, many years of advocacy on this.
12 This is a plan that we also need to thank Mayor
13 Bloomberg, Deputy Mayor Bob Lieber, and all of his
14 staff for working on and bringing forward and
15 negotiating very earnestly with the Council on.

16 We'll hear in a little bit from
17 Chairperson Katz, Chairperson Garodnick, and
18 Council Member Hiram Monserrate. I want to thank
19 all of them for their tireless work on this
20 project, particularly Melinda Katz and Hiram
21 Monserrate who worked up until the final minutes
22 to make sure that Willets Point was a plan that
23 the vast majority of the City Council could, and I
24 hope, will support.

25 What we're doing here is taking a

1
2 part of Queens, a part of our city that, for
3 decades and decades, has been in desperate need of
4 redevelopment. The first discussions of
5 redeveloping Willets Point began under Robert
6 Moses, and for decades these have sat in different
7 iterations on bureaucrats' desks and never moved
8 forward.

9 What we have today due to the
10 leadership of Mayor Bloomberg, the leadership of
11 Chairperson Katz, Garodnick, and very much the
12 leadership of Hiram Monserrate, we have the
13 Council and the Administration coming together to
14 finally do something that the city has been unable
15 to do for decades--to redevelop a part of Queens,
16 and in doing this, to create a regional
17 destination, to create 35% of the housing that
18 will be developed as affordable housing. The vast
19 majority of it, affordable to working-class
20 residents of New York who have so few options,
21 unfortunately, as it relates to affordable
22 housing.

23 We will also create thousands and
24 thousands of permanent good jobs at the hotel and
25 the convention center and the regional destination

1
2 that are part of the Willets Point redevelopment.
3 We will also create countless jobs through the
4 building that will go on and the environmental
5 cleanup that will go on as part of this project.

6 And make no mistake about it, the
7 environmental cleanup that is part of the Willets
8 Point plan is incredibly significant. This is an
9 area that is severely contaminated and its level
10 of contamination causes, not only a problem for
11 Willets Point, but in the impact it has for the
12 areas surrounding Willet Point and some of the
13 waterways in the area.

14 What action we're taking today will
15 redevelop this area, it will clean up the
16 environmental contamination, it will create
17 affordable housing, it'll create a regional
18 destination right next to City Field, not far from
19 the airports, near major subway lines. It'll
20 create a place for people to go that it will
21 create jobs and revenue that is in desperate need
22 right now. This will be an economic engine right
23 at the time our city needs it most.

24 I urge everyone to support this and
25 I again want to thank all of my colleagues who

1
2 have worked on this, particularly Council Members
3 Katz and Monserrate.

4 And let me call on the Chair of our
5 Land Use Committee, Council Member Katz, then
6 Council Member Monserrate, and then Council Member
7 Garodnick.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Thank you,
9 Madam Speaker. As the speaker said, this is a
10 application to create a special Willets Point
11 district to transform a largely underutilized and
12 extremely in need of environmental cleanup into a
13 vibrant community in the borough of Queens.

14 This is a long time coming for me
15 and for many of my colleagues from Queens. As the
16 Speaker said, it has been decades that Willets
17 Point has been in need of investment and need of
18 being redone. There is no one, my colleagues, no
19 one that drives through Willets Point or walks
20 through Willets Point and says, yeah, this is
21 great, let's leave it just the way it is. It is
22 impossible to say that when you go through that.

23 This is a chance for the city to
24 invest millions of dollars at a time when the
25 economy of this city desperately needs investment,

1

2 desperately needs people to work, desperately
3 needs affordable housing at a rate where actually
4 people that are in most need of it can actually
5 afford to live there.

6 This is a good plan, and it's a
7 complex plan, it did not come together easily and
8 there's so many people that say to me, well, you
9 know, at the end, the vote was a good vote in land
10 use, but the truth is, there are years, the last
11 few months and weeks and hours up until the last
12 minute that all the parties--the Administration,
13 the Council, the advocates, the land owners, and
14 the tenants--had to come together in the end and
15 come up with a plan that may not be perfect in
16 everyone's mind, but it is the best possible plan
17 for this area as we move forward. I am proud of
18 the results that we got here today, it will keep
19 people working, it will train the 1,700 folks that
20 are working there now who, by the way, with the
21 economy the way it is, I guess we all hope that
22 the jobs would still be there if we left it the
23 way it is, but nobody knows that. And now there's
24 a chance to train the 1,700 workers that are there
25 for future employment to create 5,000 permanent

1

2 jobs in the city of New York.

3

4 It is also one of the best
5 affordable housing components that I have seen as
6 Land Use Chair. Thirty-five percent of the
7 housing here out of the 5,500 units will be
8 affordable; 60% of that will be at 60% AMI or
9 lower--that's an incredible amount of units
10 available to the folks in the city who can least
11 afford to live here, and we want to make sure they
12 stay here and want to work here and want to
13 actually invest in the economy of this city as we
14 move forward and that's extremely important.

14

15 So I want to congratulate everyone
16 that's been involved with this plan. It has come
17 down to the wire as so many land use projects do,
18 but in the end, Willets Point is in need of
19 revitalization, it is in desperate need of getting
20 rid of the contamination that is there and it will
21 add to the economy and to this city and I'm proud
22 to be the Chair of the Land Use Committee and I'm
23 proud that the vote went well and I thank
24 everyone.

24

I urge a yes vote on this.

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SPEAKER QUINN: Council Member

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2 Monserrate.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MONSERRATE: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. First and foremost, I want to thank the constituents of the 21st Council district that in 2001 voted for and supported me to enter into these chambers and do some good work along with my colleagues. It has been some ride, I have to tell you.

I want to thank my staff in particular Wayne Malke and Julissa Ferraras, who worked tirelessly in the last few weeks holding extensive meetings with both the EDC and the property owners to ensure that they were treated fairly and that deals were closed.

I want to thank all the advocates who over two years ago began this journey, began this journey to talk about affordable housing and other needs in jobs and protections against the abuses of eminent domain, particularly ACORN and Queens Congregations United who were there from the very beginning holding town hall after town hall to hear the people's response and to ensure that the people at the grassroots level had an opportunity to participate in what would

1
2 ultimately be one of the largest projects in the
3 history of the borough of Queens.

4 Folks, I would like to thank all my
5 colleagues, in particular all the delegations, all
6 the brave members that signed letters to the
7 administration saying that there had to be changes
8 to a plan, that the plan must have been more
9 fairer, and one that would provide benefits for
10 the people of this great city that we represent.

11 I also want to make a special note
12 to the Black Latino and Asian Caucus, of which I
13 had the honor of co-chairing for four years, who
14 also stood by to ensure that the issues that were
15 important, particularly to our communities were
16 also met. And, ladies and gentlemen, I also want
17 to thank organized labor, the hotel trades in
18 particular, and so many who worked tirelessly also
19 to ensure that at the end of the day this project
20 would have prevailing wage protections and
21 provides quality jobs for our New Yorkers in a new
22 and improved Willets Point.

