

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC
SITINGS AND DISPOSITIONS

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February 10, 2021
Start: 2:05 p.m.
Recess: 3:16 p.m.

HELD AT: Remote Hearing (Virtual Room 1)

B E F O R E: Kevin Riley
CHAIRPERSON

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Inez Barron
Peter Koo
I. Daneek Miller
Mark Treyger
Mark Levine
Margaret Chin

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

Libby Rohlfing, Chief of Staff
Department of Housing Preservation and
Development

Vionda Simmons, Director of Manhattan
Planning Division
Department of Housing Preservation and
Development

James Hull, Manhattan Planner
Department of Housing Preservation and
Development

Arielle Goldberg, Director of Land use
and Policy
Department of Housing Preservation and
Development

Carrie LaBotz, Assistant Commissioner of
Preservation Finance
Department of Housing Preservation and
Development

Kate Lemos McHale, Director of Research
Landmarks Preservation Commission

Anthony Fabre, Director of Community and
Intergovernmental Affairs
Landmarks Preservation Commission

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS, AND
DISPOSITIONS

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2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Sergeant Polite, can you
3 start the cloud recording, please? PC is started.

4 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Recording to the cloud
5 all set.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Sergeant Bradley, can
7 you give us the opening, please?

8 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Yes. Good afternoon and
9 welcome to today's New York City Council hearing of
10 the Committee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, and
11 Dispositions. At this time, will all panelists
12 please turn on their videos. To minimize disruption,
13 please place electronic devices on vibrate or silent
14 mode. If you wish to submit testimony, you may do so
15 at landusetestimony@council.NYC.gov. Again, that is
16 landusetestimony@council.NYC.gov. Thank you for your
17 cooperation. We are ready to begin, Chair.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Good
19 afternoon, everybody. My name is Kevin Riley and I
20 am the Chair of the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public
21 Sitings, and Dispositions. I am joined remotely
22 today by my Council members Subcommittee members Koo.
23 Council member Koo, Subcommittee member Council
24 member Barron, Subcommittee member Council member
25 Treyger, and I believe Council member Perkins is here

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND
DISPOSITIONS

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2 also. Today we will be holding a public hearing on a
3 40 year extension of the East Harlem Urban Renewal
4 Plan, an HDFC ground lease amendment and the
5 designation of the East 25th Street historic district
6 in Flatbush. But, first, we will vote on two items
7 we heard at our last meeting on January 20th. We
8 will vote to approve LU 711, the 110 Lenox Avenue
9 ANCP cluster. This item is an application submitted
10 by the Department of Housing Preservation and
11 Development pursuant to article 16 of the general
12 municipal law and article 11 of the private housing
13 finance law requesting waiver of the designation
14 requirements and the requirements of section 197-C
15 and 197-D of the Charter. Approval of an urban
16 development action area project and approval of a
17 real property tax exemption for properties located at
18 110 Lennox Avenue, 128 West 116th Street, and 1971
19 Seventh Avenue in Manhattan Council District
20 represented by Council member Perkins. We will also
21 vote to approve pre-considered LU 717, the Landmark
22 Preservation Commission's historic landmark
23 designation of the Angel Guardian home located at
24 6301 12th Avenue, block 5739, part of lot one in the
25 borough of Brooklyn in Council district represented

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND
DISPOSITIONS

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2 by Council member Menchaca. Both items have the
3 support of the local Council members. Counsel,
4 please call the roll.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Riley?

6 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Koo? He is on
8 mute, Council member Koo.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I vote aye.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council member
11 Barron?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you.
13 Permission to explain my vote?

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Permission granted.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you. I vote
16 aye for the landmarking for the Angels Home and on
17 the other 110, I'm abstaining because I think that
18 while the provision for those who are presently
19 living there to be able to purchase at a reasonable
20 price is a great offering, I think that the offering
21 price for those who want to become new owners there
22 is prohibitive for the people who presently live in
23 the district. Thank you.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Treyger?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Aye.

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND
DISPOSITIONS

7

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: On LU 711, the vote
3 is three in the affirmative, zero in the negative,
4 one abstention. On the 110 Linux, the vote is three
5 in the-- four in the affirmative-- or three in the
6 affirmative with one abstention. Can I just say
7 that? To clarify, 711-- LU 711 is three in the
8 affirmative with one abstention. LU 717 is for in
9 the affirmative and the vote is held open, though the
10 items are recommended for approval to the full land
11 use committee.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, counsel.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council member
14 Barron is asking to be recognized.

15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes. Go ahead,
16 Council member Barron.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you so much.
18 I just want to make sure that it is recorded that my
19 abstention is four 110 Lenox Avenue.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes. Thank you,
23 Council member Barron.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you.

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1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND
DISPOSITIONS

8

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, counsel.

3 We will now move on to our public hearing. I
4 recognize the subcommittee counsel, again, to review
5 today's hearing procedures.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.

7 Just a moment. I am Jeffrey Campagna, counsel to the
8 subcommittee. Members of the public who wish to
9 testify were asked to register for today's hearing.

10 If you wish to testify and have not registered,

11 please go to www.council.nyc.gov to sign up now. If

12 you're a member of the public who wants to watch this
13 hearing, please watch the hearing on the New York

14 City Council website. All people testifying before

15 the subcommittee will be on mute until they are

16 recognized to testify. When the Chair recognizes

17 you, please confirm that your mic is unmuted before

18 you begin speaking. Public testimony will be limited

19 to two minutes per witness. If you have additional

20 testimony you would like the subcommittee to

21 consider, or if you have written testimony you would

22 like to submit in lieu of appearing before the

23 subcommittee, you can email it to

24 landusetestimony@council.NYC.gov. Please indicate

25 the LU number or project name in the subject line of

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND
DISPOSITIONS

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2 the email. During the hearing, Council members who
3 would like to ask questions should raise the zoom
4 hand function. The raise hand button should appear
5 at the bottom of the participant panel. I will
6 announce Council members who have questions in the
7 order that they raise their hands. Witnesses are
8 reminded to remain in the hearing until they are
9 excused by the Chair. Lastly, there may be extended
10 pause is if we encounter technical problems. We ask
11 that you please be patient as we work through these
12 issues. Chair Riley will now continue with today's
13 agenda items.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Jeff. I
15 now opened up the public hearing on application
16 number C210067HUM submitted by the Department of
17 Housing Preservation and Development pursuant to
18 section 505 of article 15 of the Gen. municipal Law
19 and section 197-C of the New York City Charter
20 requesting approval of the 16th amendment to the East
21 Harlem Urban Renewal Plan. The amendment will extend
22 the duration of the East Harlem Urban Renewal Plan
23 for 40 years from its expiration date in December
24 2020. The East Harlem Urban Renewal Plan includes
25 properties in Council District represented by Council

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND
DISPOSITIONS

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2 member Ayala and Perkins and now I would like to give
3 Council member Perkins a chance if he would like to
4 address the committee on this project. Council
5 member Perkins?

