

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON LAND USE

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July 21, 2009  
Start: 01:01 pm  
Recess: 01:09 pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E:  
MELINDA R. KATZ  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Melinda R. Katz  
Tony Avella  
Charles Barron  
Leroy G. Comrie, Jr.  
Simcha Felder  
Eric N. Gioia  
Robert Jackson  
John C. Liu  
Helen Sears  
Sara M. Gonzalez  
Annabel Palma  
Maria del Carmen Arroyo  
Inez E. Dickens  
Daniel R. Garodnick  
Jessica S. Lappin  
Elizabeth Crowley  
Vincent Ignizio

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: I turn it  
3 over to my colleague Council Member Katz, who is  
4 chair of the Land Use Committee.

5 CHAIRPERSON KATZ: I'm sorry; I  
6 just keep trying to speed it along. I am simply  
7 going to open the meeting of the Land Use  
8 Committee, make a motion once again for the  
9 rezoning proposal that is in front of us on Coney  
10 Island with the modification that we remove the  
11 Wonder Wheel site from the mapping action and the  
12 related text amendment that goes along with that.  
13 I ask for a motion to approve from my colleagues  
14 on the Land Use Committee.

15 [Pause]

16 CHAIRPERSON KATZ: We're going too  
17 fast, right? We don't have anyone to take the  
18 vote. We need somebody to call the roll.

19 WILLIAM MARTIN: William Martin,  
20 Committee Clerk.

21 CHAIRPERSON KATZ: I guess I need  
22 to ask if there is any discussion first. Call the  
23 roll.

24 WILLIAM MARTIN: William Martin,  
25 Committee Clerk, roll call on the Committee on

1

2 Land Use. Council Member Katz?

3 CHAIRPERSON KATZ: I vote aye.

4 WILLIAM MARTIN: Avella?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: No.

6 WILLIAM MARTIN: Barron?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: May I be

8 excused to explain my vote?

9 CHAIRPERSON KATZ: Yes.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I'm voting

11 no on this because there are still a lot of

12 outstanding things that need to be negotiated. I

13 know that people may feel that they have done a

14 lot of work and I commend my colleague for all of

15 the work that he's done. But in these situations

16 when we're talking about people who live in public

17 housing and trying to get them into home ownership

18 and doing the higher income bracket of that, and

19 then those who are below \$60,000 and trying to get

20 in and they may have to go into rentals. Then

21 we're talking about four hotels that are 15

22 stories high and another building at 27 stories

23 high. I think this needs far more thinking

24 through. I think that more of the community needs

25 to be involved in these negotiations. So on that

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2 I'm going to vote no. I think that sometimes when  
3 we try to rush into things and try to get things  
4 passed in the long run when this vote is over with  
5 and it plays out in the communities, the results  
6 often aren't what they looked like on paper. Then  
7 when we get to the real life situation, we find  
8 the results are far more, or less beneficial for  
9 the people in the community and more beneficial  
10 for developers who are trying to make super  
11 profits and who want to make the community look  
12 like a richer community and not a poor community  
13 so we can put a more affluent look on the  
14 community as opposed to really helping the people  
15 in the community get some affordable housing and  
16 have businesses that work. It's not really about  
17 that. In my opinion it's about developers putting  
18 a more affluent face on a community so they can  
19 make better profits. For that I vote no.

20 WILLIAM MARTIN: Comrie?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: I vote aye  
22 on all. I just want to congratulate all of the  
23 parties that were involved in putting this  
24 difficult project together. I hope that people  
25 will continue to make their voices heard on all of

1  
2 the aspects of the project yet to be resolved and  
3 that we continue to work with Council Member  
4 Recchia so that he can do everything necessary to  
5 protect the constituents that live in that area  
6 but also to make sure that Coney Island is a jewel  
7 that the entire city can enjoy. I vote aye.

