

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING
AND FRANCHISES

----- X

October 5, 2021
Start: 10:10 a.m.
Recess: 12:15 p.m.

HELD AT: Remote Hearing, Virtual Room 2

B E F O R E: Francisco P. Moya
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Francisco P. Moya
Diana Ayala
Joseph C. Borelli
Barry S. Grodenchik
Stephen T. Levin
Antonio Reynoso
Carlina Rivera

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

Frank St. Jacques

Renzo Ramirez

Laurie A. Cumbo

Bryan Kelly

Melanie Myers

Dan Kaplan

Stephanie Rhodes

Shelby Green

Lucy Koteen

Julia Bryant

John Dew

Sandy Reiburn

Tina Fleming

Max Cerci

Cynthia McKnight

Brian Adamczyk

Blaire Green

Frank Covalt

Ernest Augustus

Barry Conyers

Lori Raphael

Regina Myer

Judith Rosenfeld

Alef Tadese

Daniel Arnow

Devin Mathis

Denny Salas

Elan Lee

Bernell Grier

William Thomas

Darold Burgess

Beth Allen

Raisa Brown

Edgar Pereria

Lorrie Ayers-Hutchinson

Alex Carrington

@

1
2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Sergeants, can you
3 please start your recordings?

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: PC recording under
5 way.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Cloud recording
7 started.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Backup is rolling.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good, thank you.
10 Sergeant Polite.

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS POLITE: Good morning
12 and welcome to the remote hearing on zoning and
13 franchises. Will council members and staff please
14 turn on their video at this time. Thank you. To
15 minimize disruptions, please place all cell phones
16 and electronics to vibrate. You may send your
17 testimony to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Once
18 again, that's landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov.
19 Chair, we are ready to begin.

20 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Ah, thank you and good
21 morning. Um, my name is Council Member Francisco
22 Moya. I am the chair of the subcommittee on Zoning
23 and Franchises. Ah, I'm joined remotely today by
24 Council Members Grodenchik, Ayala, and Rivera. Ah,
25 today we will hold a public hearing on the Broadway

1 and 11th Street rezoning related to property located
2 at Queens and the 130th St. Felix proposal relating
3 to property located in Brooklyn. Before we begin,
4 ah, I will recognize the subcommittee counsel to
5 review the remote, ah, meeting procedures.
6

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair
8 Moya. I am Arthur Huh, counsel to the subcommittee.
9 Members of the public wishing to testify were asked
10 to register for today's hearings. If you wish to
11 testify and have not already registered, we ask that
12 you please do so now by visiting the New York City
13 Council website at www.council.nyc.gov/landuse,
14 www.council.nyc.gov/landuse. Members of the public
15 may be also view the live stream broadcast of this
16 meeting at the council's website. As a technical
17 note, for the benefit of the viewing public, if you
18 need an accessible version of any of the
19 presentations shown this morning, shown today, ah,
20 please send an email request to
21 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. When called to
22 testify, individuals appearing before the
23 subcommittee will remain muted until recognized by
24 the chair to speak. Applicant teams will be
25 recognized as a group and called first, followed by

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

1 issues. And Chair Moya will now continue with
2 today's agenda items.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Ah, thank you, Arthur.
5 I now open the public hearing on preconsidered LU
6 items for the Broadway 11th Street rezoning proposal,
7 seeking zoning map and zoning text amendments and
8 relating to property in Council Member Van Bramer's
9 district in Queens. As a reminder for anyone wishing
10 to testifying on this item, if you have not already
11 done so you must register online and you may do that
12 now by visiting the council's website at
13 www.council.nyc.gov/landuse. Ah, Counsel, can you
14 please call, ah, the first panel for this item?

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The applicant panel
16 for this item will include Frank St. Jacques, land
17 use counsel to the applicant. Ah, also available for
18 Q&A will be Steve Sinacori and Damien Smith.

19 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Great. Counsel, if
20 you could, um, please administer the affirmation.

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

24 STEVEN SINACORI: Steven Sinacori.
25

2 FRANK ST. JACQUES: Frank St. Jacques.

3 DAMIEN SMITH: Damien Smith.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Do you
5 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and
6 nothing but the truth before this subcommittee and to
7 respond honestly to council member questions?

8 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

9 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

10 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Um, when
12 you are, ah, when you are ready to, ah, ah, present
13 your slide show please, ah, say so and it will be
14 displayed on the screen by our staff and slides will
15 be advanced for you when you say next. Ah, as a
16 technical note for the benefit of the viewing public,
17 if you need an accessible version of this, ah,
18 presentation please send an email request to
19 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Ah, and now, ah,
20 if you and your team may, ah, begin, ah, I'll ask all
21 the panelists as they first begin any remarks or in
22 response to questions to please introduce yourselves,
23 ah, by restating your names and organizations for the
24 record. Ah, you may begin.

1
2 FRANK ST. JACQUES: Thank you, Chair Moya
3 and subcommittee members. Um, I'm Frank St. Jacques,
4 and associated with Akerman LLP. We're land use
5 counsel for this project. Um, if you could, please
6 go ahead and lie, ah, excuse me, load my slide show
7 presentation. Um, I'm also joined by Steve Sinacori
8 from my office and Damien Smith of ownership, ah, who
9 will be available to answer questions, ah, after the
10 presentation. Next slide please. We are here to
11 present an application for a zoning map amendment to
12 rezone under-utilized property in Ravenswood on the
13 south side of Broadway between 11th Street and 12th
14 Street from the existing R5 zoning district to a
15 special mixed use district, or MX district that pairs
16 an M1-4 manufacturing zoning district and an R7A
17 residential zoning district. This application also
18 seeks zoning text amendments to establish an MIH, or
19 mandatory inclusionary housing area with MIH option
20 1, and to establish this MX district within the
21 zoning text. These actions will facilitate the
22 development of a seven-story mixed use building with
23 199 units, including 50 permanently income-
24 restricted units under MIH option 1. Next slide
25 please. This portion of Ravenswood was zoned with an

1 R5 residential district in 1961 that remains in place
2 today despite the prevalence of industrial uses,
3 which are shown on this land use map in purple. The
4 R5 district is characterized by industrial,
5 warehouse, and garage type buildings and pockets of
6 low-density older housing stock. In contrast, the
7 area north of Broadway was rezoned in the 2010
8 Astoria rezoning and there are several new eight-
9 story residential buildings on the north side of
10 Broadway in the R7 district, which are shown with
11 blue circles on this land use map. You can also see
12 that there is very little local retail in the area.
13 Next slide please. And you can see that surrounding
14 built context in this aerial view, which is looking
15 at the, um, rezoning area, ah, from the south looking
16 north. The project area is located on two wide
17 streets, Broadway and 11th Street, and is within the
18 transit zone. North of the site along Broadway and
19 the existing R7A/C2-3 district you can see those
20 eight-story residential buildings, the lower density
21 warehouse contacts to the south, as shown on the
22 bottom portion on this slide. The block west of the
23 site across 11th Street was rezoned with an R7X with
24 a C-13 overlay and that's R6B district in 2019. Next
25

1 slide please. So this slide shows the existing R5
2 zoning district on the left with the site shaded in
3 red and the right shows the proposed M1-4/R7A MX
4 district. The special mixed use district zoning
5 designation was established back in 1997 to encourage
6 investment in existing neighborhoods, such as
7 Ravenswood, by allowing a balanced variety of uses,
8 including light industrial uses consistent with the
9 historic character of this area. The MX district
10 allows for new medium density mixed use development
11 that is consistent with the surrounding built context
12 and zoning. Next slide please. Here are details of
13 the proposed development. Ah, these actions would
14 facilitate, ah, seven-story mixed use building with
15 199 units, 50 of which would be permanently income-
16 restricted under MIH option 1 and new job generating
17 uses including approximately, ah, 28,686 square feet
18 of commercial and light industrial uses. These
19 include a grocery store, local retail, arts
20 programming space, a wine distributor, and floral
21 production studio. The proposed measure zoning
22 district ensures that this range of uses is permitted
23 in the project area. The breakdown of MIH units by
24 income band and unit size is also shown on this
25

1 slide. Ah, 17 units will be provided at 40% AMI, 17
2 at 16% AMI, and 16 units at 80% AMI. Hannick will be
3 the project's MIH administering agent and we also
4 note that we have signed an agreement with 32BJ for
5 prevailing wage building service worker jobs. Next
6 slide please. Here you can see the ground floor
7 configuration of uses, including several
8 nonresidential uses along with the residential
9 lobbies and, ah, access to parking. Next slide
10 please. The proposed development servicing
11 [inaudible] the community as there is currently very
12 little local retail in the area, ah, along Broadway.
13 This building will provide a grocery store and local
14 retail, most likely, ah, locally oriented, ah, food
15 and beverage use. And you can see that the corner of
16 the building is chamfered at 11th Street, as you can
17 see on the right-hand side of the screen. Next slide
18 please. And that chamfer, um, which you can see here
19 on the left-hand side of the screen allows an outdoor
20 seating area for that local retail. Um, along 11th
21 Street there will also be a floral production studio.
22 The florist, Cambridge Floral Designs, intends to
23 relocate from Long Island City. And then finally,
24 um, the wine distributor, Il Bacco, excuse me, Il

1 Bacco Wine Merchant, is planning to move its
2 operations from Nassau County. Next slide please.
3 And finally you can see the arts programming space at
4 the corner of 12th Street and 33rd Avenue, and you
5 can also see the building form and how the building
6 steps down from seven stories along Broadway to six
7 and five stories on the southern edge of the
8 building. That concludes my presentation. Ah, I'm
9 happy to answer any questions and, as I noted, Steve
10 Sinacori from my office and Damien Smith from
11 ownership are also available for questions. Thank
12 you.
13

14 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Thank you,
15 Frank. Thank you for your testimony today. I just
16 have one quick question. Ah, do you have a plan, ah,
17 in place to address, ah, local hiring during
18 construction generally and, ah, how do you respond to
19 some of borough president's recommendations around
20 jobs specifically? I know you mentioned the service
21 workers, but, um, just in particular about local
22 hires.

23 FRANK ST. JACQUES: Yes, um, the, the
24 project team has actually been working with, ah,
25 Urban Upbound, ah, to provide, to respond to the

1
2 borough president's, ah, request for, for local
3 hiring, and M/WBE hiring, ah, as a component of the
4 project, ah, so we're happy to report that, that
5 we're working with, with, ah, Urban Upbound on that.

6 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Great. Ah, that's it
7 for me. Um, I now want to turn over, ah, to my
8 colleagues if they have any questions, um, for this
9 panel.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, Council Member
11 Grodenchik has, ah, hand raised for the question, for
12 a question.

13 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Barry G, you're up.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Um, if I
15 could ask the applicant to go back to their
16 presentation? And specifically the map of the area.

17 FRANK ST. JACQUES: This is probably
18 slide three.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: It might have
20 been. Yes.

21 FRANK ST. JACQUES: OK.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: So, um, my
23 only question, Chair, is whether or not this building
24 will affect Socrates Sculpture Park with, with
25 shadows.

1
2 FRANK ST. JACQUES: So that, that's a
3 good question, and that was part of a, a thorough,
4 um, what we were required to, to perform, ah,
5 environmental analysis for this project. Ah, we
6 determined that there would be, ah, no, no impact,
7 ah, from the project on Socrates Sculpture Park.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: OK. Thank
9 you very much. Thank you, Chair.

10 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, um, thank
11 you Barry. If there's any other council members who
12 have any questions, ah, for this panel?

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: No, Chair, I see no
14 members, ah, other members with questions.

15 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: OK. There being, ah,
16 no further questions, ah, the applicant panel is
17 excused. Counsel, are there any members of the
18 public who wish to testify on the Broadway 11th
19 Street rezoning application?

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, Chair, I believe
21 that we do have one public witness who has signed up
22 to speak. Ah, for members of the public, please note
23 again that witnesses will generally be called in
24 panels when necessary. If you are a members of the
25 public signed up to testify on the Broadway 11th

1 Street rezoning proposal please stand by when you
2 hear your name being called and prepare to speak when
3 the chair says that you may begin. Please be
4 reminded that once all panelists in your group have
5 completed their testimony you will be removed from
6 the meeting as a group and the next group of speakers
7 will be introduced. Once removed, participants may
8 continue to view the live stream broadcast of this
9 hearing at the council's website. We will now hear
10 from the first panel, which will consist of Renzo
11 Ramirez. Renzo Ramirez, ah, to give testimony.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Just, ah,
14 as a reminder to members of the public you will be
15 given two minutes to speak. Ah, please do not begin
16 until the Sergeant at Arms has started the clock.
17 Ah, Renzo, you may begin.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

19 RENZO RAMIREZ: Can you guys hear me?

20 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: We can, Renzo.