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council member, you
7 are on mute.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: You are on mute,
9 Council member.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Okay. Okay.
11 So, to repeat myself, I am supporting these projects
12 that are in my district and that I think it is a good
13 move, for the sake of my neighborhood and for the
14 sake of this neighborhood and for the sake of this
15 city. Excuse me? [Inaudible 00:09:09] what other
16 questions that you're talking about? Oh. Here.
17 What is the status of the MVC site on 125th Street?

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council member?

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yeah. Council
20 member, were going to save the questions until after
21 the applicants to the testimony.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Okay.

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: So, I'll come back
24 to the questions [inaudible 00:09:26].

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1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND
DISPOSITIONS

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: [inaudible
3 00:09:34]

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Counsel, please
5 call the applicant panel.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The applicant panel
7 for HPD is Libby Rohlfing, Vionda Simmons, Arielle
8 Goldberg, and James Hull.

9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Counsel, please
10 administer the affirmation.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Can we unmute the
12 applicant panel? Please raise your right hands. Do
13 you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and
14 nothing but the truth in your testimony before this
15 subcommittee and in response to COUNCIL member
16 questions?

17 LIBBY ROHLFING: Yes.

18 VIONDA SIMMONS: Yes.

19 JAMES HULL: Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Before
21 you begin, please state your name and affiliation
22 again for the record. You may begin.

23 LIBBY ROHLFING: Great. Thank you, Chair
24 Riley. My name is Libby Rohlfing. I'm the Chief of
25 Staff at the Housing Preservation and Development

2 Department at-- were New York City and I'm going to
3 begin with my testimony. So, this is a ULURP action
4 in connection to an urban renewal plan to extend the
5 duration of the Urban Renewal Plan for 40 years
6 continuous from the prior expiration date of the
7 plan. In 1968, the city designated the Harlem--
8 East Harlem Urban Renewal Area and establish the
9 Harlem East Harlem Urban Renewal Plan pursuant to
10 article 15 of the general municipal law, the urban
11 renewal law. That area is located in community
12 districts numbers 10 and 11 and the central Harlem
13 many East Harlem neighborhoods of Manhattan it is
14 generally bounded by West 127th Street and East 133rd
15 Street to the north, the Harlem River on the east,
16 West 110th Street, East 106th Street, East 107th
17 Street, and East 110th Street on the south and Fifth
18 Avenue, Madison Avenue, Park Avenue, Lexington
19 Avenue, and Malcolm X Boulevard on the west. Though
20 the boundary encompasses a large area, only
21 designated urban renewal sites are subject to the
22 restrictions of the plan. The city has amended the
23 Harlem East Harlem Urban Renewal Plan 15 times,
24 including the last amendment in 2008, the 15th
25 amendment. The 15th amendment to the Harlem East

2 Harlem Urban Renewal Plan included several site-
3 specific design controls, including height, setback,
4 and open space requirements that affect parcels still
5 under city ownership. HPD is proposing an amendment
6 to extend the Harlem East Harlem Urban Renewal Plan
7 for an additional 40 years for continued agency
8 administration and management continuous from the
9 prior expiration date of the plan. No new
10 construction or project is associated with this
11 application and the proposed action does not change
12 the geographic scope of the Harlem East Harlem urban
13 renewal area. Today, HPD is before the
14 subcommittee's seeking approval of the 16th amendment
15 not to the Harlem East Harlem Urban Renewal Plan.

16 Thank you. We would like to do just a quick
17 presentation. I think it would help provide some
18 further context. I see that you sharing the screen.
19 Thank you. And I will turn this over to my
20 colleague, James Hull, to do the presentation.

21 JAMES HULL: Great. Thanks, Libby.

22 LIBBY ROHLFING: Of course.

23 JAMES HULL: So, again, my name is James
24 Hull and I am the Manhattan planner at HPD. I am
25 joined by my colleagues, Vionda Simmons and Arielle

2 Goldberg. This application is the 16th amendment to
3 the Harlem East Harlem Urban Renewal Plan to extend
4 the plan's duration for 40 years continuous from the
5 prior expiration date of the plan. Urban renewal
6 amendments are subject to the uniform land use review
7 procedure and this application is certified into
8 ULURP on September 14th, 2020. Next. So, generally,
9 urban renewal law gives the city the ability to
10 acquire and convey sites for redevelopment in
11 accordance with an urban renewal plan. Depending on
12 the plan, this could be a certain land use is or, in
13 the case of this plan, additional design controls.

14 The Harlem East Harlem Urban Renewal Plan was
15 established in 1968 and subsequently amended 15 times
16 over the past four decades. As was previously
17 mentioned, this plan expired in December 2020. The
18 most recent amendment, the 15th amendment, was
19 approved by the City Planning Commission and city
20 Council in 2008 and this amendment inserted a number
21 of site-specific design controls end of the plan.

22 So, I think Libby mentioned the urban renewal area
23 which is generally bounded by East 106 Street to the
24 south, FDR to the east, Madison Park, Lexington,
25 Fifth Avenues to the west and the Harlem River Drive

2 at East 132nd Street to the north. So, just to be
3 very, very clear, though the boundary does encompass
4 a large area, only sites dedicated as urban renewal
5 sites are subject to restrictions of the plan. Next
6 slide, please. Thank you. So, as was previously
7 mentioned, this plan has been amended 15 times, most
8 recently in 2008. This amendment included several
9 site-specific design controls that do affect parcels
10 still under city ownership, so this application
11 before you is an extension of the plan's duration for
12 40 years. No substantive changes or project being
13 proposed as part of this application. The goal of
14 this land use action is to facilitate the
15 preservation of the site-specific controls that
16 currently exist in the plan. Next slide. Thanks.
17 So, this map shows the boundary of the urban renewal
18 area, just to repeat myself like a broken record.
19 Though the boundary does encompass a large area, only
20 sites that are designated as urban renewal sites and
21 are required and conveyed are subject to the plan.
22 Next slide. So, on the design controls, this table
23 highlights some of the design controls that would
24 remain active if the plan is extended. Some of these
25 goals-- some of these controls also comport with the

2 stated goals in the East Harlem Neighborhood plan.