23 I'd like to think also--yes, I also
24 would like to thank Mayor Bloomberg and Deputy
25 Mayor Lieber and the staff at EDC that also worked

1
2 very hard alongside the City Council staff and my
3 staff to deal with all the issues that we have
4 raised.

5 And today, ladies and gentlemen, we
6 are here for a vote. The Chair of the Land Use
7 Committee, the Subcommittee Chair Dan Garodnick,
8 Melinda Katz together, also spent a considerable
9 amount of time, their staffs on this issue and
10 also assisted in raising the issues. This was
11 truly a project that heard the voices, all the
12 voices and all the stakeholders.

13 I'd like to say also that I know
14 that this is probably one of the last major
15 projects I will be voting on as a member of this
16 body, and it has been a tremendous experience, but
17 I am extremely proud of this institution because
18 what we were able to achieve in Willets Point
19 should really establish a benchmark in how we look
20 at future projects. When we talk about the
21 affordability aspects of this project and we look
22 at the fact that over 60% of the 35% that is
23 allocated for affordable housing will really go to
24 the New Yorkers that need it the most. This is
25 the most affordable affordability project that we

1
2 have ever undertaken. We are talking about
3 providing housing at 29% to folks who are making
4 under 46,000; another 47% of the affordability set
5 aside for those who are making under 38,000; 11%
6 for those who are making under 30,000; 13% set
7 aside for folks, families of four that are making
8 under \$23,000 a year. This is a victory for the
9 people of the city of New York and, yes, it is a
10 victory for the city of New York.

11 But we also didn't forget those who
12 are there now. We have put forth workforce
13 redevelopment plans, relocation plans, a fund to
14 assist the current business owners that I also met
15 with today and I assured them that we will
16 continue to advocate for the Willets Point
17 business owners that are there today.

18 I want to also establish and state
19 that in this project we also have an MWBE program
20 to ensure that there is diversity in contracts and
21 jobs for communities that historically have been
22 disenfranchised.

23 Ladies and gentlemen, I am proud
24 for the work that we have done at Willets Point
25 collectively. I thank you for all your support

1

and work and I ask you to support this project.

2

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Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

4

[Applause]

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,

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please. Quiet, please.

7

SPEAKER QUINN: Chairperson

8

Garodnick.

9

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Thank

10

you, Madam Speaker.

11

I'm pleased to follow Council

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Member Monserrate and Katz.

13

I want to first of all recognize

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Council Member Monserrate for being a strong

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advocate for his district and to Council Member,

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Chair Katz for her advocacy, and, of course,

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Speaker Quinn and Mayor Bloomberg for their

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thoughtfulness throughout this process, which is

19

an important plan today, the redevelopment of 62

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acres of real estate that are in such a condition

21

of distress that you would hardly recognize them

22

as part of the city of New York.

23

Willets Point lacks basic

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infrastructure. such as a sewer system and has not

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even had the most basic maintenance of its streets

1
2 and sidewalks. Visitors like myself to Willets
3 Point observe sink holes the size of entire
4 intersections.

5 And on October 17, my Subcommittee
6 at Planning heard about seven hours of testimony
7 from area residents, business owners, labor
8 representatives, elected officials, and others
9 about the historic inattention to this area, the
10 absence of basic infrastructure, and the
11 environmental harms--environmental harms that
12 continue to do damage to the Jamaica Bay and
13 Flushing River. Soil tests have found high
14 concentrations of petroleum-based contaminants, as
15 well as lead and mercury, the cancer causing
16 toxins that are present in the groundwater pose a
17 serious public health risk, in my view, that is
18 likely only to grow more acute if the existing
19 land uses in the area going change.

20 Indeed, the environmental
21 conditions at Willets Point are so significant
22 that their remediation by the ultimate developer
23 of this site alone is an enormous benefit of the
24 redevelopment. And as the potential for this
25 area, and the potential for this area as a point

1
2 for economic revitalization is enormous. It sits
3 right next door to the new City Field as the
4 Speaker mentioned, it has the Seven Train, the
5 Long Island Railroad, and highways right at its
6 side, it is minutes away from LaGuardia Airport.
7 It is, in short, a critical hub for New York City,
8 one that creates an opportunity to add billions in
9 economic stimulus, and the environmental cleanup
10 is to be done at the expense of the private
11 sector. This is a plan from which the public will
12 surely benefit.

13 Of course, there are a number of
14 commitments that have been made and it's the job
15 of this body to hold those commitments to their
16 tasks and we will do that, certainly will through
17 our oversight power.

18 And with this vote today, I believe
19 we have an opportunity to take Willets Point in a
20 new direction and I encourage my colleagues to
21 vote yes. Thank you.

22 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you very much,
23 Chairperson Garodnick--

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM:
25 [Interposing] Excuse me [off mic] Council Member

1

2 Gentile.

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COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: I just
wanted to--

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SPEAKER QUINN: [Interposing]
Council Member, I'm sorry--

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8

COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Oh, I'm
sorry--

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SPEAKER QUINN: --are you--

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11

COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: --I'm just
speaking on--

12

SPEAKER QUINN: Yeah, no, no--

13

COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Okay.

14

15

SPEAKER QUINN: --you'll have to do
that when you vote, not on Speaker's time, I
apologize.

16

17

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Oh, okay.

18

19

SPEAKER QUINN: The other item, I
said today, today was a big day for Queens and it
is. The second very, very significant item of
Land Use we're taking up in Queens is Hunters
Point South.

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21

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23

Before I do that though, I just

24

failed to, when I was speaking about Willets

25

Point, thank everyone at the Economic Development

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2 Corporation for all of their hard work on the
3 Willets Point project and also thank Congress
4 Member Joe Crowley, he and his staff worked long
5 and hard to bring Willets Point to a reality
6 today.

7

8 The second project we're voting on
9 today is Hunters Point South in Council Member
10 Gioia's district. I want to thank Peter Janosik
11 and Christian Hylton and Gail Benjamin of the Land
12 Use staff for all of their work on this item. I
13 want to particularly congratulate Council Member
14 Gioia for all of his work; thank our HPD
15 Commissioner, Shaun Donovan, for his work.

16 Council Member Gioia and Commissioner Donovan were
17 working late into the night last night to make
18 sure that the Hunters Point South redevelopment
19 could be the most it could possibly be for the
20 borough of Queens and the Long Island City
21 neighborhood and I think Eric and Shaun surpassed
22 that on what we're voting on today.

23

24 This is a plan that will rezone
25 part of Long Island City on the waterfront. It's
a plan that, among other things, will create
thousands of new units of affordable housing.

1
2 This is, by many accounts and most accounts, the
3 largest commitment to the expansion of middle-
4 class housing in the city of New York since
5 Starrett City in the 70s--that is quite, quite an
6 accomplishment. But on top of that, through the
7 earnest work of Council Member Gioia and the
8 staff, they were able to identify sites that could
9 also be rezoned very, very close in walking
10 distance to the Hunters Point South rezoning.
11 Those rezonings will allow us to do more than just
12 the biggest middle-class housing development since
13 the 70s, which would be enough, but will add into
14 this, hundreds of units for working-class New
15 Yorkers and hundreds of units for low income
16 seniors.

