

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND  
FRANCHISES

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September 24, 2021  
Start: 10:10 a.m.  
Recess: 2:12 p.m.

HELD AT: Remote Hearing (Virtual Room 2)

B E F O R E: Francisco Moya  
CHAIRPERSON

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Carlina Rivera  
Diana Ayala  
Barry Grodenchik  
Stephen T. Levin  
Antonio Reynoso  
Joseph C. Borelli  
Deborah Rose

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

Lisa Orrantia, Land Use Counsel  
Akerman LLP

Jordan Press

Shiva Ghomi, Director of Planning and Community  
Development  
Aufgang Architects

Nicola Iervasi  
Mare Nostrum Elements

Kevin Albert  
Mare Nostrum Elements

Silas Leavitt, Housing Development Coordinator  
HANAC

Renzo Ramirez  
32 BJ

Catherina Gioino, Head of Community Partnerships  
and Advocacy  
Oonee

Eric Palatnic, Land Use Counsel  
Eric Palatnic PC

Sean Campbell, Treasurer  
Teamsters Local 813

Will Fisher, Assistant Vice President Government  
And Community Relations  
New York City Economic Development Corporation

Daniel Kaplan, Senior Partner  
Fairfax Collaborative Architects

Sumitha Amairaj  
Economic Development Corporation (EDC)

Lauren George

John Beutler, Senior Vice President of  
Development  
Radson Development

Joe DeGenova, CEO  
Center for Union Community Services

Gabby Guilart, Deputy Political Director  
Hotel Trades Council

Stuart Beckerman, Land Use Counsel  
Hirschen, Singer, Epstein LLP

Meredith Marshall, Cofounder and Managing  
Partner  
BRP Companies

Mary Serafy  
BRP Companies

Zach Schwanbeck  
BRP Companies

Shay Alster

Andy Cohen

Sean Stafford, New York City Resident

Zach Kadden, Director of Development  
Madison Realty Capital

Meenakshi Srinivasan, Senior Land Use and Zoning  
Advisor  
Kramer Levin

Toni Finger, Environmental Counsel  
Kramer Levin

Vincent Accornero, Chairman  
Land Use Committee  
Community Board One Staten Island

Deborah Given, New York City Resident

Helen Northmore, New York City Resident

John Kilcullen, New York City Resident

Leticia Remauro, New York City Resident

Reverend Dr. Demetrius Carolina, Pastor  
First Center Baptist Church

Nikki Odlivak, President and CEO  
Community Agency for Senior Citizens (CASC)

Kamillah Hanks, New York City Resident

Michael Harwood, New York City Resident

Sally Jones, Member  
St. George Civic Association and  
Staten Island Democratic Association

Dale Smith, Leadership Counsel  
Youth Filled Impact

Elizabeth Morgan, Director of Youthful Impact  
Program  
Central Family Life Center

Icisis Cruz, New York City Resident

Reverend Judy Brown, Senior Pastor  
Bethel Community Church

Jan Koehler, New York City Resident

David Jones, New York City Resident

Theo Dorian, President  
St. George Civic Association

Richenda Kramer, New York City Resident

Benjamin Donsky, New York City Resident

Neil Barry, New York City Resident

Joseph Caccamo, New York City Resident

Stephanie Echevarrieta, Program Assistant  
Youth Filled Impact



2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: PC recording done.

3 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Backup is rolling.

4 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and welcome  
5 to today's remote New York City Council hearing on  
6 the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. At this  
7 time, we ask that Council members and Council staff  
8 please turn on their video for verification purposes.  
9 To minimize disruptions, please place all cell phones  
10 and electronic devices to silent or vibrate. If you  
11 have a testimony you wished to submit, you may do so  
12 at testimony@Council.NYC.gov. Once again, that is  
13 testimony@Council.NYC.gov. We thank you for your  
14 cooperation. Mr. Chair, we are ready to begin.

15 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Good  
16 morning. I am Council member Francisco Moya, Chair  
17 of the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. I am  
18 joined remotely today by Council members Grodenchik,  
19 Rose, Levin. I saw Borelli, Ayala, and I believe we  
20 have the Speaker on, as well. Before we begin, I  
21 know that LU number 834 on today's agenda for the  
22 Windemere proposal will be laid over. Today we will  
23 hold public hearings on the 62-04 Roosevelt Avenue  
24 rezoning and the 48-18 Van Dam Teamsters rezoning,  
25 both relating to property in Queens. The 495 11th

2 Avenue rezoning in Manhattan, the 1776 48th Street  
3 rezoning, and the 270 Nordstrom Avenue rezoning, both  
4 relating to property located in Brooklyn, and led to  
5 52 Victory Boulevard and River North read zoning  
6 proposals, both relating to property in Staten  
7 Island.

8           First, we will vote on a number of items  
9 heard by the subcommittee at our September 10th  
10 meeting. We will vote to approve LU number 832 and  
11 833 for the 2840 Knapp Street rezoning proposal  
12 relating to property in Council District 48 in  
13 Brooklyn. The proposal seeks a zoning map amendment  
14 to change an R5 district to an R6 district and a  
15 related zoning text amendment to establish a  
16 mandatory inclusionary housing area utilizing option  
17 one and option two.

18           We will also file pursuing a letter of  
19 withdrawal in accordance with Council rule 11.6 LU  
20 number 836 and 8374 the 629-639 West 142nd Street  
21 rezoning proposal. On September 23rd, 2021, the  
22 applicant submitted a letter of withdrawal of the  
23 application.

24           We will also vote to approve with  
25 modifications LU number 838 four citywide zoning text

2 amendment proposed by the Department of City Planning  
3 and the MTA known as Zoning for Accessibility or ZFA.  
4 The proposal would establish a systemwide easement  
5 requirement requiring developers of transit adjacent  
6 sites to first obtain a determination as to the need  
7 for easement volumes to facilitate future station  
8 access and it will also create an expanded  
9 authorization framework for the transit improvement  
10 floor area bonus program, expanding the area of  
11 applicable a data to all R9 and R10 districts  
12 citywide in applying the program to a larger radius  
13 for eligible sites. Our modifications would include  
14 adding the city Council to the list of recipients to  
15 the MTA annual report for the easement program, would  
16 clarify the resiliency measures in conjunction with  
17 accessibility improvements would be among the  
18 allowable types of station upgrades, and would  
19 establish a maximum threshold for additional floor  
20 area for sites under the proposed authorization  
21 mechanism.

22 We will also vote to approve LU number  
23 839 for the 10602 Rockaway Boulevard-- Rockaway  
24 Beach Boulevard rezoning proposal relating to  
25 property in Council member Ulrich's district in

2 Queens. The proposal seeks a zoning map amendment to  
3 change an R5D C23 district to an M15 district.

4 Council member Ulrich is in support of the proposal.

5 And, finally, we will also vote to  
6 approve LU numbers 840 and 841 for the 307 Kent  
7 Avenue proposal relating to property in Council  
8 member Levin's district in Brooklyn. The proposal  
9 seeks a zoning map amendment to change an M31  
10 district partially to an M15 district and partially  
11 to an M14 R6A special mixed-use district as well as a  
12 related zoning text amendment to establishing  
13 mandatory inclusionary housing area in the special  
14 mixed-use district portion of the rezoning area.  
15 However, approval will facilitate a new nine story  
16 primarily commercial and community facility building.  
17 Council member Levin is in support of the proposal.

18 And now, I will take the opportunity to recognize any  
19 of the local members who may want to say remarks  
20 before our vote. Counsel, do we have any members  
21 that are looking to speak before the vote?

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, Council  
23 member Levin has a hand raised.

24 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Council member  
25 Levin?

2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you very  
3 much, Chair. I just want to quickly acknowledge the  
4 long-standing work that the applicant at 307 Kent  
5 Avenue put into this proposal. This was an  
6 application from two partners who have long ties to  
7 this piece of property going back generations. Both  
8 of their parents owned the property before then. So,  
9 these are-- I do believe these individuals have the  
10 best interest of Williamsburg at heart and want to do  
11 the right thing and this was a very manageable  
12 process in terms of negotiations and the outcome that  
13 we found suitable is that this will be a ground-up  
14 commercial development with the increased FAR. There  
15 will be a set-aside of 10 percent of the commercial  
16 FAR for below-market rents at no more than 75 percent  
17 of the market rate. The owners of the property now  
18 have agreed to not develop, lease, or knowingly sell  
19 the property to somebody to develop into self  
20 storage. That we felt was the important, but also  
21 the best mechanism that we had to ensure that that  
22 does not become an outcome in the instance that they  
23 sell the property. And then there are certain  
24 sustainability measures that they have agreed to take  
25 as part of the development of this parcel. So, with

2 that, I just want to encourage my colleagues to vote  
3 aye and, once again, thank the applicants for their  
4 working with us in good faith. Thank you, Chair.

5 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. I now call  
6 for a vote to file pursuant to letter of withdrawal  
7 LU 836 and 837 to remove them from our calendar, to  
8 approve LU 832, 833, 839, 840, and 841. And to  
9 approve with modifications I have described LU 838.  
10 Counsel, please call the role.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair Moya?

12 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: I vote aye.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council member  
14 Levin?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I vote aye.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council member  
17 Grodenchik?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Aye.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Come back to  
20 Council member Grodenchik. Council member Ayala?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I vote aye.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council member  
23 Borelli? Council member Grodenchik?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Aye. I'm  
25 sorry about that.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Quite all right.  
3 Council member Borelli? Council member Borelli? If  
4 you can hear me, raise your hand. Chair, we appear  
5 to be having a technical issue with Council member  
6 Borelli's audio. So I think we can come back to him.  
7 The vote--

8 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: We can leave it open.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: currently stands at  
10 for the affirmative zero and the negative with no  
11 abstentions at the moment and the vote will remain  
12 open with your permission.

13 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Yep. Absolutely.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: In that case, as  
15 soon as we have word that we can sort out Council  
16 member Borelli, we can move to the remote meeting  
17 procedures.

18 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: All make that  
20 announcement, Chair, if that is all right with you.

21 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Yes.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Hey, guys.

23 Sorry.

24

25

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Oh. Excuse me.  
3 Council member Borelli, on a vote of the land use  
4 items?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Aye on all. I  
6 apologize.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: That's okay.  
8 Chair, the vote is currently five in the affirmative,  
9 zero in the negative with no abstentions. We will  
10 continue to leave the vote open.

11 And with that, I am Arthur Huh, counsel  
12 to this subcommittee. Members of the public whereas  
13 to testify for today's hearings. If you wish to  
14 testify and are not already registered, we ask that  
15 you please do so now by visiting the New York City  
16 Council website: [www.counsel.NYC.gov/landuse](http://www.counsel.NYC.gov/landuse).

17 Members of the public may also review A live stream  
18 broadcast of this meeting at the Council's website.

19 As a technical note for the benefit of the viewing  
20 public, if you need an accessible version of any of  
21 the presentations shown today, you may send an email  
22 request to [landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov). When  
23 called to testify, individuals a. Before the  
24 subcommittee will remain muted until recognized by  
25 the Chair to speak. Applicant teams will be

2 recognized as a group and called first, followed by  
3 members of the public. When the Chair recognizes  
4 you, your microphone will be unmuted. Please take a  
5 moment to check your device and confirm that your  
6 microphone is on before you begin speaking. Public  
7 testimony will be limited to two minutes per witness.  
8 If you have additional testimony you would like the  
9 subcommittee to consider or if you have written  
10 testimony you would like to submit instead of  
11 appearing here before the subcommittee, you may email  
12 it to [landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov). Please  
13 indicate the LU number and or project name in the  
14 subject line of your email. During the hearing,  
15 Council members with questions should use the zoom  
16 raise hand function. The raise hand button should  
17 appear at the bottom of your participant panel.  
18 Council members with questions will be announced in  
19 the order as they raise their hands and Chair Moya  
20 will recognize them to speak. Witnesses are  
21 requested to remain in the meeting until excused by  
22 the Chair as Council members may have questions.  
23 Finally, there will be pauses over the course of this  
24 meeting for various technical reasons and we ask that  
25 you please be patient as we work through any issues.

2 Chair Moya will now continue with today's agenda  
3 items.

4 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Arthur.

5 Before we begin with our hearings, I also would like  
6 to take this opportunity to wish Council member Ayala  
7 very happy birthday today. I hope you have a good  
8 day and what better way to spend your birthday than  
9 with the Zoning and Franchising Committee. So happy  
10 birthday--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Yay.

12 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Councilwoman. I will  
13 now recognize the Subcommittee counsel to review  
14 procedures but he just did.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: You're welcome. And now  
17 I open the public hearing on LU numbers 852 and 853  
18 for the 6204 Roosevelt Avenue rezoning proposal  
19 seeking a zoning map and zoning text amendment and  
20 relating to property in Council member Van Bramer's  
21 district in Queens. I will remind the viewing  
22 public, for anyone wishing to testify on this item,  
23 if you have not already done so, you must register  
24 online and you may do that now by visiting the

2 Council's website. Counsel, if you could please call  
3 up the first panel for this item.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The applicant panel  
5 for this item will include Lisa Orrantia, Nicola  
6 Iervasi, Shiva Ghomi, Kevin Albert, Richard Windslow,  
7 Paula Duran, Jordan Press, Staci Oyago, and Silas  
8 Leavitt.

9 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Counsel, if  
10 you please administer the affirmation.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Panelists, please  
12 raise your right hands and state your name for the  
13 record.

14 LISA ORRANTIA: Lisa Orrantia.

15 JORDAN PRESS: Jordan Press.

16 NICOLA IERVASI: Nicola Iervasi.

17 KEVIN ALBERT: Kevin Albert.

18 SHIVA GHOMI: Shiva Ghomi.

19 SILAS LEAVITT: Silas Leavitt.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: All right. I'm not  
21 sure I heard everybody, but, panelists, please raise  
22 your right hands. Do you affirm to tell the truth,  
23 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your  
24 testimony before this subcommittee and in answer to  
25 all Council member questions?

2 LISA ORRANTIA: Yes.

3 UNIDENTIFIED: I do.

4 UNIDENTIFIED: I do.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, counsel.

7 When you are ready to present your slide show, please  
8 say so and it will be displayed on screen by our  
9 staff and slides will be advanced for you when you  
10 say next. As a technical note for the benefit of the  
11 viewing public, if you need an accessible version of  
12 this presentation, please send an email request to  
13 [landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov). And now, if the  
14 panelists would please restate your names and  
15 organizations for the record, you may begin.

16 LISA ORRANTIA: Good morning. My name  
17 is Lisa Orrantia from Akerman LLP. I am land use  
18 counsel on behalf of Woodside 63 Management LLC.  
19 Should I begin the presentation?

20 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: You can begin.

21 LISA ORRANTIA: Thank you. Can we start  
22 with slide one, please? Good morning. Again, my  
23 name is Lisa Orrantia, land use counsel from Akerman  
24 LLP. Thank you for your time today. Steve Leicher  
25 [sp?] from Woodside 63 Management LLC couldn't join

us here today, but we are joined by co-applicant Mare Nostrum Elements, as well as other applicant members. The proposed zoning and text amendments will allow the development of a 13 story mixed use building in Community District two in Woodside, Queens. It will include a new home for Mare Nostrum, a Woodside-based nonprofit performing arts organization and additional space for other community artists. Next slide, please. The site is located at a transit and is bounded by Roosevelt Avenue and the elevated seven line, 63rd Street and the Long Island Railroad tracks in Woodside, Queens. Next slide, please. The site is currently improved with one and two-story commercial buildings that were constructed before 1960 and there are no residential or community facility uses at the site. Next slide, please. The proposal is to change the R6 and R6 with C14 overlay district to a C44 district and designate a mandatory inclusionary housing area that will be mapped for options one and two coterminous with the rezoning area. These actions will allow a moderate increase in density at a transit hub to facilitate new development that will improve housing opportunities for the areas growing population. It will include

2 permanently affordable housing units, and it will  
3 increase community facility offerings by adding  
4 affordable performing arts space. Next slide,  
5 please. And Shiva Ghomi from Aufgang Architects will  
6 present the following slides.

7 SHIVA GHOMI: Thank you, Lisa. Good  
8 morning, everyone. Thank you so much for the  
9 opportunity for presenting this application today.  
10 My name is Shiva Ghomi. I am the director of  
11 planning and community development at Aufgang  
12 Architects. As you can see, this slide and Lisa  
13 mentioned to the proposed building is a 13 story I  
14 building. We aim for a high quality an architectural  
15 design for this development and the aim and the goal  
16 was to be as respectful, as much as possible, to the  
17 community's character. The proposed setbacks that we  
18 can see in the renderings are, you know, the goal of  
19 it is to make the building more attractive and  
20 mitigate the impact of the overall size of the  
21 development and also to create some sort of open  
22 spaces, open balconies and terraces. The proposed  
23 development is just over 210,000 square feet and it  
24 will contain 516 accessory parking's that are  
25 required by zoning codes and also 213 dwelling units

1 that 54 of them are going to be permanently  
2 affordable. The performing arts space will take up  
3 approximately 7500 square feet in the cellar area and  
4 there is going to be local retail on the ground  
5 floor, as well. Next slide, please. This project  
6 features sustainability criteria and principles  
7 that they are following. There are going to be  
8 proposed green roofs and solar panels on the roof.  
9 High-efficiency heating and cooling system. Low flow  
10 plumbing features. Air sealing and insulation in  
11 high performance windows. There is going to be  
12 energy saving appliances implemented into the  
13 project. We are going to be mindful of reducing off  
14 gassing VOC materials to improve the quality of the  
15 indoor air quality. The efficient air circulation  
16 with, you know, high efficiency HVAC system is going  
17 to be proposed. And as I mentioned, there is going  
18 to be second floor terraces and also third floor open  
19 space for the residents to have access to. Next,  
20 please. The entrances for the parking area, arts  
21 space, residential, and portion of the commercial and  
22 retail of the ground floor are all located on 63rd  
23 Street and additional commercial access and  
24 entrances, as you can see on the site plan, are going  
25

2 to be provided on Roosevelt Avenue. Next, please.  
3 Based on the feedback that we received by the  
4 community board, they increased the number of family  
5 units, twos and threes, in the proposed dwelling  
6 units unit count and, as you can see on this site,  
7 we're going to have 41 studios, 101 one-bedroom, 60  
8 two-bedrooms, and 11 three-bedroom units. Next,  
9 please. Okay. I will pass it to Nicola and Kevin to  
10 talk to you about the performing arts space. Thank  
11 you.

12 KEVIN ALBERT: Hi, everyone. Thanks  
13 for the opportunity to present this project. My name  
14 is Kevin Albert and I am here with Nicola Iervasi.  
15 We are co-artist directors and cofounders of Mare  
16 Nostrum Elements. The entire arts node will be, as  
17 it was mentioned, approximately 7500 square feet of  
18 which our organization will have 2000 square feet to  
19 use for rehearsals, performances, and classes and to  
20 make available to alumni of our main program, the  
21 Emerging Choreographer Series, and o the general  
22 dance and theater public for deeply affordable,  
23 hourly rentals of 10 to 15 dollars an hour. So, if  
24 you see on the top left and bottom left, MNE One and  
25 MNE two, those are the two studios that we are going

2 to have. The arts node will also include a 2000  
3 square foot-- that's the CA Space to the right of  
4 our MNE number one-- to be made available to  
5 individual artists, performing artists, and small  
6 entities at 10 to 15 dollars an hour from the get-go.  
7 Queens Com Art, which is a newly formed nonprofit,  
8 will run this space and will benefit from the vast  
9 pool of dancer, teachers, choreographers, and theater  
10 makers connected to our organization. The arts node  
11 will also include five smaller studios to be made  
12 available at deeply affordable rates to performing or  
13 visual artists for shorter or long term rentals. The  
14 main lobby of the arts node will be used as an art  
15 gallery exhibiting the works made in the space. The  
16 developer has agreed to offer us a column free space  
17 with 12 foot clearance. This is very important for  
18 legitimate dance. We're going to have legitimate  
19 dance here in Queens. Also, the developer has agreed  
20 to give us a sprung wood dance floor. This is very  
21 helpful for an organization like this. Also,  
22 communal restrooms. You'll see that the bottom  
23 right. Restrooms. That is for all the spaces so  
24 that then the artists have to dig into their own  
25 studios to build restrooms. The developers also

2 agreed to a blatant sign on Roosevelt directing the  
3 public to the entrance and a mural by local artists,  
4 Xehan Wazehd [sp?] That is available from the train.  
5 We thank Councilman Van Bramer for all of his support  
6 in connecting us to this project and we have faith in  
7 this development team. They had been very responsive  
8 to all of our suggestions to follow through on their  
9 promises to see this advancement in New York in  
10 Queens thrive. And thank you, once again, for  
11 allowing us this opportunity.