3 For example, the plan requires the construction of at

4 least 700 housing units on particular sites, which

5 would not be required under zoning. An active plan

6 places a height limit on certain sites. Under

7 zoning, the height limit is governed by this guy

8 exposure played, so very tall towers could be built

9 on these sites. An important component is also the

10 public open space requirement in the plan which would

11 require in total at least 12,500 square feet of open

12 space with benches and illumination and programming

13 on certain sites. There is no similar mechanism

14 through the existing underlying zoning. Next slide?

15 Just to wrap up the presentation, urban renewal

16 amendments are subject to the ULURP. This

17 application certified on September 14th, 2020 and we

18 look forward to answering any further questions that

19 you have. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Thank

21 you. So, I do have a few questions that I want to

22 ask in the first one is how do you distinguish the

23 ways that the Urban Renewal Plan were used in the

24 past opposed to the harmful consequences that they

25 have for people of color and low income New Yorkers

2 in the 20th century to the ways that it is being used
3 today?

4 LIBBY ROHLFING: Vionda, do you want to
5 answer that one? Are we all-- I don't know if we
6 are muted or not.

7 VIONDA SIMMONS: Yes. Now unmuted.
8 Thank you for your question. Good afternoon,
9 everyone. My name is Vionda Simmons. I'm the
10 director of the Manhattan planning division at HPD.
11 Urban renewal plans have historically caused alarms
12 for many residents nationally. There is a history of
13 displacement for people of color everywhere in terms
14 of the way that urban renewal plans have been
15 administered by government agencies and city
16 agencies, as well. In this particular case, we are
17 focused on preserving design controls, as was
18 indicated in place in 2008 to allow particularly the
19 East 123rd Street project, the FEC project to remain
20 contextual with the rest of the community. The
21 design controls also allow for open space that is not
22 permitted by zoning and there are other controls as
23 mentioned in terms of setbacks. And so, those are
24 the specific design controls that we are looking to
25 preserve and that are aligned with Kings Board 11

2 community District need statement and, additionally,
3 during this pandemic, during this crisis which is
4 still in existence, many people have been looking for
5 opportunities to a really social distance on their
6 properties and allow for more open space so that
7 people have room. And so, again, these design
8 controls allow for that to continue to remain in
9 place. As future phases of the MEC site continue to
10 be developed over the next few years, that basically
11 will take place.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Speaking about the
13 MEC sites, what are the land use controls on the NBC
14 site that this renewal will maintain?

15 VIONDA SIMMONS: Hello? Yes. Did you
16 want to go [inaudible 00:20:29]? There's a
17 particular slide--

18 JAMES HULL: Sure.

19 VIONDA SIMMONS: that indicates several
20 of the design controls.

21 JAMES HULL: Yeah. If we could-- is it
22 possible to pull up the slides again and go back to
23 the slide with the-- or the table with the design
24 controls on it? If not, that's--

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Can you pull up the
3 site again, please?

4 VIONDA SIMMONS: So, while that is being
5 pulled up, you know, again, we have mentioned public
6 open space on specific sites within the MEC
7 developments. There is bulk setbacks of at least 10
8 feet along 125th Street. We have height limits, as
9 well. We also have a maximum height of 150 feet and
10 without some of these design controls, you can
11 develop as of right very tall towers that will be out
12 of context with the larger community and will
13 actually increase cost of construction and make any
14 new development that is coming forward more expensive
15 due to construction typology.

16 JAMES HULL: You can go back a few slides,
17 but, yeah. Basically just what Vionda said. The
18 design controls that we would like to preserve for
19 the side are the height limits, the minimum
20 residential square footage requirement, and the open
21 space requirement on these sites.

22 VIONDA SIMMONS: Right. In the slides
23 that you're looking at-- if you could go back one
24 slide? Yes. These were provided to us by CB 11's
25 consultant in these were great examples of kind of

2 what exists now with the design controls in place.
3 You have contextual buildings. You have open space
4 that is permitted. Again, that would not be required
5 by zoning and just have height limits. So, if you
6 can go to the next slide. Without the urban renewal
7 plan and some of the design controls that we are
8 looking to preserve, especially for the future
9 [inaudible 00:22:42] of the MEC site which has not
10 been advance yet. These are some of the heights that
11 can easily double and, again, you know, open space,
12 it's possible for them to-- them meaning future
13 developers-- to not provide the open space. And so
14 you can get a design that looks similar to this and
15 then the last scenario is-- if you can advance the
16 slide. You know, the buildings will triple in size.
17 This is an unlikely scenario, but as of right, you
18 know, the developer can build tall towers. And,
19 again, you know, the design controls help provide
20 more of a contextual balance which is something that
21 is really of a concern citywide.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. Two more
23 questions. Why is the Urban Renewal Plan extension
24 for 40 years and does this make it the best duration,
25 do you believe? You can go ahead.

2 ARIELLE GOLDBERG: Thank you. My name is,
3 again, Ariel Goldberg. I am the director of the lien
4 use and policy. So, there are two main reasons. One
5 reason is a typical extension of a renewal plan
6 actually is about 40 years, so this is sort of
7 consistent with how we typically do extensions. The
8 other reason is because, as we were saying, these
9 controls affect-- the design controls specifically
10 affect these MEC sites and at the end of 2019, we
11 conveyed the first phase on the western portion of
12 the block of MEC. And we conveyed a subject to these
13 controls for 40 years. The subject to the plan for
14 40 years. So, essentially, what we are doing is
15 making subsequent phases consistent with that first
16 phase.

17 JAMES HULL: If I could just add to
18 Ariel's point is that this is a question, you know,
19 we went to the community boards several times and
20 this was a question that they had and we did research
21 on Urban Renewal Plans extension citywide in the 40
22 year number was fairly typical. Or is typical,
23 should say.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: All right. I'm
25 going to ask one more question and then I'm going to

2 allow my colleagues. I believe Council member
3 Perkins has some questions, but borough president
4 Brewer were recommended that HPD update the BPs
5 office and the community boards every five years
6 regarding the status of HPD acquisition plans for any
7 sites within the URP area. Does that seem like
8 something that is practical or feasible that could
9 happen?

10 JAMES HULL: If we could unmute--

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Please don't mute
12 yourself because we have to extend an invitation for
13 you to unmute yourself.

14 ARIELLE GOLDBERG: Sorry about that. Just
15 trying and not unintentionally be speaking. So, I
16 think one of the things that is worth knowing is, you
17 know, the borough teams, the Manhattan borough
18 planning team, they engage with the community board
19 all the time for various projects and so I think they
20 have a regular relationship with them and if we are
21 going to be pursuing any acquisition, that is
22 certainly something we would engage on, but it is
23 just sort of increments of five or 10 years, they
24 don't necessarily make-- they don't fit necessarily
25 with the reality of how this acquisition would come

2 up. In any acquisition would require a public
3 hearing for notification. So, I think, you know,
4 there are built-- there are built-in requirements
5 and there is also this ongoing relationship between
6 HPD's borough teams and the community boards that
7 lend itself promptly to the more frequent updates if
8 there are any updates to be had.

