

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE OF LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING & MARITIME USES

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July 21, 2008  
Start: 11:45am  
Recess: 12:06pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E:  
LEROY G. COMRIE, JR.  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Annabel Palma  
Maria del Carmen Arroyo  
Rosie Mendez  
John C. Liu

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

Patrick O'Sullivan  
Vice President  
New York City Economic Development Corporation

James Harris  
Senior Associate in Government and Community Relations  
New York City Economic Development Corporation

Susan Long  
Vice President for Strategic Planning  
Hugh L. Carey Battery Park City Authority

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2                   RAPHAEL PEREZ: Testing one, two.  
3 Testing one, two. This is a test for the  
4 Committee of Landmarks. Today's date is July 21,  
5 2008 and the meeting is being recorded by Raphael  
6 Perez.

7                   CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Today is  
8 Monday, July 21. I'm Leroy Comrie. I'm chairing  
9 the Committee on Landmarks, Public Use and Siting  
10 and Maritime Uses. We're joined today by Council  
11 Members Annabel Palma and Maria del Carmen Arroyo  
12 from the Bronx. We're also joined by Council  
13 Member Rosie Mendez from Manhattan and Council  
14 Member John Liu from Queens. We're here today  
15 regarding Application Number 20095017P and M in  
16 Council Member Gerson's district, community board  
17 12.

18                   It's a proposed maritime lease  
19 pursuant to New York City Charter section 1301 by  
20 the New York City Small Business Services of Pier  
21 A in Manhattan to the Battery Park City Authority.

22                   We're joined today by Susan Long  
23 from the Battery Park City Authority and Patrick  
24 O'Sullivan from the New York City Economic  
25 Development Corp. And they're going to give us a

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2 presentation at this time. We'll turn over the  
3 mic to you. Good morning.

4 PATRICK O'SULLIVAN: Good morning.  
5 Good morning Chairman Comrie and members of  
6 Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses Sub-  
7 Committee. I'm Patrick O'Sullivan. I'm Vice  
8 President of the New York City Economic  
9 Development Corporation. I'm joined this morning  
10 by James Harris; a senior associate in Government  
11 and Community Relations at EDC.

12 Today I'm pleased to present you  
13 with an overview and update on Pier A, a project  
14 that we have been working on closely with the  
15 Battery Park City Authority in recent months. We  
16 are seeking City Council approval of the lease  
17 that we've agreed upon with the authority pursuant  
18 to Section 1301.2F of the City Charter.

19 I'm going to begin today with a  
20 brief overview of the history of Pier A. I will  
21 then talk about recent developments and the status  
22 of the project. I will then provide a summary of  
23 the agreement that we have reached with the  
24 Authority on the redevelopment of the pier and  
25 describe our objectives as we move forward with

1  
2 redevelopment. I will also discuss the reasons  
3 for Batty Park City Authority's involvement in the  
4 project. I will be happy to take your questions  
5 at the end of the presentation.

6 Pier A is a three-floor structure  
7 at the tip of lower Manhattan containing over  
8 30,000 square feet of indoor space as well as a  
9 public plaza area. Battery Park City is to the  
10 north of the pier and Battery Park is to the  
11 south.

12 Construction of the pier shed was  
13 completed in 1886, making it the oldest standing  
14 pier shed in the city. Pier A was built  
15 immediately after work was finished on the  
16 Brooklyn Bridge and using the same equipment.  
17 Pier A was constructed by the City's Department of  
18 Docks and until 1959, served as the headquarters  
19 for the Harbor Police. Subsequently it became the  
20 home of the Marine Division of the City's fire  
21 department.

22 The Pier, with its distinctive 70-  
23 foot high clock tower, has played host to many  
24 important maritime events, including the selling  
25 of the Lusitania in 1907 and the 300th anniversary

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2 of Henry Hudson's voyage up the river that now  
3 bears his name. The distinctive clock was added  
4 in 1919 to commemorate soldiers, sailors and  
5 Marines who died in World War I. Sadly this  
6 historic city asset has sat undeveloped for the  
7 last 20 years. Now however, as was announced  
8 earlier this year and as you may have read, this  
9 is about to change.

10 Plans to redevelop Pier A date back  
11 to the late 1980s. Unfortunately, over that time  
12 various redevelopment plans have stalled. Given  
13 the limited space available and the cost  
14 associated with restoring this landmark, private  
15 developers have not been successful in their  
16 efforts. As you may be aware, the City took back  
17 possession of the pier in June 2007.

