

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES

----- X

December 15, 2014
Start: 10:02 a.m.
Recess: 10:10 a.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm,
16th Fl.

B E F O R E:
MARK S. WEPRIN
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Daniel R. Garodnick
Jumaane D. Williams
Donovan J. Richards
Antonio Reynoso
Ritchie J. Torres
Vincent M. Ignizio
Vincent J. Gentile
Ruben Wills

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

Eric Palatnik

Attorney

Estate of Letizia Sollazzo

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright. Good
3 morning everyone. Hello, my name is Mark Weprin; I
4 am Chair of the Zoning and Franchises Subcommittee
5 and I hope everyone had a nice weekend and we are
6 here today for one item on the Zoning and Franchises
7 Subcommittee agenda. Before we get to it, I just
8 want to acknowledge and the presence of the following
9 members of the committee, which makes up a quorum,
10 Council Member Donovan Richards, Council Member
11 Daniel Garodnick, Council Member Vincent Ignizio and
12 our gold star for the day, Council Member Vincent
13 Gentile; we also expect other members to arrive
14 shortly.

15 I'd like to call our first item, first
16 and only item on the agenda, which is Land Use No.
17 0151, Sollazzo Plaza Rezoning in Council Member
18 Rose's district. I'd like to invite Eric Palatnik to
19 please come up, the attorney representing this
20 applicant. Mr. Palatnik, you know the drill; please
21 state your name for the record and describe the
22 application.

23 ERIC PALATNIK: Can you hear me now?
24 Good morning. I'll be as brief I could be; I know
25

1
2 that you all have a very busy schedule and I hope
3 everybody is doing well; it's nice to see everybody.

4 The application that we're here for today
5 is on behalf of the Estate of Mr. Sollazzo and the
6 family has owned the property that we're talking
7 about in the Graniteville section of Staten Island
8 for the better part of the last century and the
9 property -- I don't know if you can see it from that
10 distance; I tried to move the pictures, but there's a
11 video camera requirement of where they must be, so
12 you must have good eyesight to see them. The
13 property is pictured here in the top two pictures and
14 in this picture here, and as you can tell, it's the
15 remnants of an old... literally an old farmhouse, with
16 its accessory structures. The structure on the left
17 there is an old commercial structure, it's all
18 located... the whole property is located in an R3-2
19 district, except for a small portion of it that's
20 within a commercial overlay; about 20 feet of the
21 front of it, and what we're asking permission to do...
22 [pause] what we're asking permission to do, if you
23 can see in the middle there, is to... that's the
24 property reflected in zoning; we're seeking to add
25 that hatched area there and what the hatched area

1
2 represents obviously is a zoning district which is a
3 C1-2 zoning district. Right now the property is
4 zoned entirely, if you can see on that map in the
5 center there -- I know it's hard to see from there;
6 the map is zoned in mostly residential. The rezoning
7 will allow us to develop [pause] a one-story, 7,064-
8 square-foot retail structure with 24 parking spaces
9 in the front. The way it's been designed -- in your
10 package that I passed up you have some plan sets
11 which should be in there, but the way the building
12 has been designed, with a lot of input from the
13 community board, which unanimously supported the
14 application, is to push the building up against the
15 back of the property, up against the Graniteville
16 Elementary School, which is directly behind the
17 property. Everything represented in blue there is
18 the elementary school, and by pushing the building
19 right up against the back of the property, what the
20 community board wanted to make sure of, and which the
21 applicant agreed to, is to make sure that nobody
22 hangs out behind the shopping center next to the
23 elementary school and no trash is stored back there
24 or anything next to the elementary school and it's
25 really just the yard, the ball-playing field to the