9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. I believe as
10 long as there is a transparent conversation with the
11 community boards and the borough president's office,
12 I think everyone would be 80s during this situation.
13 All right. Thank you. I really appreciate that.
14 And now I would like to invite my colleagues if they
15 have any questions. I know Council member Perkins
16 had some questions before, so, Council member
17 Perkins, would you like to ask your question?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: I just want to
19 get a sense in the timeframe in which this project
20 will come to fruition. How much time has this-- I
21 mean, as we move along on this project-- will it
22 take?

23 LIBBY ROHLFING: Are you speaking
24 specifically about the next phase of the MEC site?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Yes.

2 LIBBY ROHLFING: Okay. Vionda, do you
3 have a sense the timeline?

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: I think she muted
5 herself, so we have to have it sent to her.

6 LIBBY ROHLFING: Okay.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: I just heard
8 her, so I don't know.

9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: There you go.
10 There you go.

11 VIONDA SIMMONS: Yes. I'm back. Thank
12 you. So, yes. As Arielle mentioned, the first phase
13 is under construction, which is exciting and we are
14 working with the development team is to advance the
15 next two phases. We are hoping, especially with a
16 lot of the starts and stops with the city government
17 and a lot of projects put on hold, we are hoping that
18 that will advance in this new administration, so the
19 next phase it will take approximately at least a year
20 to get underway once it starts advancing again. So,
21 the third phase is further out. And I hope that
22 answers your question, Council member Perkins.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Thank you for
24 that. And when you say further out, how further out
25 is it in terms of timeframe? Does that make sense?

2 VIONDA SIMMONS: Yeah. It's a great
3 question. At this point, I can't speculate
4 unfortunately. Once the second phase gets underway
5 and we have the construction timeline, then that
6 third phase can advance forward. Hopefully in the
7 next five years. Hopefully.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Hopefully.
9 Keep hope alive.

10 VIONDA SIMMONS: Always.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
13 member Perkins. Council member Barron has a
14 question.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yes. Thank you,
16 Mr. Chair. I apologize. I've been in and out, so I
17 haven't heard the testimony nor all of the questions,
18 but I just wanted to know the terms are asking for a
19 40 year range and so my question is why is it 40
20 years and are we locked into that 40 years or is
21 there another option that should refine that
22 circumstances and situations require a change, can
23 the city Council come back and make an amendment to
24 the 40 years and reduce it?

2 LIBBY ROHLFING: I'll let Arielle answer
3 that.

4 ARIELLE GOLDBERG: Sure. So, in terms of
5 the 40 years, I think it will refresh what I had said
6 prior which is that it was 40 years for two reasons.
7 One is because that is a fairly typical extension,
8 particularly for something that is right on the edge
9 of expiring as opposed to expiring in 10 or 20 years
10 from now. The other reason is we just recently
11 conveyed at the end of 2019 the first phase of MEC
12 which was subject to the plan for 40 years, so,
13 essentially, we're making subsequent phases
14 consistent with that first phase. They are
15 literally on the same block and the design controls
16 that would stay in effect. In terms of the 40 year
17 period, so once a site is conveyed, it is subject to--
18 - you know, sold to the developer. It is subject to
19 the restrictions of the plan that was in place at
20 that time, so unless there is an agreement between--
21 so, hypothetically there were an amendment to be
22 passed after the site had been conveyed, the that
23 would have to be agreed upon between both the city as
24 well as the developer to be subject to that new plan
25 because you can't retroactively change restrictions

2 that they are subject to after they already own the
3 site. And any urban renewal plan amendment HPD would
4 need to be the applicant on because we are the urban
5 renewal-- the agency with urban renewal authority.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay. Thank you.

7 ARIELLE GOLDBERG: You're welcome.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
9 member Barron. And I just want to take this time to
10 acknowledge my colleagues that just entered. Council
11 member Levine and Council member Margaret Chin just
12 entered also. Counsel, are there anymore questions
13 for this panel?

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If there are
15 anymore Council member questions, please raise your
16 hand now. I see no other Council member questions.

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: There being no more
18 questions for this panel, this panel is excused.
19 Counsel, are there any members of the public who wish
20 to testify on this item?

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: There are no
22 members of the public signed up to testify on this
23 item.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: All right. Thank
25 you, everyone.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair Riley, you
3 can close the public hearing on this item. That's on
4 page 19.

5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Got it. There
6 being no other members of the public who wish to
7 testify on this item, the public hearing on
8 application number C210067HUM is now closed. Our
9 next item is LY 725, the Everlasting Pine HDC ground
10 lease amendment. This application was submitted by
11 the Department of Housing Preservation and
12 Development for approval of an urban development
13 action area project located at 96 Baxter Street in
14 Council member Chin's district. Council member Chin,
15 would you like to give any remarks to this project?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. Council
17 member Riley. Good seeing you.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Good seeing you,
19 too.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: And this is not an
21 easy committee. It's a very busy committee and we
22 are glad that you are taking charge. I just wanted
23 to echo my-- say my support for this project and I
24 am really looking forward to HPD's presentation.
25 This senior building has been in my district for more

2 than 20 years and though residents-- I mean, there
3 is 100-- over hundred residents, that is 88 units,
4 and some of the residents are over 100 years old and
5 that Council, you know, we have supported the
6 development with social service support and it's
7 amazing how active these seniors are. And we just
8 hope that the building will continue with city
9 support to be a long term senior housing with some of
10 the variations that are really needed and it is such
11 a great place and they have beautiful gardens and a
12 community room on the 13th floor which we welcome you
13 to visit when this whole pandemic is over, so I just
14 wanted to voice my support and we really want to see
15 this happen. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
17 member Chin. Counsel, please call the applicant
18 panel.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The applicant panel
20 is Libby Rohlfing, Carrie LaBotz-- I hope I get this
21 right. Zyamara Pedraza in Franz Hewitt.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Counsel, please
23 administer the affirmation.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Panelists-- Hold
25 on just a moment. Let's unmute everyone. Let's see-

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND
DISPOSITIONS

30

2 - one, two, three where is Franz? Is Franz here?