8 WILLIAM MARTIN: Gioia?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER GIOIA: I vote yes.

10 WILLIAM MARTIN: Jackson?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: I vote  
12 aye.

13 WILLIAM MARTIN: Liu?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: Madame  
15 Chairperson, I vote yes. I want to commend you  
16 and Council Member Recchia on the tremendous  
17 amount of work that you have done on this plan.  
18 This plan is a lot better than was originally  
19 offered to the City Council for approval.  
20 Obviously there are still some shortcomings that  
21 need to be addressed in the coming days and weeks.  
22 I look forward to working with the Administration  
23 and all of our colleagues here to fix those kinds  
24 of problems. Nonetheless, there has been a  
25 remarkable amount of progress made on this plan.

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2 I vote yes.

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WILLIAM MARTIN: Sears?

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COUNCIL MEMBER SEARS: Aye.

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WILLIAM MARTIN: Gonzalez?

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COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: Aye.

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WILLIAM MARTIN: Palma?

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COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Yes.

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WILLIAM MARTIN: Arroyo?

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COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Aye.

11

WILLIAM MARTIN: Dickens?

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COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Madame

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Chair, permission to explain my vote?

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CHAIRPERSON KATZ: Yes.

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COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: I commend

16

Council Member Recchia on his long arduous work

17

with a strong commitment to his community and the

18

Brooklyn residents. He demanded and got increased

19

affordable housing, maybe not enough, but he got

20

more than what the Administration was in the

21

beginning willing to give. He fought for

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contextual building, permanent jobs as well as

23

construction jobs for the area residents,

24

increased community services, safe and secure and

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strong infrastructure, a good quality free public

1  
2 school education and I could go on. This has been  
3 a very long difficult process. It is difficult at  
4 times to be a leader yet that is what our  
5 communities have elected us to be. As such, we  
6 cannot be everything to each individual and we lie  
7 to you if we tell you we can. It is impossible to  
8 meet the needs of each person. Therefore, we do  
9 the very best that we can. We fight to represent  
10 our communities to the best of our abilities  
11 asking the almighty to give us the foresight, the  
12 tenacity and the courage to garner as much as we  
13 can to meet the needs of most and we ask to be  
14 judged on that rather than in the reverse. In  
15 that light, I vote yes as I congratulate Council  
16 Member Recchia and the amazing Gail Benjamin and  
17 the Land Use staff. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON KATZ: Thank you.

19 WILLIAM MARTIN: Garodnick?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: I vote  
21 aye.

22 WILLIAM MARTIN: Lappin?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: May I be  
24 excused to explain my vote?

25 CHAIRPERSON KATZ: Yes.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: My mother  
3 grew up in Brooklyn and still talks about the  
4 magic of Coney Island. She used to go on the  
5 weekends. Her mom would do the crossword puzzle  
6 and read the paper while she and her step dad did  
7 the Parachute Jump and went to Nathan's to get a  
8 hot dog. I hope and believe that with this action  
9 Coney Island will be a magical place for  
10 generations of New York children. With that I  
11 wanted to congratulate Domenic Recchia and vote  
12 aye.

13 WILLIAM MARTIN: Crowley?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: I vote  
15 aye.

16 WILLIAM MARTIN: Ignizio?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Yes.

18 WILLIAM MARTIN: Felder?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FELDER: Yes.

20 WILLIAM MARTIN: By a vote of 13 in  
21 the affirmative, 2 in the negative and no  
22 abstentions, all items have been adopted. Council  
23 Members please sign the committee reports. Thank  
24 you.

25 CHAIRPERSON KATZ: The motion is

1  
2 carried. We'll leave the vote open for ten  
3 minutes. Congratulations everyone.

4 WILLIAM MARTIN: Technical  
5 correction on the final vote on the Committee on  
6 Land Use. The actual final vote on the Committee  
7 on Land Use is 15 in the affirmative, 2 in the  
8 negative and no abstentions.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Donna Hintze 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.

Signature 

Date August 19, 2009