18 After taking time to assess our  
19 options, we began discussions with the Authority,  
20 which led to an agreement in principle on terms at  
21 the end of last year. Since that time, we and the  
22 Authority have worked on drafting a lease for the  
23 pier. Additionally, the fiscal year 2009 adopted  
24 budget included \$30 million for renovations of the  
25 pier. The \$30 million allocated in the budget for

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2 this project will provide funding for the  
3 Authority to undertake the restoration of Pier A.  
4 The budget funds will be used for the renovation  
5 of the shed and sub-structure of the pier, the  
6 improvement of the pier's upland plaza area, the  
7 fit out of the mixed use commercial space to be  
8 built within the pier shed and the possible fit  
9 out of an on-site visitor center.

10 Let me turn to the lease. The  
11 lease has a 49-year term with five 10-year renewal  
12 options. The specified uses for the site include  
13 recreational maritime and ancillary uses including  
14 retail, event and dining uses. It will be a  
15 triple net lease with nominal rent, meaning that  
16 the Authority would be responsible for maintenance  
17 and operations of the pier. With respect to the  
18 nominal rent charge, it should be noted that the  
19 City currently receives surplus revenues generated  
20 by the Authority pursuant to an agreement between  
21 the parties. These revenues go into the City  
22 General Fund. Any surplus revenues generated by  
23 Pier A would be included in such annual payment.

24 In addition, the City will retain  
25 approval authority with respect to certain

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2 decisions including the redevelopment and sub-  
3 structure plan, tenancies and annual capital and  
4 operating budgets. The Authority will proceed  
5 with redevelopment plans to be agreed upon by the  
6 City. The lease also includes milestones with  
7 respect to final designs and completion of the  
8 work.

9                   It is currently expected that the  
10 project will be completed by the end of 2010.  
11 While plans are still in the early stages of  
12 preparation, we expect the redevelopment of Pier A  
13 to accomplish the following goals. It will  
14 preserve this important maritime landmark. It  
15 will create a new first class destination at a  
16 strategic location in the city. And it will act  
17 as a gateway to the city's Harbor district by  
18 potentially including a visitors' center and  
19 recreational ferry service. And if an agreement  
20 can be reached with the National Park Service by  
21 serving as the new embarkation and debarkation  
22 location for Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island  
23 ferry service.

24                   We believe Battery Park City  
25 Authority's involvement makes sense because Pier A



1  
2 was originally part of the Battery Park City's  
3 footprint when the Authority was created in 1969.  
4 And we have great confidence in the Authority's  
5 ability to restore the pier in the appropriate  
6 manner.

7           The Authority has demonstrated its  
8 development capabilities by being a pioneer in  
9 green urban development. Its efforts have  
10 resulted in a model neighborhood where people live  
11 and work and have access to world-class open  
12 space. It is also attuned to the interests of the  
13 surrounding community and will bear those in mind  
14 as it moves forward.

15           Given the Authority's record of  
16 successfully developing and maintaining public  
17 property, its involvement gives us reason to  
18 believe that this project, after so many false  
19 starts, will at last be completed. Furthermore,  
20 the Authority's prepared to hit the ground running  
21 with respect to the project.

22           This summer the Authority is  
23 working with its architect, H3 Hardy Collaboration  
24 Architecture, on proposed designs and has hired a  
25 consultant to analyze possible uses of the indoor

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2 space. Additionally, there is some initial  
3 necessary sub-structure work that the Authority is  
4 prepared to have commence this summer.

5           As we move forward with the  
6 project, the Authority will continue to keep the  
7 community involved in the process. The Authority  
8 regularly seeks input and guidance on all its  
9 projects from Community Board One's Battery Park's  
10 City Committee. We, along with the Authority,  
11 have briefed the BPC Committee on the Pier A  
12 project. Additionally, the Authority's president,  
13 James Cavanaugh, has given tours of the project  
14 site to CB 1 president, Julie Menin, and other  
15 local leaders.

16           Furthermore, a kick-off seret  
17 [phonetic] was held in the spring to solicit ideas  
18 about the rehabilitation and redevelopment of Pier  
19 A from a wide cross section of interested parties,  
20 including lower Manhattan government entities,  
21 architects, construction experts, engineering  
22 firms and the community. As the project moves  
23 into a stage where uses for the site are  
24 evaluated, the Authority will undertake additional  
25 community outreach.

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2 As I mentioned earlier, we are  
3 seeking City Council approval pursuant to section  
4 1301.2F of the City Charter. The redevelopment of  
5 Pier A is a very important part of the renaissance  
6 now underway in lower Manhattan and will help  
7 further the creation of a unified water front  
8 district that will improve access and recreational  
9 opportunities for New Yorkers and visitors alike.

10 To conclude, we are excited about  
11 the redevelopment prospects for the pier and look  
12 forward to continuing to work with the Authority  
13 to make the plans become reality. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Is Susan Long  
15 going to testify? Okay. Any questions from  
16 members so far? Okay.

17 SUSAN LONG: Good afternoon  
18 Chairman Comrie, members of the sub-committee.  
19 I'm Susan Long, Vice President for Strategic  
20 Planning at the Hugh L. Carey Battery Park City  
21 Authority. I appreciate the opportunity to speak  
22 with you about the rehabilitation and development  
23 of Pier A.