3 Libby, do you know Franz is here?

4 LIBBY ROHLFING: I'm not seeing him.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay. So, we will
6 proceed. So, if you could all raise your right
7 hands.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: I don't think
9 Carrie is unmuted.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay. Where is
11 Carrie? Carrie is unmuted.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Oh. She is.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay. Please raise
14 your right hand. Do you affirm-- Please state your
15 names and--

16 LIBBY ROHLFING: Libby Rohlring.

17 ZYAMARA PEDRAZA: Zyamara Pedraza.

18 CARRIE LABOTZ: Carrie LaBotz.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you affirm to
20 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
21 truth in your testimony before the subcommittee and
22 in answer to all Council member questions?

23 LIBBY ROHLFING: I do.

24 ZYAMARA PEDRAZA: Yes. I do.

25

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: again for the
3 record and then you may begin.

4 LIBBY ROHLFING: Great. I am Libby
5 Rohlring. I am the Chief of staff at the Department
6 of Housing Preservation and Development. We are here
7 today with an action seeking UDAP designation,
8 disposition, and project approval, as well as an
9 urban renewal plan amendment in order to rehabilitate
10 a project known as Everlasting Pines located at 96
11 Baxter Street, block 198, Lot 126 in Manhattan
12 Council District one. Here on all refer to this as
13 the disposition area. Everlasting Pines is a senior
14 housing project rehabilitated under HPD's HUD
15 multifamily program which leverages public resources
16 and private sector financing to rehabilitate,
17 recapitalize, and preserve privately owned HUD
18 assisted rental housing throughout New York City.
19 The program's mission is to ensure low income New
20 Yorkers to remain in affordable apartments over the
21 long term to promote financial and physical stability
22 and to promote revitalized neighborhoods. The city
23 currently ground leases the disposition area to
24 Walker Street, Chung Pac Local Development
25 Corporation, the LDC and LDC sublet set to the

2 sponsor, Chung Pac Local Development Corporation.

3 The disposition area is located adjacent to the

4 Manhattan detention complex which will undergo a

5 seven year demolition and replacement as part of the

6 creation of a borough based jail system. The

7 comprehensive points of agreement related to the

8 closure of Rikers Island outlines HPD's commitment to

9 provide a stabilization loan to address immediate

10 capital needs to protect to the senior housing during

11 this process, including HVAC upgrades, window

12 replacement, and a rooftop enclosure. In keeping

13 with this commitment, HPD you will provide a loan to

14 the sponsor for the rehabilitation of the disposition

15 area. In addition, HPD will amend the ground lease

16 term from a term of 49 years to a term of 99 years.

17 The sponsor will enter into a regulatory agreement

18 restricting rents and income on the disposition area.

19 The project, currently fully occupied, provides

20 approximately 87 rental dwelling units, plus one

21 dwelling unit for a superintendent. Anticipated

22 area median income targets to be reflected in the HPD

23 regulatory agreement will be up to 50 percent of area

24 median income, which is 39,800 for single household,

25 but the tenants will not pay more than 30 percent of

2 their income in rent. The existing section 8 half
3 payments, which represents the subsidy that HUD is
4 paying to the project are 1387 for a studio and 1688
5 for a one-bedroom but tenants are only responsible
6 for the tenant share which is much lower because of
7 the federal assistance. Currently, the average
8 tenant share paid is \$254, which is equivalent to a
9 rent of approximately 13 percent of area median
10 income. So, today, HPD is before the subcommittee
11 seeking approval of the Everlasting Pines project in
12 order to preserve this affordable senior residential
13 building. We do you have a presentation. If you
14 could put up the slides, that would be great. I'm
15 going to turn it over to my colleague, Carrie LaBotz
16 just walked through the deck real quick.

17 CARRIE LABOTZ: Thank you, Libby. Good
18 afternoon, everyone. My name is Carrie LaBotz. I am
19 the assistant commissioner of preservation finance at
20 the Department of Housing Preservation and
21 Development. Just to walk through this, next slide,
22 please. To give you-- and some of this will just be
23 a highlight of what is in the testimony, but, just
24 remind folks that the HUD multifamily program which
25 is providing the assistance for this project

2 leverages public resources and private sector
3 financing to rehabilitate, recapitalize, and preserve
4 privately owned HUD assisted rental housing
5 throughout New York City. The program-- through
6 that, we provide tax exemptions and can also provide
7 low-interest loans in order to preserve the project,
8 as well-- and the projects must be 100 percent HUD
9 assisted to be eligible for the program. Next slide,
10 please. The Everlasting Pines project is a HUD 202
11 senior housing development with 88 units, all of
12 which are covered by a project-based contract. The
13 project is adjacent to the Manhattan detention
14 complex which will be demolished and replaced as part
15 of the creation of the borough based jail system and,
16 in October 2019, a point of agreement was entered
17 into in which HPD agreed to provide a loan to address
18 the immediate capital upgrades to mitigate the
19 impacts of the demolition. This is three scope items
20 replacement of the HVAC system, replacement of the
21 windows, and a rooftop enclosure. Next slide,
22 please. The project is located in Chinatown at 96
23 Baxter Street. It is comprised of 38 studios and 58
24 one-bedroom apartments which includes the super's
25 unit. As part of our assistance at closing, we will

2 provide a regulatory agreement. That regulatory
3 agreement will mirror and restrict households who
4 qualify to at or below 50 percent AMI, which is
5 39,800 for a single household and because of the half
6 assistance, federal assistance, the tenant share of
7 rent is 30 percent of their income. The half
8 contract covers payments to the building in the
9 amount of 1387 dollars for studios and 1688 dollars
10 for a one bedroom. Tenants are only responsible for
11 30 percent of their income, which, on average, in the
12 building represents about 254 dollars per month in
13 terms of the tenant responsibility which is
14 approximately 13 percent AMI. Next slide, please.
15 The project is on city-owned land. We will be
16 extending the decaf brand lease from 49 years to 99
17 years, so HPD is part of this action that is seeking
18 to provide UDAP authority with article 16 loans and
19 administer and amend the ground lease from 49 years
20 to 99 years. Administration of the residential
21 portion of the ground lease will also be transferred
22 to HPD at closing. Thank you. That is the end of my
23 presentation.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. I just
25 have three questions I want to ask. The first one is

2 the application states that the stabilization loan
3 would include three capital projects-- Excuse me.
4 Three capital improvements per the Rikers Island
5 points of agreement. HVAC upgrades, window
6 replacements, and rooftop enclosures. Could you
7 please provide additional details on those land
8 improvements?

