

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

SUB COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, DISPOSITIONS AND
CONCESSIONS

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December 7, 2009
Start: 9:50 am
Recess: 10:00 am

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
DANIEL R. GARODNICK
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Inez E. Dickens
Lewis A. Fidler
Sara M. Gonzalez
Diana Reyna

2

CHAIRPERSON GARODNICK: Good

3

morning everyone and welcome to the sub committee
on Planning, Dispositions and Concessions. Again
this is sub committee of the Land Use Committee of
the nyc Council. My name is Dan Garodnick and I
have the privilege of chairing this sub committee
and reopening a meeting that was recessed on
December 2nd.

10

I am joined today by Council Member
Sara Gonzalez, a member of the sub committee,
Council Member Inez Dickens, a member of the sub
committee, Council Member Diana Reyna and I
believe Council Member Lou Fidler is or was here a
moment ago. There's Council Member Fidler.

16

Today we're going to be voting on
Land Use items 1227, 1228, 1229 and 1230. They're
all related to the Broadway Triangle area in East
Williamsburg, Brooklyn. At this point as you all
know, these Land Use items have now gone through
the various reviews required of such applications.
They're proposed by HPD, approved by Community
Board 1, the Brooklyn Borough President, Marty
Markowitz and the City Planning Commission.

25

On November 19th, this committee

2 heard an approximate five hour hearing on the
3 subject here on these chambers of the City
4 Council, at which time all members of the public
5 wishing to be heard were, in fact, heard. At this
6 point, we'll take any comments from members of the
7 committee or Council Members. Council Member
8 Reyna.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you,
10 Mr. Chair. For two years we've bee fighting is
11 what is considered to be the Broadway Triangle
12 plan as sponsored by HPD. Where they select in
13 pre-determined process, the process has been
14 compromised. My community has been plagued with
15 gentrification at an unseen rate in years past.
16 For any plan in Williamsburg to not address
17 displacement with more affordable housing and
18 denser structures is not a plan at all. In nyc
19 the average park space per 1,000 people is 3.5
20 acres. In Williamsburg the average park space per
21 1,000 is 0.6 acres of land. For any plan to not
22 address the scarcity of park land in our community
23 is not a plan at all.

24 This rezoning is allowing for the
25 minimum in economic development and job creation.

2 Not only is it giving us the minimum, it is
3 looking to displace hundreds of jobs within the
4 rezoning area. For any plan to not address job
5 creation and economic development is not a plan at
6 all.

7 What seems to be the case is my
8 community was excluded from the planning process
9 and issues that they need and wanted addressed
10 have been excluded. And all I have been asking
11 for is a plan, a comprehensive one, one that takes
12 people into consideration, not politics. The plan
13 is not representative of my community and our
14 needs. It does not provide enough affordable
15 housing, open space, community planning and
16 business industrial development, jobs, prevailing
17 wages. I am not playing politics but standing up
18 for those in my community that have been silenced
19 so that others can control people.

20 I ask this committee and the full
21 Land Use committee to reject this plan for it has
22 not addressed and has been confirmed that it will
23 not continue to address unless a point of
24 agreement has been agreed upon, of which I have no
25 sense because I have not been asked as a

2 representative of this community to the table.

3 I also call upon the Mayor's office
4 to have withdrawn this plan and I was ignored.
5 Time and time again, it's not a community we're
6 addressing, it is the politics and a select few
7 will control land, housing, people. That is not
8 good government and I hope my colleagues take that
9 into consideration.

10 [Applause]

11 CHAIRPERSON GARODNICK: Thank you.
12 Folks, please hold your applause. Thank you,
13 Council Member Reyna for your comments and
14 certainly for your advocacy. As I noted before,
15 this is the next point in the process, which as
16 Council Member Reyna noted, has gone on for a
17 while and certainly for the purposes of the rules
18 of the Council and the rules of the charter, this
19 is the next stop in this application.

20 Again, Land Use 1227 1228, 1229,
21 1230, the ultimate goal of this application, as
22 explained by HPD is to revive an area that has
23 been under utilized and to create more affordable
24 housing for a community that everyone agrees is in
25 great need of it.