17 I want to congratulate everyone who
18 worked on this project, it does deserve a round of
19 applause.

20 In addition to Council Member
21 Gioia, I also want to thank Chairperson Katz for
22 all of her work on the project, this is a great
23 day for Queens. You know, Council Member Gioia
24 has talked about wanting Long Island City to be an
25 area where folks of all incomes can live together,

1
2 live near each other, all send their children to
3 the same schools, and this rezoning is certainly
4 going to take us a step closer to that dream
5 coming true.

6 Let me call on Chairperson Katz and
7 then Council Member Gioia.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Thank you,
9 Madam Speaker, and I also neglected to thank
10 Subcommittee Chair Garodnick for Willets Point.
11 Everyone should know that before the subcommittee
12 heard the seven hours of testimony, Council Member
13 Garodnick insisted on going out to Willets Point,
14 touring it with the map, touring it with the folks
15 from the city, and I think that that was an
16 important dynamic during the hearing. And also
17 Councilman Monserrate for all of his negotiations.

18 And we're here also to rezone
19 Hunters Point South. We're here to create a
20 vibrant middle income urban community and a
21 waterfront park in Hunters Point and, as important
22 as it is to create lower income housing for folks
23 to stay in the city of New York and be able to
24 afford to live here and donate to our economy, we
25 also need to create and have as a goal in the City

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Council to create middle income housing and this will create 3,000 affordable units out of the 5,000 units that we're putting on one of the sites; 200 units will be lower income senior housing; 800 units will be at 80% AMI; 1,000 will be at 130%; 1,000 will be 165%. And it's extremely important that we note that in the surrounding area, Councilman Gioia was terrific in negotiating, and I know he will talk about it, with the city for additional affordable units in his area. It is in desperate need and we are proud to submit this application from the Land Use Committee as well.

I want to thank the Subcommittee Chair Tony Avella for all the work that he put into this as well.

SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you. Council Member Gioia.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIOIA: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and thank you, Chair Katz, and thank you, Chair Avella, for your support and all the members who voted on this today.

I also want to thank all of the

1
2 advocates, and when I say advocates, I mean, the
3 people who live in Queens who came to my office
4 over the past few months has shared with me their
5 personal stories--stories that, frankly, are
6 difficult to share with people who aren't family.
7 Stories about how difficult it is for them to pay
8 their rent, to put food on their table, to pay for
9 prescription drugs, these are proud people who I
10 know it was difficult the stories they were
11 sharing with me. But the stories they were
12 sharing were the stories of so many New Yorkers
13 who are in the midst of what can only be called a
14 deep, deep housing crisis. It's a crisis that is
15 driving the middle class to the suburbs and
16 driving the poor into squalor. It's a crisis that
17 you can see by walking down Roosevelt Avenue or
18 down Skillman Avenue and looking at the one and
19 two family houses with four and five and six bells
20 on the door. There's so many bells because that's
21 how many families are living in those homes;
22 that's how many partitions are up in one-bedroom
23 apartments where two and three families are
24 living. You have kitchens that have mattresses on
25 the floor because that is where people are

1
2 sleeping. So this city is in the midst of a
3 housing crisis.

4 Someone asked me if I was satisfied
5 with what happened today in Queens, and let me say
6 with this rezoning, the two rezonings together--
7 Hunters Point South and Willets Point--this is the
8 biggest public investment in housing, subsidized
9 development perhaps in our city's history,
10 certainly in the history of Queens and we take a
11 giant step forward to making New York City more
12 affordable. But someone said to me, are you
13 satisfied with that and the answer is absolutely
14 not. No one in this body and no one in this city
15 can be satisfied until every New Yorker, no matter
16 what their income, is able to live in a home that
17 they can afford in a neighborhood that they are
18 proud of.

19 And I want to speak specifically
20 about Hunters Point South. The city is taking a
21 bold step forward for middle-class families, for
22 middle income families. You know, often I say of
23 Queens, Queens is a borough that has a middle-
24 class attitude, but has working-class incomes and
25 I think sometimes as we plan this city and plan

1
2 development, we forget that, because there are a
3 lot of people with that middle-class attitude who
4 can't afford a middle-class rent.

5 That being said, if all we do is
6 housing for the fabulously wealthy or for the
7 desperately poor, then that middle--that cop who
8 is married to a school teacher will be pushed out
9 of New York City.

10 Hunters Point South by itself does
11 a big step forward at doing that job, including
12 225 ownership units at permanent affordability.
13 This is not done often, in fact, this is only the
14 second time it's ever been done in Queens--225
15 ownership units of permanent affordability.

16 But as we made room for the middle
17 class, I want to make sure that we're not pitting
18 the middle-class against those who are truly
19 struggling to make ends meet, those at the very
20 lower levels of the income spectrum. And that's
21 why I'm very happy that Hunters Point South will
22 now be a catalyst for rezonings in this
23 surrounding area. Already today we've rezoned a
24 plot that will give 330 more units of affordable
25 housing at the lower income level and the city,

1
2 working with the city, we are identifying further
3 parcels, both city owned and privately owned,
4 where, over the next few years, we believe at the
5 bear minimum, it will be at least 500 more
6 affordable units at the lowest levels, I believe
7 it'll be closer to 1,000, even surpassing 1,000.

8 But I will conclude by saying, the
9 opportunity we have in Long Island City, the
10 opportunity we have is to finally get this right,
11 to build a neighborhood on the waterfront. A
12 neighborhood where people of all income levels can
13 live together--yes, that cop and school teacher,
14 but also the nurse and the restaurant worker and
15 the crossing guard--all in the same neighborhood,
16 all in the same building, sending their children
17 to the same schools and walking in the same parks.

18 Today is the beginning of that
19 process of ending the housing crisis in New York,
20 certainly not the end. And I thank everybody
21 who's worked towards that goal. Thank you very
22 much.

23 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you, and that
24 concludes Communications from the Speaker.

25 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Sorry.

1

2 Okay, that's all right, thank you.

3

Okay, Discussion of General Orders.

4

Council Member Barron.

5

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you

6

very much, Madam Chair, before you start my time,

7

today's a very special day for me. I just wanted

8

to say publicly to my wife, Inez Barron, my

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beautiful Black Queen, today is our 26th

10

anniversary--marriage anniversary and I just

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wanted to take a moment for that--

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[Background noise]

13

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: --put the

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clock back and I wanted to hurry up and get a

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handclap 'cause it's the last one I'm going to get

16

from you today. And to say that I'm glad George

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Washington came down so we can put Barack Obama up

18

and have the first black portrait in the City

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Council chambers should be Barack Obama. So I'm

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glad it came down and we can discuss the kind of

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portrait we'll have for him.