24 For those of you not entirely  
25 familiar with the Battery Park City Authority,

1  
2 we're a public benefit authority that administers  
3 a 92-acre man made mixed-use community located at  
4 the southwestern tip of Manhattan. Battery Park  
5 City contains 33 acres of park space, 9.5 million  
6 in square feet of office space, a commodities  
7 trading facility, retail space, a marina, two  
8 hotels, a movie theatre, museums, public schools  
9 and approximately 9,000 residential units.

10 Battery Park City is also home to almost 5 million  
11 square feet of green development including the  
12 nation's first green residential high-rise.

13 Pier A is located within the  
14 Authority's statutory project area, immediately  
15 adjacent to the current southern boundary of  
16 Battery Park City. And was one of the under-  
17 utilized piers that the Authority was created to  
18 replace or revitalize in the 1970s. However in  
19 the late 1970s, Pier A was designated a New York  
20 City landmark and placed on the National Register  
21 of Historic Places and was retained by the City in  
22 1982 when current Battery Park City area was  
23 turned over to the Authority. It is now the last  
24 remaining historic pier in Manhattan.

25 When the pier was completed in 1886

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2 it served as a gateway to New York City and later  
3 has, as Patrick mentioned, the City's Department  
4 of Docks and Marine Divisions of the police and  
5 fire departments.

6 The Battery Park City Authority  
7 will oversee the pier's badly needed underwater  
8 repairs, restore the three-story structure to its  
9 historic nature and ensure the surrounding plaza  
10 area links up with existing downtown park and  
11 transportation systems so the pier is once again a  
12 vibrant part of downtown Manhattan.

13 The estimated cost of the  
14 redevelopment is approximately \$30 million. We  
15 believe the pier can be renovated and operational  
16 by end of 2010. The cost estimate originates with  
17 the previous tenant, so as more accurate  
18 information becomes available, we'll be sharing it  
19 with the City for your approval. The Authority  
20 will submit detailed budgets, along with schematic  
21 drawings for the pier's redevelopment, to the City  
22 later this summer.

23 To that end, the Authority has  
24 commenced needed underwater repair work with a  
25 view toward completing that element of the project

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2 this summer by October 2008. We're also beginning  
3 discussions with the State Office of Parks,  
4 Recreation and Historic Preservation with respect  
5 to the terms of a grant made to the city for Pier  
6 A in 1998, under which the State has certain  
7 continuing rights. The lease will take effect  
8 upon receipt of all necessary state approvals.

9 We're currently exploring the best  
10 uses for the pier including retail, restaurant,  
11 office and event space. As Patrick mentioned, we  
12 hired some experts to help us with that process.  
13 All plans and tenants will be approved by the City  
14 also. Upon completion, the Battery Park City  
15 Authority will maintain all the public areas and  
16 space occupied by any tenants that aren't us.  
17 We're also seeking continuing input from the  
18 community. We've met with Community Board 1 and  
19 we're doing some public surveys for lower  
20 Manhattan residents to get input in continuing  
21 ideas for the tenants.

22 In addition to the historic  
23 building, the Pier A site includes a 35-acre  
24 plaza, which sits between Battery Park and the  
25 Battery Park City's Wagner Park. It will be

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2 designed to allow the public to walk easily  
3 between points in lower Manhattan and may include  
4 features such as landscaping, planting, decorative  
5 pavers and seating. Pier A will serve as a  
6 critical link between the esplanades along Battery  
7 Park City and historic Battery Park. And the open  
8 space we create there will be vital to pedestrian  
9 and bicycle traffic.

10 Battery Park City's close proximity  
11 to Pier A in addition to our extensive experience  
12 managing multi-million dollar capital projects and  
13 major construction activity, make us uniquely  
14 equipped to facilitate Pier A's rehabilitation.  
15 We believe Pier A will be a vibrant destination  
16 point for visitors and locals alike and a valuable  
17 addition to Manhattan's water front district.

18 My thanks to the Committee for this  
19 opportunity to discuss Battery Park City  
20 Authority's role in this important project. We  
21 look forward to working with you and Council  
22 Member Gerson and the Community Board 1 as we move  
23 forward. I'd also be happy to answer any  
24 questions.

25 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Thank you for

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2 that testimony. Thank you both for your testimony  
3 today. I'm confused on the location. Is this the  
4 facility that's--? What street is this that's in  
5 the picture, in the third slide? What's this  
6 street here?

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MS. LONG: That's Battery Place.

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CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: That's Battery  
9 Place? So is that the hotel that's on the...?

10

MS. LONG: Yeah.

11

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay.