12 LISA ORRANTIA: Thank you, Kevin. Next  
13 slide, please. The project was refined over the  
14 course of several meetings with the community board  
15 and we are happy to have the strong support of both  
16 the community board and borough president as a result  
17 of this collaboration. Some of the highlights we'd  
18 like to identify for you are a signed MOU with the  
19 co-applicant regarding the 7500 square feet of space  
20 to be used for community arts, attractive signage on  
21 the corner of Roosevelt Street, a change from MIH  
22 option two, and the initial application to option  
23 one, plus there is a commitment to provide additional  
24 affordable units that will get us to 30 percent of  
25 residential floor area reserved for households

2 earning 60 percent AMI. There is also a completed  
3 agreement with 32BJ so that prevailing wage jobs with  
4 benefits are available to the permanent building  
5 service employees. Electric vehicle charging  
6 stations and car share spaces are included in the  
7 building-- will be included, as well as New York  
8 City Mesh which will provide independent, fast,  
9 reliable internet connection accessible to all New  
10 Yorkers. Next slide, please. So, local nonprofit,  
11 HANAC, will administer the affordable units and  
12 handle the marketing and lease up process and the  
13 owner will work with local organizations like  
14 Woodside On The Move, as well as the Community Board  
15 and elected officials to advertise the availability  
16 of residential units. Next slide, please. Front  
17 storage for 116 bicycles will be included as required  
18 by the zoning resolution and, in response to the  
19 community board strong interest in providing support  
20 for alternatives to car travel, the owner intends to  
21 partner with Oonee, which is a local company that  
22 designs attractive and secure bicycle storage  
23 structures for both inside and outside the building.  
24 Next slide please. That concludes our presentation.  
25 Thank you very much.

2 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. I just have  
3 one quick question. To have a plan in place to  
4 address the local hiring during construction  
5 generally and how do you respond to some of the  
6 Borough President's recommendations around jobs  
7 specifically?

8 LISA ORRANTIA: We don't have a GC hired  
9 yet. There is agreement, as I said, with 32 BJ for  
10 the permanent building service employees and could  
11 instruction is planned on being a mix of union and  
12 nonunion labor.

13 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Okay. That is it  
14 for me and I want to invite my colleagues to ask any  
15 questions. If you have any questions for the  
16 applicant panel, please use the raise hand button.  
17 Counsel, do we have any Council members with  
18 questions?

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, Council  
20 member Grodenchik has a hand raised for a question.

21 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: You are up, Barry G.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you,  
23 Chairman. I just wanted to ask a question of the  
24 gentleman who presented on the arts. Is that going  
25 to be permanent for the life of the building? How is

2 that insurance and into what we're talking about  
3 today?

4 KEVIN ALBERT: Jordan, would you like  
5 me to talk to that or would you like me to respond?

6 LISA ORRANTIA: Oh, I can-- Oh. Sorry.

7 JORDAN PRESS: I was going to suggest,  
8 Kevin, if you guys just wanted to describe the length  
9 of the agreement that you have at this point.

10 KEVIN ALBERT: Yeah. Right now, we  
11 have been offered a 10 year lease and we are in  
12 conversations to find out a way to make it in  
13 perpetuity. At this present moment, we don't have  
14 that agreement in place, but I do see a willingness  
15 to continue talking about that. We have reached out  
16 to other organizations with Steve Leischer who are  
17 doing similar things or trying to do similar things  
18 to try to find a way to keep it in perpetuity to  
19 match, you know, the increase in building size which  
20 will also be in perpetuity. But right now, we don't  
21 have an agreement beyond a 10 year lease and, but,  
22 like I said, we are still negotiating and working out  
23 some of those details.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you very  
25 much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Council  
3 member Grodenchik. Are there any other Council  
4 members with questions?

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, Chair. I see  
6 no other members with questions at this time.

7 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
8 further questions, the applicant panel is excused.  
9 Counsel, are there any members of the public who wish  
10 to testify on the 6204 Roosevelt Avenue rezoning  
11 application?

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, Chair Moya.  
13 We have approximately three public witnesses who  
14 signed up to speak.

15 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: From members of the  
17 public here to testify, please note again that  
18 witnesses will generally be called in panels. If you  
19 are member of the public signed up to testify on this  
20 item, please standby when you hear your name being  
21 called and prepared to speak with the Chair says that  
22 you may begin. And please note, again, that once all  
23 panelists in your group have completed their  
24 testimony, you will be removed from the meeting as a  
25 group in the next group of speakers will be

2 announced. Once removed, you may continue to view  
3 the live stream broadcast of this hearing the Council  
4 website. And we will now hear from the first panel  
5 which willing Renzo Ramirez and Catherina Gioino. In  
6 my apologies for that. First speaker Renzo Ramirez.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

8 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Just a quick reminder to  
9 the members of the public, you will be given two  
10 minutes to speak. Please do not begin until the  
11 sergeant-at-arms has started the clock. Now you may  
12 begin.

13 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

14 RENZO RAMIREZ: Good morning, Chair Moya  
15 and members of the subcommittee. My name is Renzo  
16 Ramirez and I am a representative of 32 BJ and a  
17 Queens resident. As you know, 32 BJ is the largest  
18 property service union representing 85,000 properties  
19 service workers across the city. We represent  
20 workers who maintain, clean, and provide security  
21 services and buildings like the one being discussed  
22 at 6204 Roosevelt Avenue. 32 BJ supports responsible  
23 developers who invest in the communities where they  
24 build. I am happy to report that the developers  
25 affiliated with this project have made a credible

2 commitment to creating prevailing wage building  
3 service jobs at this site. Their commitment is an  
4 investment in Queens by providing wages and benefits  
5 that give working families opportunity for upward  
6 mobility and economic security. We estimate that  
7 this rezoning, which will allow the construction of  
8 213 units including 64 permanently affordable units,  
9 will lead to the creation of four new cleaning jobs.  
10 We are in support of this project and we are  
11 confident that the developers will be a responsible  
12 employer and have positive presence in the community.  
13 For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to  
14 approve this rezoning. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Do we have  
16 the next panelist ready?

17 CATHERINA GIOINO: Thank you very much for  
18 inviting me--

19 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

20 CATHERINA GIOINO: Sorry.

21 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: No. You can start.  
22 That's okay.

23 CATHERINA GIOINO: Hi, there. I'm  
24 Catherina Gioino. I'm the head of community  
25 partnerships and advocacy for Oonee. As a born and

1 raised Queens resident coming from a low income  
2 single mom, I don't need to explain how unnecessary  
3 this business partnership with me is so inclusive and  
4 necessary. Oonee provides free bicycle parking to  
5 everyone and it will be providing a needed and,  
6 fortunately, lacking service in our city's  
7 infrastructure. Oonee is a black and brown phone  
8 company that will provide over 1506 care bicycle  
9 parking spaces that are free, again, for all New  
10 Yorkers and New Jerseyans who happen to live near a  
11 location or happened to pass by. And that is just a  
12 drop in the bucket given how only one in four--  
13 given how one in four households in New York have had  
14 their bikes stolen in the last five years. Given the  
15 6204 location to both several subway stops and in LAR  
16 station, having a secure bicycle parking location for  
17 people living in this area, as well as commuters is a  
18 major asset-- well, provide communities a major  
19 asset to both Queens and the city. We are in support  
20 of this project and I know that my team and I are  
21 very excited to work with the group behind this  
22 project. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Thank you  
25 for your testimony.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, that was the  
3 last speaker for this panel.

4 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Do we have any  
5 Council members who have any questions for this  
6 panel?

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, Chair. I see  
8 no members with questions for the panel.

9 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
10 more questions for this panel, the witness panel is  
11 now excused.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: All right. If  
13 there any members of the public who yet wish to  
14 testify on the 6204, Roosevelt Avenue rezoning  
15 proposal, please press the raise hand but now. The  
16 meeting will stand IDs briefly while we also check  
17 for any newly registered members of the public.  
18 Chair, it appears that we may have an additional  
19 speaker. Okay. So we are getting that settled. Is  
20 there a Peter Chu present in the meeting and seeking  
21 to testify on this item, the 6204 Roosevelt Avenue  
22 proposal? Peter Chu? If you can hear us, please  
23 raise your hand. We're working on getting the next  
24 speaker in.

25 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, just  
3 finalizing. We did get word that there was possibly  
4 an additional speaker, so we're still working out  
5 that technical detail. Okay. Chair, my apologies.  
6 I don't think we were able to resolve whether there  
7 was another speaker and/or there may be technical  
8 difficulties. I'll take this reminder to remind all  
9 of the viewing public that anyone wishing to submit  
10 written testimony may do so by sending an email to  
11 landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov. And with that,  
12 Chair, I say no other members of the public who wish  
13 to testify.

14 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Great. Thank you,  
15 Arthur. There being no other members of the public  
16 who wish to testify on LU numbers 852 and 853 for the  
17 6204 Roosevelt Avenue rezoning proposal, the public  
18 hearing on these items is now closed and they are  
19 laid over.

20 I now open the public hearing on LU  
21 number 863 for the 48-18 Van Dam Teamsters rezoning  
22 proposal which seeks a zoning map amendment and  
23 relates to property in Council member Van Bramer's  
24 district in Queens. I will remind the viewing public  
25 for anyone wishing to testify on this item that if

2 you have not already done so, you must register  
3 online and you may do that now by visiting the  
4 Council's website. Counsel, if you can please call  
5 the first panel for this item.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sorry, Chair. One  
7 moment, please.

8 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Yep.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The applicant panel  
10 for this item will include Eric Palatnic, land use  
11 counsel for the applicant, and Sean Campbell on  
12 behalf of the applicant. Panelists, please raise  
13 your right hands and state your name for the record.

14 ERIC PALATNIC: Eric Palatnic.

15 SEAN CAMPBELL: Sean Campbell.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Do you  
17 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and  
18 nothing but the truth in your testimony before this  
19 subcommittee and in answer to all Council member  
20 questions?

21 SEAN CAMPBELL: Yes.

22 ERIC PALATNIC: Yeah.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Thank you. Just  
25 as a reminder, when you are ready to present your

2 slideshow, please say so and it will be displayed on  
3 screen by our staff. Slides will be advanced when  
4 you say next. Once again, anyone who requires an  
5 accessible version of this presentation may send an  
6 email request to landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov.  
7 And now, if the panelists would please raise state  
8 your names and organizations for the record, you may  
9 begin.

10 ERIC PALATNIC: Eric Palatnic, land-use  
11 attorney representing Teamsters Local 813.

12 SEAN CAMPBELL: Good morning, Sean  
13 Campbell representing Local 813 4818 Van Dam Street  
14 Holdings. Property holdings.

15 ERIC PALATNIC: And we ready for the  
16 presentation, Chair Moya.

17 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you.

18 ERIC PALATNIC: Thank you to members of  
19 the Council and the committee for spending the time  
20 on this and for your continued dedication to New York  
21 City. My name is Eric Palatnic. It is a pleasure to  
22 be before you for every rezoning for the property at  
23 4818 Van Dam Street. Next slide, please. The  
24 rezoning, if it were to be approved-- You can switch  
25 to the next slide, if possible. In the rezoning, if

2 it were to be approved and rezone the block front  
3 that you see here from an M21 district to an M15  
4 district, it would facilitate the enlargement of the  
5 existing two-story building that the Teamsters have  
6 substantially invested in and allowed for a four-  
7 story enlargement of the building to create a  
8 Teamsters phase building to include local 813 as well  
9 as other unions within the Long Island city community  
10 that may need an office. There is a strong demand  
11 for union space with record-keeping and meeting rooms  
12 and ample parking, none of which already exists in  
13 the Long Island city area and Sean and his  
14 organization on anxious to expand the building. Next  
15 slide, please. You can see the site here in more  
16 detail. Next slide. You can see some imagery here  
17 of the existing building that Sean and his  
18 organization have redeveloped an old factory  
19 warehouse building and they are currently located  
20 there right now and, as I'm talking, you can just  
21 click through the next four or five slides, please,  
22 to give the viewing audience a chance to see what the  
23 property looks like. It is this building that we  
24 would ask that for stories on top of. And you can  
25 click to the end of the photographs, please. This

1 should take you to page nine. This shows you page 9  
2 which shows you the proposed zoning map. It is page  
3 nine on the-- next slide, please. It shows you the  
4 proposed rezoning which is, on the left side, the  
5 existing zoning, and M21. You can stop there. Go  
6 ahead of the next slide, please. That's fine. I can  
7 talk. And it would rezone the site to an M15 as you  
8 say on the right side. Next slide, please. This  
9 imagery shows you the addition the Teamsters wish to  
10 add to the building. You can see on the left side of  
11 the building the garage door entrances. That would  
12 be the space for off street accessory parking  
13 voluntary. I say to the Teamsters when they have  
14 meetings or their organization, their members need to  
15 come in about and they need to do other business  
16 within the building and, of course, New York City and  
17 Long Island city parking is a premium. I would also  
18 like to pay special attention to the park that is in  
19 the left corner there that imagery. That will be a  
20 pocket park that the Teamsters have signed a  
21 restrictive declaration and had to create their,  
22 which will be nice addition to this otherwise  
23 concrete corner of Van Dam Street. Next slide,  
24 please. The next few images I will just click  
25

2 through rather quickly, but it shows you how the  
3 building is proposed to layout. I will come out some  
4 special attention to the conference rooms, the large  
5 room, the off street parking, off street bicycle  
6 parking, and ample circulation for vehicles. Next  
7 slide, please. I can provide you-- actually, I  
8 didn't realize you put an appendix here. I can show  
9 you the remainder of the plans, if you'd like, but I  
10 think it is probably best if I stop. Open it up to  
11 any questions and give anybody any time to speak. I  
12 would also like to call out that the community board  
13 did vote to support the application, as did  
14 Councilman Van Bramer indicate his support so far. I  
15 will let him speak for himself. I believe he is  
16 here. And also the Borough President voted in  
17 support of it. We have also met with numerous local  
18 community groups and Sean has a longstanding  
19 relationship with LaGuardia Community College, a very  
20 young intern program that he can speak to, as well,  
21 as well as his commitment to arts and promoting that  
22 within the building as much as he can. Thank you  
23 very much for giving us the time to speak.

24 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. I know you  
25 might have mentioned it before, Eric, and I'm sorry.

2 You incorporated any of the community board or the  
3 Borough President recommendations onto the proposal?

4 ERIC PALATNIC: Well, the community  
5 board-- most of the community board  
6 recommendations-- Well, we've included a lot of the  
7 community board recommendations. Let me start there.  
8 There was a lot of discussion about bicycle parking  
9 in off street bicycle parking. That has been  
10 included within the proposal. Sean spent extensive  
11 amount of times meeting with the rather strong  
12 cultural arts dedication and Long Island City. And  
13 it is sort of the arts above New York and Sean has  
14 met with the Arts Committee of Community Board Two,  
15 as well as with some other local artists and has  
16 agreed-- I will let him speak to the agreement that  
17 he has made. They can't promise any are space  
18 officially because they are union and, as such, they  
19 have a fiduciary responsibility to their members and  
20 that doesn't include being an art gallery. Having  
21 said that, they have a strong love of art and I will  
22 let Sean explain the personal commitments they have  
23 made to the community to allow our to be displayed  
24 within the building and any vacant storefronts and  
25 things to that affect. So, we have done our best to

2 accommodate the community's concerns. The final  
3 thing I believe they has four or a like Jake vehicle  
4 charging stations. We could not accommodate those on  
5 the site. The engineering and the intricacies and  
6 the levels of work that need to accomplish that are  
7 beyond the abilities of the Teamsters right now as  
8 they are under extreme duress due to COVID and  
9 getting their union fund and getting the building  
10 actually constructed. But everything else that was  
11 asked for they fully desire to comply with.

12 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Thank you. So,  
13 now I want to see if any of my colleagues have any  
14 questions for this panel.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, I see no  
16 members with questions for this panel.

17 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
18 further questions, the applicant panel is excused.  
19 Counsel, there any members of the public who wish to  
20 testify on the 48-18 Van Dam Teamsters rezoning  
21 application?

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If there are any  
23 members of the public who wish to testify on the 48-  
24 18 Van Dam Teamsters rezoning proposal, please press  
25 the raise hand and now for the 48-18 Van Dam

2 Teamsters rezoning proposal. The meeting will very  
3 briefly stand at ease while we check on members of  
4 the public. Chair Moya, I see no other members of  
5 the public who wish to testify on this item.

6 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
7 other members of the public who wish to testify on LU  
8 numbers 863 for the 48-18 Van Dam Teamsters rezoning  
9 proposal, the public hearing is now closed and this  
10 item is laid over.

11 Okay. I now want to open the public  
12 hearing on LU numbers 861 and 8624 that 1776 48th  
13 Street rezoning proposal requesting zoning map and  
14 zoning text amendment and relating to property in  
15 Council member Yeger's district in Brooklyn. Once  
16 again, anyone wishing to testify on this item who has  
17 not already registered online must do so now by  
18 visiting the Council's website to sign up. Counsel,  
19 can you please call this panel for this item?

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: the applicant panel  
21 for this item, Chair will include Eric Palatnic, land  
22 use counsel for the applicant. Mr. Palatnic, a  
23 reminder that you remained under oath.

24 ERIC PALATNIC: Thank you very much for  
25 the reminder and thank you very much, again, to the

1     committee for making the time to hear with me again  
2     and I am happy to report that we have been busy  
3     during COVID trying to get things moving. So, thank  
4     you very much for taking the time to hear it. This  
5     application is another well supported application. I  
6     am happy to be here with the support of the Community  
7     Board, and I believe of the Councilman, as well, to  
8     support a rezoning of 18th Avenue from what is R5 to  
9     R6B. next slide, please. You can see the imagery--  
10    Pull up the application, please. You can see on the  
11    screen that's about to be shared-- next slide,  
12    please. And next slide, please. The proposal is to  
13    redevelop an existing building that sits at the  
14    corner with this building that you are seeing right  
15    here. If approved, it would allow for a three-story  
16    building that would have five dwelling units. It  
17    would be approximately 8000 square feet and would  
18    have ground floor commercial. Next slide, please.  
19    More imageries so you can see what it would look  
20    like. Next slide, please. Next slide, please. You  
21    can see here the block FRONT in which the property is  
22    located is a commercial block FRONT, yet despite  
23    being commercial block front, right now it is zoned  
24    purely R5. You will notice a large school across the  
25

1 street, as well as multiple dwellings across the  
2 street, which is rather at this with its R5 zoning  
3 right now. So the request is to make it an R6B  
4 zoning district. It should also be noted that we  
5 have the support of all of the neighbors around us.  
6 Next slide, please. This shows you the site in  
7 greater detail. It shows you and you can see right  
8 here on this map how this is the only block front on  
9 the entire block that doesn't have a commercial  
10 overlay. It is somewhat at odds with the remainder  
11 of the block. Next slide, please. The proposed  
12 zoning district change is depicted here. Again, you  
13 can see on the left side how this is the only block  
14 front without a commercial overlay and you can see  
15 that it is staunchly within an R5 district over the  
16 as [inaudible 00:54:41]-- Pardon the interruption.  
17 The as built conditions are larger than an R5 and  
18 rather more similar to an R6B which is the request.  
19 Next slide, please. This just shows you the zoning  
20 change in greater detail. I would like to pause the  
21 presentation here. I know you have a busy agenda. I  
22 believe I have shown you a lot about we are proposing  
23 and I would like to open it up from any questions or  
24

2 go through any more of the applications in greater  
3 detail should the committee desire.

4 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: I have no questions for  
5 the applicant. Counsel, do we have any Counsel  
6 members who wish to ask any questions on this item?

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, I see no  
8 members with questions for this item.

9 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
10 further questions, the applicant panel is excused.  
11 Counsel, there any members of the public who wish to  
12 testify on the 48th Street rezoning application?

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If there are any  
14 members of the public who wish to testify on the 48th  
15 Street rezoning proposal, please press the raise hand  
16 button now. The meeting will briefly stand at ease  
17 while we check for any members of the public, Chair.  
18 Chair, I see no other members of the public who wish  
19 to testify on this item.

20 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. No other members  
21 of the public who wish to testify on the LU number  
22 861 and 8624 that 1776 48th Street rezoning proposal,  
23 the public hearing is now closed and the items are  
24 laid over.

2 Okay. I now open the public hearing on  
3 LU numbers 854, 855, 856 for the 495 11th Avenue  
4 rezoning proposal requesting zoning map and zoning  
5 text amendment's and a related site section and  
6 acquisition action relating to property in Speaker  
7 Johnson's district in Manhattan. Once again, anyone  
8 wishing to testify on this item who has not already  
9 registered online must do so now by visiting the  
10 Council's website. I want to take a moment right now  
11 to see if we have the Speaker on or-- Okay. We are  
12 going to go to the applicant first. So, counsel, if  
13 you can please call the first panel for this item.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, the  
15 applicant panel for this item will include Lisa  
16 Orrantia, land use counsel for the applicant, Will  
17 Fisher for EDC, Jonathan Butler, Joe DeGenova for the  
18 developer, Dan Kaplan, Ben Abelman for the architect,  
19 Sumitha Amairaj, EDC, Brooke Escorik, EDC, Hudwick  
20 Secsenna, Sam Schwartz, and Lauren George,  
21 representing the applicant. That's a lot of names,  
22 but if you could all raise your right hands and state  
23 your name for the record.

24 DANIEL KAPLAN: Daniel Kaplan.

25 WILL FISHER: Will Fisher.

2 SUNITHA AMAIRAJ: Sunitha Amairaj.

3 UNIDENTIFIED: [inaudible 00:59:32]

4 LAUREN GEORGE: Lauren George.

5 LISA ORRANTIA: Lisa Orrantia.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And I do see

7 Johnathan Butler. Panelists, do you affirm to tell

8 the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth

9 in your testimony before this subcommittee and in

10 answer to Council member questions?

11 LISA ORRANTIA: Yes.

12 PANEL: Yes.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. When you are  
15 ready to go. The slide presentation, please say so.

16 It will be displayed on the screen and slides will be  
17 advanced for you by our staff when you say next.

18 Anyone who requires an accessible version of this

19 presentation may send an email request to

20 [landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov). Now, if the

21 panelists would please read state your name and

22 organization for the record, you may begin.