22

I rise today to talk about Willets

23

Point. It's good that ACORN was involved to get

24

affordable housing. I think it's very good that

25

my friend and comrade in struggle Hiram Monserrate

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2 led it. I think it's good that organized labor
3 was involved to assure the jobs.

4 But I'm going to make a protest
5 vote of no today for this reason. You're going to
6 win 'cause nothing comes here without the victory,
7 so you are going to win your vote, but we have to
8 stand in protest against the abusive use of
9 eminent domain. When the Supreme Court passed the
10 law that said no longer would eminent domain be
11 used for the public use of school, a park, a
12 highway, but now rich developers can use it to
13 maximize profits and give us a cut, affordable
14 housing, jobs, that to me, they left a wiggle room
15 for cities and states to protect the voiceless.
16 So I'm standing up for those retail stores, for
17 those who are going to lose their jobs because
18 when you sit down and negotiate with the city when
19 they have the power of eminent domain, it's like
20 Eric Gioia said, it's like sitting down with Al
21 Capone with a gun on the table, and like I say
22 it's like sitting down with the Godfather and he
23 will make you an offer you cannot refuse.

24 So I just think that when you force
25 people out through eminent domain, whether they

1

2 are retail stores or residence, we are doing the
3 wrong thing. So my protest is against eminent
4 domain. When I marched with Hiram Monserrate, it
5 was marching against the abusive use--

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Thank you,
7 Council Member.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: --of eminent
9 domain--

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Thank you,
11 Council Member.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: --and I will
13 always do that. Thank you very much--

14 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Thank you.
15 Thank you.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: --I vote no
17 today, thank you.

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,
19 please. Council Member Gentile.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Thank you,
21 Madam Public Advocate. I too hope that the Mayor
22 will not use eminent domain in the last analysis
23 of this project, but I do congratulate those who
24 have worked hard to get the affordable housing and
25 the job training that is part of this Willet Point

1

2 project.

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4 However, there is one issue that
5 has gotten less focus, but should be as much of a
6 concern to us as the other issues, and that is the
7 concern that I have that this Council is ceding
8 some of its authority in approving zoning without
9 an RFP being issued or without knowing who will
10 develop this site. I'm concerned because this
11 kind of blanket approval in and of itself would
12 take the Council out of the decision-making
13 process in regard to negotiating with the chosen
14 developer before we grant the zoning change. And
15 so this really is a procedural aspect of our land
16 use authority that we should be careful to protect
17 and to preserve.

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 But in this case, I am persuaded
that there are sufficient safeguards left in the
remainder of the process so that I can join
Councilman Monserrate and the others and my
colleagues on this Council in supporting this
measure.

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 For example, I am told that there
will be square footage limitations on specific
sites in Willets Point based on the urban renewal

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2 plan. I'm also told there will be constraints on
3 certain sites on the height based on the flight
4 plan of the nearby airport. And I'm also told
5 that this plan will go to the Borough Board for
6 approval on the contractor and the contractor's
7 plans, which, in effect, means that the members of
8 this Council from the borough of Queens will
9 ultimately get to vote on the plan that is
10 presented.

11 So that, given those safeguards in
12 the rest of this process, I can support this plan,
13 but I still believe that we should be very careful
14 in preserving and protecting our land use
15 authority in these procedures. Thank you.

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Anybody
17 else? Oh, Council Member Avella.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: Thank you,
19 Madam Public Advocate. I also want to talk about
20 the Willets Point project, and I won't repeat some
21 of the comments I made on the Land Use Committee,
22 but I do agree that this is one more example of
23 the misuse of eminent domain.

24 You know, these property owners,
25 some of which have been there for generations,

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built up their businesses and they want to stay there, the city never went to them and say gee, you know, we got this project, we want to improve area, how can we work together? That conversation never happened. The conversation was, we're going to take this land and you accept our offer or else, or you face eminent domain. That's not how city government should operate and I will vote against this plan for that and other reasons.

The only other comment I wanted to make was that something that the Speaker mentioned about that this is something that the city administrations for years has attempted to do address. Well, the city created this situation. For decades, and I served in the Koch administration and lobbied against this, for decades ignored this area, they never put in the sewers, they never put in the roads. If the city would have done that, development would have taken care of itself. Even today, if the city would do that, development would take care of itself and those businesses and those workers that want to stay there, would still be there, remediation would take care of itself, because property owners

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are responsible for that remediation.

This is, you know, the arguments for this project have been turned literally upside down. I do want to thank Council Member Hiram Monserrate and congratulate him, he did make this project better than what it was and it is an achievement in terms of the affordable housing--if it gets built. All the city is agreeing to do is put this in RFP, that does not mean that one brick ever goes into the ground for affordable housing.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Anybody else?

Report of Special Committees.

COUNCIL CLERK: None.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Reports of Standing Committees.

COUNCIL CLERK: Report of the Committee on Economic Development, Intro 860, Industrial and Commercial Abatement program.

SPEAKER QUINN: Adopted and laid over.

COUNCIL CLERK: Report of the Committee On Finance, Intro 808, Belmont business improvement district.

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SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on General
Orders.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Intro 841, 13
business improvement districts.

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SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on General
Orders.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Report of the
Committee On Land Use, L.U. 779 and Reso 1687
through L.U. 784 and Reso 1692, Willets Point.

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SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on General
Orders.

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COUNCIL CLERK: L.U. 906 and Reso
1693 through L.U. 917 and Reso 1697, Hunters Point
South.

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SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on General
Orders.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Report of the
Committee on Transportation, Intro 812-A, parking
meters.

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SPEAKER QUINN: Amended and laid
over.

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: General
Order Calendar.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Resolution

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appointing various persons, Commissioner of Deeds.

SPEAKER QUINN: Coupled on General Orders, and at this point I'd like to ask for a roll call on all items that have been coupled on the General Order Calendar, please.

COUNCIL CLERK: Addabbo.

COUNCIL MEMBER ADDABBO: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Arroyo.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Aye.

COUNCIL CLERK: Avella.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: Yes on all, except for the Land Use items associated with Willets Point development 779 through 784, I vote no.

COUNCIL CLERK: Barron.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I vote aye on all, except L.U. 779 through 784 and the accompanying Resos as it relates to Willets Point, I vote no.

COUNCIL CLERK: Brewer.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I vote aye, but I want to say two things. One, I want to thank Hiram Monserrate, he contacted the Manhattan delegation and long before the Mayor briefed us,

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2 we were briefed both by the folks who had issues
3 and by EDC and then of course by the Mayor's
4 office and the Speaker's office. So I want to
5 congratulate him.

6

I just want him to know that his
7 speakers in Albany cannot figure him out and I
8 explained to some of those who are very
9 progressive that he's actually more progressive
10 than they are and they can't believe it. So
11 they'll find out, we'll miss him.

12

Congratulations.

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MALE VOICE: I couldn't schedule,
14 they scheduled it for me.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Como.

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COUNCIL MEMBER COMO: Aye on all.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Comrie.