9 LIBBY ROHLFING: Carrie, do you want to
10 take that?

11 CARRIE LABOTZ: So let's see. The
12 window replacement will upgrade and replace the
13 windows with emphasis on noise mitigation. So the
14 windows will be fully replaced with high performance
15 windows. The HVAC system-- right now it's my
16 understanding that the project has window through air
17 conditioner units, so, as part of the HVAC
18 replacement, the area in which the sleeves come
19 through the façade of the building will be braked
20 over and there will be in unit split systems so that
21 tenants have control of heating and cooling. And
22 then the rooftop enclosure will provide an enclosure
23 area of four the open patio space on the 13th floor
24 so tenants may enjoy use of that patio throughout the
25 year and throughout the construction and demolition.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: The current rent is
3 listed as 1387 dollars for a studio, 1688 dollars for
4 a one-bedroom. On average, what portion of this rent
5 will tenants actually be paying?

6 CARRIE LABOTZ: The tenant share is 30
7 percent of their income, so in order to qualify for
8 the building, the tenants must qualify-- households
9 must be earning at or below 50 percent AMI. After
10 that, tenants are only paying 30 percent of their
11 income. So, attended earning 20 percent AMI could
12 qualify for an apartment in the building, however,
13 there tenant share will always only be 30 percent of
14 their income. So, I think another way to think of it
15 is that the big numbers that I was speaking about,
16 that the 1300 and 1600, those are really payments to
17 the building via the HUD contract. Tenants will
18 never pay more than 30 percent of their income and
19 tenants in the building only qualify if they earn at
20 or below 50 percent AMI.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. And my last
22 question-- and I really want to focus on this
23 because of the time we are in and I really want to
24 emphasize helping out our unions, so I want to know
25 if this building will be built with unionized labor.

2 I definitely think it is very important moving
3 forward that we definitely, you know, take this into
4 consideration with a lot of projects within our city,
5 especially because we are in a union based city, so
6 will this project be built on unionized labor?

7 CARRIE LABOTZ: Currently there is no
8 requirement for the rehabilitation to be completed
9 with union labor.

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. All right.
11 I think that is something we should speak about.
12 Council member Barron, do you have any questions?
13 Council member Barron is muted. Can someone unmute
14 Council member Barron?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yes. Can you hear
16 me now?

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes. We can hear
18 you, Council member.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay. Great.
20 Thank you. Yes. My question is what is the
21 connection between this project and Rikers Island? I
22 heard reference to Rikers Island in the description
23 for this project and I wanted to understand what is
24 the connection.

25 CARRIE LABOTZ: Libby, do you want me--

2 LIBBY ROHLFING: Sure. Go ahead.

3 CARRIE LABOTZ: I am not well-versed in
4 the borough based jail agreement, however, it is my
5 understanding that that is part of Rikers Island, I
6 believe, being decommissioned that there are-- that
7 there is work taking place on existing jails within
8 the five boroughs. The connection is that, as part
9 of that agreement, the Manhattan detention center,
10 which is next door to the Everlasting Pines project,
11 is going to be demolished and rebuilt.

12 LIBBY ROHLFING: And as part of the--

13 CARRIE LABOTZ: Libby, if there's
14 anything more eloquent to say about that.

15 LIBBY ROHLFING: No. I just would add
16 that, as part of the agreement, HPD agreed to provide
17 a loan to the project to do some upgrades so that
18 Doreen the construction, these upgrades will help
19 mitigate from any effects from that.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: And what's the cost
21 of this project?

22 CARRIE LABOTZ: We are anticipating
23 putting a rehabilitation loan of approximately \$8
24 million.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: 85?

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND
DISPOSITIONS

40

2 CARRIE LABOTZ: 8 million. Excuse me.
3 That has not been finalized yet, but that is what we
4 are estimating right now.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you. Thank
6 you, Mr. Chair.

7 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
8 member therein. Council member Chin? Do you have a
9 question? Can we unmute Council member Chin?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yes. Okay. Got
11 it. Thank you. Yeah. I think I just wanted to also
12 address the question that Council member Barron had.
13 I mean, last year when we voted more than a year
14 ago-- it's been so long-- for the borough based
15 project and, in my district, because Manhattan
16 detention center is right next to the senior building
17 and we want to make sure that the seniors are
18 protected during the construction and demolition
19 process and, at the same time, we wanted to see what
20 else we could do for the senior building. So, I am
21 glad to see that we can extend the ground lease 1099
22 years and I think my question is that how do-- is
23 there some guarantee written in there that this has
24 to remain as a senior building? The senior citizen
25 building or is that a given?

2 CARRIE LABOTZ: For HPD, regulatory
3 agreement will require the project to remain a senior
4 building. Right now there is also a HUD 202 loan
5 which is a loan targeted to seniors to assist senior
6 projects and that also requires seniors in terms of
7 population.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Do you know if all
9 of the apartments are accessible? I mean, they all
10 have bathrooms that are accessible to wheelchairs so
11 that the renovations don't have to include that?

12 CARRIE LABOTZ: It's our understanding--
13 Yeah. Excuse me.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yeah. I'm not
15 sure, but that is what I'm asking. Whether the
16 management office or the agency that knows that.
17 Like are all the apartments already accessible that
18 they don't have to do any changes like where their
19 bathroom needs to be widened to allow wheelchairs or
20 other upgrades that need to be done besides window
21 HVAC's and other things?

22 CARRIE LABOTZ: It is our understanding
23 that nine of the 88 units are accessible.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Only nine?
25

2 CARRIE LABOTZ: That's correct. It is
3 our understanding that the building was built
4 [inaudible 00:51:38] standards, but in terms of the
5 accessibility that you're describing in terms of the
6 roll in showers and turn radius, it's our
7 understanding that nine of the 88 are accessible.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay. So I guess
9 we also need to work with the building to see if
10 there are other adjustments that need to be made
11 because some of the seniors are aging in place, so
12 when they moved in when they are 62 and now they are
13 like 82, like 20 some years later, then they might
14 have some additional needs. So that is something
15 that HPD should really work with, you know, the
16 building owner-- I mean, the building provider to
17 see if, besides windows and roofs and, I mean,
18 enclosing the outdoor garden which is really nice,
19 and the HVAC system. Okay. That was my question.
20 Thank you, Chair.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: No problem, Council
22 member Chin. There be no more questions for this
23 panel, this panel is excused. Counsel, are there any
24 members of the public who wish to testify on this
25 item? Counsel?

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND
DISPOSITIONS

43

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: There are no
3 members of the public here to testify on this item.

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: There being no
5 other members of the public who wish to testify, the
6 public hearing on LU 725 is now close. Our next item
7 is LU 724, the Landmark Preservation Commission
8 designation of East 25th Street historic district in
9 East Flatbush in Council District represented by
10 Council member Lewis. Is Council member Lewis
11 available?

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: She's not here yet.
13 She may--

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: attend shortly.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: No problem.