21 Whenever you're ready.

22 RENZO RAMIREZ: All right, cool, thank
23 you. Good morning, chair. Good morning, Chair Moya
24 and members of the subcommittee. My name is Renzo
25

1 Ramirez and I am a member of 32BJ. I'm here on
2 behalf of 32BJ SCIU and the more than 8000 32BJ
3 members to express our strong support for this
4 project. The developers, D and K Construction and
5 Prosper Property Group, have applied to build a
6 seven-story mixed use building that will include
7 residential and commercial space. We are pleased to
8 pronounce the developers have made a credible commit
9 to provide prevailing wages jobs for the future
10 building service workers at this site. We estimate
11 that this rezoning will allow for the creation of
12 five new property service jobs and 50 new affordable
13 units. These jobs are typically filled by local
14 members of the community and because its commitment
15 will pay family [inaudible] and wages which help
16 bring working families into the middle class. The
17 percentage of affordable apartments are needed for
18 working people in Queens. This affordable housing
19 and commitment to good prevailing wage jobs will give
20 the opportunity for upward mobility, security, and
21 dignity to working class families. 32BJ supports
22 responsible developers who invest in the communities
23 where they build. We know that this development will
24 continue to uphold the industry standard and provide
25

2 opportunities for, for working families [inaudible].

3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Renzo.

5 Thank you for, ah, your testimony today. Ah, if, ah,

6 any council members have questions for this panel

7 please raise your hand.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, there are no

9 members with questions for this panel.

10 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: OK. There being, ah,

11 no more questions for this panel, the witness panel

12 is excused.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If there are any

14 additional members of the public who wish to testify

15 on the Broadway 11th Street rezoning proposal please

16 press the raise hand button now. The meeting will

17 briefly stand at ease while we check for any newly

18 registered members of the public. Chair Moya there

19 are, ah, no other members of the public who wish to

20 testify on this item.

21 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: OK. There being, ah,

22 no members of the public who wish to testify on the

23 preconsidered LU items relating to the Broadway 11th

24 Street rezoning proposal, the public hearing on these

25 items is now closed and they are laid over. I now

1 open the public housing on LU numbers 875, 876, 877,
2 878 for the 130 St. Felix Street proposal, which
3 seeks zoning maps, zoning text amendments, as well as
4 two zoning special permits, ah, and relates to
5 property in Majority Leader Cumbo's district in
6 Brooklyn. Ah, I will remind the viewing public for
7 anyone wishing to testify on this item, if you have
8 not have already done so, you must register, ah,
9 online and you may do that now by visiting the
10 council's website at www.council.nyc.gov/landuse.

11 Um, Counsel, if you could, ah, please, ah, call the
12 first panel for this item. Do we have, ah, the
13 Majority Leader, ah, ah, wishing to make an opening
14 statement? I apologize if I skipped over that.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sure. I see that the
16 Majority Leader does appear to be, ah, in the
17 meeting. Um, I'll recommend that if she does want to
18 give a statement please use the raise hand function.

19 MAJORITY LEADER CUMBO: I've, I've
20 unmuted myself. Can you hear me at this time?

21 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Yep, we can hear you.

22 MAJORITY LEADER CUMBO: Thank you so
23 much. Good morning, everyone, and thank you to Chair
24 Moya for hosting this meeting. I'm on my way to a
25

1 ribbon cutting in Fort Greene Park, but I certainly
2 wanted to, um, express my enthusiasm for this
3 particular project at 130 St. Felix. This is my
4 first opportunity to have a project that has
5 affordable home ownership opportunities in our
6 district. The majority of the projects that I have
7 had the opportunity to approve have been rentals, ah,
8 affordable housing rentals, but this project will
9 give many deserving families an opportunity to have,
10 ah, an opportunity to own homes within, ah, the Fort
11 Greene community. And that's a rarity, with such
12 public access as the Atlantic Avenue train station,
13 cultural institutions right in the midst of the
14 neighborhood, as well as having an opportunity to
15 have local businesses, the greatest schools in the
16 world right here in our district, and for a family to
17 be able to afford the opportunity to purchase
18 something in the district which has been, um, so out
19 of reach for so many families. This is really a
20 great opportunity to do that. I'm also extremely
21 excited about the opportunity for the Brooklyn Music
22 School, an institution that is over 109 years old,
23 um, one of the oldest cultural institutions in
24 Brooklyn, New York, and New York City, for that
25

1 matter, to have an opportunity to expand their
2 particular facility to serve even more children who
3 are deserving of a music and arts education. So this
4 really a win-win, ah, for our community on so many
5 levels, the ability to have affordable home
6 ownership, the ability to have, ah, local hiring
7 within our community, and the ability for an anchor
8 organization in our community to finally be able to
9 expand its facility to service more children is
10 certainly something that I'm proud to see, um, as I
11 close my tenure in the City Council. Thank you so
12 much.
13

14 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Majority
15 Leader Cumbo. Thank you for your, um, ah, opening
16 statement. Ah, I now, um, ask the counsel to please,
17 ah, call up, ah, the first panel for this time.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The applicant panel
19 will include Bryan Kelly, Stephanie Rhodes, Dan
20 Kaplan, Melanie Myers, Shelby Green, and also
21 available for questions, ah, and answers David Court
22 and Abby Rudo.

23 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, and
24 Counsel, if you could please, ah, administer the
25 affirmation.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Panelists, ah, please
3 in some semblance of an order, ah, state your name
4 for the record and raise your right hand.

5 BRYAN KELLY: Gotham Organization.

6 MELANIE MYERS: Melanie Myers, Fried
7 Frank.

8 STEPHANIE RHODES: Stephanie Rhodes,
9 Gotham Organization.

10 DAN KAPLAN: Dan Kaplan, FX Collaborative
11 Architects.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ah, do you affirm to
13 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
14 truth before this subcommittee and to respond
15 honestly to council member questions?

16 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

17 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

18 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah.

19 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

20 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you.

21 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Great. Ah, thank you.
23 Ah, when you're ready to present your slide show, ah,
24 please say so and it will be displayed on the screen
25 by our staff. The slides will be advanced when you

1 say next. Ah, once again, anyone who requires an
2 accessible version of this presentation may send an
3 email request to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov.
4 Um, and also I just want to quickly recognize that
5 we've been joined by Council Member Levin. Ah, and
6 now, ah, Ms. Myers, if you and your team, ah, ah,
7 would like to begin you can, ah, begin now with your
8 presentation. Thank you.

10 MELANIE MYERS: Thank you very much, and
11 if you could, ah, um, bring up the slides that would
12 be great. Thank you, Chair Moya and council members.
13 Ah, thank you for having us. My name is Melanie
14 Myers. I'm a land use attorney with Fried Frank
15 Harris Shriver & Jacobson. We're the attorney for
16 the applicant. Um, next slide please. The, the
17 applications before you are for a series of land use
18 approvals that will replace a long-vacant site in
19 downtown Brooklyn with a contextual residential and
20 community facility building to be developed by the
21 Gotham Organization. The development will be located
22 at 130 and 130 St. Felix Street within the BAM
23 historic district and will share a zoning law with
24 the existing Brooklyn Music School on its
25 northeastern side and with a 512-foot tall 1 Hanson

1 condominium on its southwestern side. When complete
2 the project will include approximately 120
3 residential units, of which 30% will provide a unique
4 home ownership opportunity for low and moderate
5 income households and it will also include 20,000
6 square feet of expansion space for the Brooklyn Music
7 School, a long-standing Brooklyn not-for-profit. I
8 am going to run through the requested land use
9 actions, then we'll turn it over first to Dan Kaplan
10 of FX Collaborative to discuss the proposed building
11 in its context, then to Stephanie Rhodes of the
12 Gotham Organization and Shelby Green of the Brooklyn
13 Music School to discuss the project's affordable
14 housing program and the goals for the Brooklyn Music
15 School. Next slide please. There, next slide, thank
16 you. There are four land use actions. The first we
17 are seeking is zoning map amendment from the existing
18 C6-1 zoning to a C6-6 and the C6-4 district. This
19 amendment will appropriately place the southern half
20 of the block into higher density zoning districts
21 immediately adjacent to Brooklyn's largest
22 transportation hub. It will also replace the zoning
23 district that is inconsistent with the existing 1
24 Hanson building context with a zoning that brings the
25

1 existing building into closer compliance. The zoning
2 map amendment will allow for the remainder of the
3 zoning law, including the 130 St. Felix site, to be
4 built to a transitional, roughly 8 FAR scale.

5 Second, we are seeking zoning text amendments to
6 rezone the area as a mandatory inclusionary housing ,
7 MIH area, to modify the FAR permitted in C6-6

8 districts to the standard 12 FAR if the district is
9 also zoned as an MIH area, and to modify an existing

10 downtown Brooklyn special permit allowing both
11 modifications for developments on irregular sites to
12 make it applicable in C6-4 and C6-6 zones. Next

13 slide please. Third, we are requesting a special
14 permit pursuant to the revised, ah, [inaudible] 101-
15 82 to modify height and setback regulations, ah, for

16 the building. This modification will allow for the
17 130 St. Felix Street building to be moved away from

18 the lower scale St. Felix Street and towards the

19 Ashland Street above a low two- and three-story base.

20 We are also seeking modifications of court and lot
21 coverage requirements and these modifications will

22 allow us to address a party wall condition and the

23 high lot coverage of the existing 1 Hanson building.

24 Finally, the project is seeking a waiver under zoning
25

1 resolution section 74533 to eliminate a requirement
2 for 17 accessory parking spaces. This special permit
3 will allow the lower floors of the project to be
4 occupied by the Brooklyn Music School rather than
5 parking, something that we think is appropriate in
6 this high transit zone. Thank you for your time. I
7 will now turn it over to Dan Kaplan.

9 DAN KAPLAN: Good morning Chair Moya and
10 council members, and, ah, Majority Leader Cumbo. Ah,
11 next slide please, and the slide, actually the next
12 two slides. I will walk through the, ah, yes, thank
13 you. Um, ah, the design, ah, aspects of the project.
14 Ah, the development site shown here in red is in a
15 very interesting location in the BAM historic
16 district immediately adjacent to the landmark 1
17 Hanson Place Tower and, ah, across the street from
18 the, ah, ah, Flatbush corridor and, as was noted
19 earlier, ah, steps away from the, um, transit hub.
20 Next panel. Ah, the whole idea behind our massing
21 was to create a transition from the Flatbush corridor
22 to the Fort Greene and BAM historic districts, um,
23 and also be respectful to the 1 Hanson Place
24 landmark. Therefore, we have, um, lowered the
25 building below the main, what we call the shoulder

1 of, of the tower. It has a tapering form that defers
2 to the tower and it covers a, ah, lot line wall
3 that's less ornamented. It also responds to the, um,
4 St. Felix Street scale by creating a 40-foot high
5 street wall and then a 40-foot, a deep setback in two
6 tiers, which I'll show you in a minute. Um, it is
7 worth noting that this project received, um, approval
8 as appropriate from, ah, the Landmarks Preservation
9 Commission. Next slide please. Ah, which you'll see
10 a rendering of the project from, ah, going from
11 bottom to top it, ah, just immediately, ah, right of
12 the, the church, the Hanson Place Church, you can see
13 low street wall and the two steps up and then the
14 tapering form, and then the building setting back,
15 ah, below the main shoulder of, of 1 Hanson Place.
16 We also looked very carefully at the, um,
17 architecture and façade of the art deco tower and
18 have reinterpreted that in a modern way and really
19 looked at the brick colors very carefully, so
20 everything harmonizes. Next slide please. I'll now
21 give you a tour around the building, starting with,
22 um, Fulton Street, ah, looking north with 1 Hanson in
23 the middle of the slide and our, ah, proposed tower
24 or building stepping to the right down, ah, to, ah,
25

1 St. Felix Street. Next slide please, which is Fourth
2 Avenue. Ah, and you can see a little sliver of the
3 building just to the left of 1 Hanson Place. It's
4 really deferential to it and, ah, will not compete
5 with it. Next slide please. Ashland, ah, and Fulton
6 looking south, ah, the BAM cornice in, in the mid
7 ground, and then our building pushed up against the
8 existing lot line building, 1 Hanson, and its
9 setbacks harmonizing with the setbacks of 1 Hanson,
10 and also the tower, or the building being lower than
11 the tower of St. Felix and that piece of mechanical
12 equipment there is actually on the, um, St. Felix
13 Street, ah, the 1 Hanson Place, ah, building. Next
14 slide. Ah, which is from, ah, Hanson Place, and you
15 could see how the, the, the stepping and tiering of
16 the building steps away from the historic district
17 and is deferential to the 1 Hanson Place landmark.
18 Next slide please. St. Felix Street, ah, frontage,
19 ah, the music school is on the right, ah, in those
20 stucco buildings that, that are arrayed, and then our
21 building is just immediately to the left of the that,
22 Brooklyn down into two portions. The portion
23 immediately to the left of, of the music school is
24 the entrance, and then the building steps forward and
25