2 I share some of the concerns that
3 have been raised about the use of eminent domain
4 and site authorization in this context. I, most
5 certainly, have the utmost respect for my
6 colleague, Council Member Reyna, who has been a
7 strong advocate for these and other process issues
8 here.

9 On the subject of eminent domain, I
10 do not believe that small businesses here should
11 be subject to eminent domain because of
12 residential development next door. Their presence
13 does not stop or even significantly inhibit the
14 redevelopment of this area, however, if we approve
15 or disapprove this application we would not be
16 impacting that question. The Urban Renewal Plan
17 already authorizes the use of eminent domain to
18 acquire private properties for public uses. Our
19 actions today would not change HPD's ability to
20 use eminent domain as it is authorized by the
21 Urban Renewal Plan.

22 As for site authorization, this
23 committee has recently worked with HPD to create
24 more transparency in the process for creating site
25 authorization letters. In response, HPD agreed to

2 post on its web site, the agency's policy
3 regarding site authorizations. A number of the
4 groups can call off, if they're interested in a
5 specific site, a list of addresses for each
6 property for which HPD provided authorization
7 letters and a list of federal and state awards for
8 city owned sites once those decisions are made.
9 I'm pleased that HPD has now taken these steps at
10 the request of this committee to ensure that there
11 is greater transparency in this process going
12 forward.

13 Right now the Broadway Triangle is
14 zoned for manufacturing uses and much of the land
15 has been vacant and unused for the last 30 years.
16 By rezoning the area to the residential R6A and
17 R7A, additional residential housing that is
18 consistent with the scale of the surrounding area
19 will be developed. The community has consistently
20 stated, and we heard that very clearly in the
21 hearing, that it needs more affordable housing.

22 This proposal will allow for 1,851
23 units of which 844 will be affordable. The units
24 built on the city owned land will be 100%
25 affordable. HPD's proposal also contains an

2 inclusionary housing program. Of course, this
3 promotes affordable housing on privately owned
4 land by giving developers additional residential
5 space in return for affordable units. I should
6 note that there are \$400,000 of state funds that
7 have been allocated to this proposal through a
8 Brownfield Opportunity Grant, which will
9 facilitate the creation of more affordable
10 housing.

11 Now there are two modifications on
12 this proposal that are both related to open space.
13 I just want the record to reflect those
14 modifications. One of them is a modification to
15 UDAP C090416HAK, which can be found in Land Use
16 1230, which adds the language as follows: the
17 preference for the use of the property located on
18 Block 2272/Lots 111, 45 and 46 shall be open
19 space. Again, preference for the use of the
20 property located on Block 2272/Lots 1145 and 46
21 shall be open space.

22 There's also a modification to
23 urban renewal plan items C090415HUK, which can be
24 found at Land Use 1229, in which in the sub
25 section C2A at the very end the language which is

2 added: the preference for use on Block 2272/Lots
3 1145 and 46 shall be open space. Again, the
4 preference for use on Block 2272/Lots 1145 and 46
5 shall be open space.

With those modifications, I believe substantively that this proposal provides for rezoning and development that is in context with the neighborhood and will benefit the community and the city. Significantly, both the current Council Member David Yassky, who represent the district in which these changes would take place and the incoming Council Member Steve Levin have weighed in, in support of these items.

I recognize there is a great deal
at stake and I appreciate the passion of everyone
involved in this complex issue. However, for the
foregoing reasons I'm going to be voting yes today
and I encourage my committee to do the same. With
that, I will ask the counsel to call the roll
unless there are any comments. There are none,
I'll ask the counsel to call the roll.

23 COUNSEL: Chair Garodnick.

24 CHAIRPERSON GARODNICK: I vote aye.

25 COUNSEL: Council Member Gonzalez.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GONZALEZ: Aye.

3 COUNSEL: Council Member Dickens.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Aye.

5 COUNSEL: By a vote of three in the
6 affirmative, none in the negative and no
7 abstentions, the aforementioned items are approved
8 as modified.9 CHAIRPERSON GARODNICK: Thank you
10 very much and with that, this sub committee is
11 adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Amber Gibson, 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 Amber Gibson

Date _____