

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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January 9, 2019
Start: 10:46 a.m.
Recess: 10:57 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: DANIEL DROMM
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Adrienne E. Adams
Andrew Cohen
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Laurie A. Cumbo
Vanessa L. Gibson
Barry S. Grodenchik
Rory I. Lancman
Steven Matteo
Francisco P. Moya
Keith Powers
Helen K. Rosenthal
James G. Van Bramer

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

Michael Blaise Backer, Deputy Commissioner of
Neighborhood Development, Department of Small
Business Services

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2 [sound check] [background comments]

3 [gavel]

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, good morning,
5 Happy New Year and welcome to today's Finance
6 Committee meeting. My name is Council Member Daniel
7 Dromm, and I'm chair of this committee. We have been
8 joined by Council Member Barry Grodenchik, Council
9 Member Adrienne Adam, Council Member Keith Powers,
10 Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer, Council Member Andy
11 Cohen and Council Member Robert Cornegy, and I know
12 other members are in the other room voting. Oh,
13 Majority Leader Laurie Cumbo is here with us as well,
14 and the other members should be joining us shortly.
15 Today, we have two BID items on the agenda, which are
16 Intro 1226 and Intro 1227. Intro 1226 would
17 establish the Throggs Neck Business Improvement
18 District in Council Member Ghonaj's district in the
19 Bronx. The proposed district extends along both
20 sides of East Tremont Avenue from Bruckner Boulevard
21 to Miles Avenue. The proposed district is a low
22 density residential area of 180 properties with
23 substantial commercial overlay. The BID projects a
24 first year budget of \$340,000 and which it proposes
25 to offer such things as maintenance and-and

2 sanitation services, marketing and retail and
3 attraction services and administration advocacy
4 services. The maximum annual assessment of the BID
5 as set by this law would be \$3.4 million. Intro 1227
6 would extend the boundaries of the Hudson Square BID
7 in Speaker Johnson's district as well as increase the
8 maximum annual assessment of the BID. The Hudson
9 Square BID was first established in 2008 primarily to
10 address issues presented by the area's increased
11 commercial and residential popularity with its
12 proximity to the Holland Tunnel. The BID is
13 currently requesting that the Council approve the
14 following change to the district plan. (1) An
15 extension of the BID boundaries further west along
16 Canal Street to West Street and further north from
17 West Houston to Clarkson Street, and (2) A \$1,400,000
18 increase in its annual assessment from \$2,500,000 to
19 \$3,900,000. On November 28, 2018, this committee
20 held a public hearing to consider both Intro 1226 and
21 Intro 1227, and we heard testimony in support of the
22 BID's respective establishment and expansion. As
23 required by law, that hearing closed without a vote
24 and the 30-day period began to allow property owners
25 affected by the establishment or extension of the

2 relevant BID to formally object to the proposed
3 action. According to the City Clerk, with whom these
4 objections would be filed, one property owner filed a
5 valid objection to the creation of the Throggs Neck
6 BID during the 30-day period. For the Hudson Square
7 BID, however, no property owners filed a valid
8 objection to the expansion of the BID. Accordingly,
9 the committee may now vote in favor of Intro 1226
10 and Intro 1227 if we can answer the following four
11 questions in the affirmative: (1) Will all notices
12 of hearings for all hearings required to be held
13 published and mailed so as-as-as so required bylaw
14 and otherwise sufficient? (2) Is all the real
15 property within the district's boundaries benefit
16 from the establishment and expansion of the district
17 except as otherwise provided by the law? (3) Is all
18 real property benefitted by the district included
19 within the district? And (4) Is the establishment or
20 expansion of the district in the best interest of the
21 public? Representatives from the Department of Small
22 Business Services are here to testify to help us
23 answer those questions on the two BID items. SBS,
24 please come up and my counsel will swear you in, and
25

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2 we are joined now by Michael Blaise Backer from the
3 Small Business Services.

4 LEGAL COUNSEL: Do you affirm that your
5 testimony will be truthful to the best of your
6 knowledge, information and belief?

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BACKER: Yes, I do.

8 LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you. You may
9 proceed.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BACKER: Thank you.