23 WILL FISHER: Good morning. We are ready

24 for the slides. Hi. Good morning, Chair Moya and

25 members of the subcommittee. I am will Fisher,

1 assistant vice president of government and community  
2 relations at the New York City Economic Development  
3 Corporation, EDC. Today, I am pleased to introduce  
4 the 495 11th Avenue project on behalf of the entire  
5 development team. This project secures much-needed  
6 affordable housing in a transit and amenity rich part  
7 of Manhattan, in addition to providing other valuable  
8 economic development programming that will add to New  
9 York City's resurgence from COVID 19. Next slide,  
10 please. The applicant for this project is 495 11th  
11 Avenue owner Realty LLC, a joint venture of Radson  
12 Development and Kingspoint Heights together with EDC.  
13 For the site selection and acquisition action, the  
14 applicants are the New York City Department of  
15 Citywide Administrative Services, DCAS, and the New  
16 York City Police Department. The applicant  
17 representative is EDC. Next slide. This project has  
18 reached today's milestone as a result of advocacy by  
19 Speaker Cory Johnson and Manhattan Community Board  
20 Four and I would like to thank each of them on behalf  
21 of the entire team for their partnership and  
22 collaboration. To activate the site at the  
23 community's recommendation, EDC released an RFP in  
24 2015 and selecting the development team that is here  
25

1 before you in 2017. Over the last six years, the  
2 team has worked closely with Community Board Four to  
3 make changes to the proposal in direct response to  
4 their input, resulting in an overwhelming vote of  
5 support earlier this year. We could not have reached  
6 the stage without their hard work and want to thank  
7 them once again. This proposal includes the goals  
8 which you see here on the page of maximizing  
9 affordable housing with cross subsidy from commercial  
10 use, not using city subsidy, providing a range of  
11 income levels for affordable housing, accommodating  
12 the existing NYPD parking on-site, and incorporating  
13 a grocery store. Our team is proud to have  
14 accomplished each of these goals and, for more  
15 details, I am pleased to introduce Lisa Orrantia from  
16 Akerman. Lisa? And next slide.

18 LISA ORRANTIA: Thank you, Will. Good  
19 morning. Lisa Orrantia from Akerman LLP, land use  
20 counsel for 495 11th Avenue owner, Realty LLC. Thank  
21 you to the committee for hearing this application  
22 today. The site is located on 11th Avenue between  
23 West 39th Street and West 40th Street in Hells  
24 Kitchen, Community District Four, Manhattan. The  
25 site is currently zoned M15 and it's located west of

1 the Special Hudson Yards District. Next slide,  
2 please. The sites lot area is just under 25,000  
3 square feet and it is surrounded by Javits Convention  
4 Center structures and transportation uses. Next  
5 slide, please. The site is unimproved and has been  
6 used for NYPD vehicle parking since 1993. A Lincoln  
7 tunnel entrance ramp is located across the street  
8 from the site. West is a garage for the Javits  
9 Center. North of the site is, on 40th Street, is an  
10 MTA bus depot. Next slide, please. The 100 feet  
11 tall Lincoln tunnel ventilation structure is located  
12 to the south of the site. This portion of West 39th  
13 Street is mapped, but unopened and the 30 foot wide  
14 southern have of West 39th Street is reserved for  
15 emergency access and maintenance. Next slide,  
16 please. A proposed map and text amendment's to  
17 change to a C64 district and map the site within the  
18 Special Hudson Yards District will facilitate  
19 development that is part of the continuous expansion  
20 of the Special District as C64 districts to the east.  
21 It is compatible with the area is high density  
22 transit oriented business and residential character.  
23 It will allow housing, office, vehicle storage, and  
24 large supermarket uses which will meet the goals of  
25

2 the RFP and will maximize they affordable housing  
3 program by excluding police vehicle parking storage  
4 floor space from floor area, producing the required  
5 setback from West 39th Street and allowing a total 24  
6 FAR. That area would be mapped for MIH and developed  
7 under option two, however, all units will be subject  
8 to income restrictions for affordability. The site  
9 selection and acquisition actions will allow the  
10 building to include a permanent space for police  
11 vehicles to serve a new bike command center on West  
12 42nd Street. Next slide, please. And John will  
13 continue the presentation.

14 JOHN BEUTLER: Thank you very much,  
15 Lisa, and thank you very much to the New York City  
16 agencies EDC, NYPD, and DCAS for making this project  
17 possible. My name is John Beutler. I am the senior  
18 vice president of development for Radson Development,  
19 codeveloper of this project. I would like to now go  
20 over some of the programming elements that will be  
21 included in this project. First, there will be a  
22 14,000 square foot grocery store occupying the ground  
23 floor and seller, almost 39,000 square feet of  
24 replacement parking for NYPD, about 13,000 square  
25 feet of office space, a 680 key hotel tower, and a

350 unit affordable housing tower. Next slide, please. In this slide, we would like to go over some of the key elements as well as the following slides of the programming. The south tower will be predominately contained by the hotel usage with the base of the building occupying hotel usage, as well, including conference rooms, guestrooms, and amenities spaces. Again, the retail space will be confined to the grocery store and cellar where a grocery store will serve the community and programs included in the program. Next slide, please. The north tower is the taller of the towers. It'll rise 57 stories and include 274 units of affordable housing available to families and individuals earning incomes between 90 percent and 165 percent of AMI, as well as 75 supportive units. There will be amenity space located on the fifth floor, including the supportive housing offices, as well as other residential amenities. The north tower will also include other amenity space related to the affordable housing and the NYPD parking will be confined within the base of the building with office space wrapping around the base to have light and air windows that will better serve connection to the community. Next slide,

1 please. This is a breakdown of the affordability and  
2 unit types we plan to include. 176 units will be  
3 serving incomes between 155 and 165 percent of AMI.  
4 98 units will serve incomes between 90 percent and  
5 110 percent of AMI with 75 units also serving  
6 individuals and families of supportive housing. Of  
7 these units, 114 units will be designated as MIH.  
8 Again, the total affordable housing of all housing  
9 within the project will be 350 units. Next slide,  
10 please. So, we would like to mention that the  
11 community for word was the essential partners  
12 throughout this process. Earlier this year when  
13 going to their vote, we received unanimous approval  
14 from the community board. They were named trickle  
15 part in deciding the unit mix as well as introducing  
16 supportive housing into this project. As a condition  
17 for the support, we would continue working with them,  
18 as well as the Hells Kitchen Hudson Yards alliance, a  
19 BID in designing the public plaza that will be  
20 adjacent to this project. While this clause was not  
21 part of the ULURP action, it remains a very important  
22 part to the community and we will continue working  
23 with them on the design of this plaza. Next slide,  
24 please. And affordable housing that this project  
25

2 will create, we want to pay mention to the economic  
3 activity that will also be created by the project.

4 About 1500 construction jobs will be created and  
5 almost 400 permanent jobs. We will be committed to  
6 local hiring when selecting our general contractor  
7 and selecting MWBE subcontractors were appropriate.

8 We have also reached agreement with Hotel Trades  
9 Council and 32 BJ to serve on this project. And with  
10 that, I would like to hand the next part of the  
11 proposal and presentation over to Joe DeGenova for  
12 the supportive housing portion of the project.

13           JOE DEGENOVA:       Thank you, John. Next  
14 slide, please. Good morning. My name is Joe  
15 DeGenova and I am the CEO of the Center for Urban  
16 Community Services. I would like to start by saying  
17 thank you to Speaker Johnson and to Community Board  
18 Four for insisting that supportive housing the  
19 included in this project. As you can see here from  
20 the list of things that we too, we have a lot of  
21 experience helping people transition from being  
22 homeless to being housed. We are considered one of  
23 the creators of the supportive housing model. We  
24 have been providing services in supportive housing  
25 since the early 80s and we currently provide services

2 in over 2700 units of supportive housing. Next  
3 slide, please. Our service staff will be on site.  
4 This shows you what the design of the office space  
5 looks like. As John said, there will be 75 units of  
6 supportive housing scattered throughout the building.  
7 It will provide services on site and will provide the  
8 full complement of services and then some that are  
9 provided in supportive housing. I'm very excited  
10 about this project. As you all know, there is a real  
11 need for more supportive housing. I want to thank  
12 you for your time and attention this morning. I'm  
13 going to turn it over to Dan Kaplan.

14 DANIEL KAPLAN: Good morning, Chair Moya  
15 and Council members. Next slide. Next two slides,  
16 please. Next slide. Yes. I am Dan Kaplan, senior  
17 partner of Fairfax Collaborative Architects. I will  
18 briefly discuss the design of this project. This is  
19 an elevation of the west side of Manhattan that shows  
20 the with Hudson Yards and job it's in the center and  
21 our project in yellow. Two towers. The residential  
22 tower is 680 feet and the hotel tower is 653 Feet.  
23 Next slide. So, in crafting this project, we were  
24 very cognizant about bringing light and air to the  
25 residential units and came up with this idea of

1 stepping the two towers away from each other. So,  
2 the residential steps from the West and the hotel  
3 steps from the East. Next slide, please. In the  
4 next slide, you can see how the project looks from  
5 the various vantage points. On the left is from the  
6 East looking West with the two towers in the hotel  
7 stepping away in the residential on the right. In  
8 the center is the residential tower from 11th Avenue  
9 and 43rd Street looking south with its setbacks. And  
10 on the right side from Hudson River Park with the  
11 residential buildings stepping back in the hotel.  
12 Next. We gave the residential building pride of  
13 place at the corner of 40th and 11th Avenue and  
14 brought the residential scale down to the street in  
15 conversations with the community board with a strong  
16 residential corner entrance. To the right is the  
17 NYPD entrances into the left in that gray box is the  
18 grocery store entrance. Next slide, please. In  
19 contrast to the residential, the hotel is more  
20 commercial and faces south and you can see the  
21 various hotel entrances here and on the left side we  
22 will get into the design of that open space that  
23 Jonathan referenced previously. Next slide, please.  
24 From a sustainability point of view, we all are  
25

1 meeting or exceeding Leed Gold certification and a  
2 number of very energy efficient and habitat related  
3 goals. It is, I think, the most important thing we  
4 are doing here is avoiding the all glass building and  
5 creating a substantially opaque façade which could be  
6 highly insulated. Next slide, please. Just on a  
7 ground floor plan arrangement, on the right hand  
8 side-- I will go clockwise. On 40th Street are the  
9 entrances to the NYPD garages, the loading. There is  
10 an office space entrance on 40th Street close to the  
11 corner. As I said before on the corner of 40th and  
12 11th is a residential entrance. The supermarket mid-  
13 block on 11th Avenue. The three hotel entrances and  
14 the hotel entrance and access to the 39th Street open  
15 space that is immediately to the left and south of  
16 the project. Next. On the setback roofs, there are  
17 green roofs and outdoor space accessible to the  
18 residential tower on the setback with river views and  
19 in the middle, in the courtyard to the hotel, went  
20 with a green buffer between the hotel and the  
21 residential building. Next slide, please. And the  
22 next slide after that. As Johnathan mentioned, the  
23 public open space is very important to all. It is  
24 not a part of this ULURP, but we wanted to show it to  
25

2 you. It will be reviewed by DOT subsequent to the  
3 ULURP. It's a 30 by 125 foot wide space. It's  
4 immediately-- Well, in the 39th Street street bed  
5 extension. The spaces around it are very  
6 constrained. There is the vent structure to the  
7 Lincoln Tunnel. There's the Lincoln Tunnel itself  
8 below this space and to the left is a Javits employee  
9 entrance. Nevertheless, we have endeavored to make a  
10 very green space here. The other constraint I  
11 neglected to mention is that everything will have to  
12 be removeable and moveable, so we've created this  
13 work with landscape architects of moveable chairs and  
14 moveable-- and removeable planters that are of  
15 substantial size. Next slide, please. So this is a  
16 view from the east looking west. You can see the  
17 amount of greenery that we were able to achieve with  
18 these large, moveable planters and the open seating  
19 that is in coordination with the BID standards all  
20 accessing the hotel and the Javits employee entrance  
21 to the left. And I think, with that, that is the  
22 conclusion of our presentation. Next slide, please.  
23 And we look forward to any questions and comments.  
24 Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. I have just  
3 one quick question for the panel. I understand that  
4 the West 39th Street pedestrian plaza improvements  
5 were subject to the review by the DOT after the  
6 conclusion of ULURP. How confident are you that what  
7 you're proposing for this space will successfully  
8 built?

9 LISA ORRANTIA: Yeah. I'll take that  
10 question. That is correct. The improvements to West  
11 39th Street in the city street would be subject to a  
12 DOT application for revocable consent. We understand  
13 that that petition is fairly straightforward and we  
14 believe that the design put forward in these  
15 conceptual drawings will be approved through that  
16 process.

17 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Great. Thank  
18 you. Let me check with our counsel to see if there  
19 is any Council members who have any questions for  
20 this panel.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, I see no  
22 members with questions for the panel.

23 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
24 further questions, the applicant panel is excused.

2 Counsel, are there any members of the public who wish  
3 to testify on the 495 11th Avenue rezoning proposal?

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, Chair. We  
5 have approximately two public speakers who have  
6 signed up to speak. For those members of the public  
7 here to testify, please note, again, that witnesses  
8 will be called in panels. If you are a member of the  
9 public signed up to testify on this item, please  
10 stand by way and you hear your name being called and  
11 prepared to speak with the Chair says that you may  
12 begin. Please also note that, once all panelists in  
13 your group have completed their testimony, you will  
14 be removed from the meeting as a group in the next  
15 group of speakers will be announced. Once removed,  
16 participants may be able to view the live stream  
17 broadcast of this hearing that the Council website.  
18 We will now hear from the first panel which will  
19 include Renzo Ramirez and Gabby Gilmart. The first  
20 speaker will be Renzo Ramirez.

21 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

22 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Renzo, hold on just one  
23 second. As a reminder for members of the public, you  
24 will be given to minutes to speak. Please do not

2 begin until the sergeant-at-arms has started the  
3 clock. Renzo, whenever you're ready, you can begin.

4 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

5 RENZO RAMIREZ: Good morning, Chair  
6 Moya and members of the Subcommittee. I name is  
7 Renzo Ramirez and I am a member of 32 BJ SEIU. As  
8 you know, 32 BJ is the largest [inaudible 01:20:34]  
9 union representing 85,000 properties service workers  
10 across the city. We represent workers to maintain,  
11 clean, and provide security services and buildings  
12 like the ones being discussed at 495 11th Avenue.  
13 Radson development, which was selected by the New  
14 York City Economic development Corporation to develop  
15 the site is seeking a rezoning in order to build two  
16 towers: a 56 story commercial tower with a hotel and  
17 [inaudible 1:21:03] residential tower. The rezoning  
18 would allow for the construction of 275 residential  
19 units. 100 percent of the residential units will be  
20 affordable. It will also allow for the construction  
21 of a community facility that will consist of 75  
22 supportive housing units for formerly homeless  
23 individuals and families. We estimate that this  
24 development will create about four properties service  
25 jobs. These jobs should help uplift working families

2 and give workers dignity. The developers seeking  
3 this rezoning have reached out to 32 BJ and have made  
4 a credible commitment to providing prevailing wage  
5 jobs to the future building service workers at this  
6 site. 32 BJ supports responsible developers who  
7 invest in the community where they build. We know  
8 that this development will continue to uphold the  
9 industry standard and provide opportunities for  
10 working families to thrive. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you for your  
12 testimony.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next speaker  
14 well-being Gabby Guilmart.

15 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

16 GABBY GUILMART: Hi. Good morning,  
17 Council members. My name is Gabby. I am the deputy  
18 political director for the Hotel Trades Council, the  
19 union for New York City's hotel workers, and I'm here  
20 today to offer our support for this project. The  
21 developers behind this project have approached this  
22 in a thoughtful and responsible manner by reaching  
23 out early in the process to key stakeholders,  
24 including the Hotel Trades Council. We are confident  
25 that this project will benefit workers in New York by

2 creating hundreds of good jobs-- good and high-  
3 quality hotel jobs. We would like to encourage all  
4 of you to support the Slaughterhouse project for this  
5 reason. Thank you for considering this proposal and  
6 hearing my testimony today.

7 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Gabby. Thank  
8 you for your testimony. Counsel, do we have any  
9 Council members who have questions for this panel?

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, Chair. I see  
11 no members with questions for this panel.

12 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
13 questions for this panel, the witness panel is  
14 excused. Counsel, do we have any other members of  
15 the public who wish to testify?

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If there are any  
17 other members of the public who wish to testify on  
18 the 495 11th Avenue rezoning proposal, please press  
19 the raise hand but now. The meeting, Chair, will  
20 briefly stand at ease while we check for any  
21 additional members of the public. Chair Moya, I see  
22 no other members of the public who wish to testify in  
23 the 11th Avenue rezoning proposal.

24 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
25 other members of the public who wish to testify on LU

2 numbers 854, 855, and 856 for the 495 11th Avenue  
3 rezoning proposal, the public hearing is now closed  
4 and the items are laid over.

5 I now want to open the public hearing on  
6 LU numbers 859, 860 for the 270 Nordstrom Avenue  
7 rezoning proposal which seeks a zoning map amendment  
8 and a zoning text amendment and which relates to  
9 property in Council member Cornegy's district in  
10 Brooklyn. I will remind the viewing public, for  
11 anyone wishing to testify on this item, if you have  
12 not already done so, you must register online and you  
13 may do that now by visiting the Council's website.  
14 Council, can you please call the first panel for this  
15 item?

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, the  
17 applicant panel for this item will include Stuart  
18 Beckerman, land use counsel for the applicant,  
19 Meredith Marshall, Mary Serafy, Andy Cohen, Zack  
20 Schwanbeck, and Shay Alster.

21 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Counsel, if you could  
22 please administer the affirmation.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Panelists, please  
24 raise your right hand and state your name for the  
25 record.

2 MARY SERAFY: Mary Serafy.

3 ZACH SCHWANBECK: Zach Schwanbeck.

4 SHAY ALSTER: Shay Alster.

5 ANDY COHEN: Andy Cohen.

6 STUART BECKERMAN: Stuart Beckerman.

7 MEREDITH MARSHALL: And Meredith  
8 Marshall.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Do you  
10 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and  
11 nothing but the truth in your testimony before this  
12 subcommittee and in answer to COUNCIL member  
13 questions?

14 PANEL: Yes.

15 UNIDENTIFIED: I do.

16 MARY SERAFY: I do.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Just as a  
19 reminder, we are in receipt of your slideshow  
20 presentation and our staff will display it on screen  
21 whenever you are ready. Slides will be advanced for  
22 you when you say next. Once again, anyone who  
23 requires an accessible version of this presentation  
24 may send an email request to

25 [landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov). And now, if the

2 panelists would please raise state your names and  
3 organizations for the record, you may begin.

4           STUART BECKERMAN: Hi. I'm Stuart  
5 Beckerman. I did from the law office of Slater and--  
6 sorry. Hirschen, Singer, and Epstein. I'm a partner  
7 at Hirschen, Singer, and Epstein. And the first  
8 speaker will be Meredith Marshall who is cofounder  
9 and managing partner of BRP companies and we'll start  
10 with the first slide.