1
2 is, is really the, the music school's, ah, main, main
3 portion with an entrance to the residential on the
4 far, far of the screen. You can see here the, the
5 setbacks from St. Felix Street that really should,
6 ah, expose, keep exposed the north side of the church
7 and really push, um, the majority of, of the proposed
8 building away from the scale of St. Felix Street.
9 Next slide. On Ashland Place, ah, the building also
10 sets back. It has ah, ah, materials that harmonize
11 with 1 Hanson Place's base. Ah, Brooklyn Music
12 School has a presence on, ah, on Ashland right next
13 to, um, BAM Fisher and, um, the rest of the, the
14 cultural core. Next slide please. Um, this will be
15 a sustainable building. Um, the, ah, it will have,
16 um, deal with storm water in, in a very responsible
17 way with cisterns and green roofs. It will have a
18 very a, um, energy efficient façade that's, ah, not
19 all glass. It has a lot of opaque surfaces for
20 highly insulation, highly insulated, and have healthy
21 materials for all residents. Next slide. Finally,
22 um, a couple more slides, ah, before we turn it over.
23 This is on the left is a section or a cut through the
24 building and in blue you can see Brooklyn Music
25 School on, on three floors with it, its main, with

1 high floor-to-floor heights, um, the main entrance
2 off of, ah, ah, St. Felix Street and on the, the, ah,
3 entire second floor, and a portion of the, of it
4 below grade. Ah, above that is the residential
5 building. On the right is the plan of, um, the
6 ground floor. St. Felix Street is on the, on the
7 right. The Brooklyn Music School is shown in blue,
8 immediately adjacent to the existing music school, so
9 it can, ah, be connected seamlessly with it. The
10 residential is shown as yellow, and on the left side,
11 which is, ah, Ashland Place, is a loading for the,
12 the condominium, the, the, the 1 Hanson Place
13 condominium tower, as well as the service entrance to
14 the residential building, so deliveries and trash
15 will be on Ashland Place and not on the smaller scale
16 St. Felix Street. Next slide. Ah, Shelby will talk
17 about this more in, in a moment, ah, but I just
18 wanted to highlight some of the architectural aspects
19 of the, of the music school expansion. 20,000 square
20 feet, high floor to floor heights. Um, BMS will be
21 able to double their, their, ah, instructional space,
22 um, and critically will allow a place for the school
23 to continue to function on site while the rest of
24 the, ah, existing buildings are being renovated, and
25

1 really preserves, ah, affordable music education at
2 this location, which, ah, was referenced earlier as
3 being for over a century. Ah, with that, I will turn
4 it over to Stephanie Rhodes. Next step.

5
6 STEPHANIE RHODES: Actually we have a,
7 um, we have a couple of slides for Shelby Green
8 [inaudible]...

9 DAN KAPLAN: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry,
10 Shelby.

11 STEPHANIE RHODES: [inaudible].

12 DAN KAPLAN: I'll turn it over to Shelby
13 Green [laughs].

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Shelby, you're on
15 mute.

16 SHELBY GREEN: Thank you. Yeah, I'm
17 Shelby Green, a chair of the Board of Trustees of the
18 Brooklyn Music School, BMS. This mixed use, mixed
19 income project, the future home of the Brooklyn Music
20 School Community Arts Center, promise to play an
21 integral role in so many city objectives and
22 policies. The first has to do with BMS's place in
23 and service to the community. A new building will
24 enable BMS to continue its storied place as an anchor
25 in the community, a place where the young and old

1
2 come to share ideas and to be inspired. BMS began
3 not long after the emergence of the shanty towns in
4 Fort Greene. In the early 1900s BMS offered music
5 lessons in not-so-pretty places, wherever it could
6 find space, like the navy yard amid ship building,
7 and to the poor and struggling for 30 cents a lesson.
8 This project will place BMS solidly in the 21st
9 century. It will mean doubling the performance and
10 instruction space. It will house a state-of-the-art
11 facility for music recording and play, and provide a
12 space for training kids in music production. It will
13 be accessible to persons of all abilities. It will
14 be a venue for other arts programs in the community.
15 The BMS founding principle is that music and arts
16 instruction should be available to all irrespective
17 of needs or background. Our adherence to this
18 principle is revealed in the diverse demographics
19 among students and leadership. More than 60% of
20 students come from communities of color and most
21 receive some sort of financial aid. Starting with
22 me, more than half of the Board of Trustees and staff
23 are diverse by ethnicity and gender. BMS offers
24 music and arts instruction across all general
25 reserve, from African drumming to hip hop to opera.

1 The after-school and summer programs keep students,
2 kids, engaged outside the classroom. The outreach
3 program brings music to public schools and senior
4 centers throughout the city. It is well known that
5 musical training improves cognitive abilities in ways
6 that serves us all in all of our lives' endeavors.
7 But the existing facility, four 100-year-old row
8 houses cobbled together, was not designed for music
9 instruction. The building does not only constrain
10 use, but also the capacity for creativity. They are
11 nearing the end of their lives and it takes
12 tremendous resources to maintain them. They lack
13 both modern infrastructure and energy-efficient
14 systems, now known to be important for our physical
15 and environmental health. The second reason for
16 approving this project has to do with access to the
17 Fort Greene community. BMS and the prospective
18 residents of the new building will own their spaces.
19 This ownership will go a long way to achieving a
20 measure of social equity. While Fort Greene with its
21 mix of cultures and lifestyles is now viewed as a
22 desirable place to live and discover, it was not
23 always that way, and continues to suffer from the
24 lingering impacts of exclusionary government and
25

1 private land use practices over time, from the
2 disinvestment of redlining against once thriving
3 enclaves of black craftsmen to being the target of
4 the plans of Robert Moses at community
5 revitalization, code for removing the poor and ethnic
6 minorities. Now Fort Greene faces the challenge of
7 rising housing prices that may raise new concerning
8 demographic changes. As an example, in the last
9 decade the median home price in Fort Greene rose by
10 over 100%. Keeping music and housing available and
11 affordable are key tools for keeping the community
12 open and inclusive. This well-planned and
13 thoughtfully designed project will act as a strong
14 bulwark against the loss of diversity, ah, and
15 vibrancy in the community. Thanks. Now I'll turn it
16 over to Stephanie.

18 STEPHANIE RHODES: Good morning. Um, if
19 you could please advance, um, a couple more slides.
20 Thank you. Next slide. Ah, 130 St. Felix aims to
21 remove barriers to affordable home ownership in a
22 high-cost area. Long-time residents in this
23 neighborhood find it increasingly difficult, if not
24 impossible, to afford to stay. Ah, given the drastic
25 growth in home prices, ah, which you heard Shelby

1 speak to from around \$400,000 10 years ago to close
2 to 1 million dollars today, purchasing a home remains
3 out of reach for most families. Next slide. So our
4 proposal sets aside 30% of the homes as income
5 targeted for families earning low to moderate income.
6 Um, these will be for-sale homes, creating an
7 opportunity for affordable home ownership, and we
8 will work with the local not-for-profit IMPACCT
9 Brooklyn as the administrative and marketing agent,
10 and to assist with community outreach. Next slide.
11 So income-targeted home ownership addresses a
12 significant existing gap in economic opportunity and
13 access to quality housing. Ah, the homes at 130 St.
14 Felix will be reserved for families at 70%, 90%, and
15 100% of area median income, so low to moderate
16 income. Um, this is an average of 93% area median
17 income. Ah, this is below the maximum allowable
18 average AMI, ah, under MIH option 4. Represented
19 here towards the bottom of the slide are several
20 examples of households that would fall within that
21 income range. Ah, additionally, our unit, unit mix
22 prioritizes larger family size units, ah, with a
23 majority of the homes being one bedroom or larger,
24 and a significant number of those homes being two and
25

1 three bedrooms. Next slide. Using today's area
2 median income figures, this chart represents
3 household incomes that would qualify at 70%, 90%, and
4 100% AMI. Um, to note, the median household income
5 for this area is around \$114,000. Next slide. Ah,
6 as you heard from the Majority Leader, creating
7 affordable home ownership opportunities as opposed to
8 rental is unique for the area and almost
9 unprecedented in a landmark district, where there are
10 greater barriers to home ownership. Um, families are
11 able to build generational wealth that would
12 otherwise be unavailable to them, um, and do not have
13 to relocate further outside of the city in order to,
14 ah, be able to afford to own a home, ah, avoiding
15 displacement and advancing economic equality. Next
16 slide. Ah, additionally we plan to work with Team
17 Brown Consulting to maximize local and M/WBE
18 employment opportunities. Um, we'll provide Team
19 Brown with a procurement schedule and they'll reach
20 out to the community to advance, ah, to announce
21 openings and to gather a list of respondents for our
22 construction manager and we'll all work together to
23 track placement progress and help ensure these goals
24 are either met or exceeded. Next slide. So in
25

1 summary, ah, this is a truly unique proposal to bring
2 income-targeted home ownership along with community
3 facility space to be owned by Brooklyn Music School,
4 creating a lifeline for a cherished arts and cultural
5 institution with a long-standing presence in the
6 community. Additionally, we are committed to
7 advancing employment opportunities, meeting local and
8 M/WBE hiring goals, and providing well-paying 32BJ
9 building service jobs. Our design will be
10 sustainable and energy efficient and is contextual to
11 its surroundings in the neighborhood. This will
12 transfer an empty, unused parking lot into a
13 multitude of benefits for the community. Thank you.
14 If you go to the next slide it'll say thank you, and
15 that's the end of our presentation. Thanks for the
16 opportunity to speak today.

18 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you so much.

19 Um, just a couple of questions here. Um, we were
20 just talking about, ah, the, ah, ah, housing units.
21 What are the proposed prices for the affordable home
22 ownership units, and, ah, how do these prices compare
23 to market rate?

24 STEPHANIE RHODES: So I can take that.

25 Ah, they're at a significant discount from market

1 rate, um, about 60% on average, ah, based on 2020
2 sales data for the area. Um, the prices are
3 calculated such that families will pay no less than
4 25% and no more than 35% of their gross income
5 towards their housing cost, so that's mortgage and
6 common area charges. Um, I can speak to specific
7 pricing.
8

9 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Yeah, if you could.

10 STEPHANIE RHODES: I thought that's where
11 you were going, yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Yeah.

13 STEPHANIE RHODES: Um, OK. So, ah, it,
14 it obviously varies by AMI level, but as an example,
15 ah, 70% AMI one bedroom would be priced at \$59,690,
16 well that's that required income. The home prices
17 [inaudible] AMI and that comes down to a total
18 monthly payment of \$1741 a month at 35% [inaudible].

19 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Could repeat that, you
20 kind of like froze for a minute so I kind of lost you
21 right there.

22 STEPHANIE RHODES: Sure, I lost my screen
23 as well. Um, can you hear me now?

24 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Yep.
25

1
2 STEPHANIE RHODES: Sure, OK. I said as
3 an example at 70% of area median income a one-bedroom
4 unit would be priced at \$246,000, ah, which is a
5 monthly payment of, ah, \$1741 a month.

6 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: OK. Um, and then for
7 the, ah, MIH home ownership units if a homeowner
8 wants to move, ah, how does that unit remain
9 affordable for the next buyer?

10 STEPHANIE RHODES: Ah, so the unit would
11 be restricted to that same area median income, so,
12 ah, the next family looking to purchase would need to
13 qualify at the same income level.

14 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Got it. And will the
15 affordable home ownership residents have equal access
16 to the, ah, building amendments?

17 STEPHANIE RHODES: Yes, equal access to
18 all amendments and same entrance and lobby.

19 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Great. Um, OK. Those
20 are, ah, all the questions that I have, ah, for the
21 panel. Um, Arthur, do we have any council members
22 that wish to ask the panel any questions?

23 MAJORITY LEADER CUMBO: I have a
24 question.

1
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ah, council members
3 with questions should use the, yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Ah, here we go. Ah,
5 let me turn this over now to, ah, Majority Leader
6 Cumbo for some questions.

7 MAJORITY LEADER CUMBO: Thank you so
8 much. Um, much of what was, um, discussed, ah,
9 during the presentation answered many of my
10 questions. I want to reiterate that, um, the
11 partnership with Team Brown Consulting is very
12 important. Um, we want to make sure that local
13 hiring is happening our community and so I'm very
14 pleased that you all have already created an
15 arrangement with Ed Brown Consulting. But I want,
16 what I want to get ahead of is I want to make sure
17 and to ensure that Team Brown Consulting is brought
18 in, in the very infancy stages of the project. So I
19 certainly want to make sure that, um, their
20 leadership and their experience of hiring in the
21 community is brought in at a very [inaudible] for,
22 ah, this particular project. I also wanted to ask,
23 because so many projects, um, that we do have been
24 rentals how did you all come to decide to a
25 affordable housing home ownership program?