11 Good morning Chair Dromm and members of the Finance
12 Committee. I'm Michael Blaise Backer, Deputy
13 Commissioner for Neighborhood Development at the
14 Department of Small Business Services. Today, I
15 would like to testify in regards to both BID related
16 items on the agenda today and first I will report on
17 the result of the period for filing objections with
18 the City Clerk against the proposed establishment of
19 the Throggs Neck Business Improvement District. As
20 required by law the Throggs Neck Steering Committee
21 mailed the Summary of the City Council Resolution to
22 the following parties: To each owner of real
23 property within the proposed district at the address
24 shown on the latest city assessment roll to such
25 other persons as are registered with the city to

2 receive tax bills concerning real property within the
3 district and to tenants of each building within the
4 proposed district. Furthermore, SBS arranged for the
5 publication of a copy of the summary of the
6 resolution at least once in the City record. At the
7 conclusion of the objection period at 5:00 p.m. on
8 December 31, 2018, and taking into consideration any
9 objections postmarked by that date, one ballot
10 objection representing less 1% of the total assessed
11 value was filed with the City Clerk for properties
12 within the district. Additionally, one invalid
13 objection was filed with the City Clerk for a
14 property within the district. This level of
15 objection is within our acceptable threshold needed
16 to advance a bill for a favorable consideration by
17 the full City Council. The Department Small Business
18 Services supports the establishment of the proposed
19 Throggs Neck BID. In our judgement, the proposed BID
20 will improve the quality of life and business
21 conditions within the Throggs New district.

22 Secondly, I'd also like to report on the result of
23 the period for filing objections with the City Clerk
24 against the proposed expansion of the Hudson Square
25 Business Improvement District. As required by law,

2 the Hudson Square BID expansion steering committee
3 mailed the summary of the City Council Resolution to
4 the following parties: To each owner of real
5 property within the existing district and proposed
6 expansion at the address shown at the latest city
7 assessment roll. To such other persons as are
8 registered with the city to receive tax bills
9 concerning real property within the existing district
10 and the proposed expansion, and to tenants of each
11 building within the existing district and the
12 proposed expansion area. Additionally, the Hudson
13 Square BID published a notice of the public hearing
14 at least once in in a local newspaper having general
15 circulation in the district, specifying the time when
16 and the place where the hearing would be held, and
17 stating the increase proposed and the maximum amount
18 to be expended annually. Furthermore, SBS arranged
19 for the publication of a copy of the summary of the
20 resolution at least once in the city record. At the
21 conclusion of the objection period at 5:00 p.m. on
22 December 31, 2018, and taking into consideration any
23 objections postmarked by that date no objections were
24 filed with City Clerk. Department of Small Business
25 Services supports the expansion of the Hudson Square

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2 BID and in our judgment it will improve quality of
3 life and business conditions in the Hudson Square
4 District. At this time I'm happy to take any
5 questions.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Thank you very
7 much. I want to say we've been joined by Council
8 Member Francisco Moya, and I believe with that, we
9 are going to ask our Committee Clerk Billy Martin to
10 call the roll.

11 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk,
12 roll call vote Committee on Finance. The items are
13 coupled. Chair Dromm.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I vote aye.

15 CLERK: Cohen. [pause] Cornegy.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Aye.

17 CLERK: Cumbo.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I vote aye.

19 CLERK: Van Bramer.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye.

21 CLERK: Grodenchik.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Aye.

23 CLERK: Adams.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Aye.

25 CLERK: Moya.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Aye

3 CLERK: Powers.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Aye.

5 CLERK: Matteo.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Aye.

7 CLERK: By a vote of 9 in the

8 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,

9 all items have been adopted by the committee.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you very

11 much, and with that, we're going to keep the vote

12 open for another 10 minutes. Thank you very much to

13 everybody for coming in. [background comments/pause]

14 [laughter]

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: [gavel] Quiet, quiet

16 please.

17 CLERK: Continuation roll call Committee

18 on Finance, Council Member Cohen.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Aye.

20 CLERK: Rosenthal.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Here and aye.

22 I vote aye. [background comments]

23 CLERK: The final vote Committee on

24 Finance, all items have been adopted by the committee

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2 11 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and no
3 abstentions.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you very
5 much and with that I'm going to say that this meeting
6 is adjourned at 10:57 in the morning. Thank you very
7 much. [gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date January 23, 2019