11           MEREDITH MARSHALL: Thank you. That  
12 will be the next slide. Yes. Just to give a bit of  
13 context, I think, will be helpful here. Again, I  
14 Meredith Marshall. Good morning. Thank you for the  
15 opportunity to present before the Council. I am  
16 managing partner and cofounder of BRP Companies. We  
17 are a fully integrated real estate investment  
18 development firm based in New York City. We were  
19 founded in 2003 and, after my wife kicked me out of  
20 my apartment-- our business out of the apartment, we  
21 had a storefront-- we had a storefront on 739 Fulton  
22 Street not too far away from our developments in  
23 Bedford Stuyvesant. We are a vertically integrated  
24 firms. We have a development firm. We have a  
25 construction outfit. We have a property management

1 group and we have an equity fund targeting transit  
2 oriented workforce and affordable housing throughout  
3 the five boroughs. We built about 2.5 million square  
4 feet of mixed income developments and we're proud to  
5 say that we are the largest MWBE development firm in  
6 the state of New York, probably in the tri-state area  
7 and probably one of-- top three firms in the country  
8 doing like work. We are an award-winning group in  
9 Bedford Stuyvesant and Central Brooklyn, including  
10 East New York and Fort Greene. We own about 1300  
11 units, about 85 percent service low income population  
12 and very low income population and including  
13 supportive housing developments. We are showing  
14 developments here in Bedford Stuyvesant that we have  
15 completed starting with the Garvey in 2009, 100  
16 percent affordable targeting incomes between 40 and  
17 60 percent. Then we moved on to the Bradford in  
18 2011. Again, financed by HPD and HDC. 105 units,  
19 100 percent affordable targeting incomes from 30  
20 percent up to 130 percent of AMI. And then we have  
21 two 80/20 projects owing to the 421A which are 20  
22 percent below 80 percent of AMI and the balance  
23 market rate development. The first two developments  
24 were heavily subsidized by the city and includes  
25

2 city-owned land. The subsequent two projects were  
3 private sites, no city subsidy, but still 20 percent  
4 affordable to area residents making at or below 80  
5 percent of AMI. Next slide, please. What we found  
6 in our developments as we build-- we are large  
7 affordable developer and we have now some of the  
8 largest developments in the city outside of Bedford  
9 Stuyvesant like the Bronx, [inaudible 01:31:21], we  
10 have the National Urban League site in Harlem. And  
11 what we found was, you know, the affordable  
12 development target AMI that have a strict regulatory  
13 constraints and what we need in certain marks,  
14 particularly Bed Stuy-- and we did this with  
15 Councilman Cornegy-- is to build naturally occurring  
16 affordable housing on the market rate side and then  
17 target a low income population on the inclusionary  
18 side and that is what we attempted to do. And, quite  
19 frankly, we proposed an R8A development which would  
20 give us a bowl because 7.2, about 477 units. And  
21 when we went to the community board in the Borough  
22 Pres., we didn't get support that we thought we would  
23 get, although it was close. For the community board,  
24 I think we had a 60/40 split against the R8A. We  
25 went back to the drawing board. We heard the

1 community. We went to the Department of City  
2 Planning headed by our good friend Winston Barnangle  
3 [sp?] And Wayne came up with a compromise R7D R7X  
4 which would generate 380 unit development targeting  
5 the essential workers, healthcare workers, education  
6 workers, workers that have been here for left out of  
7 the affordable housing developments that we have  
8 built, but can't afford, you know, market rate  
9 brownstone acquisition. We have 114 units at 30  
10 percent using MIH option four. We have 30-- about  
11 30,000 square feet of retail of which 5000 square  
12 feet would be targeted to a community use. We want  
13 to work with and have targeted a minority manager--  
14 a minority firm that is a manager of these  
15 developments that we have worked with in the past and  
16 some of our developments and what they will do is  
17 they will target small users from 1000 square feet  
18 your maybe 1500 feet and they would lease the units  
19 at below market rates to those community residents.  
20 Again, we are seeking a rezoning from R7X to R7D.  
21 It will be mapped with MIH, so we have some  
22 permanently affordable housing and we care support.  
23 Now I will turn it over to my colleague, Mary Serafy,  
24 to get into the details. Thank you so much.  
25

2 MARY SERAFY: Good morning, everyone. Next  
3 slide, please. On this slide, just want to represent  
4 the different scenarios of zoning. The current  
5 zoning is an R7A and one thing I would really like to  
6 highlight on this is that the current inclusionary is  
7 voluntary, so someone could potentially build this  
8 site with no inclusionary and no affordability at  
9 all. Original proposed R8A with a C2-4 overlay, as  
10 Meredith mentioned, yielded 487 units and changing it  
11 from voluntary inclusionary to mandatory inclusionary  
12 with 144 units. Our revised and approved City  
13 Planning district is an R7X/R7D. Also with the C2-4  
14 overlay yielding 380 units and 114 of those will be  
15 mandatory inclusionary. I will pass this to start  
16 Beckerman right now and I will come back in a few  
17 slides.

18 START BECKERMAN: Okay. Next slide,  
19 please. Okay. First of all, good morning, Chair  
20 Moya, and Council members. Thank you for hearing us.  
21 So, this slide shows one of the rationales for this  
22 proposal. You know, really does support the  
23 increased density, but also the commercial overlay.  
24 We have excellent access to transit. We are on the  
25 corner of Nostrand and Dekalb. It's at the

1 [inaudible 01:35:41] and the G train subway station  
2 is one block away and directly in front of our site  
3 is the stop for the B44 select bus service which  
4 provides transit to other subway lines. Both  
5 Nostrand and Dekalb are major commercial corridors.  
6 On the opposite side of Dekalb is a superblock with a  
7 Home Depot and, on the opposite side of Nostrand, is  
8 a large medical facility. And as this slide shows,  
9 we are the only block front out of the six block  
10 fronts around us, including ours, that does not allow  
11 commercial use. You've got for the block fronts have  
12 commercial overlays and the fifth is in the M15 which  
13 also allows the commercial use which is, of course,  
14 exemplified by the Home Depot. And, so mapping the  
15 C24 will fill in the gap that currently exists and  
16 zoning in regard to the commercial overlays. Next  
17 slide, please. So, this aerial shows the context in  
18 which our site since and, as you can see, there are  
19 several buildings of comparable size nearby. on  
20 our block and down the street is 13 Spencer Court  
21 which is 31 Kosciuszko Street. It is 12 stories.  
22 It's 135 feet tall. It was constructed prior to the  
23 Bed Stuy rezoning in 2012. In less than a quarter-  
24 mile always the night to development Lafayette  
25

2 Gardens were buildings on Mars highest 20 stories.  
3 And to the north in the lavender, I guess it is. In  
4 the light purple, there is a large swath of M zoned  
5 land which extends to the waterfront and the Brooklyn  
6 Navy Yard and also to Dumbo and Williamsburg and that  
7 encompasses the superblock to the north which has the  
8 Home Depot and also PS 54. So, this commercial  
9 institutional context surrounding the site actually  
10 reflects this areas history as an urban renewal area.  
11 The site is one of the very few large-scale sites in  
12 the neighborhood available for redevelopment and it  
13 represents, in our view, buffer between the  
14 commercial manufacturing area to the north and the  
15 residential area that surrounds us. So, on that  
16 note, I will turn the microphone over to Mary Serafy.  
17 Next slide, please.

18 MARY SERAFY: Thanks, Stuart. The next two  
19 slides are representing massings. Again, comparing  
20 our original proposed R8A and our approved R7X R7D  
21 zoning. I know it is coming up soon. Next slide.  
22 Great. Thank you. Thanks. We had a lot of meetings  
23 with Community Board and we worked closely with City  
24 Planning and listening to the concerns of mostly bulk  
25 and height issues, in particular, on Kosciuszko

1 Street. Our original scheme had 14 stories along  
2 Nostrand and Dekalb, the heavily transit oriented  
3 streets with 12 stories on Kosciuszko which more  
4 townhome row. Our revised proposal is now reducing  
5 the heigh on Kosciuszko to nine stories and 13  
6 stories along Dekalb and Nostrand Avenue. What is  
7 also does is it lets us break up the street wall  
8 which we'll see in a few minutes with the rendering.  
9 I can talk more about it. We did maintain the  
10 commercial. Just to understand, the commercial  
11 overlay is along Dekalb Avenue 100 feet back, along  
12 Nostrand Avenue 100 feet back, and there is a section  
13 of Kosciuszko that has no commercial overlay. The  
14 next slide, please, is a view from the Kosciuszko  
15 side to just represent our careful consideration of  
16 the townhome row. And then next slide. These are  
17 renderings of the two scenarios. To emphasize  
18 [inaudible 01:40:24] vision, you will see the base of  
19 the building is somewhat of a townhome like straight  
20 and faces in trying to maximize the light and air on  
21 the upper floors of a combination of both contextual  
22 design and making it as light as possible on the  
23 floors above. This represents the commercial spaces  
24 predominantly on Dekalb Avenue across from, as Stuart  
25

1 mentioned, the Home Depot site and as well as on  
2 Nostrand Avenue. Ted talk a little bit about the  
3 project overall, you know, the project will be highly  
4 miniaturized to all residents. Sustainability in  
5 BRP's preview has always been very important and is  
6 encouraged and, you know, we maximize the  
7 sustainability for all of our properties. And I  
8 think, yeah. The next slide will break out more of  
9 the commercial space. The building, as mentioned by  
10 Meredith, will contain 5000 square feet for local  
11 tenants in the community along-- we have highlighted  
12 the spaces along Dekalb as well as on the corner of  
13 Kosciuszko and Nostrand Avenue. We have the big box  
14 commercial user right at the corner, providing the  
15 parking for zoning as required, as well as bike  
16 storage is required. And we don't have the amenity  
17 plan, but the amenities are both provided on the  
18 lower and the highest levels so that, as mentioned,  
19 all tenants have access to use from the higher floors  
20 and, you know, all the amenities being provided. I  
21 think, on that note, that is the end of the  
22 presentation. I just want to thank you for this  
23 opportunity to present to the board.

2 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Thank you very  
3 much. Just a couple questions here. The application  
4 was modified a City Planning to reduce the density  
5 from the proposed R8A to a mixed R7D and R7X. Have  
6 you heard any input from the Community Board or the  
7 Borough President on this modification?

8 MEREDITH MARSHALL: We haven't heard  
9 directly from them. We know that we had some-- we  
10 didn't have support for the R8A 7.2 FAR. And, in  
11 fact, when we had early conversations, the community  
12 board wanted us to consider the 7D and the 7X. So,  
13 we assume that we have some support. Again for the  
14 R8A, we had about a 40 percent about at that  
15 Community Board for the support of the 7.2 FAR.

16 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. In this  
17 application proposes using the MIH workforce option  
18 at 30 percent of the floor area at an average of 115  
19 AMI.

20 MEREDITH MARSHALL: Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Units priced at the  
22 upper end of this affordability range appeared to  
23 actually be at or above current market rate prices in  
24 the area. What is the rationale for this supported  
25

2 workforce option here and have you considered the MIH  
3 option two?

4 MEREDITH MARSHALL: We did. We had a  
5 greater affordability, but it only works in this  
6 instance-- this is not a public site. We have built  
7 on public sites and, again, we are one of the largest  
8 affordable developers in the city and it just doesn't  
9 work without the greater bulk. So, there is a trade-  
10 off. If we have the 7.2, we can provide greater  
11 affordability. With a smaller building, we have to  
12 use the option where we blend at 115 percent of AMI  
13 to make that work. That being said, kind of disagree  
14 with the 130 being above market. We have market rate  
15 projects and buildings not too far away in the market  
16 is above the 130 percent of AMI, particularly with  
17 the one-bedroom units and the smaller units. The  
18 market has moved in Bedford Stuyvesant.

19 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: God A. And have you  
20 made a commitment to good paying and quality jobs on  
21 this site?

22 MEREDITH MARSHALL: We have a history  
23 of working with 32 BJ on all of our sites that have  
24 Affordable New York or 421A and, in fact, one  
25 development in Councilman Salamanca's district with

2 100 percent affordable housing, we still have 32 BJ  
3 as our partner on that site.

4 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: [inaudible 01:45:29]

5 MEREDITH MARSHALL: This project, we  
6 will. We haven't concluded that with 32 BJ only  
7 because we don't own the site. We are contract  
8 vendee and if we don't get the zoning, we don't know  
9 what the current developer would do. So that's the  
10 only-- And, quite frankly, I spoke to Carl Bragg's  
11 team about that. If this moves forward at this  
12 level, we would have a deal with 32 BJ.

13 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Development  
14 includes 176 on-site parking spaces, more than  
15 required by zoning at a time when many developers  
16 with applications before us are seeking to waive  
17 parking entirely. What is your rationale behind  
18 including such a large number of parking spaces?

19 MEREDITH MARSHALL: Well, again, we  
20 own-- I don't know-- seven or eight parking garages  
21 and we have three in Bedford Stuyvesant. Parking is  
22 at a premium now on from COVID. A lot of folks are  
23 driving now and, in effect, we were fortunate enough  
24 to secure a great brand for the grocery store and  
25 they will have about 20,000 square feet and we will

2 need the parking. We will need transient parking  
3 during the day and we believe we will need additional  
4 parking for the permanent residence of the building  
5 going forward. So, three years ago we were reducing  
6 parking, but post COVID, we are really looking--  
7 well, our entire approach to parking, quite frankly.  
8 So, we think 176 attended parking spaces will be  
9 adequate for the development, given our proposed  
10 uses.

11 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Okay. That's it  
12 for me. Is there any other Council members that may  
13 have questions for this panel?

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, Chair. I see  
15 no members with questions for this panel.

16 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
17 further questions, the applicant panel is excused.  
18 Counsel, is there any members of the public who  
19 wishes to testify on the 270 Nostrand Avenue rezoning  
20 application?

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: For any members of  
22 the public who do wish to testify on the 270 Nostrand  
23 Avenue rezoning proposal, please press the raise hand  
24 but now and, Chair, the meeting will briefly stand at  
25 ease while we check for any additional members of the

2 public. Chair, I see no other members of the public  
3 who wish to testify on this item.

4 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: There being no other  
5 members of the public who wish to testify on LU  
6 numbers 859 and 860 for the 270 Nostrand Avenue  
7 rezoning proposal, the public hearing is now closed  
8 and the items are laid over.

9 I now open the public hearing on LU  
10 number 857 and 858 for the 252 Victory Boulevard  
11 rezoning proposal which seeks a zoning map amendment  
12 and a zoning text amendment and which relates to  
13 property in Council member Rose's district in Staten  
14 Island. Once again, for anyone watching online who  
15 wishes to testify on this item, if you have not  
16 already done so, you must register online and you may  
17 do that now by visiting the Council's website.  
18 Counsel, would you-- Oh, I'm sorry. I would like to  
19 acknowledge that we have our Council member, Council  
20 member Rose here with us today and thank you, Council  
21 member Rose for your patience today. I would like to  
22 turn it over to you for some remarks.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you so much,  
24 Chair Moya. And I want to say happy birthday to  
25 Council member Ayala. I just have very limited

2 remarks about like victory Boulevard project I just  
3 want to say that, after working closely with the  
4 applicant team for the 252 Victory Boulevard  
5 rezoning, they have incorporated several of my  
6 suggestions to make this project and asset to our  
7 community. It was an example of what working  
8 collaboratively at its best. It really was an  
9 example of how these projects can move along and wind  
10 up with a project that everyone is satisfied with.  
11 So, I look forward to hearing from the applicant team  
12 and any members of the public who wish to testify  
13 today. Thank you, Chair.

14 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And I have remarks  
16 on North River, but I will wait until let's called.

17 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Thank you,  
18 Council member. Counsel, if you can please call up  
19 the first panel for this item.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The applicant panel  
21 for this item includes Eric Palatnic, land use  
22 counsel for the applicant, and Alex Harrow, project  
23 architect.

24 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Counsel, if you could  
25 please administer the affirmation.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Panelists, please  
3 raise your right hands and state your name for the  
4 record.

5 ALEX HARROW: Alex Harrow.

6 ERIC PALATNIC: Eric Palatnic.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you affirm to  
8 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the  
9 truth in your testimony before this subcommittee and  
10 in answer to COUNCIL member questions?

11 ALEX HARROW: I do.

12 ERIC PALATNIC: Yes. I do.

13 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: and just as a reminder,  
14 when you are ready to go through your slideshow,  
15 please say so and it will be displayed on screen by  
16 our staff. Once again, anyone who requires an  
17 accessible version of this presentation may send an  
18 email request to [landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov).  
19 And now, if the panelists would please restate your  
20 names and organizations for the record, you may  
21 begin.

22 ERIC PALATNIC: Hello. My name is Eric  
23 Palatnic. I'm an attorney representing the owner of  
24 252 Victory Boulevard. Thank you sharing. Alex will  
25 introduce himself after. I'll commence with the

1 application. As you can see, this is the proposed  
2 building in front of you. It's a handsomely design  
3 building that, as the Councilwoman just said, has  
4 been very, very much a collaborative effort between  
5 US, the Community Board, and the borough president's  
6 office. It has resulted in a proposed rezoning of  
7 the property from an R32 to an R6B with the  
8 commercial overlay. Next slide, please. If the  
9 rezoning were to be approved, as the next slide will  
10 be describing, it would allow for five-story building  
11 that would have approximately 34 dwelling units, 12  
12 of which would be affordable at an average of 60  
13 percent AMI. Next slide, please. The next slide  
14 will show you the location of the property, which is  
15 located on Victory Boulevard. Next slide, please. I  
16 apologize. Location of the property is located on  
17 Victory Boulevard. You can see diagonally across the  
18 street is a large structure. That is that as the  
19 Jersey Street garage. Some of you may have become  
20 familiar with that. It is the subject right now, I  
21 believe, of an RFP to redevelop that for residential.  
22 The site is vacant and rests within a hillside  
23 preservation district. The proposed action is asking  
24 to build within the hillside preservation district  
25

2 and it will alleviate 30 percent slope point which is  
3 allowable and satisfactory within the district. Next  
4 slide, please. The next few pictures are going to  
5 show you what the property actually looks like. As  
6 you will see in the pictures that are about to be  
7 displayed, and is nothing dramatic other than a  
8 hillside. Please show the next few slides. Next  
9 slide. And you can just keep clicking through the  
10 pictures so that people can get a flavor for what it  
11 looks like. As I said a moment ago, it is a  
12 hillside. The building-- you can stop when you get  
13 out of the pictures, please. The building will be  
14 built into the hillside so that the people from the  
15 top that live above it will not be obstructed in  
16 their views. Next slide, please. This slide shows  
17 the proposed zoning district on the right. On the  
18 left is what exists right now. In the middle of the  
19 page, although it's a very busy page, you can see the  
20 extension of the commercial overlay and it will be an  
21 R6B district. And next slide, please. This shows  
22 you further the continuation. Now, if you can click  
23 to the plans, plans. And I will let Alex Harrow  
24 describe the plans. So, Alex?

2 ALEX HARROW: Good afternoon. I'm Alex  
3 Harrow, Aspire Collaborative Architects. Can we go  
4 to the next slide, please? Eric, we're not in the  
5 plans, yet. Do you want to cover any of this?

6 ERIC PALATNIC: Go to the next few  
7 slides, please so he gets to the plans.

8 ALEX HARROW: Next. Next slide. Keep  
9 going. Next. One more.

10 ERIC PALATNIC: There you go.

11 ALEX HARROW: So, this is just starting to  
12 show it. This is just a diagrammatic rendering here,  
13 but it shows on the left hand side we are in the  
14 hillside-- Special Hillside Preservation District  
15 and we are on a pretty steep slope. Part of our area  
16 does have steep slope and you can see on the lower  
17 left hand corner, if you look at the site map on the  
18 left hand side, the lower left hand corner is 128  
19 feet, upper right corner is 200 feet. So we are  
20 close to 72-- actually, it's almost at 75 foot  
21 incline from one corner of the side to the other.  
22 Next. Next slide, please. There we go. Okay. This  
23 is a rendering showing what the project is proposed  
24 to look like at the moment. We have a number of  
25 things in here that are unique to this design. The

2 first one is you can see it's a five story-- it's a  
3 six story building. Five stories plus a lower level  
4 of parking which is on the lower level and sort of in  
5 the middle to the left hand side of the drawing. You  
6 can see a car down there. That's the lowest level.  
7 That is one level completely filled with parking.  
8 Because we are on such a steep portion of Victory  
9 Boulevard and you can see as you go up the slope a  
10 little bit up the sidewalk, you'll see another car  
11 entering the property. At the next level, we have  
12 another parking area within the building, as well.  
13 You can also see here we are a few stories-- we are  
14 actually-- it's really technically only two stories  
15 at the front, which is the lower portion of the  
16 rendering and then we have three more residential  
17 floors that step back as the site actually steps  
18 back. We are trying to incorporate a lot of green  
19 space on the roof of the building and green roof  
20 within the building terraces, as well. We are also  
21 breaking up the façade. It doesn't quite show it as  
22 clearly here, but we are trying to break up the  
23 façade so that it doesn't appear as monolithic as he  
24 move up the street. Next slide, please. This is  
25 just a view of the entry of the building showing that

2 we will also have a daycare in a small commercial  
3 component. Next slide, please okay. We want to show  
4 a couple of things. Number one, cellar level. We  
5 have parking, we have 31 parking spaces down in the  
6 cellar, 28 at the upper level over there which will  
7 be at the same level as the daycare, commercial area,  
8 and residential lobby. Residential lobby is shown in  
9 yellow which will be able to enter the building and  
10 they can go IN a covered area back to the front were  
11 they will not have to be exposed to the weather.

12 Next slide, please. Okay. This one shows the  
13 daycare. Daycare is 7500 square feet. We also have  
14 dedicated some parking for daycare to come in. This  
15 is an important point. Daycare is accessed from the  
16 sidewalk as well as a separate entrance to the  
17 daycare from within the parking, from the upper  
18 parking garage which you can see on the lower left-  
19 hand corner. The attitude or the blue dots show  
20 where the entry is accessible for the daycare. Next  
21 slide, please. Next slide. This shows the  
22 commercial component which would enter solely from  
23 the sidewalk area. Next slide, please. And then we  
24 drove showing floor and with a number of units that  
25 you can see. We have 46 total residential units, 12

2 of them are affordable. Next slide, please. Next.

3 One more, please. Is this our last slide? Got it.

4 Here we go. And then, on the right hand side of the

5 roof shows the setbacks. Because it is such a steep

6 slope, as I mentioned before, we were very conscious

7 of trying to not build something that is going to

8 have two larger presence from the sidewalk as you are

9 walking or driving. We wanted something that was

10 going to work with in the slope. In addition to

11 working with slope, we have a height limitation on

12 the property. We have pulled the building farther

13 forward which also allows us to keep the top of the

14 building below the site level from the single-family

15 houses that are above us on Avon and Rose, the

16 streets that are behind the building which are not

17 even seen from this. So, their views out their

18 windows will not be obstructed by our buildings, and

19 important point that we were trying to maintain.

20 Plus, you can see appear that were trying to

21 incorporate solar panels, as well as green roof,

22 recreation area for the residents. We have a lot of

23 tears space of which we plan to build some of this

24 out as green roof and planted, as well. Next slide.

25 Then, the only other things that we have-- these are

2 some of the points that I made earlier. Building is  
3 located closer to Victory Boulevard precisely for the  
4 reason to keep visibility open for the residents who  
5 are above us. We are going to facet the façade,  
6 setback the green roofs. Other than that, the only  
7 other things I can tell you is we have stormwater  
8 retention, we will be utilizing energy Star  
9 appliances, high-efficiency and high efficacy LED  
10 lighting, insulating glass, higher levels of  
11 insulation. The 2020 energy code is actually quite--  
12 it's actually really terrific and really strong. So,  
13 this will be incorporated to every aspect of the  
14 building. Next slide, please. Eric, I think this is  
15 back to you.