1
2 BRYAN KELLY: Council Member Cumbo, it's
3 Bryan Kelly from Gotham. We, we found that the
4 barriers to entry for home ownership in this case
5 could be resolved by cross subsidy by the market rate
6 homes that fulfilled that gap were needed, and our
7 firm really specializing in mixed income housing
8 development, um, and have done it many times in the
9 past successfully, um, that this could be one of a
10 kind or the first of a kind to create affordable home
11 ownership in this location in Brooklyn. So we
12 identified the need and found that we could cross
13 subsidize, creating that affordable home ownership
14 with the market rate homes within the same building.
15 Um, so I think we're pioneering, but we've shown
16 success in our track record of building, for example,
17 the largest 50/30/20 in New York City at Gotham West
18 as an example, of being successful pioneers to create
19 diverse incomes within a building or a community.

20 MAJORITY LEADER CUMBO: That's
21 incredible. I mean, we definitely want to see more
22 home ownership opportunities, which is why this
23 particular project is so critical and important, um,
24 in our district. Can you tell me a little bit more
25

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES 43
2 about the role that IMPACCT Brooklyn will play, um,
3 in the marketing and the outreach efforts.

4 BRYAN KELLY: Stephanie, you want to
5 handle that?

6 STEPHANIE RHODES: Sure, yes, I can take
7 that question. Ah, so we're going to work with
8 IMPACCT, ah, from the early stages of the project,
9 ah, to conduct information sessions, to coordinate,
10 ah, local advertising to raise awareness. Um,
11 they'll conduct seminars, financial literacy course,
12 um, and they'll help direct people on how to apply,
13 what the application process looks like, um, as well
14 as guiding them through the [inaudible] and move-in
15 process. Um, this would include working with them to
16 obtain their, um, any kind of down payment assistance
17 program and, um, financing for the home.

18 MAJORITY LEADER CUMBO: That's fantastic.
19 One of things that we want to make sure that happens
20 in this is that people are properly notified but
21 given ample opportunity to prepare, um, their
22 applications for whatever will be needed, um, in this
23 regard. So it's important that we make sure that the
24 outreach is solid and that it's strong, but that it
25 also prepares, um, potential home buyers for what

1 they will need to do in order to be qualified for
2 this.

3
4 BRYAN KELLY: Council, ah, Council
5 Member, we take it very seriously [inaudible] start
6 early and often in the education process, and then to
7 ensure that the community board preference in
8 addition is fully met. We want to make sure it's
9 oversubscribed.

10 MAJORITY LEADER CUMBO: Um-hmm. Um, I
11 don't have any, ah, other questions. Your
12 presentation was, um, was really very thorough. Um,
13 I guess the only thing that I would close out with,
14 which you spoke about in terms of the design, um,
15 complementing the historical district. What were
16 some of the things that you did, um, or the
17 recommendations or the changes that you made, ah, by
18 LPC's approval? What were some of the things that
19 they wanted to see that you took into consideration
20 in order to deliver this project?

21 DAN KAPLAN: Ah, thank you. It's Dan
22 Kaplan of FX Collaborative Architects. Um, we first,
23 um, proposed a building, ah, that to, to the
24 commission that was, ah, taller and that was pushed
25 closer to, um, St. Felix Street and pulled away from,

1 from Ashland. And, um, the commission, ah,
2 unanimously directed us to push the building closer
3 to Ashland and further away from St. Felix, which we
4 did. So we remassed the building. We also lowered
5 the building so that it's substantially lower than
6 the, the shoulder. The second thing is we came in
7 with a design that had a, um, called it an ombre
8 design that faded from the darker brick of the 1
9 Hanson Church to the lighter brick of the, of the,
10 ah, tower, ah, from the church to the tower, and
11 while the commission appreciated and liked, liked it,
12 they asked us to tone it down, which we have and, um,
13 between that and the careful detailing of the
14 building along, ah, St. Felix Street we were able to
15 get, ah, approval from the, the commission. And, ah,
16 you know, we will continue to make sure that the
17 building is delivered with, ah, the care that the,
18 um, the commission and, and the, ah, and the, um,
19 historic district, um, ah, demand.

21 MAJORITY LEADER CUMBO: Those are all my
22 questions. Um, I thank you so much and I look
23 forward to my colleagues' support on this project,
24 and, um, I hope that my colleagues will vote in
25 support of it.

2 DAN KAPLAN: Thank you, Majority Leader.

3 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, um,
4 Majority Leader Cumbo. Ah, I now, ah, turn it over
5 to counsel to see if there are any other council
6 members that have any questions for this panel.

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

9 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Great. Um, there
10 being no further questions, the applicant, ah, panel
11 is excused. Ah, Counsel, are there any members of
12 the public who wish to testify on the 130 St. Felix
13 Street, ah, application?

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, Chair. We have
15 approximately 23 public witnesses who have signed up
16 to speak. For members of the public here to testify,
17 please note again that witnesses will generally be
18 called in panels of up to four names at a time. If
19 you are a members of the public signed up to testify
20 on the 130 St. Felix Street proposal please stand by.
21 When you hear your name being called prepare to speak
22 when the chair says that you may begin. Please note
23 again once all panelists in your group have completed
24 their testimony you will be removed from the meeting
25 as a group and the next group of speakers will be

1 introduced. Once removed participants may continue
2 to view the live stream broadcast of this meeting at
3 the council website. We will now hear from the first
4 panel, which will include Lucy Koteen, Julia Bryant,
5 John Dew, and Sandy Reiburn. And the first speaker
6 on this panel will be Lucy Koteen, followed by Julia
7 Bryant.

9 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Just a quick reminder
10 to members of the public. You will be given two
11 minutes to speak. Ah, please do not begin until the
12 Sergeant at Arms has, ah, started the clock. You may
13 begin.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

15 LUCY KOTEEN: Ah, hello. Ah, this is
16 Lucy Koteen. I want to say I am opposed to the
17 rezoning and dismantling of the 1978 landmark BAM
18 historic district, designated to protect its unique
19 historic legacy for future generations. The New York
20 City Landmarks Preservation Commission is being sued
21 in court now because they have failed in their role
22 to protect it. The outcome of this lawsuit should
23 conclude before proceeding with ULURP. This building
24 represents the dissemblance of the BAM historic
25 district. The issue here is the intrusion into a

1 historic district with an out-of-scale and
2 noncompliant design of a building. We see the
3 creeping invasion of [inaudible] historic districts
4 all over the city approved by the Landmarks
5 Commission for development that does not meet the
6 criteria in a historic district. St. Felix Street is
7 a narrow street with one side composed of three- and
8 four-story residential buildings, and the other side
9 composed of the historic Brooklyn Academy of Music, a
10 building about 60 feet high, and the historic United
11 Methodist Church, and the low rise buildings of the
12 Brooklyn Music School, which are converted
13 townhouses. The new building would line up against
14 the historic and iconic 1 Hanson Place building and
15 block out the light of those living in 1 Hanson
16 Place. To be aware that the block of St. Felix
17 Street experienced a cave-in in 1917 and 1997 and no
18 environmental examination has taken place as to
19 impact that constructing this building will have on
20 the infrastructure of the street. Concurrent with
21 the proposed construction there is this massive
22 development by Ally across, directly across the
23 street. There is no comprehensive evaluation of the
24 impact of all the construction going on
25

1 simultaneously in the area. Those who support the
2 zoning will talk endlessly about the affordable
3 housing and the attributes of the Brooklyn Music
4 School. All of this is irrelevant to the issue. We
5 have seen this play out again and again. It is
6 purposely by design to be divisive and destructive to
7 a neighborhood and to the community.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

10 LUCY KOTEEN: This is not generous,
11 generosity, it is exploitation. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Lucy.
13 Thank you for your testimony today.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Julia Bryant will be
15 the next speaker, followed by John Dew. Julia
16 Bryant.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: TIME STARTS NOW.

18 JULIA BRYANT: My name is Julia Bryant,
19 and I'm a long-time member of this community. I'm
20 also a member of the Movement to Protect the People.
21 I oppose the 130 Street, um, St. Felix Street
22 development. Um, our BAM historic district was
23 intended to protect the mid 19th century, um,
24 neighborhood character. I also would like to note
25

2 that there is no binding community benefit. Thank
3 you.

4 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Julia.
5 Thank you for your testimony today.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: John Dew will be the
7 next speaker, followed by Sandy Reiburn. John Dew.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

9 JOHN DEW: Can you hear me?

10 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

11 JOHN DEW: I don't know if you can hear
12 me.

13 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: We can hear you, John.
14 Whenever you're ready.

15 JOHN DEW: OK, good. I'm, ah, sorry.
16 Ah, first I need to acknowledge, ah, greetings to
17 Council Moya and my two council members, Majority
18 Leader Cumbo and Steve Levin, who I know very closely
19 from work in the community board. My name is John
20 Dew and I'm a member of Community Board 2 for close
21 to a quarter century, and I spent four years as chair
22 of Community Board 2 and two terms as chair of the
23 public and transportation, ah, transportation and
24 public safety committee, and I am currently co-chair
25 of the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District.

1
2 And I've divided my testimony into two very quick
3 bullet points. In 2004 the downtown Brooklyn
4 community was upzoned and gentrified. Practically
5 the entire community of color was removed using
6 building condemnation and eminent domain. None of
7 the promised community benefits agreed to by the city
8 have been realized. They included ADA access to the
9 subways, which is a federal requirement, underground
10 parking for the government agency employee vehicles
11 that currently park on the sidewalks, a public
12 restroom, the proposed public park has been
13 privatized and greatly reduced in size and remains
14 unbuilt for 19 years. Once eventually built it will
15 get 15 minutes of direct sunlight as a result of
16 being surrounded by ULURP high-rise buildings. The
17 city also agreed to limit high-rise buildings to the
18 downtown area only. The proposed building is in Fort
19 Greene historic district. Bullet point number two,
20 130 St. Felix is on an extremely narrow block...

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

22 JOHN DEW: ...in the historic district of
23 Fort Greene, the historic Williamsburg building. The
24 entire block collapsed two decades ago. In addition
25 to the street, the stoops and facades on every house

2 on the east side of the block had to be restored by
3 the city over years and the block was totally off
4 limits to the public. The sidewalk on the east side
5 of the block is three feet wide. There is parking on
6 only one...

7 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Time.

8 JOHN DEW: ...of the block...

9 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Time, time.

10 JOHN DEW: ...and the developer did not
11 mention any of this during...

12 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: John, I need you to
13 wrap it up. John, we have to wrap it up.

14 JOHN DEW: I'm, I'm, I'm wrapping it up.

15 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: OK.

16 JOHN DEW: When asked about the shadows
17 that would result from the 23-story adjacent building
18 the response was none. The shadows of the other
19 taller buildings...

20 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, John.
21 Thank you for your testimony today. We appreciate
22 it, ah, very much. Ah, Counsel, if you could, ah,
23 please call up the next panel.

24

25

1 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sandy, Sandy Reiburn
2
3 will be the last speaker on this panel. Sandy
4 Reiburn.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

6 SANDY REIBURN: Hello. Um, if you can
7 hear me, I don't see me, but, anyway.

8 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: We hear you, Sandy.

9 SANDY REIBURN: Yep. I'm, ah, Sandy
10 Reiburn, ah, and I'm in total opposition to the 130
11 St. Felix rezoning. Here's what I want to be put on
12 the City Council record, as well as a paper trail of
13 council members, Council Member Cumbo's legacy as one
14 more likely rezoning give-away to the detriment of
15 her constituents. This mega 23-story skyscraper
16 project is being built, as has been said, on a
17 fragile street and I'd like you to look at my written
18 testimony for the pictures of the, ah, ah, the, ah,
19 ah, street collapses, for two of them. Please also
20 read the dozens of community members who have sent in
21 their testimony in opposition. The developer Gotham
22 was fined at a construction site in Williamsburg,
23 where a malfeasance occurred and a worker was killed
24 in June of this year. Are they who you really want
25 to reward? Are they the right developers to be

1 trusted building on a 19th century street, on top of
2 the MTA Barkley's underpinnings? Really? And let's
3 focus on what was a predominantly black community,
4 Fort Greene. The shocking recent 2020 census data
5 shows affluent white residents moving in and pushing
6 out lower-income people of color. The tsunami began,
7 as John Dew said, in a 2004 broken promises of the
8 rezoning of downtown Brooklyn. This baloney
9 affordable condo project is more Kool-Aid sanctimony,
10 being served up exactly the way that BFC's developed
11 Bedford Union Armory, renamed, on all the so-called
12 public good it was going to do. And Council Member
13 Cumbo abetted it. Period. No matter that the
14 community was fiercely against it. Where are the
15 binding community benefits? Nowhere to be found.
16 The time is overdue to say no to this sham, and
17 frankly to put a moratorium on all city upzonings...