12

MS. LONG: Well the hotel is right  
13 there. I'm not sure if that's what you're  
14 pointing to. Yeah. The hotel is right outside of  
15 the picture.

16

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay. This is  
17 the West Side Highway?

18

MS. LONG: Yes.

19

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay.

20

MS. LONG: It's right at the end of  
21 the West Side Highway.

22

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: So below this,  
23 is the park with--

24

MR. O'SULLIVAN: [interposing]

25

That's Battery Park.



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2 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Where Battery  
3 Park is now?

4 MR. O'SULLIVAN: Mm-hmm.

5 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: And where the  
6 ferry is present.

7 MR. O'SULLIVAN: Yeah. Exactly.

8 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay. That's  
9 where the Visitor's Center. Okay. What's the  
10 condition of the building? Is it occupied by  
11 anyone at all?

12 MR. O'SULLIVAN: No.

13 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: It's totally  
14 vacant.

15 MR. O'SULLIVAN: It's totally  
16 vacant, correct. It's been vacant for a number of  
17 years.

18 CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: The way that  
19 the roof is in the picture is just enhanced by  
20 Photo Shop or whatever? The roof looks very  
21 green.

22 MR. O'SULLIVAN: Some work had been  
23 done by the previous developer on the outside of  
24 the building but the inside is completely vacant.  
25 Both the exterior and interior need to be

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2 renovated.

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CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: So the

developer did start some work on the outside of  
the building some years ago but never finished  
that work.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: Never finished it,  
right.

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Did you need  
to go to LPC, Landmarks Preservation Corp for  
approval?

MR. O'SULLIVAN: We will.

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: You will have  
to?

MR. O'SULLIVAN: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Have they been  
consulted so far?

MR. O'SULLIVAN: They have.

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay. And  
will they sit on a review board as you will? Have  
they been invited to the serets or any of the  
other oppportunities?

MR. O'SULLIVAN: They were.  
Battery Park City Authority is currently working  
on the designs. When those are ready, we will

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present it to the Commission.

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: And will the Community Board also be able to sit on this Committee to review the plan?

MR. O'SULLIVAN: Battery Park City Authority has a representative at the Community Board, at the Battery Park Community's Boards meetings. So they'll keep them apprised of the plans. But the plans primarily will be one of restoration and rehabilitation of the pier.

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay. So you're saying that you will go to the Community Board and give them updates. But will someone from the Community Board be a part of the project is what I'm saying? Or have a regular and frequent feedback other than...? Do you show up to every Community Board meeting or is that...

MR. O'SULLIVAN: Battery Park City Authority typically shows up to the meetings.

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: And gives an update at every meeting on your activity?

MS. LONG: We have just begun that process. We had an introductory presentation to Community Board 1 about this project a couple of

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months ago. From now on, we'll have a

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representative provide updates on this project at

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those meetings.

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CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay. All

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right. And Council Member Gerson is aware of this

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project and he supports it?

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MR. O'SULLIVAN: We have briefed

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Council Member Gerson and he is in support.

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CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Will someone

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from his office be regularly updated on the status

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of the project?

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MR. O'SULLIVAN: We'll be in

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contact with his office, yes.

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CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Okay. All

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right. I just wanted to do some basic checks and

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balances. I'm trying to act like Council Member

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Lappin but the Committee is ready to vote. Seeing

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that there are no other questions, I want to thank

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you for coming down this morning. At this point I

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would recommend that we do a yes vote and call the

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roll. I have to close the hearing first? Oh.

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The hearing is on this issue, seeing there are no

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other speakers on this particular issue then the

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hearing is now closed. And we will call the vote

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2 on the hearing.

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FEMALE VOICE: Vote on Pre-  
considered L.U. 20095017 P and M. Council Member  
Comrie?

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CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Aye.

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FEMALE VOICE: Council Member Lui?

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COUNCIL MEMBER JOHN C. LIU: Yes.

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FEMALE VOICE: Council Member  
Palma?

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COUNCIL MEMBER ANNABEL PALMA: Yes.

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FEMALE VOICE: Council Member

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Arroyo?

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COUNCIL MEMBER MARIA DEL CARMEN

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ARROYO: Yes.

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FEMALE VOICE: Council Member

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Mendez?

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COUNCIL MEMBER ROSIE MENDEZ: Yes.

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FEMALE VOICE: Council Member

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Lappin? Council Member Barron, Council Member

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Martinez, Council Member Oddo, not being present.

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By a vote of five in the affirmative and zero in

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the negative, the aforementioned 20095017 P and M

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is now adopted and referred to the full Committee

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on Land Use.

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CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Thank you.

Thank you Council Members and we can adjourn the meeting. Thank you for being here.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON COMRIE: Good luck with the project.

MS. LONG: Thank you.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: Thank you.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Amber Gibson, certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature Amber Gibson

Date 08/14/2008