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COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Aye on all.

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COUNCIL CLERK: De Blasio.

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COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO:

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Permission to vote on all Land Use Call-Ups?

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So

23

ordered.

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COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Thank

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you. Vote aye and permission to explain my vote.

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2 I think this is a tremendous day
3 with both Land Use items in Queens, I particularly
4 want to focus on Willets for just one moment.
5 There's a lot of very important things happened in
6 these last few weeks. I want to congratulate
7 everyone involved, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor
8 Lieber in particular, who I think gave a
9 tremendous amount of time to the Council Members,
10 as was the right thing to do. I think the
11 delegation meetings were a major step forward,
12 something that probably should have happened a
13 long time ago, I hope will happen in the future.

14 The speaker and her staff, Chairs
15 Katz and Garodnick, everyone should be proud, the
16 labor unions involved, ACORN, this is a tremendous
17 complex effort that came out with an unusually
18 good outcome and Hiram Monserrate deserves
19 tremendous credit for the very, very effective
20 manner in which he fought for his community.

21 But what I'm struck by here, and I
22 hope Hiram will look back on this as a
23 particularly important moment in his career, it's
24 not just a good outcome for the community, it is
25 precedent setting, it's a different approach that

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2 will inform everything else we do on affordable
3 housing going forward, both in terms of the amount
4 affordable housing we expect through rezonings and
5 the income [off mic] particularly trying to reach
6 those in greatest needs and really making sure
7 affordable housing is for those who are low income
8 as well, not just for those with moderate income,
9 and what was achieved in terms of living wage
10 jobs, setting a precedent that will be something
11 we can turn to in all future decisions. These are
12 the kinds of things that have a lasting impact.
13 So this is an unusually good day for this city and
14 for the City Council and I proudly vote aye on
15 all.

16 COUNCIL CLERK: Dickens.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Permission
18 to explain my vote?

19 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So
20 ordered.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: I want to
22 congratulate my colleague, Council Member Hiram
23 Monserrate, and the Speaker's staff and Land Use
24 from the Council and EDC for all the hard work.

25 Hiram had a very difficult task

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2 before him and he worked very, very hard to see to
3 it that he got an unprecedented amount of
4 affordable housing. He gets, of the 35%, he will
5 get more than 40% or is it 60% at--it's more than
6 40% at 40% AMI or less. That's unprecedented
7 because that protects the most vulnerable part of
8 our communities, that earn less.

9 And so, Hiram, I thank you for
10 raising the bar for all of us, for seeing to it
11 that you're setting up a task force that will
12 enforce the MWBE requirements for working with the
13 communities, for listening to the communities.

14 I thank my Chairs Katz and
15 Garodnick, we sat through many hours because it is
16 what the community says that we must work for, and
17 that's--those that say yes, we support it and
18 those that say no because it's on that that forces
19 the foundation from which we work.

20 So I congratulate Hiram and I vote
21 aye on all.

22 COUNCIL CLERK: Eugene.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Aye.

24 COUNCIL CLERK: Felder.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER FELDER: Yes.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Fidler.

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COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: May I be
briefly excused to explain my vote?

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So
ordered.

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COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: You know, in
my view any project that would truly improve the
Willetts Point area of Queens probably needs to
include Manny Ramirez, a completely new bullpen,
and a second basemen, but I have no objection to
using eminent domain to acquire any of those three
things. I'm surprised Hiram didn't nail them down
too.

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But like second base at City Field,
this area was a toxic dump and I respectfully
disagree with Council Member Avella that putting
in streets and sewers alone would not have caused
this area to be developed, because the enormous
cost of remediating a toxic dump would have
prevented it. Without a rezoning, there would be
no economic incentive whatsoever to do it and you
can't do it in piece. So I think that's the
strongest reason to be supporting the Willetts
Point development plan.

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2 And while we're on the general
3 subject of capital improvements to the city of New
4 York, I would say this is exactly the kind of
5 thing that we need to be doing right now to
6 generate jobs and income and revenue in our
7 economy while the private sector is sagging, and
8 the idea that we are now cutting the capital plan
9 for the city of New York by 20% is wrong minded,
10 is the wrong time to be doing it. We need to be
11 putting more people to work, creating more jobs,
12 and doing more things like Willets Point and so I
13 vote aye.

14 COUNCIL CLERK: Foster.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER FOSTER: May I be
16 excused to a vote on Land Use Call-Ups, please?

17 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So
18 ordered.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FOSTER: I vote aye
20 on Land Use Call-Ups and aye on all. Thank you.

21 COUNCIL CLERK: Garodnick.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: I vote
23 aye, thank you.

24 COUNCIL CLERK: Gennaro.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Yes.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Gentile.

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COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Yes.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Gioia.

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COUNCIL MEMBER GIOIA: Madam Public

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Advocate, may I have a moment to explain my vote?

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So

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ordered.

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COUNCIL MEMBER GIOIA: Thank you. I

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too want to congratulate Council Member Monserrate

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on all of his work today, particularly on the

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affordable housing, but I want to thank a group of

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people who have not been thanked in Willets Point,

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and that is all of the small business owners who

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have worked so hard over the past couple of years

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under just enormous pressure and under very

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difficult conditions.

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Charles Barron and I were talking

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today at the subcommittee about how when

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government comes along, it can really run over the

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little guy and what I want to say to all the small

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business owners is that government is so big and

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so powerful that no matter how strong you are, no

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matter how tough you are, it can roll you over.

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And I know all of you have been through a lot, you

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2 should be congratulated, you've been tough, and I
3 think you've put the city on notice because
4 eminent domain for economic development purposes
5 is wrong.

6 The Supreme Court decided it, I
7 believe it decided it incorrectly. I hope that
8 someday soon that that will be overturned, but
9 even in the incorrect decisions, Supreme Court
10 said we're not saying it's a good idea, we're only
11 saying you can do it. And I hope that some day
12 soon this city will stop using economic
13 development as an excuse for eminent domain.
14 Property rights need to be respected for big shots
15 as well--for little guys as well as big shots.

16 That being said, there's just too
17 much affordable housing in this project to turn
18 away from it. As I will--and this is going to
19 pass this Council today--I will be voting yes and
20 I look forward to working with the small business
21 owners and the workers in the coming years to work
22 with them to make sure--

23 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,
24 please.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GIOIA: --that

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justice is eventually done and equity is achieved.

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Thank you, and I vote yes on all today.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Gonzalez.

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COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: Yes.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Jackson.

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COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Aye on all.

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COUNCIL CLERK: James.

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COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Since I am a plaintiff on a lawsuit in the Court of Appeals on the abuse of eminent domain, I am abstaining on L.U. 779 to 784 and vote aye on the rest, thank you.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Katz.

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[Pause]

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COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Aye on all.

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Thank you.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Liu.

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COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: Permission to explain my vote, Madam Public Advocate?

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So

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ordered.

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COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: I vote yes on all matters on the General Order Calendar.