18
19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

20 SANDY REIBURN: ...and bait-and-switch MIH
21 projects, until we get a council that speaks for
22 their constituents and not their bosses, REBNY.
23 Thank you.

24

25

1 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Sandy.
2
3 Thank you for your testimony today. Ah, Counsel, if
4 you can please call up the next panelists.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The, that was the
6 last, that was the last speaker on this panel, ah,
7 Chair Moya. If there are no questions I can announce
8 the next panel. The next panel's speakers will
9 include Tina Fleming, Max Cerci, Renzo Ramirez, and
10 Cynthia McKnight. The first speaker will be Tina
11 Fleming, followed by Max Cerci.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 TINA FLEMING: OK, good morning. Can
14 everyone hear me? I'm sorry.

15 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

16 TINA FLEMING: OK. OK, good morning,
17 Majority Leader Cumbo. Good morning, members of the
18 City Council. My name is Tina Fleming and I'm a
19 lifelong resident and long-time activist of this
20 community. I'm speaking to today in support of the
21 Brooklyn [inaudible] 130 St. Felix Street project for
22 the following reason. So yes I volunteer with my
23 local PTA. I work to ensure that public school
24 students have access to STEAM - science, technology,
25 engineer, arts, and math programs from elementary

1 school age. Disposing young students, especially
2 programming that falls outside of the standard
3 curriculum is still essential because it allows
4 students to prepare to apply for specialty public
5 middle and high schools. All too often, however, we
6 see that students from higher income families are
7 exposed through their school's extracurricular
8 activities to engage in the STEM opportunities while
9 our students from lower income families are not
10 afforded these same opportunities. As a result,
11 students from lower income families are often
12 unprepared to compete in specialty middle and high
13 schools. And this text is so important while the
14 Brooklyn Music School focus on using scholarship to
15 provide accessible music education to students from
16 all economic backgrounds so essential. The Brooklyn
17 Music School diverse student body must be given
18 assets to sufficient space and facilities and in
19 order to meet their goal the school's facilities must
20 be expanded. Furthermore, I know far too many
21 educators who teach in Brooklyn who are unable to
22 afford homes in the city and thus face long commutes
23 every day. The approach that 130 St. Felix takes
24 setting aside the portion of this residential unit to
25

1 purchase at below market rate is rare for those with
2 more moderate to achieve home ownership in Fort
3 Greene. If our teachers cannot afford to live in the
4 very communities they serve prompt action must be
5 taken. The 130 St. Felix is a real opportunity for
6 action that is setting right in front of us. This is
7 the for the reason why I urge you to...

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

10 TINA FLEMING: ...the 120, the 130 Felix
11 Street Project. Thank you. I got it all under two
12 minutes. Have a great day, guys.

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

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Max Cerci will be the
16 next speaker, Max Cerci followed by Renzo Ramirez.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

18 MAX CERCI: Hello, members of the New
19 York City Council. My name is Max Cerci and I am
20 here today to speak on behalf of Terry Grace, the co-
21 founder, producer, and director of Irondale. My name
22 is Terry Grace and I am here to speak in favor of the
23 Brooklyn Music School's enhancement of its facilities
24 as part of the development at 130 Street St. Felix.
25 I cannot stress enough the importance of this

1 project. Every community has its own character and
2 density. But the quality of arts in downtown
3 Brooklyn in Fort Greene is unlike anyplace else in
4 the world. It is one of the reasons people want to
5 live here and it is one of the reasons the
6 neighborhood exists as a stable mix of new residents
7 and those who have lived here for many years. For
8 over 100 years the Brooklyn Music School has been a
9 touchstone in creating the character of the
10 neighborhood and now the neighborhood must support
11 this expansion. My theater, Irondale, like BMS, has
12 created spaces, virtual and physical, that allow for
13 artistic expression of all forms and push the
14 boundaries of artistic expression. BMS offers a
15 space for our youth where they can feel free and
16 comfortable to express themselves, while bringing
17 them closer to the community. And over the past year
18 and a half the importance of such organizations has
19 been self-evident. For families throughout Brooklyn
20 now well beyond, thanks to its creative, virtual
21 learning programs, BMS's expansion will allow it to
22 diversify its programs and partnerships and to
23 continue to provide its services to people of all
24 ages and backgrounds, creating new generations of
25

1
2 citizen artists throughout our community. I and all
3 the actors and staff at Irondale support this plan to
4 continue artistic expression through the Brooklyn
5 community, aiding our city and community's recovery.
6 Sincerely, Terry Grace, executive director and
7 cofounder of Irondale [inaudible] Project at 85 South
8 Oxford. Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, Max. Thank
10 you for your testimony.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Renzo Ramirez will be
12 the next speaker, followed by Cynthia McKnight. Ah,
13 chair, I see that Majority Leader Cumbo has her hand
14 raised for a question.

15 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Yep. Can we turn it
16 over to Majority Leader Cumbo for a question?

17 MAJORITY LEADER CUMBO: Ah, good
18 afternoon. I just want to, I have a ribbon cutting
19 at Fort Greene Park that I have to be in, so I, I
20 just wanted to conclude. I've heard, ah, much of the
21 testimony. I'm hoping that I can hear the rest. I
22 just wanted to respond that with, with many of the
23 developments that have happened that I've been able
24 to approve, I'm hearing a lot of what people don't
25 want, um, and what they don't want to see. But I'm

1 not seeing any conclusive plans of what people do
2 want to see. The fact of the matter is we have to
3 create affordable housing opportunities for people in
4 our community. We can't look at communities like
5 Fort Greene and Clinton Hill and say hands off. This
6 is a beautiful community. We don't wish for anyone
7 else to have the ability to live here. Um, that's
8 unfortunate that so many people see having an
9 opportunity for many young and upcoming families to
10 have an opportunity to experience what so many people
11 who have lived in this community for decades have had
12 an opportunity to enjoy. It's critical that we
13 continue to open our community to make sure that many
14 people, up and coming people, people of different
15 racial backgrounds and cultures can live in this
16 community and benefit from the cultural amenities,
17 the local businesses, the creative sector, the
18 transportation opportunities. This is a game changer
19 for families that are able to live here. It's
20 critical that we create those opportunity for those
21 who are moving to the community. The Gotham Company
22 is well established at being able to do environmental
23 reviews to make sure that this particular
24 consultation project is safe, um, for this community,
25

1 and that we do not have an imploding of our streets.
2 They have the expertise. They have built projects
3 far larger and more complicated than this one, and
4 the opportunity for the Brooklyn Music School, you
5 know, we have to come to the realization that culture
6 is the economic engine of this city. It is the very
7 fiber of what makes New York City what it is today,
8 and to continuously, um, limit its ability to be able
9 to grow and thrive in this city is a missed
10 opportunity and it's unfortunate. And I would say
11 that there are many projects, such as the, the Hanson
12 Place Seventh Day Adventist Project, which is
13 producing 100 units of affordable housing, same
14 individuals against that project. The development
15 and the restructuring and the revitalization of Fort
16 Greene Park, another project, against it. 840
17 Atlantic Avenue, where we're producing 50 units of
18 affordable housing at the 40 AMI level. Against it.
19 I mean, at a certain point we have to recognize we
20 have to provide housing for people, and so I'm just
21 gonna conclude with that. You know, when we talk
22 about the BAM cultural district and how, ah, how
23 sacred it is, we have to remember that Harvey
24 Lichtenstein, um, who was the key elevator of the BAM
25

1 cultural district had a vision to utilize the BAM
2 parking lot for cultural at [inaudible] when we see
3 BAM south and BAM north they're being utilized. To
4 have a vacant lot in the middle of the community with
5 no usage for it is a waste in our community when we
6 have an affordable housing shortage. And I will just
7 end with that. Thank you.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you, ah,
10 Majority Leader Cumbo. Um, I just quickly want to
11 make a quick announcement. I'm sorry, ah, I have to
12 attend a, ah, bill signing for one of my bills that,
13 ah, has just passed and I am now going to be turning,
14 ah, this over for the remaining part of this hearing,
15 ah, to Council Member Grodenchik, um, to chair the,
16 ah, subcommittee meeting. Ah, so, thank you very
17 much, and let me turn it over to, ah, Council Member
18 Grodenchik.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Renzo Ramirez will
20 continue, ah, on this panel. He will be followed by
21 Cynthia McKnight.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: TIME STARTS NOW.

23 RENZO RAMIREZ: Can you guys hear me?

24 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

25 RENZO RAMIREZ: All right.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Yes, go ahead.

RENZO RAMIREZ: Good morning, Chair Moya and members of the subcommittee. My name is Renzo Ramirez and I am a member of 32BJ. I am here on behalf of 32BJ SCIU and the more than 3500 32BJ members who live and work in the Community District 2 to express our strong support for this project. The Gotham Organization has made it credible to manage providing prevailing wage jobs to the future building service workers at this site. We estimate that this rezoning will allow for the creation of many new property service jobs. These jobs are typically filled by local members of the community and because of this commitment will pay family-sustaining wages, which help bring working families into the middle class. The Gotham Organization's partnership with the Brooklyn Music School will also sustain this important institution for years to come. The Gotham Organization has a track record of creating good jobs throughout their portfolio and long-time partnership with 32BJ. As our members serve on the front lines of this pandemic, Gotham has continued to act a responsible employer and has put the needs of their essential work, workforce first. We respectfully

1
2 urge you to approve this project. Thank you very
3 much.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you,
5 Renzo.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Cynthia McKnight will
7 be the last speaker of this panel. Cynthia McKnight.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

9 CYNTHIA MCKNIGHT: Good morning. I'm the
10 president and Brooklyn Borough President appointee
11 for Community Education Council 13. District 13 goal
12 is to be an antiracist district and decrease the
13 equity issues in our black and brown schools. I am
14 also a union leader with AFG Local 913 of the United
15 States Department of Housing and Urban Development,
16 HUD, an agency that was instrumental in enacting laws
17 and policies that prevented black and brown people
18 from receiving loans and owning affordable homes,
19 such as those built in Levittown, New York. HUD is
20 the agency that created the manual for redlining,
21 which private lenders later adopted. The condo
22 project at St. Felix would provide a opportunity for
23 families to own a home, and this is why I'm so
24 passionate about getting this project approved. CC13
25 looks forward to working with the nonprofit IMPACCT,

1 who is working on this St. Felix project, by
2 notifying our families about this opportunity for
3 families to acquire generational wealth. I was the
4 PTA president of PFS-11 in a [inaudible] school in
5 District 13, where we had the opportunity to partner
6 with the Brooklyn Music School. Our Title 1 schools
7 cannot afford music programs and we look forward to
8 the expansion of the Brooklyn Music School through
9 this project to help our District 13 schools secure
10 music programs. More than ever, our children and
11 families are still facing a pandemic. We need our
12 art programs to educate and heal. Although the real
13 estate prices have gone up, we still have many low
14 and middle income families in District 13, including
15 Bed-Stuy, Clinton Hill, Fort Greene, Prospect Heights
16 communities. I plead that you approve this project
17 to allow our families to own one of the affordable
18 condos. Thank you for your time and consideration.

19
20 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you,
21 Ms. McKnight. Thank you for your testimony this
22 morning.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: That was the last
24 speaker on this panel.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Are there any
3 questions from any of the council members for the
4 panel?

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

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you,
8 Counsel.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel will
10 include Ernest Augustus. Ernest Augustus will be the
11 next speaker.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Is Mr.
14 Augustus with us?

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I understand he is,
16 ah, being brought into the meeting.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you.
18 Thank you, Counsel. There he is.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Mr. Augustus,
21 are you with us? [dog barking] I don't think that
22 was Mr. Augustus.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mr. Augustus, if you
24 can hear me, ah, and you are on a phone, can you
25

1 press *9 please,*9. Ah, Chair, I see we're having
2 some...

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Why don't we
5 come...

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: ...technical
7 difficulties.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Yeah, why
9 don't we come back.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We'll come back.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: All right.
12 If you could introduce the next panel.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel, and
14 we will come back to Ernest Augustus, ah, ah, later.
15 We'll try to get you later, Mr. Augustus. The next
16 panel will include Brian Adamczyk, Barry Conyers,
17 Blaire Green, and Frank Covalt. Brian Adamczyk will
18 be the first speaker. Ah, and please forgive me for
19 mispronouncing, and followed by Barry Conyers.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Go ahead, Mr.
22 Adamczyk.