17 Counsel, can you please call the applicant panel?

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The applicant panel
19 Landmark Preservation Commission is Kate Lemos McHale
20 and Anthony Fabre.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Counsel, can you
22 please administer the affirmation?

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Applicants, can you
24 please raise your right hands and state your names?

25 KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Kate Lemos McHale.

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND
DISPOSITIONS

44

2 ANTHONY FABRE: Anthony Fabre.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you affirm to
4 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
5 truth in your testimony before the subcommittee and
6 an answer to all Council member questions?

7 KATE LEMOS MCHALE: I do.

8 ANTHONY FABRE: I do.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Before
11 you begin, please state your name and affiliation for
12 the record and you may begin.

13 KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Thank you. I am
14 Kate Lemos McHale, Dir. of research for the Landmarks
15 Preservation Commission.

16 ANTHONY FABRE: And I'm Anthony Fabre,
17 director of community and intergovernmental affairs
18 at the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. You may
20 begin.

21 KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Thank you, Chair
22 Riley. Good afternoon, subcommittee members. Thank
23 you for the opportunity to present the East 25th
24 Street historic district in Brooklyn in Council
25 District 45 which was designated on November 17, 2020

2 and we have a presentation, if that could be shared,
3 please. Thanks. In the next slide, please. Great.
4 Thank you. That East 25th Street historic district
5 is a remarkably cohesive group of 56 row houses built
6 by a single developer, the Henry Meyer building
7 company between 1909 and 1912. All were built on the
8 Renaissance revival style and remain very well
9 preserved. LPC reviewed a request to evaluate this
10 block from its Block Association with support from
11 Council member Farah Lewis and the Historic District
12 Council and we work closely with the community having
13 our first outreach meeting with property owners via
14 zoom last spring and are very grateful for their
15 support. At the public hearing on September 22,
16 eight people spoke in favor of the proposed
17 designation, including representatives of community
18 Board 17, the East 25th Street Block Association,
19 Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks
20 Conservancy, and residents of the district. In
21 addition, the Commission received 17 written
22 submissions in favor of designation including from
23 New York City Council member Farah Lewis, New York
24 State Assembly member Rodneyse Bichotte,
25 representatives of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden,

2 Vanderveer Park United Methodist Church, East 26th
3 Street Block Association and residents of the
4 district. We also received a petition from the East
5 25th Street Block Association supporting designations
6 of-- and that was signed by 66 people and we
7 received no opposition to the proposed district.
8 Next slide, please. That historic district extends
9 along both sides of East 25th Street between
10 Clarendon Road and Avenue D in Brooklyn's Flatbush
11 neighborhood. In determining the boundaries of the
12 district, LPC staff analyzed a broader area and
13 concluded that this block stands out with its
14 larger neighborhood for the quality and consistency
15 of its architecture. And it's high level of
16 integrity. Next slide, please. These maps
17 illustrate this. It is the three major factors that
18 contribute to its quality. It's construction within
19 a very short timeframe by one developer, its
20 architecture will consistency all in the Renaissance
21 revival style, and it's very high integrity. Next
22 slide, please. Flatbush was initially its own town
23 developing separately until its annexation by the
24 city of Brooklyn in 1894. Although the Brooklyn
25 Flatbush and Coney Island railroad link to the

2 neighborhood with downtown Brooklyn as early as 1878,
3 Flatbush remained largely rural and till the 1890s.
4 This 1873 map shows the location of the historic
5 district on what was still the Vanderveer Farm and
6 you can see Prospect Park to the northwest. Next,
7 please. Residential development in Flatbush was
8 originally focused in areas directly east and south
9 of Prospect Park in the late 19th century. Important
10 early developments include areas that are now
11 historic districts including the Prospect Park South
12 historic district with its opulent freestanding
13 houses and suburban developments such as Ditmas Park,
14 Fisk Terrace, and Midwood Park and also Prospect
15 Lefferts Gardens Historic district. The East 25th
16 Street is the first historic district in the eastern
17 part of Flatbush. Next, please. In the early 20th
18 century, as this map shows, that area around the
19 historic district was still mostly rural with wood
20 frame buildings scattered around and incomplete
21 street grid. Next, please. But within a few years,
22 new transportation routes spurred intensive
23 development around East 25th Street. Major
24 transportation improvements included the Northern
25 Avenue streetcar line 5 blocks east which crossed the

2 new Williamsburg Bridge in 1906 and linked Flatbush
3 with Manhattan's lower East side. West through the
4 historic district, the upgrade and expansion of the
5 Brighton railroad in 1908, which is now the B&Q
6 lines, was heralded as a great transportation highway
7 for the city. Next, please. The Henry Meyer
8 building company purchased of the site of the
9 historic district in the spring of 1909. It had been
10 part of a former farm outlined here in blue
11 established by Julius Yons Vanderveer soon after
12 leaving Holland in 1659. In 1790, it still belonged
13 to the family, to his grandson, and the household at
14 that time consisted of five white males, five white
15 females, and 10 enslaved people whose genders were
16 not recorded. The farm was known to generations of
17 Flatbush residents for its own norm is windmills,
18 shown here that sheltered African-American families
19 seeking refuge during the 1863 draft riots. By the
20 1890s, Vanderveer descendants began selling off
21 portions of the farm. Next slide, please. Henry
22 Meyer, who developed the historic district, was born
23 in Germany in 1864 and emigrated to the United States
24 as 18. Starting in the 1890s, his firm constructed
25 approximately 700 houses in the Cypress Hills section

2 of Brooklyn's East New York neighborhood. Possibly
3 due to his membership in the Cortelyou Club near East
4 25th Street, he ventured into the Flatbush market had
5 the earliest houses on East 25th Street were
6 completed by the end of 1909. In the advertisements
7 shown on the right, he claimed, we transformed East
8 New York from a wilderness to a city. We are now
9 operating in Flatbush and are going to duplicate our
10 former success. The ads of the development company
11 highlighted the area has excellent transit
12 facilities, clubs, and schools and the privacy that
13 only a single-family house could offer and the modern
14 features and comforts of the whole. Next slide,
15 please the East 25th Street houses were designed in
16 the Renaissance revival style featuring limestone--
17 or brownstone fronts, full height rounded or angled
18 projecting bays, foliated keystones and classically
19 ornamented entrance surrounds and cornices. Each of
20 the two rows on either side of East 25th Street is
21 symmetrical and the two rows are mirror images of
22 each other, so you have this incredible sense of
23 place when you walk down the block. Unlike similar
24 houses constructed elsewhere in Brooklyn at that time
25 that were constructed as more affordable to family