23

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With regard to the Willets Point

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2 rezoning, a lot has been said extolling the
3 virtues of this plan and I think the plan does
4 have some terrific virtues, I just caution and I
5 implore the city to continue the negotiations with
6 the private business owners and landowners on site
7 right now. Three weeks ago, when the city
8 testified before the City Council on this matter,
9 they had accumulated a total of 12% of the land,
10 which was an abysmal record after two years of
11 efforts. Nonetheless in the past--

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,
13 please.

14 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: --nonetheless,
16 in the past month, in the past three weeks, they
17 have worked hard practically day and night to
18 acquire through a negotiated settlement more of
19 the property to the point where they now have
20 control over a majority of the previously
21 privately owned lands. In the coming days,
22 beginning tomorrow and weeks, beginning next week,
23 it is incumbent upon the EDC and the city to
24 continue the negotiations in earnest to reach a
25 fair settlement with the private land owners so

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that their land is not seized in a wholesale manner.

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This has far more to do than just with the Willets Point landowners, it is also a message that we're sending to all the small businesses and entrepreneurs throughout our city that we would like people to invest their blood, sweat, and tears, their lives, their souls into their businesses and create success for our entire city, and to do so without the fear of their businesses and property being taken away in a wholesale manner, only to be given to a larger entity, a larger private entity.

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So I implore once again the EDC and the city, and I'll do everything I can to help smooth the negotiations so that we can reach fair settlement.

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Thank you very much, Madam Public Advocate.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Mark-Viverito.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Can I please be excused to explain my vote?

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So ordered.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Okay.

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I would like to also congratulate both my

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colleagues Monserrate and Gioia for the efforts

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that have led us to this point. In particular,

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what I think is important to note is that with

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each rezoning that we do, we really are pushing

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the bar as a Council, as a legislative body on

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defining income-targeted housing, on really

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achieving levels that are truly more

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representative of the true AMI of the city of New

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York.

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So I think this is to be seriously

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commended, I think that legislatively and as a

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legislative body that we need to keep pushing this

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administration to really be committed to more

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closely meeting the AMI needs when it comes to

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affordable housing that our--the reality in a lot

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of our communities. So I really do want to

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commend Council Member Monserrate and I look

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forward to continuing to push the bar with this

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Council.

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We also have to put a lot of

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pressure on the federal government to really

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redefine what true AMI is at the city level and

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2 one that reaches our communities.

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So, having said that, I will be
voting aye on all items.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Martinez.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Madam
Public Advocate, may I be excused to explain my
vote?

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So
ordered.

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COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ: Yeah, I
also want to commend Council Member Hiram
Monserrate and Council Member Gioia on the
rezoning of the district. Particularly, I want to
commend Councilman Hiram Monserrate for his
continued work in support and in defense of many
small business owners in that area, but
particularly this is a testament of the work that
he's done in the past, as I mentioned in the Land
Use Committee, not only had he stood out for small
business owners in his district, but we all
remember how hard he fought for the Bronx Terminal
Market small business owners there. And I trust
his judgment that these small businesses in the
Willets Point area and the fact that we're going

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2 to have a WMBE program to address the need for
3 more women and minority owned businesses to do
4 business with the city and be part of the
5 development there, that we're doing the right
6 thing here, in addition to the affordable housing
7 that are coming to the district. And I want to
8 congratulate him, his community for the work that
9 he's done and the achievement.

10 So I vote aye on both.

11 COUNCIL CLERK: Mealy.

12 [No response.]

13 COUNCIL CLERK: Mendez.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Aye on all.

15 COUNCIL CLERK: Monserrate.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MONSERRATE:

17 Permission to explain my vote?

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So
19 ordered.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MONSERRATE: Thank
21 you very much. I want to just again thank all my
22 colleagues for their vote of confidence, for their
23 hard work, and their due diligence on this matter.
24 And obviously it's because the issue of eminent
25 domain was one that I also raised and is of great

1

2 concerns to me.

3

4 I want to make the record clear
5 that, as it stands right now, the city of New York
6 either owns or has contracted with the majority--
7 owns or contracts the majority of the land that is
8 at Willets Point, they have made a commitment to
9 continue in their negotiations even after today's
10 vote. My office will continue to ensure that and
11 follow that up in the coming weeks to ensure that
12 eminent domain is not abused and we continue to
13 find better solutions for the business owners that
14 will soon be having to relocate.

14

15 I vote aye on all. And thank you
16 all very much.

16

COUNCIL CLERK: Palma.

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COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Aye.

18

COUNCIL CLERK: Recchia.

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COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Aye.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Reyna.

21

22 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Permission to
23 explain my vote?

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So

24

24 ordered.

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COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I've been

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2 trying to find reasons to--

3 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,
4 please.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: --understand
6 why I should or should not vote for this
7 particular plan on Willets Point and I'm troubled
8 by the fact that we continue to talk about setting
9 bars and percentages, and when we truly need to
10 hold the accountability on these units, very
11 little oversight has been transparent in this
12 body.

13 And on the Williamsburg/Greenpoint
14 in comparison, because it's all I have to really
15 hold this Administration accountable, none of the
16 city-owned land has been constructed on, and
17 that's where they have most control to create the
18 affordability that they so commit to whenever we
19 have these rezonings.

20 I expect that this industrial park
21 will be the last active industrial park that this
22 Administration will attempt to convert to
23 residential because if we continue this path of
24 converting industrial parks, we will have no space
25 that will exist to engage in the catalyst of

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2 promoting small-business, of giving opportunity to
3 new entrepreneurs, to continue to have the union
4 labor that we so need, not just in construction,
5 that I see very little being done to affect the
6 unemployment rate in minority communities.

7 And so I will make sure that I will
8 hold myself accountable, but I hope that this body
9 will hold the Administration accountable and the
10 oversight necessary to see that all of these
11 rezonings that have been taking place will do
12 right by the city of New York, because as of
13 today, they haven't.

14 On that note, I will vote in favor
15 of Willets Point, but I am not satisfied with the
16 fact that eminent domain is still on the table and
17 there is probably close to 40% of the businesses
18 that are still present with property owners that
19 continue to have to negotiate. Thank you.

20 COUNCIL CLERK: Sanders.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS:
22 Congratulations to Eric; congratulations to Hiram;
23 congratulations to ACORN, I vote yea.

24 COUNCIL CLERK: Seabrook.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER SEABROOK: I vote

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2 aye.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Sears.

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5 explain my vote, please?

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So

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ordered.

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9 COUNCIL MEMBER SEARS: Willets Point
10 has been a struggle on all sides ever since it
11 started, and to the moment that we are here today
12 voting on this, we've accomplished several things
13 and this vote is not the end, this vote is the
14 beginning. It's the beginning for future
15 negotiations; it's the beginning for dealing with
16 fairness; it sets a model for labor agreements
17 later on; it takes in all economic levels in terms
18 of housing; and it has established a precedent, a
precedent for a quality of life in this city.

19

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,

20

please.