23 BRIAN ADAMCZYK: OK. Hello, good
24 morning, ah, Council. Um, thank you all very much
25 for allowing me to voice my thoughts in support of

1 the 130 St. Felix Street Project. My name is Brian
2 Adamczyk, and I'm the interim executive director at
3 the Brooklyn Music School. Prior to stepping into
4 this role I served as the director of programming and
5 productions at BMS. Between these various roles,
6 which has involved a heavy emphasis on implementing
7 the music and dance programming BMS offers as well as
8 overseeing the entire building usage and the theater,
9 I believe I have an intimate understanding of our
10 current resources and facility statuses. As you may
11 or may not know, the Brooklyn Music School is a 112-
12 year-old organization with a core mission of
13 providing access to music and dance programming for
14 anybody who wishes to receive it. Private lessons,
15 ensembles, group classes, music therapy, early
16 childhood music performance opportunities, and many
17 other forms of the performing arts are offered to a
18 diverse, wide-ranging population of individuals from
19 infants all the way to senior citizens and everything
20 in between. BMS is truly an historic and cultural
21 hub and community, and it is a place where everyone
22 is welcome to celebrate, bond, and gather through the
23 arts. Over the long history of the Brooklyn Music
24 School the programming, staff, and faculty have all
25

1 functioned under one roof, that being 126 St. Felix.
2 Our current building is charming and unique, yet
3 tired and full of dated materials. If BMS is to
4 grow, reach more people, and continue to serve its
5 mission of creating widespread access, the idea of
6 having not only more space, but a new cutting edge
7 facility is incredibly exciting to us. The impact
8 would undoubtedly be extended past its capability at
9 the moment. From a programmatic standpoint, it would
10 foster all existing programming and create a larger
11 scale at which our various offerings could be housed
12 and executed. Another facet that this potential
13 expansion could help with is, ah, in curricular
14 areas, such as music production, digital composition,
15 mixing, and recording. These more contemporary types
16 of programming ideally require proper equipment,
17 space, and gear that truly, ah, allow it to thrive.
18 The addition, ah, additional BMS space within one...

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

20 BRIAN ADAMCZYK: [inaudible] provide us.
21 Thank you very much. We're very excited about this
22 opportunity.
23

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
25 your testimony.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Barry Conyers will be
3 the next speaker, who will be followed by Blaire
4 Green.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: I don't see
7 Mr. Conyers. Ah, boy. I think Mr. Augustus made it
8 to us, though. [inaudible]

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We'll hear from
10 Blaire Green next, and come back to Barry Conyers.
11 Blaire Green.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

13 BLAIRE GREEN: Hello, can you hear me?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Yes, sir, go
15 ahead.

16 BLAIRE GREEN: Hello, my name is Blaire
17 Green and, um, on behalf of the Brooklyn Music School
18 Project for 130 St. Felix Street. My testimony is
19 gonna be on behalf of someone who spent more than
20 half of their life here as a student and as somebody
21 who's worked in this building. So I studied
22 classical music here for about 15 years and during
23 that time I got an opportunity to live out my dream
24 and perform in the BMS theater, places all around the
25 city, um, even in Belgium as a foreign exchange

1
2 program that we had. So I feel that this is gonna be
3 an important project because it helps people like me,
4 who want to live out a dream, like having more of an
5 opportunity because I think that such a place that's
6 so charming, um, needs to be expanded and for a
7 diverse place like Brooklyn we need like more
8 resources to give to, ah, the community and for kids
9 who want to live out a dream and learn instruments,
10 sing, dance, act, or anything in the arts. So I feel
11 that this is an important project and I look forward
12 to it being, ah, being a reality. So, thank you.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you,
14 sir. Thank you for your testimony.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Frank Covalt will be
16 the next and last speaker on this panel. Frank
17 Covalt.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

19 FRANK COVALT: Thank you for allowing me
20 the opportunity to speak in support of the 130 St.
21 Felix Street Project. My name is Frank Covalt and I
22 have been the finance manager here for over a year.
23 We're really excited about this opportunity to be in
24 a brand-new building next door. The school here
25 encompasses more than a hundred years of providing

1
2 quality musical instruction to students of all
3 backgrounds and skill levels in the community. Topy
4 to move into a newly designed and constructed
5 edifice, ah, gives us opportunities from a technical
6 and musical standpoint. Our building at 126 is old
7 and has served its purpose well, but now it's showing
8 its age. We constantly are distracted by aging
9 boilers, leaks in the walls and ceiling, antiquated
10 wiring, failing plumbing, and falling roof tiles.
11 Climate control in this three adjoining brownstones
12 is nearly impossible. We're looking forward to being
13 able to, ah, consolidate some of our costs and
14 maintain, ah, the structure better in a new building.
15 The building will be home to communities for our
16 private music instruction, group lessons, music
17 therapy, dance, [inaudible] program, and ensembles.
18 The new structure will provide space for expansion
19 for future programs. The building is an attractive
20 environment for future students and parents, who we
21 hope would then in turn bring other students into the
22 program. We're very hopeful about this project and
23 the potential it gives to the school. Thank you
24 again for your opportunity to speak about this
25 project.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
3 your testimony this morning.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: That was the last
5 speaker, ah, for this panel.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Any
7 questions? Are there any questions from any of the
8 council members for the panel?

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ah, Chair, I see no
10 members with questions.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Seeing none,
12 thank you. I, I move to dismiss this panel, then.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel will
14 include Ernest Augustus, Ernest Augustus.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Mr. Augustus,
17 if you could unmute yourself.

18 ERNEST AUGUSTUS: Hello?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Yes, we can
20 hear you.

21 ERNEST AUGUSTUS: Ah, all right, all
22 right. Thank you. My name is Ernest Augustus and
23 I'm the land use committee of Community Board 2. Ah,
24 with regard to 130 South Felix, when the land use
25 committee conducted its public hearing on this, ah,

1 on this location, ah, most of the speakers fail to
2 really speak pacifically to the land use item. They
3 didn't pacifically to the landmarking institute, nor
4 did they speak pacifically to the design, ah, of
5 this, ah, ah, site, ah, ah, [inaudible] the city, ah,
6 ah, the department of, um, ah, landmarks were spot on
7 when they said that the site for the proposed
8 building was at a scale that has violated the BAM
9 historic district, it basically violated the Fort
10 Greene contextual zoning, which is still on the
11 books. Ah, again, it's the issue of the, ah, ah, ah,
12 of the land use and the design of the building had
13 nothing to do with programs. Ah, people who talk
14 about the program fail to either acknowledge that
15 this building is out of character and it does harm,
16 ah, to the, to the community that they're finding so,
17 so attractive. The other issue is that ULURP itself,
18 the application is defective. There is an issue
19 regarding whether this ULURP is for the BAM, ah,
20 music school or for the BAM, ah, ah, private school.
21 Ah, we found out that you had a private school mixed
22 with a not-for-profit and that has not been, ah,
23 clarified. The parents who send their kids to the
24 music school are up in arms because they're,
25

1
2 rightfully so, suspicious that this ULURP and that
3 this new building will only serve the, ah, the
4 private school that's on site, ah, there have been
5 articles in the papers. I wish that the City
6 Planning Commission would look at it...

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

8 ERNEST AUGUSTUS: ...and raise some, and,
9 and raise some questions about that. But, in the end
10 I'm opposed to it because it does, it does harm to
11 the, to the, to the district, to the character of
12 Fort Greene, ah, which this hearing is all about.
13 It's not about a program for music school.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: All right,
15 thank you for your testimony, Mr. Augustus, this
16 morning.

17 ERNEST AUGUSTUS: No, thank you.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you,
19 sir. I don't see anybody wanting to ask questions so
20 we're gonna dismiss this panel. Please call up the
21 next panel, Counsel.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel will
23 include Barry Conyers, Lori Raphael, Regina Myer,
24 Judith Rosenfeld, and Alef Tadese. The first speaker
25

2 on this panel will, once again, be Barry Conyers, who
3 will be followed by Lori Raphael.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Mr. Conyers,
6 if you, ah, you're not unmuted, I don't know if you
7 can hear me.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mr. Conyers?

9 BARRY CONYERS: OK, I'm ready.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you,
11 sir.

12 BARRY CONYERS: Yes, so good morning.

13 Um, my name is Barry Conyers and I'm the head custody
14 for Brooklyn Music School. I have been here
15 approximately seven months and in that time I have
16 come to have a great sense of appreciation for
17 Brooklyn Music School in several regards. First, I
18 have a deep appreciation for the rich history
19 associated with this location and the tradition of
20 quality teaching, tutorial, and mentoring that occurs
21 here. I feel and see the passion of each instructor
22 at this site. I see wonder in the eyes of the
23 children as they discover the magic of music. I am
24 intrigued by the idea of expansion and be able to
25 reach out and touch more interested and embarking on

1
2 the wonderful experience that music offers. I thank
3 Brian for affording me the opportunity to be a part
4 of something that has such a huge impact on the lives
5 of all involved. I fully support the expansion
6 effort. Thank you for your testimony.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
8 your testimony, Mr. Conyers.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Lori Raphael will be
10 the next speaker, followed by Regina Myer.

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Mr. Raphael,
13 please unmute yourself.

14 LORI RAPHAEL: Thank you very much. Good
15 morning, subcommittee members. My name is Lori
16 Raphael and I'm a senior vice president with the
17 Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce. I'd like to express
18 our support for the project by Gotham Organization
19 and Brooklyn Music School at 130 St. Felix. The
20 project will bring accessible arts to the area in the
21 form of a mixed use cultural center in the heart of
22 Brooklyn and by providing affordable home ownership
23 opportunities and reinvigorating the Brooklyn Music
24 School. 130 Felix helps ensure the downtown Brooklyn
25 cultural district remains a diverse and vibrant

1 community for future generations. The Brooklyn Music
2 School has been serving the residents of this borough
3 for over 100 years. It is more critical than ever
4 right now to give nonprofits opportunities to
5 survive, grow, and serve the future generations. For
6 the Brooklyn Music School and the greater community
7 this project will more than double instructional
8 space, create a fully accessible facility, add new
9 dance and rehearsal space and a digital music plan,
10 enable eventual upgrade and renovation of the
11 existing facility while maintaining services to the
12 community, provide affordable home ownership to allow
13 for generational accumulation of assets and ties to
14 the community, and fill in an empty lot with
15 contextual architecture. 130 St. Felix is the
16 definition of transit-oriented development and it's a
17 welcome addition to the downtown Brooklyn Fort Greene
18 neighborhood. Now more than ever as the borough
19 recovers from the impacts of COVID-19 we need
20 investment like this that will contribute to the
21 vibrancy of our neighborhoods. This project has the
22 full support of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce.
23 Thank you.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
3 your testimony this morning.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Regina Myer will be
5 the next speaker on the panel, followed by Judith
6 Rosenfeld. Regina Myer and Judith Rosenfeld.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

8 REGINA MYER: Good morning, um, chair and
9 members of the committee. Um, I'm Regina Myer,
10 president of the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership. Um,
11 on behalf of DBP and the three downtown Brooklyn
12 business improvement districts we represent, I'd like
13 to express our strong support for the music school
14 and Gotham Organization's 130 St. Felix project, with
15 a design that is sensitive to the heritage of the
16 Williamsburg Savings Bank building, the proposed St.
17 Felix Street project will transform the vacant mid
18 block lot into a new mixed use cultural center that
19 integrates expanded modern facilities for the music
20 school, alongside market rate and affordable home
21 ownership homes at the heart of the cultural district
22 and one of the most transit-rich locations in New
23 York City. The proposed building has been
24 respectfully designed in context with the art deco
25 influences of its neighbors. The overall building

1 height is lower than the shoulder of the bank tower,
2 preserving the historic beloved, the building's
3 beloved stature while transitioning to the lower
4 scale buildings along St. Felix Street and of course
5 to BAM, and features intentional set backs that
6 minimize its presence. This project will enable the
7 music school, a 110-year old community institution,
8 to better serve children's, children, adults, and
9 seniors with 20,000 square feet of additional space.
10 The not-for-profit music school provides free or
11 discounted music and performing arts instruction to
12 over 80% of its students and it's vital that we
13 create the opportunity to expand that within the
14 cultural district, maintaining and increasing access
15 to arts programming for all Brooklyn residents. In
16 addition, the project will create up to 120 units of
17 housing with about 36 permanently affordable home
18 ownership units for low and moderate families earning
19 between 70% to 100% of AMI. The global pandemic...