16 ERIC PALATNIC: Yeah. This is a good  
17 time to conclude. This just provides the  
18 affordability paradigm that we spoke about earlier  
19 where we are at 26 percent of the floor area will be  
20 provided as MIH option level two and add a level of  
21 60 percent. Excuse me. Option one.

22 ALEX HARROW: Excuse me. Can I make one  
23 last comment?

24 ERIC PALATNIC: Okay, Alex.

2 ALEX HARROW: Okay. I apologize. I just  
3 need to correct what I said. The streets just to top  
4 of us are Rosewood and Bathier [sp?]. Apologies.

5 ERIC PALATNIC: Thank you, Alex.

6 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Well, you  
7 answered my question just now, Eric. So, I have no  
8 further questions. I want to turn it over to Council  
9 member Rose if she has any questions or any of my  
10 other colleagues.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you, again,  
12 Chair. I don't have any questions and I don't have  
13 any questions because, like I stated, we worked very  
14 closely with the team and they incorporated all of  
15 the aspects that we felt were important to making  
16 this project not only a good green project, but one  
17 that would be an asset to the community and one that  
18 would meet a community need by providing take care  
19 spaces for daycare. And the public amenities.  
20 Parking was a very important issue and they provided  
21 off the street parking. So, basically, they did  
22 everything that we requested and so I am in support  
23 of this project.

24 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Great. Thank you,  
25 Council member Rose. The applicant panel is excused.

2 Counsel, I there any members of the public that wish  
3 to testify on the 252 Victory Boulevard rezoning  
4 application?

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If there are any  
6 members of the public who wish to testify on the 252  
7 Victory Boulevard rezoning proposal, please press the  
8 raise hand button now. Chair, the meeting will  
9 briefly stand at ease while we just confirm there are  
10 no additional members. Chair, does appear that we--  
11 I believe we have one speaker for this item. The  
12 speaker panel will include one speaker, Shawn  
13 Strafford. Shawn Stafford will be testifying on  
14 this item.

15 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

16 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Shawn Stradford,  
17 whenever you're ready.

18 SHAWN STRADFORD: I think this is supposed  
19 to be for the--

20 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Which item are you  
21 testifying for, Shawn?

22 SHAWN STRADFORD: North River.

23 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Not yet.

24 SHAWN STRADFORD: Okay.

25 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: [inaudible 02:05:14]

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: You're early.

3 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: All right, Shawn. Thank  
4 you.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And with that,  
6 Chair, I see no other members of the public who wish  
7 to testify on this item.

8 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
9 members of the public who wish to testify on LU  
10 numbers 857, 8584 the 252 Victory Boulevard rezoning  
11 proposal, the public hearing is now closed and the  
12 items are laid over.

13 I now open the public hearing on LU  
14 numbers 842, 843, 844 for the River North rezoning  
15 proposal which seeks a zoning map amendment, a zoning  
16 text amendment, and zoning special permit all of  
17 which are related to property in Council member  
18 Rose's district in Staten Island and, as a reminder--  
19 And I will remind the viewing public, for anyone  
20 wishing to testify on this item, if you have not  
21 already done so, you must register online and you may  
22 do that now by visiting the Council's website. I no  
23 one to recognize Council member Rose for some opening  
24 remarks.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you, again,  
3 Chair Moya. Today, again, we have an application  
4 before us that has been rejected by local community.  
5 The residents are concerned that the proposed density  
6 is unprecedented and will be used by future  
7 applications for city agencies to approve similar  
8 density across the north shore. So sorry. Someone  
9 is ringing my doorbell.

10 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: That's okay, Council  
11 member Barron will give you time. Don't worry. It's  
12 fine.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Should I go answer  
14 it? I'll let them wait. So, I look really-- So,  
15 this proposed density is unprecedented and will be  
16 used by future applicants or city agencies to approve  
17 similar density across the North Shore. So we are  
18 looking forward to the applicant's response to this  
19 concern. I'll also share my constituent's concerns  
20 about the height of the proposed buildings. My  
21 previous remarks that were submitted to the  
22 Department of City Planning reflect as much. I  
23 cannot support this application with the proposed  
24 allowable building heights. I certainly have  
25 concerns about the proposed affordability on this

2 site also. The additional density requested for this  
3 site calls for additional affordable housing above  
4 and beyond the requirements of MIH. I cannot support  
5 this proposal with the current level of affordability  
6 on this site. I look forward to hearing what kind of  
7 commercial uses will be provided on site. The St.  
8 George community would benefit from the inclusion of  
9 a grocery store and community-oriented uses such as  
10 daycare programming. I cannot support this project  
11 without additional community benefits for our local  
12 residents. I look forward to hearing more from the  
13 applicant and the feedback from the community and I  
14 thank you again, Chair Moya.

15 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Council  
16 member Rose for your opening statement. With that,  
17 Counsel, if you can please call up the first panel  
18 for this item.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The applicant panel  
20 for this item will include Zach Kadden on behalf of  
21 the developer, Meenakshi Srinivasan, land use and  
22 zoning advisor, Dan Kaplan, Ben Abelman, project  
23 architects, and Tony Finger, land use counsel for the  
24 applicant.

2 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, counsel. If  
3 you can please administer the affirmation.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Panelists, if you  
5 can please raise your right hands and state your name  
6 for the record.

7 DAN KAPLAN: Dan Kaplan.

8 BEN ABELMAN: Ben Abelman.

9 ZACH KADDEN: Zach Kadden.

10 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: Meenakshi  
11 Srinivasan.

12 TONI FINGER: Toni Finger.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Do you  
14 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and  
15 nothing but the truth in your testimony before this  
16 subcommittee and in answer to all Council member  
17 questions?

18 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: Yes.

19 TONI FINGER: I do.

20 DAN KAPLAN: Yes.

21 BEN ABELMAN: Yes.

22 ZACH KADDEN: I do.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Thank you. As a  
25 reminder, we have your slideshow presentation and

2 whenever you are ready to go through it, please say  
3 so and our staff will display it on the screen. Once  
4 again, anyone who requires an accessible version of  
5 this presentation may send an email request to  
6 [landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov). And now, if the  
7 panelists would please restate your names and  
8 organizations for the record, you may begin with the  
9 presentation.

10 ZACH KADDEN: Zach Kadden, Madison Realty  
11 Capital. Are we ready to start?

12 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Yep.

13 ZACH KADDEN: Perfect. Good afternoon,  
14 Chair Moya, subcommittee. I am Zach Kadden, director  
15 of development at Madison Realty Capital is the  
16 applicant for the River North proposal. We are very  
17 excited to present the River North project to you  
18 today. Next slide, please. To orient everyone, here  
19 is a quick aerial view of the St. George area. You  
20 can see the project site highlighted OR outlined in  
21 orange as well as its proximity to Staten Island's  
22 public transportation: the Staten Island Ferry, New  
23 York City Ferry, the railway, and local bus stops.  
24 The River North project will complement and enhance  
25 ongoing land use projects and activities that have

supported and strengthened the North Shore community of Staten Island. Next slide, please. Madison is committed to seeing this project through to completion and, over the last several years, has assembled and engaged a stellar team including FX Collaborative, the architects, Star Whitehouse, landscape architects, and Langan, the environmental consultants, to make this project happen. Next slide, please. Madison has an excellent inconsistent record in developing mixed-use residential buildings with affordable housing, as well as economic development projects in many parts of the city. Our professionalism to oversee and advance projects through a robust public process and to construct complete in contribute to neighborhoods is a testament to our vision and commitment to implement River North that world delivers substantial benefits to the community. You can see here in the top produce a project in Woodside where we actually broke ground in in February. We finished the foundation and we are excited to bring a public school-- a K-5 476 student public school, as well as 478 affordable units to Woodside Queens. Next slide, please. Another slide switch. Madison is also no stranger to

2 Staten Island where we have completed several  
3 projects in the North Shore, including downtown  
4 Plaza, a.k.a. 364 Bay Street on the left which had  
5 completed construction and leased up. So, Crunch  
6 Fitness is attendant there, which many of you may  
7 know, as well as The View, 224 Richmond Terrace,  
8 which is the center image which is only a few lots  
9 over from our site. We finished the construction  
10 there, leased, and sold it which is, those are said,  
11 adjacent to River North. And on the right and side,  
12 this is very important. This is an image which is  
13 just an example of Madison. We invest and we  
14 believed to be boots on the ground in the communities  
15 we develop in. So, during COVID, we knew that  
16 Richmond University Medical Center was hit  
17 particularly hard by the pandemic. We partnered with  
18 the frontline food trucks which is that image in the  
19 background just to give essential workers free food,  
20 coffee, and put a smile on their face during the  
21 heights of the pandemic. Next slide, please. River  
22 North will be a transit oriented mixed-use  
23 development which will include three residential  
24 buildings with 750 units of which 225 will be set  
25 aside under MIH option two. The ground floor will be

1 activated by local retail and hopefully community-  
2 oriented retail as the Council member mentioned  
3 earlier, and created in enhanced pedestrian  
4 environment with street trees that will improve  
5 connectivity. There will be new public open spaces  
6 on-site, passive and active, as well as new parking  
7 capacity. Also, we have an agreement already for 32  
8 BJ for building services and we are working closely  
9 with Building Skills and Youth Build Impact to  
10 provide local opportunities for members in the  
11 community. Next slide, please. Here's a quick  
12 overview. We actually engage Carp Strategies, an  
13 urban planning consultant to analyze the economic  
14 impact during the construction and operating phase of  
15 the project. So, quickly, to run through the  
16 bullets, you will see, under construction phase, we  
17 assume about 590 jobs per year with 100 A.D. jobs at  
18 peak employment, produce over 450 million in economic  
19 output that will circulate throughout the Staten  
20 Island economy, result in over 22 million--  
21 estimated in 2024 total tax revenue, including city  
22 and state taxes. That is during construction.  
23 Moving on to once the buildings are completed and put  
24 into operation, total annual economic output in the  
25

2 first year of operation is 52.8 million. 4.8 million  
3 in total tax revenue in the first year of operation  
4 and then also 48 permanent jobs but there could be as  
5 many as 200 new communitywide jobs as a result of  
6 this project. Next slide, please. Bringing new  
7 affordable housing to this neighborhood is one of our  
8 primary goals. We are proposing 30 percent of the  
9 floor area, or option two under MIH, which would, we  
10 figure, would be approximately 225 unit, would cover  
11 three income bands and here you see the breakdown of  
12 what we are proposing between the 60 percent AMI  
13 band,, the 80 percent AMI band, and the 110 percent  
14 AMI band. And also, you can see that we have  
15 weighted the distribution to the slightly lower end  
16 which is about the 60 percent AMI trench. Next  
17 slide, please. Just to give you an idea of how the  
18 AMI translate to family types, we thought it would be  
19 helpful to have this visual. For example, a  
20 household of four with single income healthcare  
21 worker earning 45 to 50,000 dollars would qualify  
22 around 40 percent AMI, or dual income family of four  
23 earning together A.D. thousand would be 60 percent of  
24 AMI. A single MTA worker earning 65,000 would be a  
25 80 percent of AMI in total income employees officer

2 in teacher with the child earning about 100,000 would  
3 be at 100 percent AMI. With that, will turn over the  
4 presentation to Ben Abelman and Dan Kaplan at FX  
5 Collaborative, the architects for the project. Thank  
6 you.

7 BEN ABELMAN: Next slide, please. And good  
8 afternoon now to the Council members and thank you  
9 for giving us the opportunity to present this  
10 project. As that mentions, the site is located  
11 adjacent to the civic infrastructure of downtown St.  
12 George and is within a 10 minute walking radius of  
13 the St. George ferry terminal and the largest transit  
14 in Staten Island. What is important in this image is  
15 the two overlaid colors that you see. The pink color  
16 to the right of the image is the Special St. George  
17 district. In the green color is the Special Hillside  
18 Preservation district which the site is currently  
19 zoned. As you can see, the site sits at the abutment  
20 of these two special districts and is, in fact, at  
21 the base of the hill fronting onto Richmond Terrace  
22 and Stuyvesant Place, two vital corridors of the St.  
23 George area. Next slide, please. Hillside's  
24 preservation district is mapped throughout Staten  
25 Island largely within low density single family

1 residential zoning districts. The R6 district, which  
2 the River North project sits, mapped within the  
3 Special Hillside Preservation district, is an anomaly  
4 within this district. And the controls crafted  
5 within the special district are very responsive to  
6 the conditions to which you see on the screen here.  
7 Next slide, please. And less the conditions that you  
8 see on our site. This image show the adjacencies of  
9 the two special districts. Again, green is the  
10 Hillside Preservation district. Purple is the  
11 Special St. George district. And we can see that the  
12 site sits at the low end of the hillside fronting on  
13 Stuyvesant Place and Richmond Terrace on a block  
14 which its natural topography has already been  
15 compromised by the existing presence of the Castleton  
16 Park apartment complex in its parking structure which  
17 is built onto the site. Next slide, please. As of  
18 right development would be governed by the Special  
19 Hillside Preservation district in the R6 district  
20 that the site is currently mapped. The Hillside  
21 Preservation district limits the location of building  
22 footprints to locations which are not in steep slope  
23 areas. As you can see on site B with the saturated  
24 blue color, that is the only feasible building  
25

2 footprint site on the two lots that make up the River  
3 North property today and, in the end, the site, if to  
4 be developed as of right would only be able to  
5 achieve less than 50 percent of its entitled floor  
6 area because of the limitations of the underlying  
7 zoning. Next, please. Next slide. Thank you. And  
8 so-- No. Back one. Sorry. Our approach to the  
9 project is to merge the ideals embedded within these  
10 two special districts. From the Hillside  
11 Preservation district, our intent is to leave as much  
12 of the site unbuilt as possible, preserving 50  
13 percent of open space on the site. In terms of the  
14 St. George district, we have looked to its bulk  
15 language where it requires street walls and building  
16 bases with active ground floor uses with building  
17 forms and towers above which are perpendicular to the  
18 waterfront to provide view corridors through the  
19 site. So, now, Dan Kaplan will walk you through the  
20 strategies and discuss how this plays out in the  
21 design.

22 DAN KAPLAN: Next slide, please. Dan  
23 Kaplan, senior partner. FX Collaborative. So, from  
24 a site planning principles and open space, really two  
25 headlines. Number one is, instead of a continuous

2 wall of buildings, we have subdivided the site into  
3 three buildings which also provides three open  
4 spaces, three bands of greenery that we call green  
5 fingers that come down from the hillside onto  
6 Richmond Terrace. Second is that those green  
7 corridors provide habitat preservation, stormwater  
8 retention which recent events have made even more  
9 critical, and, basically, allows for open space and  
10 view corridors, which is the second principle. By  
11 setting the building on your right significantly  
12 lower and creating gaps between the two buildings--  
13 the three buildings, we've allowed views from the  
14 upland, including the Castleton Park apartment  
15 buildings to the rear of your screen and, on your  
16 left, Hamilton Avenue-- and I'll show you that in a  
17 moment. Next slide, please, which is a plan of the  
18 site plan showing the three buildings and, basically,  
19 the three open spaces. In conversations with the  
20 Council member, we have included two publicly  
21 accessible open spaces-- one a passive open space at  
22 the corner of Hamilton Avenue and Stuyvesant Place  
23 and another one between building two and building  
24 three which is active open space. Next slide,  
25 please. This shows an image of the new passive open

2 space at the corner of Hamilton Avenue and Stuyvesant  
3 Place and actually is an endcap to Stuyvesant Place  
4 in St. George. It is well appointed with green  
5 spaces, with seating, and paving. It is nestled by  
6 the building and then wraps up Hamilton Avenue and  
7 also you can see here the effect of setting back the  
8 buildings from Hamilton Avenue, allowing for the  
9 upland uphill single family houses to have an  
10 uninterrupted view down the hill. Next slide,  
11 please. This shows the proposed active open space  
12 that's off Stuyvesant Place with a gracious opening  
13 to the sidewalk-- to the reconstructed sidewalk, I  
14 should say, two new, in purple, equipment areas, a  
15 recreational lawn in the center, and seating at the  
16 end of the page. Next slide. Architecturally and  
17 massing wise, we've created strong contextual basis  
18 with active uses, screen parking, and strong texture  
19 and architecture. For the upper building massing,  
20 it's well tailored with multiple step backs and set  
21 backs pulling away from the surrounding context.  
22 Next slide, please. Over the evolution of the  
23 project and working in dialog with various  
24 stakeholders, we have significantly modified that  
25 massing and reduced the height. Most significantly,

2 the building to the right, which was building three  
3 which was reduced eight stories to open up views from  
4 the Castleton Park apartment house. In addition, the  
5 two build-- the two taller buildings were reduced by  
6 approximately 30 feet. Next slide, please.

7 Architecturally, we have sought to anchor the  
8 building into the St. George context by looking  
9 carefully at the architecture and material pallet and  
10 avoided the all glass paradigm that you see in a lot  
11 of new buildings. Next slide, please. Here is a  
12 view that shows those bases and the architectural  
13 treatment. This is looking down Stuyvesant Place  
14 showing the two new buildings and the green spaces  
15 coming through. Next slide, please. Go ahead. This  
16 aerial shows how the three buildings step. They are  
17 a family together and working together. They do not  
18 all match, but they share the same DNA with the lower  
19 building in the foreground opening up views from  
20 Castleton Park apartments. Next slide, please. And,  
21 finally, the skyline view between the careful  
22 massing. The selections and materials, the opening  
23 up of the buildings and subdividing them into three  
24 parts and the green fingers coming down from the  
25 hillside. We have created an ensemble of buildings

2 that compliments the skyline of St. George. And,  
3 with that, I'll turn it over to Meenakshi who will  
4 discuss the zoning actions. Thank you.

5 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: Thank you. Next  
6 slide, please. Good afternoon, Chair Moya, Council  
7 member Rose, and member of the zoning subcommittee.  
8 I am Meenakshi Srinivasan, senior land use and zoning  
9 advisor at Kramer Levin representing the applicant.  
10 And I really appreciate the opportunity to present  
11 today. The project requires three zoning options.  
12 The first is a zoning map amendment to change the R6  
13 C2-2 overlay district which is a medium density  
14 district within the Special Hillside Preservation  
15 district that is now currently along Richmond Terrace  
16 and Stuyvesant Place to an R7-3 C2-4 district  
17 overlay. This is also a medium density district  
18 within the special St. George district. The second  
19 action is a zoning text amendment to the Special St.  
20 George district to incorporate the R7-3 zoning which  
21 is, basically, the parallel of the underlying R7-3  
22 regulations. The text amendment would also create a  
23 new special permit to make bulk regulations in order  
24 to support a superior site plan and open design.  
25 And, finally, the text amendment would also extend

1 the mandatory inclusionary housing designation to the  
2 rezoning area. The third action is a special permit  
3 pursuant to the proposed text to waive bulk  
4 regulations to allow the proposed project and the  
5 carefully crafted environmental protection design.  
6 The next slide, please. So, just to recap, the River  
7 North project in the zoning package are based on  
8 sound planning principles and will harness time-  
9 tested tools to achieve quality development to Staten  
10 Island's North Shore. Revamping the site of special  
11 Hillside Preservation District, response to an  
12 existing, alternate degraded condition and the sites  
13 match the topography and the isolation from the  
14 remainder of the Hillside district. Mapping it  
15 within St. George reflects St. George's evolution  
16 into an urban center over the past several decades  
17 and the city's plans for the waterfront across  
18 Richmond Terrace. Mapping the site into an R7-3  
19 district provides the additional FAR that can be used  
20 to address that area needs. The infusion of  
21 approximately 225 units of affordable housing will  
22 improve housing opportunities in the community and a  
23 significant [inaudible 02:29:56]. The additional  
24 public open space [inaudible 02:30:07] outdoor

2 resources available to those who live around the  
3 neighborhood and the additional density brings  
4 important secondary effects. It provides critical  
5 mass of population to support a wider range of retail  
6 and commercial offerings and it advances the city's  
7 signature land use policy of promoting higher density  
8 in transit rich areas. Finally, the special permit  
9 waivers allow [inaudible 02:30:26] controls to be  
10 tailored to this unique site in order to provide the  
11 best possible site plan and building form. Height  
12 and setback waivers will allow public open space  
13 [inaudible 02:30:36]. It will facilitate the  
14 preservation of green space on the site areas, has  
15 visual amenities, and [inaudible 02:30:43] site, and  
16 the special permit would allow the project inspired  
17 skyline more texture and distinctive design. And  
18 with that, we are happy to answer any questions and,  
19 of course, thank you again for allowing us to testify  
20 here today. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Just a  
22 couple questions before I turn it over to Council  
23 member Rose for her questions. And I am not sure if  
24 I missed this, but are you in full control of all the  
25 parcels within the special permit boundaries?

2 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: We are not. So, we  
3 have control of our parcels in the other parcels are,  
4 you know, no different private ownership.

5 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: I'm sorry. Could you  
6 repeat that? I heard you say you not, but I couldn't  
7 hear the rest.

8 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: Yes. We're not.  
9 We are not in control the properties outside of our  
10 site which you've seen the design for, but I think,  
11 you know, as the environmental impact statement  
12 looked at this area overall, there really is only one  
13 site that we believe will develop under the proposed  
14 rezoning and that was analyzed as part of that  
15 document and our review. The other sites within the  
16 parcel are built out, are two smaller constraints,  
17 and the site to the north, which is the triangular  
18 site, there's no change, really, within in terms of  
19 its density. So it is density neutral and rezoning  
20 zoning included within the Special St. George  
21 district because, otherwise, it would be an often  
22 site between-- within St. George.