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22 COUNCIL MEMBER SEARS: Everything
23 isn't resolved, it won't be because that's what
24 negotiations are, they are to develop and to bring
25 this thing to a very agreeable and a beautiful
conclusion.

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2 I vote aye, and I know it is the
3 beginning of a future for many, many New Yorkers.

4 COUNCIL CLERK: Stewart.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER STEWART: Yes on all.

6 COUNCIL CLERK: Vallone.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Permission
8 to explain?

9 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: So
10 ordered.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: I too am
12 concerned about the use of eminent domain against
13 legitimate businesses. In this instance, however,
14 I've become convinced after many, many meetings
15 that the environmental hazards posed that this
16 site justify the potential use of eminent domain.
17 How this site was allowed to get into this
18 hazardous condition is a travesty, as Councilman
19 Avella said, but that is not before us today.

20 Before I vote, I've been informed
21 by Counsel that, in an abundance of caution, I'm
22 supposed to place on the record in case anyone in
23 the universe doesn't realize this that my father's
24 consulting firm did represent a group of private
25 businesses opposed to Willets Point and I vote

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2 aye.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Vann.

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COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Aye.

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COUNCIL CLERK: Weprin.

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COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: Aye on all.

7

COUNCIL CLERK: Yassky.

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COUNCIL MEMBER YASSKY: Madam Public

9

Advocate, I will vote aye on all.

10

I do want to say about the Willets

11

Point proposal, I believe it is a positive step

12

forward without question for the city, so I vote

13

for it. I am concerned about eminent domain, I do

14

believe that the project could have been

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accomplished without it, but here's how it's been

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presented, so I will vote for it.

17

I just want to echo though

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something that Diana Reyna said, and this was my

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main source of reluctance here, I too represent

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parts of Greenpoint and Williamsburg, as Diana

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does, and we had a rezoning in that area three

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years ago and, much like this, it was an overall a

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good project, there are many commitments made

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about amenities to be provided to the neighborhood

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as a result of the development and I have to say

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that several of those remain undone, some of them are undone for perfectly good reasons because things were more difficult than anticipated or litigation from outside has prevented the Administration from executing. But one, a park that was promised to the neighborhood, there's no litigation blocking it, it's simply a matter of not executing and I brought this up with the Administration during this process, reminded them of this because I do think that when these commitments are made, we take them seriously, we go out and tell the public, this is part of the plan and when it's not done, we've gone back on that and the Administration has gone back on it.

And so there are a lot of similar commitments made here in Willets Point, I know that we will be vigilant and watching to make sure they are executed, but I believe that we also need to make sure that the past commitments were made on similar plans are executed as well. Thank you.

And I vote aye on all matters.

COUNCIL CLERK: Oddo.

COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: I vote yes on all and if anyone really cares why I'm voting on

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2 Willets Point, I bring to their attention the
3 transcript of the Land Use hearing and Council
4 Member Vann's comments, he gave the speech I would
5 have given, but he did it much more eloquently
6 than I did so I won't repeat it.

7 So yes on all.

8 COUNCIL CLERK: Speaker Quinn.

9 SPEAKER QUINN: Aye on all.

10 [Pause]

11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: All items
12 on today's General Order Calendar were adopted by
13 a vote of 45 in the affirmative, zero negative,
14 zero abstentions, with the exception of L.U. 779
15 and Reso 1687, which was adopted by a vote of 42
16 in the affirmative, two negative, one abstentions;
17 and L.U. 780 and Reso 1688, which was adopted by a
18 vote of 42 in the affirmative, two negative, and
19 one abstention; and L.U. 781 and Reso 1689, which
20 was adopted by a vote of 42 in the affirmative,
21 two negative, one abstentions; and L.U. 782 and
22 Res 1690, which was adopted by 42 in the
23 affirmative, two in the negative, 1 abstentions;
24 and L.U. 783 and Reso 1691, which was adopted by
25 42 in the affirmative, two in the negative, and

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2 one abstention; and L.U. 784 and Reso 1692, which
3 was adopted by 42 in the affirmative, two
4 negative, and one abstentions.

5 The revised use land up call vote
6 is 45 affirmative, zero negative.

7 I don't see any resolutions today--
8 oh, I'm sorry, Introduction Reading of Bills.

9 SPEAKER QUINN: All bills are
10 referred to committees as indicated on the agenda.
11 I just want to remind--

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,
13 please.

14 SPEAKER QUINN: --my colleagues that
15 next week we are going to be having finance
16 committee and joint finance committee meetings on
17 the November plan, the--

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,
19 please.

20 SPEAKER QUINN: --hearing on Monday
21 will just be Finance, the other ones will be
22 finance jointly with the other committees.

23 Thank you, Madam Public Advocate.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: There are
25 no resolutions and we'll go to the General

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2 Discussion.

3 Council Member James. Put Felder
4 on there.5 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: I have two
6 words for all of you. President Obama--7 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,
8 please.9 SPEAKER QUINN: Just get quiet in
10 the chambers, please.11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,
12 please.13 SPEAKER QUINN: Sorry, Council
14 Member.

15 FEMALE VOICE: Okay.

16 SPEAKER QUINN: Quiet. Thank you.
17 Go ahead, Council Member, sorry.18 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Thank you.
19 As was stated on the day of the victory, I have
20 two words for you, President Obama, the 44th
21 President of the United States, a symbol of
22 change, hope, unity, intelligence, dignity,
23 integrity, and yes, progress. It is a great day
24 for democracy and, as we stated in the Pledge of
25 Allegiance, we all stand indivisible and with

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2 justice for all.

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It is also with sadness that the day before the election, my good friend Terrence Tolbert died. He had this keen wit, this in-depth intelligence, the sharp tongue, and the spirited personality.

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet, please.

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COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: He was preoccupied with Star Trek because, like Terrence, Terrence knew no boundaries. He turned a red state blue, and on the day of his death, the blue skies turned gray. Terrence, rest in peace, you've done a good work, you've done a good job, you go home to the Angels. God bless you.

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Excuse me, could you all please be quiet because some of the Council Members cannot be heard or can't hear. Thank you.

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Council Member Dickens.
COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Thank you. Today, I'm introducing Intros 864 and 865 and Reso 1681.

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,

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2 please. Hold on, Inez, wait a minute, please.

3 Quiet, please.

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Okay, Council Member.

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COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Thank you.

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Intro 864 pertains to a new emergency notification

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system for the Department of Buildings. When an

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emergency occurs, there has not been a systematic

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outreach by DOB to people working on job sites, to

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the city elected officials, nor to community

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boards. This further endangers passersby and

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other people living in the area.

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This legislation would mandate that

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the DOB, upon declaration by the Commissioner of

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an emergency, would need to contact all

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appropriate parties.

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Intro 865 is a companion to the

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crane legislation--

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SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet, please

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PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet.

21

Sorry, Inez.

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COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Thank you.