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

22 REGINA MYER: I'm sorry.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: It's OK, you
24 can finish, go ahead.

1
2 REGINA MYER: The global pandemic and
3 its impact on our local economy has only exacerbated
4 the affordability crisis in our city and it's
5 critical that we locate affordable housing in
6 transit-rich locations where residents can access
7 jobs and resources across the city and region. This
8 is a rare opportunity for residents to own a home and
9 build equity in downtown Brooklyn and nowhere is
10 home, affordable home ownership more appropriate than
11 across the street from the Atlantic terminal station.
12 We enthusiastically support this plan. Thank you.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
14 that testimony this morning.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Judith Rosenfeld will
16 be the next speaker, followed by Alef Tadese. Judith
17 Rosenfeld.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

19 JUDITH ROSENFELD: Hi, good morning.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Good morning.

21 JUDITH ROSENFELD: Um, thank you to the
22 chair, um, and council subcommittee for the
23 opportunity to testify. Ah, my name is Judith
24 Rosenfeld and I am vice president, um, of special
25 projects at Breaking Ground, the city's largest

1 nonprofit developer and operator of permanent
2 supportive housing. Breaking Ground testifies in
3 support of the land use application for 130 St. Felix
4 Street. Affordable home ownership opportunities
5 occupy an important place in the housing continuum
6 and this project will allow households who may
7 otherwise need to look far outside of the city for
8 home ownership to instead put down roots in Brooklyn
9 and build equity. In addition, the project will
10 incorporate a new home for a vibrant cultural
11 institution. At the Schermerhorn, ah, Breaking
12 Ground supported residents in downtown Brooklyn, ah,
13 which is just half a mile from this project. We
14 developed a community space that is home to the
15 Brooklyn Ballet, which provides education, training,
16 and performance opportunities for underserved youth.
17 We have seen firsthand the benefit of new practical
18 state-of-the-art space for the arts within the
19 community. In the same way, 130 St. Felix offers a
20 rare opportunity for the Brooklyn Music School to
21 modernize and expand their instruction spaces while
22 allowing continuous operation of their educational
23 programs. This is an incredible chance for a music
24
25

1 education nonprofit to find a sustainable home.

2 Thank you so much for your time.

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
5 your testimony. Anybody, ah, anyone else on this
6 panel?

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Alef Tadese will be
8 the next and last speaker on this panel.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you.

10 ALEF TADESE: Good afternoon. Oh, thank
11 you very much. Good afternoon, City Council members.
12 Um, my name is Alef Tadese and I am testifying on
13 behalf of RiseBoro Community Partnership, a nonprofit
14 community-based organization with roots in Brooklyn.
15 The 36 units of income-targeted home ownership being
16 proposed at 130 Felix Street represents a rare
17 opportunity for the working middle class to build
18 equity through affordable home ownership without
19 government subsidy. At RiseBoro, or at least on
20 behalf of RiseBoro, I can attest to how challenging
21 it is to build income-targeted home ownership in New
22 York City. Our organization has been working closely
23 with the HPD on a home ownership project for several
24 years and it is very hard to make the numbers work
25 with subsidy. RiseBoro Community Partnership

1
2 applauds the development team for making it work here
3 without subsidy and at, and at targeted incomes below
4 those financed by current city term sheets, which
5 target households starting at 80% of the area median
6 income. Thank you for the opportunity to submit a c
7 comment in support of this project.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
9 your testimony. Ah, I don't see any, um, hands
10 raised from council members, so we can dismiss this
11 panel and, um, get on to the next one, Counsel.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel will
13 include Daniel Arnow, Devin Mathis, Denny Salas, and
14 Elan Lee. The first speaker will be Daniel Arnow,
15 followed by Devin Mathis.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

17 DANIEL ARNOW: Hello. Can you hear me?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Yes, Mr.
19 Arnow, please continue.

20 DANIEL ARNOW: Excellent. My name is
21 Daniel. Um, hello council members. I'm the director
22 of affordable housing at the Actors Fund, and the
23 Actors Fund knows firsthand how important performing
24 arts is to a community in shaping its vibrancy and
25 culture, particularly in places like New York City

1 and downtown Brooklyn. Our organization is dedicated
2 to supporting the professionals in this industry,
3 among one of the hardest hit during the pandemic. We
4 extend our support to organizations like Brooklyn
5 Music School, who provide essential programming for
6 over 8000 students, and for these reasons we support
7 the development of 130 St. Felix Street. The
8 proposed development will not only allow BMS to
9 expand its programming to more students within the
10 community, but also provide much-needed affordable
11 home ownership opportunities with 30% of the
12 residences set aside for inclusionary housing. This
13 will ensure that members of the community, including
14 healthcare workers, teachers, municipal employees,
15 and arts workers will be able to stay in the
16 neighborhood they love and have access to the vibrant
17 downtown Brooklyn cultural district. The Actors Fund
18 supports this project to bring affordable housing,
19 home ownership, and high-quality arts programming to
20 the community. Thank you very much.

21
22 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
23 your testimony.
24
25

1
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Devin Mathis will be
3 the next speaker, followed by Denny Salas. Devin
4 Mathis.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

6 DEVIN MATHIS: Hello, thank you. Um, my
7 name is Devin Mathis. I am the executive director at
8 Urban Glass. Um, I'm speaking today to express my
9 support for the Brooklyn Music School and Gotham
10 Organization's 130 St. Felix Street project. Urban
11 Glass is a Fort Greene-located not-for-profit,
12 encouraging access to and experimentation in glass as
13 a creative material. We serve nearly 25,000 New
14 Yorkers with over 400 professional artists and
15 designers using our public access studio as their
16 main space to create their work. Our, our artists,
17 excuse me, our artist studio and art center foster
18 community and serve as an incubator for creation and
19 innovation. Our neighbors, Brooklyn Music School,
20 provides quality and accessible music education to
21 youth from a wide range of backgrounds.
22 Additionally, it's become apparent that this long-
23 time staple of the Fort Greene community is
24 constrained in its current space and that the
25 additional space, um, proposed in its expansion plans

1
2 will allow for Brooklyn Music School to meet its
3 needed and its, um, growing student body, growing
4 student body, ah, with upgraded space and state-of-
5 the-art music technology. Also, based on, um, based
6 on my understanding, ah, the 130 St. Felix
7 development will also include a affordable housing
8 component. I believe in creating opportunities for
9 families to move into or remain in Fort Greene,
10 especially those families whose income levels would
11 otherwise prevent them from living or owning, um, a
12 home in the neighborhood. The 130 St. Felix Street
13 project will be a lifeblood for its cherished
14 community and music school and will create new
15 opportunities for housing ownership. Um, it is for
16 these reasons that I am strongly supporting this
17 project. Thank you for your time.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
19 your testimony.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Denny Salas will be
21 the next speaker on this panel, followed by Elan Lee.
22 Denny Salas is next.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.
24
25

1
2 DENNY SALAS: Good morning, council
3 members. Ah, can you hear, hear me well? Just to
4 make sure. Yes?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Yes I can.
6 Go ahead sir.

7 DENNY SALAS: OK, excellent. Ah, good
8 morning, council members. My name is Denny Salas and
9 I support the development proposal for 130 Felix
10 Street. As Majority Leader Cumbo stated earlier,
11 this is an incredible project that provides home
12 ownership opportunities for working and middle-class
13 New Yorkers. For too long the ability to achieve the
14 defined American dream of obtaining equity their only
15 property has been stripped award through an
16 affordability crisis of our own making. This project
17 is not a panacea to our issues, but it shows
18 residents that we're still capable of helping them.
19 Other supporters of this project have eloquently
20 expressed why this project should move forward, so
21 I'm not going to repeat them, but just thank you for
22 your time and I hope this committee votes to approve
23 this project, and I hope you all have a great day.

24

25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Have a
3 wonderful day yourself. Thank you for your
4 testimony.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Elan Lee will be the
6 next and last speaker on this panel.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

8 ELAN LEE: Good morning, council members.
9 My name is Elan Lee. I'm here to testify on behalf
10 of Team Brown. I'm sorry, can...

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Go ahead,
12 sir. Go ahead, yes.

13 ELAN LEE: Good morning, council members,
14 my name is Elan Lee. I'm here to testify on behalf
15 of Team Brown. Um, my name is Elan Lee, um, like I
16 just said. I'm speaking in support of the 130, ah,
17 Felix Street project. This project is proposed on
18 what is currently an empty lot. This project, um, as
19 a construction worker I look at this empty lot and I
20 see opportunity for jobs in my field. As a member of
21 the community, I look at this empty lot and see an
22 opportunity for affordable home ownership use. And
23 to expand home for a loved nonprofit, the Brooklyn
24 Music School. Let's put this empty lot to good work.

2 I hope to join, I hope you all join me in supporting
3 the 130 Felix Street project. And that is all.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
5 your testimony. Thank you very much. Anyone else on
6 this panel? Is that it, ah, Counsel?

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: That was the last
8 speaker for this panel.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: I don't see
10 any questions from members of the council. So if we
11 could bring on the next panel. That one was
12 dismissed.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel will
14 include Bernell Grier, William Thomas, Darold
15 Burgess, Beth Allen, and Raisa Brown. Bernell Grier
16 will go first, followed by William Thomas.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

18 BERNELL GRIER: Hello. Have I been
19 called? I'm not sure.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Yes you have.
21 Please...

22 BERNELL GRIER: OK.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Please begin.

24 BERNELL GRIER: OK, thank you.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you.

1 BERNELL GRIER: Thank you. Ah, I'm
2
3 Bernell Grier, the executive director of [inaudible]
4 Community Council, also known as IMPACCT Brooklyn.
5 We are a community development corporation founded in
6 1964 with roots in Fort Greene, Clinton Hill. Our
7 focus is affordable housing, including income-
8 targeted rentals and home ownership. We are in favor
9 of the St. Felix, um, project. The Fort Greene,
10 Clinton Hill community has undergone significant
11 change in the midst of racial, ethnic, and income
12 diversity. There is an abundance of rental apartment
13 towers along the downtown Brooklyn foot print. These
14 buildings have sprung as a result of zoning changes
15 whereby commercial areas transition and it was
16 allowed for the creation of residential housing. We
17 at IMPACCT have served as the marketing agents for
18 several of these properties, including the Hub and 1
19 Flatbush. The demand for housing for persons with
20 income ranging from 30% to 100% of AMI is
21 demonstrated by the many residents using Housing
22 Connect 2.0 and applying for these properties.
23 Besides serving as inclusion area marketing agent for
24 rental properties, IMPACCT Brooklyn programs include
25 first-time home buyer services, where we educate

1 those interested in home ownership to be able to
2 navigate the process. We are members of the New York
3 Mortgage Coalition and the Center for New York City
4 Neighborhoods. We have an active list of clients who
5 desire home ownership, including those in the Fort
6 Greene, Clinton Hill area. The 100, the 130 Felix
7 Street Project will afford a few residents the
8 opportunity to own their residence. It is one of the
9 only opportunities amongst the new developments that
10 will be priced at an amount affordable to those
11 earning 70% to 100% of area median income. We have
12 reviewed the plans for rezoning and we respect the
13 opinions of our friends, um, in the Fort Greene,
14 Clinton Hill area. We know that gentrification is an
15 ongoing problem, but this particular project, um, in
16 reviewing the design, the renderings are a compliment
17 to the historical nature of the area. I know that my
18 time is running short, so I will end here, and I
19 thank you, and again, in support of this project.
20 Thank you.

21
22 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
23 testifying this morning.
24
25

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: William Thomas will
3 be the next speaker, followed by Darold Burgess.
4 William Thomas.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

6 WILLIAM THOMAS: Hi, everyone. Ah, my
7 name is, ah, William Thomas. Ah, I'm here to support
8 the project as the executive director for Open New
9 York. Ah, we're an independent grassroots pro-
10 housing organization. Ah, we support 130 St. Felix
11 Street because allowing more homes here would both
12 help to alleviate New York's housing shortage, ah,
13 help to fight displacement, and also help to address
14 our climate crisis. Ah, so to start, ah, New York
15 has a terrible housing shortage. Ah, between 2010
16 and 2017 median rents increased to more than double
17 median wages. Homelessness has reached the highest
18 level since the great depression. And pre-COVID one
19 out of every 10 elementary school students in New
20 York City public schools attended from homeless
21 shelters. So in this environment we need every bit
22 of affordable housing we can muster, and the 26
23 below-market homes 130 St. Felix offers is a great
24 place to start. Ah, but in addition, adding market-
25 rate homes here right on the edge of downtown

1
2 Brooklyn and Fort Greene will also help [inaudible]
3 and displacement elsewhere. This is a very desirable
4 transit-rich area and although it would be many
5 families' first choice if they can't find a place to
6 live here they'll simply move to a more affordable
7 neighborhood deeper in Brooklyn. If we don't let
8 young professionals live here they're not gonna
9 disappear, they're just gonna merely continue to
10 gentrify neighborhoods further in Brooklyn, like Bed-
11 Stuy, Crown Heights, and Brownsville, while every new
12 home will spare a family that pressure. Ah,
13 furthermore, this project is obviously a win for the
14 climate, as the project is one of the most transit-
15 rich areas of the country, two blocks away from
16 Atlantic Terminal. Ah, in addition, the developer is
17 seeking a waiver to eliminate parking [inaudible]
18 entirely. I hope the council will urge granting this
19 waiver. Ah, New Yorkers have 30% of the carbon
20 footprint of the average American, ah, largely
21 because it's possible to live here without a car.
22 Ah, the climate crisis demands that we grow in
23 greener ways and this project is just that. Ah, I
24 know that a few locals disapprove the project because
25 it may block their views from the, ah, Williamsburg

1 Savings Bank Tower, but to put it bluntly we live in
2 a city where there aren't enough homes for the people
3 who want to live here...