2 homes, these were built as single-family homes,
3 reflecting Flatbush's affluent reputation. The
4 architect of record was a small Williamsburg firm,
5 Glucroft and Glucroft, which may have based the
6 design on slightly earlier rowhouses in Prospect
7 Lefferts Garden. Next, please. This map, from soon
8 after the district was built gives a sense of its
9 remarkable cohesiveness which, in addition to the
10 quality of the architecture, stands out in the
11 surrounding area. This area's a regular grid and
12 short and angled streets and its history of primarily
13 small-scale development contributed to a variety of
14 building types in masonry and wood. Buildings tended
15 to be built individually or in small groups, making
16 the long unbroken roads of East 26th Street
17 especially distinct here. The block to the east on
18 East 26th Street was also developed by Meyer, but
19 those houses are a different style, quality, and are
20 much less intact than the block of East 25th Street.
21 Next, please. During the early years, the house is
22 in the district were owned and occupied by the
23 families of white merchants and other upper middle-
24 class professionals. Notable early residents of the
25 historic district included suffragettes Nelly

2 Marshall who marched in Brooklyn's first suffrage
3 parade in 1913 and remained active in the Flatbush
4 political equality league for several years after
5 word. Flatbush native Austin J. Tobin who led the
6 Port Authority of New York and New Jersey for 30
7 years, moved to 364 East 25th Street in 1929. Tobin
8 had a major impact on reshaping New York and the
9 region, spearheading major projects, including the
10 World Trade Center. Next, please. In recent
11 decades, ownership of the block has come to reflect
12 Flatbush's increasing diversity and the growth of its
13 African-American and Afro Caribbean communities.
14 Today most residents of the historic district have
15 roots in Caribbean countries. Caribbean immigrants
16 began buying houses on the block in large numbers in
17 the 1970s and 80s and were instrumental in founding
18 the East 25th Street Block Association in 1985. The
19 Association has played a leading role in cultivating
20 and fostering the blocks remarkable community spirit,
21 organizing a variety of block wide programs since
22 then. Since first entering the Brooklyn Botanic
23 Gardens greenest block and Brooklyn contest in 1999,
24 for example, the East 25th Street Block Association
25 has earned for first place finishes and numerous

2 other honors. And you can see some of the members of
3 the community celebrating that in this image. Next
4 slide, please. The remarkable dedication of the
5 district's homeowners continuing beauty of their
6 block is evident not only in the lush greenery of the
7 front yards, but in the outstanding integrity of the
8 buildings and the care that has been given to their
9 preservation. In this image is of residents of their
10 block celebrating the designation of the historic
11 district on November 17, shown here with Council
12 member Farah Lewis and one of our LPC research staff
13 who was there, as well. So, that is the end of my
14 presentation and I hope you will vote to uphold this
15 designation and I'm happy to answer any questions.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair Riley, you
17 are muted.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Thank
19 you. I just have two questions. Can you speak to
20 the outreach and engagement process for this historic
21 district designation, please?

22 KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Oh, sure. So, this
23 is-- we received what is called a request for
24 evaluation for the historic district from the block
25 Association and that came with information and

2 support letters about the district and then we, LPC
3 staff, did a lot of evaluation of the neighborhood in
4 looking at the block within a broader context to
5 determine if it merited designation on its own or if
6 there was a different boundary that we should be
7 looking at. The air was a lot of research and had
8 meetings with Julia Charles and the Block Association
9 and the Council member and then, when we began to
10 move forward, then we started in owner outreach with
11 property owners and this was during the early part of
12 the pandemic, actually. And so, normally we like to
13 be face-to-face in the community and have meetings in
14 person to explain our study, to explain the research
15 that we have done and also to talk with people about
16 how to work with the Landmarks Commission once they
17 may own a property that would be designated and to
18 answer any questions. So, we did that over zoom
19 mandated actually turned out to be a useful tool that
20 we have used sense to have other similar meetings.
21 So, this was a district that we did have a lot of
22 support. We had great conversations with people.
23 And so, before we calendared, we always like to know
24 that there is support.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. In my last
3 question is how did this process differ from previous
4 LPC designations and other neighborhoods?

5 KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Well, I think that
6 there is-- you know, we are always doing our own
7 research and survey and evaluation and sometimes
8 things come to us from advocates asking us to look at
9 something. Sometimes things come to us directly from
10 the community asking us to walk act, you know, there
11 block or their neighborhood and sometimes we identify
12 things. So, there is a range of how this can go,
13 but, you know, it is particularly rewarding when the
14 people living in a historic district really want to
15 be-- to become a historic district.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay.

17 ANTHONY FABRE: I think-- I mean, Kate
18 already mentioned this, but the biggest difference is
19 probably that we-- although we started in person to
20 do outreach, we had to move on to doing outreach
21 virtually, so that is probably the biggest difference
22 from other designations, but that will change now, of
23 course, since we are moving forward with other online
24 meetings. So--

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. Okay. Thank
3 you. I really appreciate the presentation. I think
4 this is going to be great for that community and all
5 of Flatbush. I actually learned something myself. I
6 did not know that Flatbush was a town within a town,
7 so that is very, you know, great to learn today and I
8 just want to take this time to invite my colleagues,
9 if they have any questions. Counsel, is there any
10 questions for many of my colleagues?

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I see no Council
12 members with questions.

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. There being
14 no more questions for this panel, this panel is
15 excused.

16 KATE LEMOS MCHALE: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Counsel, are there
18 any members of the public who wish to testify on this
19 item?

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: there are no
21 members of the public who wish to testify on this
22 item.

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: There being no
24 other members of the public who wish to testify on
25 this item-- Sorry. There being no other members of

2 the public who wish to testify, the public hearing on
3 LU 724, the designation on East 25th Street historic
4 district is now closed. Counsel, do we want to go
5 back to affirm the vote from the earlier--

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes. So, I want to
7 clarify that today's vote on LU 711 is three in the
8 affirmative, zero in the negative, with one
9 abstention and on LU 717, is for in the affirmative,
10 zero in the negative, with zero abstentions and both
11 items are recommended to the full land use committee
12 and we can now close the vote.

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: All items for today
14 during this meeting are laid over. That concludes
15 today's business. I remind you that, if you have any
16 written testimony on today's items, you may submit it
17 to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Please indicate
18 the LU number or the project name in the subject
19 heading. I would like to thank the applicants,
20 members of the public, my colleagues, subcommittee
21 counsel, land use staff, and the Sgt. at arms for
22 participating in today's hearing. This meeting is
23 hereby adjourned.

24 [gavel]

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND
2 DISPOSITIONS

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3 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you,
4 everyone.
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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 February 14, 2021