23 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. And you were  
24 talking about this before, you know, with the FAR.

2 Is there any zoning districts in Staten Island that  
3 allows for a 6.0 FAR with 26 stories?

4 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: There's two issues.  
5 One is the FAR and one is the height. There is no  
6 [inaudible 02:33:00] allows R7-3 right now in Staten  
7 Island and, perhaps, it will never happen. But I  
8 think it's worthwhile, Council members, to understand  
9 that zoning districts, there's no sort of magic  
10 number to zoning districts. I think the questions  
11 before your body and for the City Planning Commission  
12 is to see whether they propose zoning district in the  
13 benefits that it entails and its design can fit  
14 within the system context. And, I think, in this  
15 particular case, this site is very unique and I think  
16 I just want to be clear. I don't think what we are  
17 proposing year is going to set a precedent elsewhere  
18 within the district, but what makes the site so  
19 unique is a few things. One is that its proximity to  
20 mass transit and the best mass transit on the island.  
21 The second is that it is the largest so. Third is  
22 that it's the existing built context really supports  
23 a taller building and I think you will find that in  
24 other parts of Staten Island. So, the density and  
25 messing is really unique and what we believe is

2 wholly appropriate for the site because of its  
3 existing context. So, the site sits at the foot of  
4 the hill and just behind it is the tallest building  
5 in Staten Island which is Castleton Apartments. It  
6 also suits on a major corridor within St. George.

7 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: You're answer--

8 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: You want me to stop  
9 there. And one last point is--

10 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Yeah.

11 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: that is also across  
12 the--

13 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: So the answer is no,  
14 right? Correct?

15 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: Yes. And I thought  
16 I answered that initially. Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Thank you. Just  
18 making sure.

19 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Now, I know you spoke  
21 about open spaces earlier. Is there a phasing plan  
22 to the construction on the site? I know you showed  
23 on the presentation that you had in open space. Is  
24 that currently open now or is there is good or when  
25

2 the open space to the public will be delivered on-  
3 site?

4 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: Well, I can answer  
5 that question. This is not a large-scale wage is  
6 phased over multiple years. There is a construction  
7 period that is roughly, I think, two to three years  
8 and, Zach, correct me if I'm wrong. And, within that  
9 period of construction, all three buildings will be  
10 developed in that period, both public spaces will be  
11 developed. So, we're not talking about something  
12 that will come online years from now. By the time  
13 the development is completed in the period of two to  
14 three years, the public spaces will also be  
15 delivered.

16 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: So two to three years  
17 before the public open space can be delivered on-  
18 site?

19 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: Right. Because  
20 that is construction phase for the project.

21 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Is there any way  
22 to open the passive open space before the project is  
23 fully completed?

24 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: I mean, we can look  
25 at that. Part of it is just-- it just takes he

2 because there is overlaps between buildings in terms  
3 of the construction. So, you know, is just something  
4 that we can definitely consider. And, Tony, I don't  
5 know if there is anything reflected [inaudible  
6 02:36:44] that speaks to this.

7 TONI FINGER: Good morning. I am Toni  
8 Finger, and environmental Council. Kramer Levin.  
9 So, no do believe that there are conditions in the  
10 restrictive tech that the open space comes online.  
11 And I believe it is before occupancy of the third  
12 building. So, I think the sites have to be  
13 constructed first before those open spaces can come  
14 online.

15 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Just two more  
16 questions and that I am going to turn it over to  
17 Council member Rose. What kind of environmental  
18 mitigation is required for this development and are  
19 there any unmitigated impacts that exist there?

20 TONI FINGER: Yeah. So, the environmental  
21 impacts consist of there were traffic impacts  
22 identified at several intersections. Most of them  
23 are able to be mitigated with standard measures which  
24 include channels signal timing changes. However,  
25 during the construction phase in the operational

2 phase, there will be two intersections that remain  
3 unmitigated. There will also be construction noise  
4 impacts. To deal with construction noise, the  
5 applicant has committed to noise reduction measures  
6 that go beyond what is required by the New York City  
7 noise control code in order to reduce those levels.  
8 They are also offering air-conditioning units for  
9 certain residences that will be affected by noise so  
10 that they will be a have alternate means of  
11 ventilation with a closed window condition so that  
12 they wouldn't experience impacts. There will be some  
13 unmitigated noise impacts at some façades and I  
14 believe that Castleton Park South Playground for some  
15 limited period of time. But, again, construction  
16 impacts are temporary. They occurred during  
17 construction hours and they are not a constant state.  
18 They are intermittent depending on a specific  
19 activity that is occurring or the equipment that is  
20 being used at that time.

21 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: So, how are you going to  
22 assure the construction on this site will not affect  
23 traffic congestion on Richmond Terrace, especially at  
24 the peak commuting times?

2 TONI FINGER: Well, there was an analysis  
3 done for construction traffic and, with respect to  
4 the impacts that were identified, most of them were,  
5 again, able to be mitigated away with standard signal  
6 timing changes. There are two intersections that are  
7 not able to be mitigated. And that is Richmond  
8 Terrace at Jersey Street and Richmond Terrace at Wall  
9 Street.

10 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. That is it for  
11 me. I know we have a large number of folks who were  
12 also looking to testify. So, I'm going to cut my  
13 questions there in turn it over to Council member  
14 Rose for questions.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you, Chair  
16 Moya, and thank you for your questions. They were  
17 spot on. I appreciate you asking them. I wanted to  
18 know how to you plan to respond to the local resident  
19 concerns about the precedent setting density that,  
20 you know, is being requested in this application. As  
21 soon know, this has been the major issue surrounding  
22 this development.

23 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: Thank you, Council  
24 member Rose. So, to answer that question-- Well,  
25 first, I think, just to be clear, earning kind of, as

2 you know, many rezoning's or mappings that take place  
3 well have to go through ULURP, before a community  
4 board, and before the City Planning Commission and,  
5 of course, the City Council. We feel very strongly  
6 that this density in this mapping that they are  
7 proposing over here is not going to create a  
8 precedent elsewhere on the island that relate to this  
9 site and its location which warrants this density.  
10 And that includes, as I said before, just its  
11 proximity to mass transit, the ferry terminal, the  
12 wheel bay terminal, the bus ferry, and the bus lines,  
13 and it provides a lot of infrastructure for  
14 commuters, for people to go to outside the island, as  
15 well as within the island. I think the other thing  
16 is that the density that goes along with the R7-3 we  
17 understand, is greater than what is seen on the  
18 island, but we believe that it can be masked in a way  
19 which is what's proposed over here and it is  
20 supported by the existing context. So, we don't  
21 believe we will find these sites elsewhere which  
22 would a hell for taller buildings. This particular  
23 site, because you have Castleton Apartments just  
24 behind it, but it is not only the tallest building,  
25 but it is also about, I think, 70 feet above the

2 grade at Richmond Terrace. So, it sits atop of a  
3 hill and we sit at the bottom of the hill and we're  
4 on a major corridor and then, across the street, is  
5 the [inaudible 02:42:24] site and, even though the  
6 project may be dormant or may want to wait, the  
7 Special St. George district anticipates that  
8 something significant is going to happen over there.  
9 So I think the land uses that exist in context and  
10 the infrastructure of mass transit really allows the  
11 sit to be rezoned without any real ill effect and--

12 ZACH KADDEN: Meenakshi, I just want to  
13 jump in for one second.

14 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: Yes. Go ahead,  
15 sir.

16 ZACH KADDEN: Land use, I guess, to more  
17 directly answer the Council members question is,  
18 after our last meeting, FX Collaborative has been  
19 working through the night and we are figuring out a  
20 way to respond to the height question that you think  
21 would be meaningful and, you know, address your  
22 concern.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you. I look  
24 forward to having that conversation about, you know,  
25 how we have sort of circled back and are looking at

2 that. I appreciate that. And, you know, just wanted  
3 to say to Meenakshi, I know that you addressed the  
4 infrastructure in terms of transportation which would  
5 be minimally impacted because, as you stated, it's  
6 arrived at the ferry terminal, a major transportation  
7 hub. So, there really wouldn't be any transportation  
8 impact. However, you know, there are other  
9 infrastructure issues that would be impacted and so,  
10 you know, I would like to know how that figures into  
11 your equation.

12 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: Right. I think one  
13 thing is that, in terms of in plans, most of the  
14 categories are screened, really, and were not  
15 analyzed as a part of the draft and final EIS. And  
16 as Toni mentioned before, in terms of traffic, there  
17 really are just two intersections that are not, sort  
18 of, mitigated in one of them is actually closer  
19 towards Bay Street and, while it's not a part of our  
20 project, we recognize and understand that a part of  
21 the Bay Street rezoning, the city committed to do  
22 traffic monitoring for that intersection. So, you  
23 know, we believe that that would be addressed in the  
24 future with a city plan and monitoring plan. I think  
25 the other impacts are really what Toni talked about

1 which was, essentially, construction impacts and  
2 those will be temporary and we are working in her  
3 mitigation in place to screen those, as well. So, if  
4 we look at the overall sort of what are the effects  
5 of this project and were talking about these two  
6 intersections, some potential, I guess, you know, in  
7 terms of construction, but that would be,  
8 essentially, temporary, and then we look at the other  
9 side of the equation and which is about affordability  
10 and no such a significant infusion of affordable  
11 housing in this neighborhood. And we have heard what  
12 you have said, Council member, about the level of  
13 affordability or the amount of affordability in our  
14 team is working on that to see how we can, you know,  
15 increase that and address your concerns. But that is  
16 a big infusion in the area which we think provides  
17 significant benefits. And then, you know, I don't  
18 want to go through all the other issues, but we are,  
19 obviously, dividing new open space and also just the  
20 economic benefits and the secondary effects for the  
21 North Shore and for-- economically and--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yeah. Thank you,  
24 Meenakshi, and--

2 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: [inaudible  
3 02:46:40]

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I wanted to ask  
5 you, as every borough in New York City was impacted  
6 by the remnants of hurricane Ida, you know, it really  
7 brought a lot of attention to our ability of our  
8 sewers in their ability to, you know, contain, you  
9 know, the water. Commuters briefly tell us about the  
10 runoff in the drainage and, you know, the impacts of  
11 building into the hillside will have on our ability  
12 to address run of, drainage, and, you know, our sewer  
13 capacity?

14 MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN: Right. And  
15 alternate over to Dan and Ben, but, you know, the  
16 whole approach to what our site has been really  
17 known-- you know, being good neighbors both from a  
18 sustainable and a car logical standpoint, so we are  
19 including measures that will take care of our site  
20 and I want to turn that over to Dan and to Ben.

21 DAN KAPLAN: Thank you. So, I think a  
22 couple points. Number one is that we are maintaining  
23 50 percent of the site as an unbuilt area so that  
24 there will be a recharge of the groundwater.  
25 Secondly, we are creating a new sidewalk with 20

2 trees with bio soils at the base. And, third, we  
3 will have either on inside cistern and or blue roofs  
4 which retain water so that really this site should be  
5 a model for stormwater management.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. Could you  
7 provide me with the proposed bedroom mirror's, you  
8 know, of the development? That was something that  
9 came up at our meeting. Can you provide that?  
10 Everybody has do in the headlight looks, so, I  
11 guess--

12 DAN KAPLAN: No. We are just--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. Then at our  
14 next meeting? Okay.

15 DAN KAPLAN: We can provide that to you.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And, you know, we  
17 did talk about the affordable-- increasingly  
18 affordability amounts for this development. Have we  
19 explored that yet?

20 ZACH KADDEN: Correct. So, we heard you  
21 loud and clear and we're just looking at our  
22 underwriting and, again, in response to the high  
23 concerns, you will have a response that addresses  
24 your comments on increased affordability, as well.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. And have  
3 you had any conversations with any businesses or  
4 community organizations who my tenant the outcome  
5 Marshall and community facilities sites and is there  
6 enough square footage to actually provide a grocery  
7 store or a daycare facility on that site?

8 ZACH KADDEN: So, just to clarify, it is  
9 not community facility. It's retail we're talking  
10 about. And, actually, in the last two weeks, we've  
11 had a few local daycare centers on Staten Island to,  
12 I believe, have two or three existing establishments  
13 reach out to us and express interest in opening in  
14 St. George and we looked at rough square footage is.  
15 Building three would almost be a perfect fit for that  
16 use. And then, for the retail space in building one,  
17 we have actually had a few brokers reach out on  
18 behalf of their clients who are on an operating  
19 supermarkets on the island in our interested in  
20 finding and using building one's location for their  
21 establishment. So, it sounds like to work over  
22 though uses that we have been talking about for a  
23 while have expressed interest. Obviously, we have  
24 discussed how challenging it is this far out in the  
25 process, but it is exciting for us and, obviously,

2 for the community that two of our targeted uses  
3 already were the first out of the gate to connect  
4 with us on opportunities at River North.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: All right. I know  
6 that a lot of grocery stores have a certain square  
7 footage requirement in a just wanted to make sure  
8 that, you know, the retail space could accommodate  
9 those square footage needs. That's a yes?

10 ZACH KADEN: Understood.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. And how  
12 will cars enter in exit this property where are the--

13 ZACH KADDEN: Ben, do you want to take  
14 that?

15 BEN ABELMAN: Yeah. I'm happy to walk  
16 everybody through. So there will be three parking  
17 facilities and two of which are actually within one  
18 building. It's just there is no connection between  
19 those independent facilities in that one building.  
20 So, building one, which is the building closest to  
21 the St. George ferry terminal, there will be one  
22 parking entrance on Hamilton that actually brings  
23 cars onto the second story. And that will utilize  
24 the parking facility on floors two and three of  
25 building one. On Stuyvesant Place, beyond 53 feet

2 from the intersection of Stuyvesant Place and  
3 Richmond Terrace, there will be an entry into a below  
4 grade parking facility in building one. And then, in  
5 building three at the furthest northwest portion of  
6 the site, there will be an entrance off of Richmond  
7 Terrace to access parking on the second and third  
8 story of that building. And in total, you know,  
9 we're, you know, budgeting about 340 spaces. You  
10 know, and that's what's required per zoning. But,  
11 you know, as, you know, design occurs, we'll look to  
12 provide as much parking that can fit in the space.  
13 We are providing the requirement.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So there's no  
15 parking in building two at all?

16 BEN ABELMAN: Building two is the smallest  
17 building footprint and, you know, the two parking  
18 facilities are within, you know, 50 foot or to 100  
19 foot walk. So, you know, and on the same kind of  
20 campus. So, we would look to create pathways to  
21 bring users/residents to those other parking  
22 facilities.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Will those  
24 pathways be internal or--?

2 BEN ABELMAN: It's, you know, a good  
3 compliment. It would be a combination. You know, we  
4 want to avoid unnecessary excavation. So, you know,  
5 outdoor paths or, you know, potentially below grade  
6 paths connecting is something that we are looking  
7 into.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. Chair,  
9 thank you so much for allowing me to ask these  
10 questions. I know that my community has questions.  
11 So and I will be meeting with this development team,  
12 so I'll get any answers that I need. So, thank you,  
13 again, for this opportunity.

14 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Councilwoman  
15 Rose. I now want to just check with our counsel to  
16 see if we have any other colleagues that will have  
17 questions for this panel.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, Chair Moya. I  
19 see no members with questions for this panel.

20 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: All right. Seeing that  
21 there are no further questions, the applicant panel  
22 is excused. Counsel, are there any members of the  
23 public who wish to testify on the River North  
24 rezoning application?  
25

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, Chair. We  
3 have approximately 22 public witnesses that have  
4 signed up to speak.

5 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: For members of the  
7 public here to testify, please note, again, that  
8 witnesses will generally be called in groups of up to  
9 four names at a time. If you are a member of the  
10 public who has signed up to testify on the River  
11 North rezoning proposal, please stand by when you  
12 hear your name being called and prepare to speak when  
13 the Chair says that you may begin. Please note,  
14 again, once all panelists in your group have  
15 completed their testimony, you will be removed from  
16 the meeting as a group and the next group of speakers  
17 will be introduced. Once removed, participants may  
18 continue to view the livestream broadcast of this  
19 hearing on the Council website. We will now hear  
20 from the first panel which will include Vincent  
21 Accornero, Deborah Givens, Helen Northmore, and John  
22 Kilcullen. The first speaker on the panel will be  
23 Vincent Accornero followed by Deborah Givens.

24 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Just a reminder to  
25 members of the public, you will have two minutes to

2 speak. Please do not begin until the sergeant-at-  
3 arms has started the clock. Before we start, I see  
4 Council member Rose has her hand up. I'm sorry. Can  
5 we unmute Council member Rose?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Uh--

7 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Hold on, Council  
8 member. We've got to unmute you.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Chair, I just  
10 wanted to ask, before the public testifies, if we  
11 could ask the development team to stay to hear the  
12 testimony.

13 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Yeah. I think we may  
14 have lost them, Councilwoman.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. All right.

16 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: I apologize.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I'm sorry. I--

18 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: No. That's okay.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I should have  
20 mentioned it before. Okay. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Thank you,  
22 Councilwoman. We will now begin with Vincent.

23 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

24 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Vincent, whenever  
25 you're ready, you may begin.

2                   VINCENT ACCORNERO:       Thank you, Mr.  
3 Chairman. Ladies and gentlemen, my name is Vincent  
4 Accornero, chairman of the newly and use committee  
5 for Community Board One Staten Island. Thank you for  
6 the opportunity to speak today. Council member Rose,  
7 good afternoon. This is a letter that we address  
8 took Council member Rose continually lead to  
9 resolution that was passed near unanimously by  
10 Community Board One regarding the River North  
11 application. As you know, Community Board One had  
12 preliminary discussions with the developer and hosted  
13 an extremely lengthy and comprehensive public hearing  
14 that was well attended and provided voluminous  
15 testimony. Also, the land use committee and full  
16 board spent time prior to familiarize themselves with  
17 the proposal. After discussion, Community Board One  
18 unanimously approved the following resolution:  
19 whereas this application seeks to rezone the proposed  
20 area from an R6 [inaudible 02:58:51] district within  
21 the Special Hillside Preservation District to an R7  
22 C3/C2-4 withing the Special St. George District and  
23 whereas this application in in the Special Hillside  
24 Preservation District which was designed to give  
25 oversight to building and steep slope and whereas the

2 application seeks to obliterate the Special Hillside  
3 Preservation District in any area of the steepest  
4 slope in Community Board One whereas it is  
5 unprecedented for any proposal to be removed from  
6 this district and whereas the existing R6 district  
7 provides the greatest bulk in high of any district in  
8 Staten Island whereas the Special St. George District  
9 provides parking and other development controls,  
10 designed and adopted specifically for this area and  
11 whereas this development is asking for multiple  
12 authorizations and waivers all intended to maximize  
13 density and bulk in a district that can be developed  
14 without this extreme, contorted level of relief  
15 whereas this application has been extremely fast  
16 tracked through the Department of City Planning and  
17 saddled new representatives in the administration  
18 with a decision that should be left for the MB hereby  
19 resolved, Community Board One opposes all the actions  
20 proposed by this application and strongly suggests  
21 they build within a uses zoning control so as  
22 not to completely disregard all previously crafted  
23 zoning.

24 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

25 VINCENT ACCORNERO: Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Vincent.

3 Next, we have Deborah.

4 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

5 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Can we unmute Deborah?

6 DEBORAH GIVENS: Muted? Yes. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: There you go, Deborah.

8 DEBORAH GIVENS: Okay. Good afternoon,

9 Committee Chair Moya, Council member Debbie Rose, and

10 Council members of the Subcommittee on Zoning and

11 Franchises. My name is Deborah Gibbons. I am you to

12 oppose the project. I am a former Staten Islander,

13 born and raised and educated on Staten Island and I

14 am here to speak on behalf of all the Staten

15 Islanders who are missing this opportunity to testify

16 due to short notice as this application is being

17 pushed through the approval process with some level

18 of expediency unheard of. As City Planning

19 Commissioners Cirillo stated during the last CPC

20 sessions on this matter that the emphasis has been on

21 the hide of these buildings and that is a major

22 concern new unit showed be, but this has been to the

23 exclusion of discussing other objectionable aspects

24 of this project this large. Many were identified in

25 the final EIS. My concerns and objections are

1 divided into two. First, the lack of transparency in  
2 many forms. First, the lack of true community  
3 engagement by the applicant. Where were the sit  
4 downs? Workshops? Public meetings? Feel-good  
5 sessions inviting the community into the project?  
6 Two, the lack of scrutiny. This application is  
7 skating through the approval process ahead of  
8 comprehensive planning considerations and the racial  
9 equity analysis that is so desired by the city  
10 Council and that was introduced in 2019 with an eye  
11 on future projects. A project of this size should be  
12 reviewed through the new critical lenses as it will  
13 be completed well into the future. Three, the lack  
14 of disclosure of the housing specifics. No  
15 floorplans, no housing unit designs, no breakdown on  
16 the number of apartments by household size and income  
17 were made available nor was there and as overweight  
18 scenario and renderings or drawings as requested by  
19 the commission. I tell you these are not good signs.  
20 My other major concern is the MIH option two being  
21 proposed. As this project was going through the  
22 approval process, option one was mentioned, but it  
23 seems to have been--  
24

25 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

2 DEBORAH GIVENS: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Deborah.

4 Counsel, who is the next panelist? Sorry.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next speaker  
6 will be Helen Northmore who will be followed by John  
7 Kilcullen and, Chair, I would just like to make a  
8 brief technical announcement. For members of the  
9 public, if you have already completed the  
10 registration process and you have successfully logged  
11 into the zoom meeting and you are here waiting to  
12 testify, there should be no reason to use the raise  
13 hand function. Just for sorting logistical purposes,  
14 we will ask that you not raise your hand. If you  
15 have raised your hand, please lower it. Your name  
16 will be called in order once it is your turn to speak  
17 in your ability to speak will be enabled once your  
18 turn is called. Thank you. The next speaker is  
19 Helen Northmore who will be followed by John  
20 Kilcullen.