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

5 WILLIAM THOMAS: ...[inaudible] horrifying
6 [inaudible] consequences. I ask the council to
7 prioritize, ah, solutions there. Thank you.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
9 your testimony.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Darold Burgess will
11 be the next speaker, followed by Beth Allen. Darold
12 Burgess.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

14 DAROLD BURGESS: Good afternoon and thank
15 you for allowing me to speak today in support of the
16 130 St. Felix Street Project. My name is Darold
17 Burgess and I'm the president of the Ingersoll Houses
18 Tenant Association. I am here to express my support
19 for this project because it will provide our
20 neighborhood unique opportunities for equity in
21 housing as well as education. From a housing
22 standpoint, 130 St. Felix Street is slated to create
23 approximately 36 condo units that will be set aside
24 for moderate income earning households. This is a
25

1 unique opportunity that really have been, have seen
2 in our city, let alone our neighborhood, where the
3 cost of home ownership renders this an inaccessible
4 feat to many in the NYCHA community and beyond, thus
5 preventing these families from participating in the
6 key component of building generational wealth. From
7 an educational standpoint, the Brooklyn Music School
8 has more than demonstrated its commitment to
9 advancing equity in the neighborhood. In fact, the
10 Brooklyn Music School offers free or discounted
11 instruction to over 80% of its students. The long-
12 time Brooklyn institution's effort to create diverse
13 and inclusive environment with students and faculty
14 of all different backgrounds does not go unnoticed
15 and should be, should be a framework for educational
16 institutions across the city. Today the Brooklyn
17 Music School faces space constraints. When this 130
18 St. Felix Street Project is approved the organization
19 will be able to more than double its instructional
20 space, all in an expanded facility that they will own
21 outright. This will allow the school to greatly
22 expand the number of students it serves. I also want
23 to add that we work very well with Team Brown
24 Consulting, ah, ah, a construction consultant for
25

1 Ingersoll Houses, and I ask that the City Council
2 members hear my voice and the voice of many who
3 reside in city public housing...

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

5 DAROLD BURGESS: ...who are asking for the
6 opportunity to build generational wealth in the
7 neighborhood that we love. Thank you for hearing my
8 testimony support of the 130 St. Felix Street Project
9 today. Darold Burgess [inaudible] president.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
11 your testimony.

12 DAROLD BURGESS: Thank you.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Beth, Beth Allen will
14 be the next speaker, who will be followed by Raisa
15 Brown. Beth Allen.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

17 BETH ALLEN: Hi. Ah, my name is Beth
18 Allen. I'm the executive director of the Downtown
19 Brooklyn Arts Alliance, or DBAA. Ah, and I thank you
20 very much for the opportunity to provide testimony in
21 support of the mixed use, ah, mixed income
22 development at 130 St. Felix Street that will house
23 the expansion of the Brooklyn Music School. Um, DBAA
24 is a network of 16 nonprofit cultural organizations
25

1 in downtown Brooklyn. Our members include every
2 presenting arts venue situated in the Brooklyn
3 cultural district, as well as small galleries and
4 other arts venues, dance and theater companies, and
5 many others. DBAA offers programming designed to
6 strengthen arts organizations, foster collaboration,
7 and collectively address issues in our sector and in
8 our communities that, that affect our work. Brooklyn
9 Music School is a long-standing member of DBAA and a
10 treasured asset in our community. As the leader of
11 DBAA one of the things that I think about constantly
12 is how our existing arts organizations will be able
13 to continue to serve the growing residential
14 population of downtown Brooklyn. Brooklyn Music
15 School's explosive growth the past few years is a
16 testament to the demand for arts education in this
17 neighborhood and while their growth numbers alone are
18 impressive the fact that 80% of classes are offered
19 at free or reduced cost is especially important to
20 their impact. The breadth of their offerings,
21 spanning dozens of musical and cultural traditions is
22 especially loved. And student performances for the
23 community, for community audiences at the Downtown
24 Brooklyn Arts Festival, Atlantic Antic, and events in
25

1
2 Foley Square contribute greatly to the character and
3 identity of the neighborhood. Anyone who has visited
4 Brooklyn Music School in recent years knows that it
5 is bursting at the seams. Space to expand, as well
6 as for an upgraded facility, is urgently needed. One
7 of the primary things that defines Fort Greene as a
8 cultural neighborhood is the widespread availability
9 of high-quality arts education and in particular
10 programs that are affordable to all, serve diverse
11 students, and offer exposure to a wide range of
12 artistic forms.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

14 BETH ALLEN: As the neighborhood grows
15 and changes this project will expand the reach and
16 impact of Brooklyn Music School's programming and
17 allow an organization that has been contributing to
18 the vibrancy of the community for over a hundred
19 years to thrive. We are delighted to support this
20 project. Thank you.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
22 your testimony this morning, this afternoon, sorry.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Raisa Brown will be
24 the next and last speaker on this panel.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

2 RAISA BROWN: Hi, good morning, can you
3 hear me?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Good
5 afternoon. Yes, we can.

6 RAISA BROWN: Hi, oh, sorry [inaudible]
7 and speak on behalf of Team Brown Consulting and also
8 in full support of the 131st, um, 130 Street Felix
9 Project, and as an independent contractor myself I
10 look at this as a opportunity for jobs and for the
11 residents that live in the downtown Brooklyn area.
12 And I'm also born and raised in Fort Greene, so this
13 is definitely something that's gonna be [inaudible]
14 of the project and I hope everyone else is in full
15 support as well.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
17 your testimony. I don't see any questions, ah, no
18 hands raised from the council members, so we can
19 dismiss this panel.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And, Mr. Chair, the
21 next panel will include Edgar Pereria and Lorrie
22 Ayers-Hutchinson.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

24 EDGAR PERERIA: Hi, can everyone hear me?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Yes, sir.

1
2 EDGAR PERERIA: Yes. On behalf of the
3 Chinese, um, American Planning Council I am speaking
4 to support the 130 Street, ah, Felix Street Project.
5 For several years now CPC has been working with the
6 Gotham Organization, the developers of this proposed
7 development, to similarly expand, ah, CPC's
8 headquarters in the Lower East Side after a
9 competitive selection process. The resulting plan is
10 more than can hope for. Together with Gotham, CPC
11 will soon have a new state-of-the-art facility to
12 expand our services and, importantly, we will
13 maintain our ownership of our site. As with the
14 proposed development of 130 Street, Felix Street, ah,
15 St. Felix Street, we will also create permanently
16 affordable housing and affordable senior housing, a
17 direct result of the need we see every day in our
18 neighborhood. Speaking from experience, Gotham is a
19 tremendous partner. Their commitment to us, our
20 goals, our community needs, and our project has been
21 unwavering. As you know well, developing in New York
22 City is never easy. It's hours upon us with
23 [inaudible] changes, tweaks, revisions, more
24 conservation, and communicative, ah, before, during
25 construction. Our development is next to our current

1
2 affordable senior housing with 200 residents and
3 Gotham has been responsive to any and all concerns.
4 These public-private partnerships are critical in
5 building a better, more decisive, equitable city. At
6 CPC [inaudible] no hand challenging the landscapes
7 for nonprofit organizations. Projects like this,
8 with partners not only that have talent and skills to
9 do the work but also take the time to understand the
10 goals of the organizations with whom they are
11 partnered are the only way for nonprofits to continue
12 to providing the services and support they provide to
13 their constituents. I have no doubt that Gotham and
14 their project architects have spent hours debating
15 every detail in how building will look and feel in
16 context within the neighborhood, being careful to
17 respect what is exciting because it's exactly how
18 they approach every conversation that they had with
19 our neighbors. I'm excited to see that Gotham is
20 using the same process for the 130 St. Felix Street
21 Project, which is contextual to the neighborhood.
22 Simply put...

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

24

25

1
2 EDGAR PERERIA: ...Gotham, Gotham is a
3 good partner for the community. Thank you very much
4 for giving me the opportunity to speak.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
6 your testimony.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Lorrie Ayers-
8 Hutchinson will be the next speaker on this panel.
9 Lorrie Ayers-Hutchinson.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

11 LORRIE AYERS-HUTCHINSON: Good afternoon.
12 My name is Lorrie Ayers-Hutchinson. I am a resident
13 of Brooklyn and I appreciate the opportunity to speak
14 on my own behalf as a resident of Brooklyn who is
15 committed to caring for the families, um, of central
16 Brooklyn and particularly the communities, ah, of
17 Fort Greene and those surrounding it. I just wanted
18 to say that, ah, I am here to testify on behalf of
19 supporting this project at 130 St. Felix Street
20 because it is meeting the needs of what is already
21 such a rich and diverse community in maintaining that
22 tapestry and beauty that is Brooklyn. To be able to
23 have, ah, access to housing, ah, opportunities, and
24 someone already spoke about the opportunity to
25 building generational wealth, is incredible, and the

1 fact that developer has made room for both that and
2 to keep and maintain what has been an institution of
3 the arts in Brooklyn that makes affordable arts
4 education available to our students is an amazing
5 accomplishment, and I just wanted to say we can't
6 afford to not have this project go through. Um, it
7 would be detrimental to the people of Brooklyn. It
8 would be detrimental to the community of Fort Greene,
9 and all those who are, who would be directly and
10 indirectly impacted by the loss of such an
11 opportunity. So I just wanted to thank the, the
12 council once again. Um, I hope that you will vote in
13 favor of this project because it means so much to the
14 families of our community.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
17 your testimony this afternoon.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, that was the
19 last speaker on this panel.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: OK. I don't
21 see any hands raised, and I ask you to dismiss this
22 panel and bring on the next panel.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: The next panel will
24 include, ah, Alex Carrington. Alex Carrington will
25 be the next speaker.

2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

3 ALEX CARRINGTON: Hello, this is Alex
4 Carrington.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Go ahead,
6 sir.

7 ALEX CARRINGTON: Hello?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Yes, we can
9 hear you.

10 ALEX CARRINGTON: [inaudible]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you,
12 thank you.

13 ALEX CARRINGTON: I want to thank you so
14 much for accepting me. Good afternoon to the good
15 folks. Ah, I am a long-time and long-standing
16 resident of Brooklyn, and I'm definitely for the
17 project of 130 St. Felix, but more importantly just
18 being for the project just to continue to beautify
19 Brooklyn, I just wanted to make sure that local
20 participation of the project as far as, ah,
21 contracting and, and employment in the building of
22 the project. But we're, we're definitely for it I
23 hope you guys, you know, [inaudible] to pass and stay
24 strong, ah, with that, so that we can, ah, have that

1 affordable housing and employment through the
2 project. Thank you.

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you for
5 your testimony this afternoon.

6 ALEX CARRINGTON: All right, appreciate
7 you for having me. Thank you.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: That was the last
10 speaker for this panel.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: OK. Um, we
12 can dismiss this panel, seeing no questions, and we
13 can move to the next panel, please.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ah, if there are any
15 additional members of the public who wish to testify
16 on the 130 St. Felix Street proposal please press the
17 raise hand button now and, ah, Mr. Chair, the meeting
18 will briefly stand at ease while we check for, ah,
19 any additional members of the public who may have,
20 ah, registered. Mr. Chair, I see no other members of
21 the public, ah, who wish to testify on this item.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you,
23 Counsel. Um, seeing nobody else here to testify and
24 no other additional business, um, before the, this
25 subcommittee today I want to, um, thank Chair Moya

1
2 and my colleagues who serve on this committee, the
3 Majority Leader, ah, the subcommittee staff, and the
4 other council staffers, ah, the applicants who came
5 out to testify today, and certainly all who
6 testified, um, with regard to the applications before
7 this subcommittee today.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mr. Chair, before
9 you, before you, ah, gavel out I just ask that you
10 confirm that the public hearing has been closed and
11 that the items are laid over.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Ah, I will
13 confirm that the public hearing has been closed and
14 that the items that we heard today have been laid
15 over. With that, seeing no other further business
16 before this subcommittee today I, ah, close this
17 hearing at 12:14 p.m. [gavel]

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

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 29, 2021