23

To the crane legislation that the Council passed

24

earlier this year. We all have witnessed the

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tragic crane accidents that occurred earlier. My

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2 district in Harlem is experiencing similar growth
3 and one of the central problems in those incidents
4 is, in my opinion, that the city should have been
5 doing more due diligence in inspecting cranes
6 throughout their life cycles.

7 Therefore, better oversight of
8 these cranes to protect construction workers and
9 the surrounding communities is necessary.

10 Reso 1681 calls upon the federal
11 government and the State of New York to provide
12 capital funding to NYCHA for elevator repairs and,
13 where needed, full replacement.

14 As we all have become aware, many
15 of the NYCHA elevators are broken, malfunctioning-
16 -

17 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Quiet,
18 please.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: --skipping
20 floors, people are getting stuck, trapped, and
21 dying. This city has been transferring money out
22 of capital budget into operational expenses,
23 therefore, that capital projects are suffering.

24 So this is a Reso calling upon the
25 federal government and the state to provide

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capital funding for the elevators.

In addition, God bless you, Terrence, you're a good friend, you'll be sorely missed, and I love you.

And I want to also say congratulation to Council Members Addabbo, Monserrate, and McMahon.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Council Member de Blasio.

COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Thank you, Madam Public Advocate.

I want to also say we were all shocked the day before the election to hear about Terrence Tolbert and anyone who worked with him could not have failed to notice the incredible energy, enthusiasm, purpose, commitment, and, you know, we have lost him way too early. The only thing we can take any solace in is that this wonderful young man was lost doing exactly what he cared about the most, and I talked to people who were talking to him the days right before the election and his whole heart was in it and he would be so gratified by what happened the following day. He will be very much missed.

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2 I do also want to mention that I've
3 introduced today Intro 863, I'm working with
4 Council Member Eric Gioia on that and we welcome
5 as many colleagues to join on this legislation,
6 would improve upon Department of Transportation's
7 current effort to evaluate schools for traffic
8 safety. DOT has been doing some of the right
9 things to figure out how we make the areas around
10 our schools safer, but we need to do more, and we
11 need to do it more quickly.

12 So my bill would require all
13 schools with students who are in the eighth grade
14 or below to be evaluated in a very clear timeline
15 to see if they need traffic calming measures and,
16 then once it's identified--once those measures are
17 identified, they have to be implemented within a
18 year.

19 This is so important, we've all had
20 very, very sad situations around schools, I lost
21 two nine-year-olds coming home from a school in my
22 district a few years ago, and there are real
23 things we can do to make the areas safer, speed
24 bumps and different traffic signal patterns, etc.
25 So this is a situation that has real solutions,

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2 but we only can get ahead of the problem if we
3 look at every school with younger children and
4 decide which ones need action and commit ourselves
5 very tangibly to that action. I think my
6 legislation will lead to that day, so I urge my
7 colleagues to please sign on. Thank you very
8 much.

9 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Council
10 Member Felder.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER FELDER: Thank you,
12 Madam Public Advocate. Council Member Vallone,
13 Jr., Peter Vallone, Jr., and I are introducing
14 Resolution 1682 today, which calls on Albany to
15 end the double-dipping loophole for public
16 employees claiming disability pension and then
17 suing the city for double the money.

18 That's not how it works anywhere
19 else, not in the private sector, and it's not how
20 it works in any other states, including the fact
21 that in New York State, a thousand municipalities
22 have been pushing for the change in this loophole.
23 This loophole, if in fact corrected, would save
24 automatically overnight \$164 million. It would
25 save the city \$164 million and an additional \$11

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2 million every single year from these lawsuits that
3 people are milking the city of. So we've been
4 talking about closing senior centers, we're
5 talking about charging people six cents for
6 plastic bags, taking away their rebates, reducing
7 and eliminating the real estate tax reduction--
8 those discussions should not happen until we
9 address the actual travesty of the city and the
10 state losing so much money for no other reason,
11 other than the fact that our colleagues in Albany
12 are not willing to change this loophole.

13 So I'd ask everyone to please sign
14 on to this and I thank you.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Council
16 Member Fidler.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: You know,
18 every now and then I've been known to accuse Mayor
19 Bloomberg of having moments when he's out of touch
20 with reality of the average New Yorkers and I'm
21 afraid last week he had another one of those
22 moments.

23 I don't think the Mayor understands
24 what it means to go back on the promise of the
25 \$400 rebate to so many New Yorkers who've been

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2 counting on that money, having been told the check
3 was in the mail. There are people who have been
4 holding a bill aside waiting for that \$400 to pay
5 it, and there are people who are counting on that
6 \$400 to make sure that their holiday season is
7 joyous. I can't imagine anything that is more
8 antithetical to the idea of an economic stimulus
9 package then canceling those \$400 rebates. And
10 apropos the comment that Council Member Gentile
11 made regarding Willets Point for the Mayor to
12 think that by a waving of his magic wand he can
13 decree that the \$400 rebates don't go out, I think
14 is an affront to the authority of this body as a
15 legislature. And I believe, and I know that the
16 Speaker feels the same way that in terms of our
17 legislative right to pass on this, I dare the
18 Mayor of the City of New York to ask us to pass
19 that authority, I daresay he won't get it because
20 I don't think this body is as out of touch with
21 that reality as the Mayor is. And I would urge
22 him to take that off the table and to direct
23 Commissioner Stark to send out those \$400 checks
24 forthwith because they were promised and there are
25 people waiting for them who need them.

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2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Council
3 Member Stewart.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER STEWART: Thank you,
5 Madam Public Advocate.

6 My colleagues, I want to draw your
7 attention to two resolutions that are being
8 introduced here. Resolution calling on the New
9 York State Legislature and the governor to amend
10 the state law to allow non-citizens, those are the
11 permanent residents, who have served in the United
12 States military to be able to become a policeman
13 or fireman. Could you imagine you having someone
14 who go to Iraq, fight in that war to protect this
15 country, and then when he comes back here, having
16 met the requirements to be able to become a
17 policeman, is being denied because of the fact
18 that he's not a citizen. I think we should all
19 sign on to that resolution.

20 Another resolution that I want to
21 draw your attention to is the fact that we have
22 owners who have dangerous dogs and there is no way
23 in which we can address issues like when these
24 dogs attack people. And so I'm calling on the
25 state to have these folks obtain liability

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2 insurance for personal injury or death of any
3 person resulting from an attack of such dangerous
4 dogs.

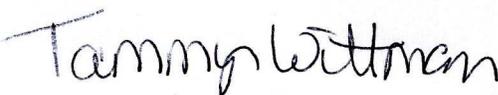
5 So I'm asking you to join me on
6 this these resolutions so that, at least, we can
7 have folks being protected. Thank you.

8 PUBLIC ADVOCATE GOTBAUM: Seeing
9 nobody else [off mic] adjourn the Council meeting
10 of November 13th in the name of Council Member
11 Phil Reed and Terrence Tolbert. Thank you.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Tammy Wittman, certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tammy Wittman". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Signature_ _____

Date February 10, 2009_____