21 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

22 HELEN NORTHMORE: Without harmful zoning  
23 concessions for River North with its unmitigated  
24 adverse effects, more than 1000 units of affordable  
25 housing are already predicted by the city in the up

1 sound Staten Island areas which start across the  
2 street: the St. George Special District, the Bay  
3 Street Corridor District, and the Special Stapleton  
4 Waterfront District. Madison Realty Capital plans to  
5 squeeze 750 apartments, 1300 people, and 340 plus  
6 automobiles into three buildings bordering Richmond  
7 Terrace. The North Shore rail line was shut down in  
8 1953, so approximately 73 percent of North Shore  
9 transit riders use the bus to get to work. The S40  
10 bus running along Richmond Terrace is the primary  
11 route. The MTA says Richmond Terrace is already  
12 inadequate for the traffic on it. About 30 percent  
13 of all S40 trips are already late throughout the day,  
14 making fairy connections difficult. When the roads  
15 are too congested, the proposed traffic signal timing  
16 won't work. The research has been done. Three plus  
17 years of construction will make things worse. The  
18 Castleton Park Apartments property, containing its  
19 sewer lines right of way, actually bisects the River  
20 North building one and building two as seen on the  
21 illustration today. Has the New York City cup  
22 housing Development Corporation given its opinion on  
23 Madison Realty Capital's plan to buy the Castleton  
24 Park property since HDC floated over \$70 million in  
25

2 loans and bonds for Castleton Park Apartments  
3 mortgages? If the zoning use change now, thereby  
4 inflating the cost of the land in St. George, why  
5 does the guarantee that even a single River North  
6 dwelling will be completed? Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Helen.  
8 Thank you for your testimony today.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The last speaker  
10 on this panel will be John Kilcullen. John  
11 Kilcullen.

12 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

13 JOHN KILCULLEN: Good afternoon, Chair  
14 Moya and Zoning and Franchises Subcommittee Council  
15 members and Council member Rose. Thank you for  
16 holding this hearing today regarding items River  
17 North. My name is John Kilcullen and I am in  
18 opposition to all three agenda items. As you may  
19 have heard, Staten Islanders, including our Borough  
20 President and Community Board One, many local civic  
21 associations, and our own Staten Island Commissioner,  
22 and City Planning Commission are opposed to this  
23 rezoning. It is not as of right development of the  
24 said property. The argument against rezoning isn't  
25 about [inaudible 03:06:57] property owners to build

2 up their property, affordable housing, or. This  
3 proposed rezoning moves to large in the wrong  
4 location. And the alteration of a hard-fought and  
5 much treasured zoning district, the Special Hillside  
6 Protection District, is-- please note, the Castleton  
7 Park Towers predate the special district and actually  
8 sit upon the flattest part of this area of St.  
9 George. At this time, Staten Island does not need R7  
10 zoning. The recently rezoned St. George [inaudible  
11 03:07:36] High Zone District, and the newly rezoned  
12 Bay Street corridor do not include R7 zoning and have  
13 not been fully developed or maxed out. ., Many  
14 developments have not taken advantage of the St.  
15 George high-rise district in the glut of unfinished  
16 or failed development projects has [inaudible  
17 03:07:55] and lighthouse won't hide the fact that  
18 Staten Island does not need this up zoning. This is  
19 simply the case of a developer crying before  
20 construction starts and their only concern is to  
21 maximize their end profits, not the community. And  
22 I'd like to point out that the point to-- the view  
23 that they have talk [inaudible 03:08:18]--

24 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

25 JOHN KILCULLEN: Thank you for your--

2 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, John. Thank  
3 you for your testimony today. Are there any Council  
4 members who have any questions for this panel?

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, Chair. I see  
6 no members with questions for this panel.

7 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: This panel is now  
8 excused. Thank you, again, for your testimony. If  
9 you can please call up the next panel.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Once again, just  
11 as a reminder for all members of the public who have  
12 successfully registered and logged into the meeting,  
13 there should be no need to use the raise hand  
14 function. Everyone will have a chair that's to be  
15 called in order. The next panel will include Renzo  
16 Ramirez, Leticia Remauro, Dr. Demetrius Carolina, and  
17 Nikki Odlivak. We will start the panel with Renzo  
18 Ramirez followed by Leticia Remauro.

19 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.  
20 Starting time.

21 RENZO RAMIREZ: Good afternoon, Chair  
22 Moya, and members of the Subcommittee. My name is  
23 Renzo Ramirez and I am a member of 32 BJ SEIU. I am  
24 here today on behalf of my union to express our  
25 support for the proposed River North project. 32 BJ

1 is the largest property service union in the country,  
2 representing 85,000 property service workers in New  
3 York City, including janitors, security guards, handy  
4 persons, and supers that work in buildings similar to  
5 the proposed River North project. 32 BJ supports  
6 responsible developers who invest in the communities  
7 where they build. I am happy to report that the  
8 developers affiliated with River North, Madison  
9 Realty Capital, have made a credible commitment to  
10 creating prevailing wage building service jobs at  
11 this site. This commitment means that workers in  
12 Staten Island will have access to families sustaining  
13 wages, retirement, and quality health benefits in a  
14 time where New Yorkers need them the most. We  
15 estimate that the mixed-use development like the one  
16 proposed by the developer will be permanently staffed  
17 by an estimated 20 building service workers. The  
18 River North project will also have approximately 225  
19 affordable housing units in accordance with the  
20 mandatory inclusionary housing program. Building new  
21 permanently affordable housing in a centrally located  
22 area with access to mass transit is important to our  
23 members and their families. For these reasons, we  
24 are in full support of this project. We have  
25

2 confidence that Madison Realty Capital will be a  
3 responsible employer and presence in the community.

4 For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to  
5 approve the rezoning. Thank you so much.

6 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Renzo.  
7 Thank you for your testimony today.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, we will hear  
9 from Leticia Remauro followed by Dr. Demetrius  
10 Carolina.

11 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

12 LETICIA REMAURO: Good morning. Or good  
13 afternoon. Thank you for letting me speak and thank  
14 you, Chairman, into our Council member, Debbie Rose.

15 Failure to plan is planning to fail is,  
16 unfortunately, on Staten Island, we have failed at  
17 planning and that failure has caused us to have  
18 homeless shelters spring up in residential  
19 neighborhoods right next to elementary schools. It  
20 has caused us to have uncharacteristic buildings  
21 being shoved into neighborhoods where they don't  
22 belong. In this failure to plan, because we are  
23 fearful of what might happen next. I am here to ask  
24 for Council member Rose in the rest of the committee  
25 to really consider a negotiation on this site. You

1 know, this project is surrounded by buildings that  
2 are taller. This project is going to provide for  
3 seed news and young people a place where they can  
4 live. And up until now, too many of our young people  
5 and our seniors have been pushed off of Staten Island  
6 because we don't have rental apartments or affordable  
7 rentals. When you have a responsible development  
8 poignant in front of us, it is really important that  
9 we take a look at how to make this work. Again,  
10 Castleton Park Apartments are tall. We have the  
11 accolades. We have Irbi [sp?]. We have wonderful  
12 areas where we can make things work and this is the  
13 right place next to public transportation. This is a  
14 place where young people can stay on Staten Island  
15 before they get married and buy a home. This is a  
16 place where seniors can retire and sell their home in  
17 have a place to live right next to the Staten Island  
18 ferry. This is a walkable neighborhood in this  
19 project actually fits into this neighborhood because  
20 not everywhere on Staten Island is suitable for a  
21 tall building and so we must recognize that the Bay  
22 Street Corridor, the Richmond Terrace Corridor--

24 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

2 LETICIA REMAURO: are there places that we  
3 should look for these projects in urge you to take a  
4 good look at this project and to negotiate.

5 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Thank you,  
6 Leticia. Thank you for your testimony today.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next speaker  
8 on the panel will be Dr. Demetrius Carolina who will  
9 be followed by Nikki Odlivak.

10 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

11 DR. DEMETRIUS CAROLINA: Good  
12 afternoon, Chair Moya, and certainly our phenomenal  
13 Councilwoman Debbie Rose, and certainly the  
14 Subcommittee. My name is Rev. Dr. Demetrius  
15 Carolina, executive director of the largest black and  
16 brown nonprofit in Staten Island and pastor of the  
17 First Central Baptist Church. I am here to support  
18 the development of the River North project and just  
19 asking this committee and our councilperson and all  
20 of those in Staten Island to consider the fact that  
21 now is the time for monumental change into  
22 opportunity has come for us to really think out-of-  
23 the-box, to rethink development into also think about  
24 the social determinants over economic well-being of  
25 this borough in the community yet to come, as was

2 mentioned before. This is a unique area in the  
3 borough and this development may not necessarily open  
4 the door for equal types of development in other  
5 areas of the borough because we understand that that  
6 is not necessarily a reality. But one thing that is  
7 a reality is we need development, especially in a  
8 historically underserved and underdeveloped area on  
9 the North Shore of Staten Island. This is a walkable  
10 community and with proper negotiation, planning,  
11 discussions, and meetings, I am certain that we, an  
12 intelligent, wonderful, thriving borough can come to  
13 some double solutions for this development project.  
14 Let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater, but  
15 lets it down and make some meaningful development  
16 plans for the future. Not just for others who are  
17 presently here, but for those who are yet to come.  
18 Thank you for your time and your consideration.

19 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Thank you  
20 for your testimony.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The last speaker  
22 on this panel will be Nikki Oddivak.

23 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

24 NIKKI ODLIVAK: Thank you for this  
25 opportunity to testify today. My name is Nikki

2 Odlivak and I am president and CEO of Community

3 Agency for Senior Citizens, better known as CASC.

4 Also, I am a resident of the St. George neighborhood

5 on Staten Island for almost 40 years and have been

6 working in St. George for over 20 years. CASC has

7 been serving older adults age 60 years and older and

8 their caregivers since 1985 and would provide

9 assistance to seniors to remain as independent as

10 possible and thrive in their Staten Island community

11 by providing different kinds of services. I'm

12 cutting my testimony. You have my written testimony.

13 CASC programs assist over 8000 people annually and we

14 expect that number to rise with baby boomers aging at

15 an unprecedented rate. Some advocates have called it

16 a tsunami of aging older adults. One of the most

17 frequent questions CASC receives from senior callers

18 and their families is how can we access affordable

19 housing? Unfortunately, there is no good news on the

20 subject. CASC assists with housing applications for

21 local, affordable housing, but wait lists, years, and

22 the available apartments at an affordable rate are

23 few. I am here to support River North Liberty Towers

24 development. It is long time overdue that our

25 beautiful waterfront is developed into an exciting,

2 thriving, and welcoming North Shore. We need the  
3 housing. We need housing for seniors who can no  
4 longer live in private homes. We need housing for  
5 seniors who are being asked to leave apartments and  
6 to and for families because, after 20 to 30 years of  
7 living there, the families are now selling these  
8 private dwellings or they can get much more rent from  
9 new tenants. We need more housing for young adults  
10 who are just starting their careers, but cannot  
11 afford moving out over their parents homes, and we  
12 need more housing--

13 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

14 NIKKI ODLIVAK: for young families where  
15 it is a safe place to live and flourish. There's  
16 more my written testimony.

17 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Thank you,  
18 Nikki. Thank you for your testimony today. Is that  
19 the last of our panelists?

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: That was the last  
21 speaker on this panel. Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Is there any Council  
23 members who have questions for this panel?

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, Chair. I see  
25 no members with questions for the panel.

2 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
3 more questions for this panel, the witness panel is  
4 now excused. Thank you all for your patience today  
5 and thank you for coming here to testify. Counsel,  
6 if you could please call up the next panel.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel will  
8 include Linda Cohen, Kamillah Hanks, Michael Harwood,  
9 and Sally Jones. We will begin with Linda Cohen  
10 followed by Camilla Hanks.

11 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Speakers are being  
13 brought in. Once again, we will start with Linda  
14 Cohen followed by Kamillah Hanks. Excuse me, Chair.  
15 The first speaker on this panel, we will take  
16 Kamillah Hanks to start who will be followed by  
17 Michael Harwood. Kamillah Hanks.

18 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

19 KAMILLAH HANKS: Good morning, Chair  
20 Moya, and members of the Zoning and Franchises  
21 Subcommittee and Council members, Council member Rose  
22 and community members that are here today. Thank you  
23 for the opportunity to testify. I enjoyed Community  
24 Board One in several of my elected officials,  
25 community stakeholders, and many residents of the

North Shore in opposition of the River North project.

My commentary, much like what you will hear to say--

and it will be brief and on both sides. I've been a

long-time proponent of creating a master plan that

uses sensible development that takes into

consideration of the existing neighborhood and builds

responsibly and has real community benefits and

provides affordability that is inclusive on all

income levels. To that end, the Madison Realty

Capital's River North project in its current

iteration does not address any of the above. This

project raises deep concerns with building heights

and current placement being built on Richmond Terrace

is yet another example of our district being planned

in piecemeal with no consideration of long-term

impacts on our infrastructure, our schools, public

transportation options, roads, sewers, healthcare

facilities, and, most importantly, our community.

While Madison is proposing zoning variance with three

buildings, 25, 26, and 11 stories, our communities

are dealing with flood damage, homeless shelters,

broken streets, vacant storefronts, and long

commutes. The problem of our waterfront and St.

George district are becoming as faded as the coming

2 soon window decals that adorn many of the different  
3 development projects. The city Council has the last  
4 word on the approval process and the city Council, at  
5 its core, was tasked with representing the interest  
6 of its constituents, the residents of the city of New  
7 York. The residents of the St. George neighborhood  
8 have declared their opposition to this project and  
9 for good reason. I urge city Council to support the  
10 residents of the North Shore and vote against the  
11 North Shore River project in its current form. We  
12 deserve better and I encourage other developers to  
13 consider our thoughtful commentaries offer today and  
14 resubmit a proposal that reflects the domains of our  
15 community. Thank you so much.

16 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Kamillah.  
17 Good to see you. Thank you so much.

18 KAMILLAH HANKS: Good to see you, too.

19 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you for your  
20 testimony today. Thank you.

21 KAMILLAH HANKS: Thank you.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Our next speaker  
23 will be Michael Harwood followed by Sally Jones.

24 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

2           MICHAEL HARWOOD: Good afternoon. River  
3 North and R7 zoning is wrong for St. George, wrong  
4 for the North Shore, and wrong for Staten Island. It  
5 is also wrong for the cause of affordable housing.  
6 The only people it is right for the developers in the  
7 real estate interests and I say that as a homeowner  
8 and as well as a landlord of 12 units in St. George.  
9 Current R6 zoning would allow 176 apartment units  
10 which is in keeping with those zoning changes that  
11 were recently enacted. This project seeks to explode  
12 that zoning to 900 units, of 500 percent increase  
13 above R6. It would also increase the allowed height  
14 nearly 800 percent. That means that this up zoning  
15 would be a property value gift by the city to this  
16 developer of nearly a quarter billion dollars in  
17 value and what public amenity are they offering in  
18 return? Practically nothing. No waterfront  
19 promenade, no score. There is no room for parking  
20 for this hypothetical grocery store and there is  
21 minimal space, mostly public space mostly for the  
22 residents. Their offer of 30 percent units of  
23 affordable housing is also illusory. Studio one-  
24 bedroom apartments starting at \$1700 a month are only  
25 slightly below the existing market rate already and I

2 know that, as a landlord in the neighborhood. But  
3 adding over 700 new market rate units will actually  
4 displace existing borderline groups in this  
5 neighborhood. The city Council recently approved the  
6 St. George rezoning and Bay Street Corridor rezoning  
7 which are designed to provide several hundred units  
8 of affordable housing more appropriately distributed  
9 through the area instead of cramming all these units  
10 in one location and this gift of over \$200 million in  
11 value will be an invitation to other developers to  
12 build more R7 projects here and all over the area  
13 near the ferry terminal. St. George already has a  
14 population density of 19,000 people per square mile  
15 and if you add another 2000 residents here, it will  
16 be triple the density of the rest of the island, even  
17 before these other projects come online. We don't  
18 need massive density increases. We need open space  
19 consistent with the existing hillside topography and  
20 public amenities that will encourage future residents  
21 and businesses to locate here because of the  
22 neighborhood character. We need responsible planning  
23 consistent with the existing zoning that integrates  
24 the--

25 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

2 MICHAEL HARWOOD: and, as the community  
3 board unanimously voted, this neighborhood is opposed  
4 to this project in its entirety and I urge the  
5 counseling committee to vote against it. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Michael.  
7 Thank you for your testimony today.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next speaker  
9 will be Sally Jones and then we will try to get Linda  
10 Cohen again. Next speaker, Sally Jones.

11 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

12 SALLY JONES: Thank you, Chair Moya and my  
13 Council member Debbie Rose. My name is Sally Jones.  
14 I am a member of the St. George Civic Association,  
15 the Staten Island Democratic Association, am on the  
16 board of the Unitarian Church of Staten Island, I am  
17 a founding member of Peace Action of Staten Island,  
18 as well as other civic groups. I live at 110  
19 Hamilton Avenue, up the street from the proposed  
20 project. I have lived in our 1910 home for 43 years,  
21 since August 1979, across the street from Curtis High  
22 School. I am opposed to this River North project for  
23 the following reasons: Its height and density is out  
24 of scale with the neighborhood of mostly one to four  
25 family homes and smaller scale apartment buildings.

2 It violates hard-fought for zoning protections to  
3 protect the hillside and harbor views. It pushes the  
4 St. George waterfront into a high rise building  
5 syndrome. It will create very few sustainable jobs.  
6 It comes on top of other in limbo projects that we  
7 live with one to three blocks from the project. The  
8 never build wheel, the sparsely visited Empire  
9 Outlets. The huge, empty, unfinished block-long  
10 garage that is right across the street and which is  
11 also ugly. The uncompleted hotel next to the ferry  
12 terminal whose construction was stopped due to  
13 bankruptcy. The community's vision of the waterfront  
14 is for public access, green space, and maintaining  
15 stunning harbor views. It should not be built up  
16 with high rises and make us a Fort Lee look alike. I  
17 urge this committee and the City Council to deny this  
18 project.

19 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Sally.  
20 Thank you for your testimony today.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And we will now try  
22 to hear from Linda Cohen once again. Linda Cohen.

23 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

24 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Do we have Linda?  
25

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I do see Linda  
3 Cohen. Linda Cohen, if you can hear us, we will ask  
4 that you accept an invitation to unmute if you see  
5 one so that we can take your testimony. Okay. We  
6 appear to be having some issues with Linda Cohen.  
7 Chair, we will try to get her testimony in a  
8 subsequent panel.

9 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And that concludes  
11 the current panel.

12 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Great. Thank you--  
13 Well, let me just check-- Are there any Council  
14 members who have questions for this panel?

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, Chair. I see  
16 no members with questions for this panel.

17 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Well, thank you  
18 very much. I thank you all for your patience today  
19 and thank you very much for your testimony during  
20 this hearing. This panel is now excused. Counsel,  
21 if you can please call up the next panel?

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel will  
23 consist of Dale Smith followed by Elizabeth Morgan  
24 followed by Icisis Cruz followed by Reverend Judy L.

2 Brown. The first speaker on this panel we will hear  
3 from is Dale Smith.

4 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

5 DALE SMITH: Yes. Good morning to the  
6 members of the Zoning and Franchises Subcommittee and  
7 to our great Council member, Debbie Rose. Hello. I  
8 am Rev. Dale Smith and I would like to thank you for  
9 having me today and I am leadership counsel at Youth  
10 Filled Impact and a reverend for [inaudible of  
11 03:30:15] Baptist Church. I am here today in support  
12 of the proposed River North project in Staten Island.  
13 At Leadership Council Youth Filled Impact, I am  
14 responsible for supporting the program participants  
15 in their personal development. I work with local  
16 youths [inaudible 03:30:27] in their academic and  
17 leadership development goals through structural  
18 activities, lessons, workshops, and events. We also  
19 provide ongoing counseling support services and  
20 guidance so they can achieve success. As the heart  
21 of my work with local Staten Island youth, I am  
22 committed to supporting the development and growth  
23 into the smallest residents in the community. But it  
24 is also important that every child's community  
25 supports him or her and has resources necessary for

2 them to succeed. Therefore, I support River North.

3 Children and teenagers growing up in Staten Island

4 should be able to grow up in stable homes-- ones

5 their parents or parent can afford. They should have

6 community spaces and public open spaces where they

7 complain, learn, and enjoy the neighborhood, breaking

8 the cycle of poverty. Many of our community members

9 include students that are homeless in this would

10 provide them with affordable housing that is

11 desperately needed for them to have a brighter

12 future. The North Shore has grown tremendously in

13 recent years. We welcome change, but must be mindful

14 that long-term residents don't get left behind. The

15 River North provides inclusivity. Please help the

16 North Shore grow in a substantial way by meeting the

17 needs of new and existing residents and ensuring that

18 the youth of today have opportunities for their

19 future. I thank you for that time.