1 elementary school. And now as they request, we've
2 also -- in the plan package you'll see there on the
3 right side of the building itself -- put enclosed
4 garbage storage within the building itself, which is
5 something that wasn't requested of us, but we thought
6 it was a nice design feature. The character of the
7 area that we're asking for the zoning change is
8 really well suited for the zoning change and this is
9 long overdue. As you can tell from the variety of
10 hatched areas that surround the property, it is
11 surrounded on all sides by a commercial district,
12 various commercial districts, and it represents a
13 rather large shopping area for the neighborhood of
14 Graniteville, including a ShopRite Supermarket that's
15 around the corner, auto repair, a Wendy's,
16 Supermarket; numerous gas stations, a U-Haul truck
17 rental, an IHOP, if you like IHOP, is right around
18 the corner there, and all of those uses represent
19 local retail; there's a McDonald's right across the
20 street from the property, actually. So we're seeking
21 to allow the rezoning that will allow us to blend
22 harmoniously with the other adjacent local retail and
23 allow this old farmhouse, really which has outlived
24 its useful life, to be torn down and for the property
25

1
2 to be redeveloped with a proper use. So thank you
3 for your time and I'd be happy to answer any
4 questions.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you
6 Mr. Palatnik; I think we can stipulate that everybody
7 likes IHOP and I just want to acknowledge for the
8 record that the community board; borough president
9 both approve this item and I have with me a statement
10 from the Council Member, Debi Rose, that I'd like to
11 read into the record. It says, "I would like to
12 welcome Land Use 0151, 1816 Forest Avenue, also known
13 as Sollazzo Plaza to the North Shore. The opening of
14 new business developments in the district means
15 increased employment opportunities for our local
16 residents and provides additional options for
17 consumers. I am sure Sollazzo Plaza will thrive and
18 look forward to working with the owners to help meet
19 the growing needs of my constituents." So that is a
20 letter of support on behalf of Council Member Rose.
21 I see we've been joined by David Greenfield, the
22 Chair of the Land Use Committee. And I'd like to
23 turn to the panel now and see if anyone has any
24 questions for Mr. Palatnik on this item, after
25 hearing how much everybody loves it. [background

comment] He wants to know the pancake specials. I don't think they have established them yet...

[interpose, background comment][crosstalk]

ERIC PALATNIK: That's on the other... To be clear, for the record, the IHOP is in an existing shopping center [background comment] around the corner, over there; I was trying to draw out that there is a commercial character... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Oh I see. Okay.

ERIC PALATNIK: includes local retail, so there is no proposed IHOP at this location; there already... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay, but... but there already is one.

ERIC PALATNIK: there already is an existing IHOP around the corner...

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Very good.

ERIC PALATNIK: it's in the ShopRite shopping center.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. So he is not... [crosstalk]

ERIC PALATNIK: And I'm not privy of their breakfast specials...

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

2 ERIC PALATNIK: to their breakfast
3 specials.

4 [background comments]

5 ERIC PALATNIK: That changes everything.

6 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Well we'll have to
7 have fact-finding trip in order to find more
8 information out. We will now call on Dylan Casey --
9 welcome, Dylan -- to call the role, since I see no
10 questions, once we've established how happy we are
11 about this. So Dylan, please -- and we're joined by
12 Ann McCoy of course, our general counsel, and
13 Mr. Casey, please call the roll.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL CASEY: Chair Weprin.

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I vote aye.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL CASEY: Council Member
17 Gentile.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: I vote aye.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL CASEY: Council Member
20 Garodnick.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL CASEY: Council Member
23 Richards.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Aye.

1 COMMITTEE COUNSEL CASEY: And Council
2 Member Ignizio.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: I vote aye and I
4 wanna say happy holidays to my friend John Sollazzo
5 who's in the audience.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL CASEY: Land Use No.
7 0151 has been approved with 5 votes for, 0 against
8 and 0 abstentions.

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Alright, that's what
10 we call a shutout, Mr. Sollazzo. Congratulations.
11 Alright, with that in mind, I wanna wish... [background
12 comments] [pause]

13 We are gonna hold the role open till
14 10:30 so those who are on their way can get here, we
15 hope. And with that in mind, I wish everyone a very
16 happy holiday and I will see you next year on this
17 committee. Thank you very much. [background
18 comments] The meeting is now adjourned.

19 [gavel]

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL CASEY: Council Member
21 Reynoso.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: I vote aye.

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 December 26, 2014