20 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Dale. Thank

21 you for your testimony.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next speaker

23 on this panel will be Elizabeth Morgan. Elizabeth

24 Morgan who will then be followed by Icisis Cruz.

25 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

ELIZABETH MORGAN: Good afternoon. Good afternoon, members of the Zoning and Franchises Subcommittee and our phenomenal leader, Council member Debbie Rose. My name is Elizabeth Morgan and I am speaking today in support of River North. In my role at the Central Family Life Center, I am the director of the youthful impact program which provides youth ages 17 to 24 with the opportunity to earn their high school equivalency diploma, construction skills, leadership soft skills, and offers other social services. River North presents the North Shore with a unique opportunity for 225 units of newly constructed, income-based, affordable housing and approximately 7800 square foot public plaza, a significant visual and safety improvement to the streets from the front and sidewalk along Richmond Terrace and Stuyvesant Place. All developed in a global manner. River North will achieve the equity in part through its partnership with Youthful Impact. Youthful Impact has begun working with River North project partner, Building Skills New York to place Staten Islanders in construction jobs, including those created by the project. When River North is approved, I look forward to continuing our work with

2 Building Skills New York to harvest the economic and  
3 career opportunities that River North will create for  
4 young people on the North Shore. Additionally,  
5 located near multiple means of public transportation,  
6 including the ferry terminal, River North will be  
7 positioned to draw visitors to our community where  
8 they can support the numerous businesses,  
9 restaurants, and cultural institutions that the  
10 island has to offer. I am urging you to vote to  
11 support River Door. Thank you for your time and  
12 consideration.

13 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Elizabeth.  
14 Thank you for your testimony today.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next speaker  
16 on the panel will be Icisis Cruz who will be followed  
17 by the Rev. Judy Brown.

18 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

19 ICISIS CRUZ: Good afternoon do members of  
20 the Zoning man Franchise Subcommittee. My name is  
21 Icisis Cruz. I am a 20 years old NYCHA resident who  
22 lives in Staten Island, New York for the past six  
23 years. I support the River North project and would  
24 very much like to see it move forward. It would  
25 bring housing in jobs to the community. I would love

1 to have the opportunity to move into my own apartment  
2 into wine over these beautiful new homes that are  
3 affordable, as well. Over the past year, I am proud  
4 to say that I was able to achieve my high school  
5 equivalency through Youth Filled Impact. As a  
6 graduate from the class of 2021, I am grateful to the  
7 many new opportunities that have opened up for me.  
8 After achieving my diploma, I went on to receive my  
9 community [inaudible 03:34:32] certification. Today,  
10 with my high school diploma and my health  
11 certificate, I am fortunate to be interning with  
12 North well Health. This pandemic has been hard, but  
13 it has also made it clear how important the health  
14 industry is and I am honored to be a part of that  
15 world now. Over the past year and a half, I have  
16 been able to turn my life around. I have also seen  
17 my dreams develop. River North is an opportunity for  
18 young adults like myself to pursue their dreams where  
19 they can afford to live and be part of a grown  
20 community in Staten Island. Although I have followed  
21 the health career and [inaudible 03:35:07] are on the  
22 construction track and are looking forward to working  
23 alongside architects, contractors, and being offered  
24 job opportunities, those homes never happened on the  
25

2 North Shore for youth like me. I hope you will  
3 support this project and give young Staten Islanders  
4 the opportunity to stay in their home Borough while  
5 having access to resources and jobs needed to  
6 succeed. Thank you. Emerging you devote to support  
7 River North. Thank you for your time and  
8 consideration.

9 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Thank you,  
10 again, for your testimony today. We can call up the  
11 next panelist.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panelist,  
13 the next and final panelist, for this panel will be  
14 the Rev. Judy Brown.

15 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Judy Brown, we can  
17 see you. Judy Brown, if you see any requests to--  
18 there we go.

19 REV. JUDY BROWN: Yes. Good afternoon,  
20 all. My name is Rev. Judy L. Brown and I am the  
21 senior pastor of the Bethel Community Church in  
22 Tompkins will, as well as the executive director of  
23 the African Refuge. I am here to support River North  
24 because, you know, in the climate that we live in, I  
25 really cannot say no to housing. Housing is the

1 essential right and so housing is needed. I do  
2 believe that there is some negotiations conversations  
3 that are needed to make the project work. I believe  
4 that River North will bring labor to the island. The  
5 developers are willing to work with the community, as  
6 well is bringing union jobs as well as have an open  
7 shop and will work with nonprofits. So, it has many,  
8 many valuable parts to it. And so, I just want to  
9 say that this is a unique opportunity and we can work  
10 it out so that there is housing that is meeting the  
11 requirements of our city Councilwoman, Debbie Rose,  
12 and meeting the requirements of our community be and  
13 we have a win-win. I am kind of rushed this morning,  
14 but thank you so much. I think this is going to be a  
15 wonderful addition to the island. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Reverend.  
18 Thank you for your testimony today. Is that the last  
19 of the panelists?

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes. There was  
21 the last speaker on this panel.

22 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Great. Do we have any  
23 Council members who wish to ask this panel any  
24 questions?

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I see no members  
3 with questions for the panel.

4 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
5 more questions for this panel, the witness panel is  
6 now excused and, counsel, if you can please call up  
7 the next panel.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel well  
9 be Jan Koehler, David Jones, and Theo Dorian.  
10 Starting with Jan Koehler who will be followed by  
11 David Jones.

12 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

13 JAN KOEHLER: I am not sure if I chose the  
14 right thing. I have lived in this neighborhood for  
15 most of the past 50 years. I've seen all of these  
16 spectacular failures. In fact, one of them since the  
17 middle of my panoramic view. It is a 20 story,  
18 unfinished, empty hull. Before starting another  
19 project, why not finish what we have? How about the  
20 building at the base of Nicholas Street? Is that  
21 for? That sat empty for years and years. Who is  
22 going to live here? Who is going to take all these  
23 apartments? What I see is a the neighborhood that  
24 has, really, no urban amenities. They don't exist  
25 here and people moving into a place like that are

2 going to expect that. So, that is all I have to say.  
3 I don't feel real good about this. Don't think the  
4 neighborhood is ready for it and I don't think it  
5 will be successful. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Jan. Thank  
7 you for your testimony today. I just want to  
8 acknowledge that we have been joined by Councilwoman  
9 Rivera. I know that you had a previous chairing a  
10 previous committee and I want to take a pause right  
11 here to see if we can just quickly take her vote and  
12 proceed from here.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, Chair. On a  
14 continuing vote of the land use items, Council member  
15 Rivera?

16 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: If we can unmute the  
17 Councilwoman? Yep.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Thank you, Mr.  
19 Chair. I vote aye.

20 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, the vote  
22 currently stands at six in the affirmative, zero in  
23 the negative, and no abstentions. We will continue  
24 to keep the vote open until the end.

2 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Thank you,  
3 Councilwoman.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: In the next speaker  
5 on this panel will be David Jones who will be  
6 followed by Theo Dorian.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

8 DAVID JONES: Yes. Thank you very much for  
9 giving me this opportunity to speak. So much of what  
10 I have to say has been shared by my fellow neighbors  
11 and much of my objection to this project has been  
12 stated both high realities, lack of amenities, and  
13 just the general inappropriateness of this particular  
14 project. Staten Island St. George, was one of the  
15 principles involved in bringing on the Historic  
16 District. It didn't go as far as we would've liked  
17 to, but it was with the idea in mind of both  
18 appreciation of the architecture in the quality of  
19 life that so made St. George what it is today. Yes,  
20 the neighborhood is walkable. The neighborhood is  
21 wonderful. Most people know each other,  
22 surprisingly. It is unlike a great many communities.  
23 It is not New York City. It is not Brooklyn. It is  
24 not any of Queens or any of those places. This is a  
25 very unique spot. Much of our view areas have been

2 robbed. We have been robbed of our view corridors.  
3 Our views, the spectacular views we have held here,  
4 have been taken away and we're not Fort Lee, New  
5 Jersey. We are not a cookie-cutter community where  
6 we are all crammed in here. The supporters are  
7 people who do not live here, who do not really  
8 understand what St. George is about. I appreciate  
9 their interest for their programs in the work that  
10 they do, but it is-- we already are saturated with  
11 programs, as it were and--

12 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

13 DAVID JONES: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. You can  
15 wrap it up if you were about to end right there. We  
16 can give you couple seconds.

17 DAVID JONES: Well, was just going to say  
18 we have supported Project Hospitality. We have  
19 supported Starlight and many, many others. To close  
20 this out, I guess, we need to have more input from  
21 the people who will be affected by this proposal in  
22 this project has been fast tracked and we need to put  
23 the brakes on this.

24

25

2 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Thank you. Thank  
3 you for your testimony. Let's call up the next  
4 panelist.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next and final  
6 panelist for this group will be Theo Dorian.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

8 THEO DORIAN: Hello. My name is Theo  
9 Dorian. I am the president of the St. George Civic  
10 Association and our Association opposes both the  
11 proposed zoning change in the proposed development.  
12 I heard several speakers today talk about the need  
13 for engagement with the community and, indeed,  
14 Madison Capital was eagerly and frequently pursuing  
15 us and our members at the onset of this project.  
16 When we presented our list of objections, a few of  
17 which I might have a moment to share with you, we  
18 never heard from them again. None of us have ever  
19 had any engagement with them. It literally stopped  
20 the moment we had imposed this plan. All of the  
21 people who have spoken in favor of it today, I note,  
22 have been clergy and people from programs outside of  
23 St. George and I, like the previous speaker,  
24 wholeheartedly endorse and applaud their missions,  
25 but a general effort to bring more people to the

2 neighborhood should not be concentrated on this area.

3 There are parts of our neighborhood that can

4 effectively hold taller, denser construction without

5 harm to the existing infrastructure and arride those

6 protections, but this is emphatically not one of

7 them. Speaker Leticia Remauro mentioned that it is

8 surrounded by tall buildings. This is extremely

9 untrue. To date, no down or mid-hill construction--

10 anything east of Hamilton Avenue-- has been higher

11 than the neighboring houses and the buildings across

12 the street, the tallest of them are four to six

13 stories. The very tallest are at the crest of that

14 hill and they already place incredibly heavy burden

15 on the traffic patterns and the water supply and

16 other factors in that area. So, this falls in a

17 district that was only recently rezoned as a special

18 district and, since that time, there has been no

19 construction in the area. Under the current zoning--

20 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

21 THEO DORIAN: to build a reasonable project

22 that fulfills the goals of many of-- of everybody

23 who spoke today without having to place this

24 extraordinary burden on a block that already is the

25 densest neighborhood of Staten Island. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Theo. Thank  
3 you for your testimony today.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will hear from  
5 one final speaker on this panel. Richenda Kramer  
6 will be next. Richenda Kramer.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

8 RICHENDA KRAMER: Hello?

9 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Hi.

10 RICHENDA KRAMER: Okay. It doesn't have  
11 video. I am a Staten Islander. I live in the St.  
12 George area about a quarter of a mile from the ferry  
13 and I totally oppose this project. The Bay Street  
14 development plan is planning several hundred  
15 apartments that they're putting up. We have already  
16 got two Irbi [sp?] Projects that are a quarter of a  
17 mile on the other side of the ferry from this  
18 proposed project. They haven't been able to hold  
19 their tenants and they are very empty, apart from all  
20 of the affordable apartments there. There've been  
21 other buildings. There was a building at the bottom  
22 of Victory Boulevard that also took about-- it took  
23 Sandy to make people buy in it. To rent those  
24 apartments. There are no services in this area and I  
25 don't see how it would be possible to put a

2 supermarket in this project which would need access.  
3 I mean, supermarkets have several large deliveries a  
4 day and it doesn't sound as if it is going to be  
5 possible for them to move in and out of something as  
6 the streets of Hamilton Avenue that would be  
7 impossible because of the hill. Stuyvesant and  
8 Victory and Richmond Terrace are extremely busy and  
9 Stuyvesant Place, you can't really take a truck going  
10 up there. I mean, I don't understand. And Richmond  
11 Terrace, as already noted, is very busy with two bus  
12 services. It is also on the route from the bus depot  
13 on Rector Street.

14 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

15 RICHENDA KRAMER: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you.

17 RICHENDA KRAMER: Okay.

18 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Is that the last  
19 panelist for this panel?

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, Chair.

21 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Any Council members that  
22 have questions for this panel?

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, I see no  
24 members with questions for this panel.

25

2 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
3 more questions for this panel, the witness panel is  
4 now excused and, counsel, if you can please call up  
5 the next panel.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel  
7 will include Stephanie Echevarrieta, Benjamin Donsky,  
8 Neil Barry, and Joseph Caccamo. We will hear first  
9 from Stephanie Echevarrieta followed by Benjamin  
10 Donsky.

11 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

12 STEPHANIE ECHEVARRIETA: Can everyone  
13 hear me?

14 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: All right. Stephanie,  
15 we've got a big echo here, so hold on one second.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Stephanie, if you  
17 have two devices connected with audio, perhaps we  
18 could try muting one of those. Stephanie, I think we  
19 will try to come back for you in this panel but,  
20 again, we will recommend that if you have two devices  
21 connected to this meeting, perhaps we will try muting  
22 one of them and speaking through the other and we  
23 will come back to you. We will go to Benjamin Donsky  
24 and then Neil Barry.

25 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

2 BENJAMIN DONSKY: Good afternoon, Council  
3 members. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My  
4 name is Benjamin Donsky. I am an urban planner, but  
5 today I'm here as a Staten Island resident who is  
6 concerned with both housing affordability and  
7 protecting our environment. And because of that, I  
8 am strongly in favor of the River North proposal.  
9 While some Staten Islanders like to think that our  
10 relative geographic isolation translates to being  
11 insulated from the city's larger . It is  
12 increasingly difficult for young families like mine  
13 to afford to live here. Families are priced out of  
14 apartments that have multiple bedrooms because  
15 roommates with two incomes and no kids can afford to  
16 pay more in rent. And the problem on the North Shore  
17 is particularly acute because it is the part of the  
18 island that is most impacted by rising rents in  
19 Manhattan and Brooklyn. While this project won't  
20 solve our housing shortage all by itself, it is part  
21 of a much larger solution not only for the borough,  
22 but for the entire city. We also need to relieve  
23 pressure to develop wetlands and environmentally  
24 sensitive areas in Staten Island and concentrating  
25 residential density new major public transit

2 facilities will help to begin to correct this  
3 unsustainable course that we are on. I am personally  
4 the owner of a two unit house in walking distance of  
5 a Staten Island railroad stop. The second unit is a  
6 one bedroom apartment and, while increasing the  
7 number of transit accessible one bedroom apartments  
8 is against my own direct, immediate financial  
9 interests, I want my kids to be able to afford to  
10 live nearby when they become adults and I recognize  
11 the importance of this project for the greater  
12 community. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Thank you,  
14 Benjamin, for your testimony.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, we will hear  
16 from Neil Barry and then Joseph Caccamo.

17 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

18 NEIL BARRY: Hello. My name is Neil  
19 Barry. Yes. Can you hear me?

20 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: We can hear you, Neil.

21 NEIL BARRY: Yes. I thank you for the  
22 opportunity to talk in front of this zoning. Council  
23 member Rose, who is [inaudible 03:54:57]. She's  
24 good. Listen, I just heard Benjamin speak about  
25 what was just talked about. I don't have a prepared

1 statement. The only thing he left out of there is it  
2 is such a segregated community, Staten Island. And  
3 so that isolation is intentional and is by design and  
4 anything that is uncomfortable to someone is Staten  
5 Island is they don't want to move forward. And  
6 there's been many projects and they keep blaming it  
7 on the project itself, but it's the people. The  
8 people don't like the projects because they don't fit  
9 the design of the segregation that is in these  
10 communities. I have some very good friends around  
11 here, but we need to be a little bit more effective  
12 than a little bit more honorable about the people.  
13 Like the young lady from [inaudible 03:55:32]. Two  
14 is a prime example of, given a visual opportunity to  
15 see these high-rises and what it might look like to  
16 maybe-- you know, especially some of our neighbors  
17 like New Brighton and West Brighton. They have never  
18 seen the opportunities that exist and maybe with  
19 these three buildings and these outlets and this  
20 baseball field and the [inaudible 03:55:52] that's  
21 not in service, there is an opportunity. So I'm not  
22 coming at it from the zoning. This is ridiculous.  
23 This has been, for years, the same zoning and things  
24 change and people have to accept change and they  
25

2 don't want to accept change. Things are different  
3 now. There's diversity. There should be some  
4 inclusion in every area. I didn't come to talk long  
5 because I'm working right now, but I thank you for  
6 the opportunity. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next speaker  
9 will be Joseph Caccamo, and then we will try to get  
10 Stephanie Echevarrieta, again. Next speaker is  
11 Joseph Caccamo.

12 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Starting time.

13 JOSEPH CACCAMO: Council members, my name  
14 is Joe Caccamo. I am speaking today in support of  
15 River North. Thank you for allowing me the  
16 opportunity to testify about this important project.  
17 The developers behind River North have a record of  
18 actually delivering on the proposals that they put  
19 forward. The proposals in particular include  
20 investments into the North Shore community that is  
21 sorely needed. With approximately 225 units of  
22 affordable housing, ample public open space, and  
23 improved sidewalks and streetscapes, River North will  
24 bolster the North Shore status as a gateway to Staten  
25 Island in its many restaurants, retail, and cultural

2 institutions. Furthermore, I was pleased to hear  
3 about the partnerships that the River North team has  
4 formed as a part of this project. For instance,  
5 River North team is working with Building Skills New  
6 York to ensure Staten Island others can access and be  
7 trained for construction jobs before, during, and  
8 after the development of River North project. I was  
9 even more pleased to hear that the River North team  
10 is working with community organizations and  
11 stakeholders that I know interest to ensure that  
12 these opportunities reach the people of Staten  
13 Island. Again, thank you for hearing my testimony  
14 today and I urge you to vote in favor of River North.

15 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you for your  
16 testimony today, Joseph.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And now we will  
18 just see if we can reach Stephanie Echevarrieta.  
19 Stephanie Echevarrieta. Chair, pleased stand by and  
20 we will see if we can bring her in.

21 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay.

22 STEPHANIE ECHEVARRIETA: Hello?

23 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Hi, Stephanie. How are  
24 you?

2                   STEPHANIE ECHEVARRIETA:       Hi. I  
3 apologize for that before.

4                   CHAIRPERSON MOYA: No. No worries.

5                   STEPHANIE ECHEVARRIETA:       Good  
6 afternoon, members of the Zoning and Franchises  
7 Subcommittee. My name is Stephanie Echevarrieta and  
8 I am here today in support of River North. As the  
9 program assistant for Youth Filled Impact, I  
10 responsible for the management of the office as well  
11 as to help support the students in their community  
12 service efforts. Because I work closely with them,  
13 you see the ways in which stable opportunities and  
14 resources can help change their lives. As students  
15 are provided with [inaudible 03:58:47] which builds  
16 leadership, strength, and work ethic and provides  
17 opportunity for critical thinking, this is why we  
18 need thoughtful partners to bring new housing jobs in  
19 community facilities to the area. This will allow  
20 our community to grow and flourish. Our borough,  
21 although sometimes forgotten, is a community of  
22 ambition, aspirational youth, and hard-working New  
23 Yorkers. We deserve to have a River North. It will  
24 fill a serious housing gap, providing apartments for  
25 those of varying income levels, including our youth

2 and their families. It will also help spur local  
3 businesses which means new jobs for our students and  
4 neighbors. These are not little things. This is how  
5 we change generations future, by showing them that  
6 there is a community that supports. I hope you will  
7 vote in favor as I truly think this project will be  
8 an opportunity to help hundreds of Staten Island you  
9 and young adults. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Stephanie.  
11 Thank you for our testimony today. Is this the last  
12 panelist?

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, that was  
14 the last speaker on this panel.

15 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. Do we have any  
16 Council members establish this panel any questions?

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, Chair. I see  
18 no members with questions for the panel.

19 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
20 questions for this panel, the witness panel is now  
21 excused. And, counsel, if you can please call up the  
22 next panel.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If there are any  
24 other members of the public at this time who wish to  
25 testify on the River North rezoning proposal, please

2 press the raise hand button now. Chair, the meeting  
3 will briefly stand at ease while we check for any  
4 additional members. Chair, I see no other members  
5 of the public who wish to testify on this item.

6 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Okay. There being no  
7 other members of the public who wish to testify on LU  
8 numbers 842, 843, and 844 for the River North  
9 rezoning proposal, the public hearing is now closed  
10 in the items are laid over. That concludes today's  
11 business and I will remind the viewing public that  
12 for anyone wishing to submit written testimony for  
13 items that were heard today, please submit it by  
14 emailing to [landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@Council.NYC.gov).

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair?

16 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Yes?

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Pardon me. Before  
18 you say the next thing, we will-- With your  
19 permission, I'll just close the vote.

20 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Oh, I'm sorry. Yep.  
21 Absolutely.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: By a vote of six in  
23 the affirmative, zero in the negative, and no  
24 abstentions, the items are approved and referred to  
25 the fall Land Use Committee.

2 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Great. And thank you.

3 And, with that, I would like to now thank the members  
4 of the public, my colleagues, the Subcommittee  
5 counsel, land use and other Council staff, as well as  
6 the sergeant-at-arms for participating in today's  
7 meeting. This meeting is hereby adjourned. Thank  
8 you very much.

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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 October 10, 2021