

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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JULY 29, 2021
Start: 10:36 A.M.
Recess: 10:50 A.M.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: CHAIR DANIEL DROMM

COUNCIL MEMBERS: DANIEL DROMM
DARMA DIAZ
DIANA AYALA
HELEN ROSENTHAL
ALICKA AMPRY-SAMUEL
ADRIENNE ADAMS
SELVENA BROOKS-POWERS
KAREN KOSLOWITZ
KEN POWERS
BARRY GRODENCHIK
FRANCISCO MOYA
STEVEN MATTEO
VANESSA GIBSON
CARLOS MENCHACA

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

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3 SGT. AT ARMS: This is the hearing for
4 the Committee on Finance to be recorded by Israel
5 Martinez, taking place in City Council Chambers,
6 scheduled for 10:00, July 29, 2021.

7 CHAIR DROMM: Okay. Good morning and
8 welcome to today's meeting of the Committee of
9 Finance. I'm Council Member Daniel Dromm and I'm the
10 Chair of the committee. We are joined by Council
11 Members Darma Diaz, Ayala, Rosenthal, Amprey-Samuel,
12 Adams, Brooks-Powers, Koslowitz, Powers, Grodenchik,
13 Moya, Matteo, and Gibson. Today, the committee will
14 be voting on four items: A Transparency Resolution,
15 two article 11 property tax exemptions, and one bid-
16 related item. Let's begin with the Transparency
17 Resolution. The Transparency Resolution sets forth
18 the new designation and changes in the designation of
19 certain organizations receiving local, aging, anti-
20 poverty, and youth discretionary funding, and funding
21 pursuant to certain initiatives in the budget. As
22 with all Transparency Resolutions, Council Member
23 will have sign a disclosure form indicating rather or
24 not a conflict exist with any of the groups on the
25 attached list. If any member has a potential

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2 conflict of interest with any of the organizations
3 listed, he or she has the opportunity to disclose the
4 conflict at the time of their vote. As a reminder,
5 please disclose any conflicts you may have with
6 proposed subcontractors, by organizations sponsored
7 by discretionary funding. These disclosures must be
8 made before the subcontractor can be approved.

9 Disclosure forms must be completed and submitted
10 prior to the vote on the Transparency Resolution and
11 then be given or emailed to Chuck Davis. Next, we
12 have the two land use items. The first is Beck
13 Street in Council Member Salamanca's District. This
14 action would provide a full 40-year article 11
15 property tax exemption to support the preservation of
16 83 units of affordable rental housing. The second is
17 Maimonides Park in Council Member Menchaca's
18 District. The action would provide a partial 40-year
19 article 11 property tax exemption to support the
20 preservation of 221 units of affordable rental
21 housing. Each Council Member is supportive of the
22 exemptions in their Districts. Council Member
23 Menchaca would like to speak about his, so I'm going
24 to give him, is he here, no, okay. He's not here
25 yet. If he comes, I'll give the opportunity to speak

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2 on it. Finally, we have Intro 2291 which would
3 authorize the Madison 23rd Flatiron Chelsea bid to
4 increase the amount it expands annually, extend its
5 boundaries, and change the method of assessment upon
6 which the district charge is based as set forth in
7 the bids amended district plan. The bid is
8 requesting that the Council approve the following
9 changes to the district plan: Extending existing bid
10 boundaries to the west to generally include more
11 properties along 6th Avenue, increasing the bid
12 annual assessment for 3.2 million dollars to 6
13 million dollars, and three, changing the method of
14 assessment on which the district charge is based to
15 create a formula based on use class. On May 27th,
16 2021, this committee held a hearing on Intro 2291,
17 and we heard testimony in support of the proposed
18 changes to the bid's district plan. As required by
19 law, the hearing closed without a vote and the 30-day
20 period of property owners to file objections to the
21 amended district plans with the office of the city
22 clerk began. According to the city clerk, no
23 property owners filed a value objection to the
24 expansion of the bid. Accordingly, the committee may
25 now vote in favor of Intro 2291 if we can answer the

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2 following four questions in the affirmative: Were
3 all notices of hearing for all hearings required to
4 be held published and mailed as so required by law
5 and otherwise sufficient. Two, does all real
6 property within the district boundaries benefit from
7 the expansion of the district except as otherwise
8 provided by the law. Three, is all real property
9 benefited by the district included within the
10 district, and is the expansion of the district in the
11 best interest of the public? If the committee and
12 full Council find in the affirmative on these four
13 questions and the number of objections required to
14 prevent the expansion of the bid are not filed, then
15 the legislation can be adopted. Additionally, the
16 committee and the full Council must determine that it
17 is in the public interest to authorize an increase in
18 the maximum annual expenditure amount that the
19 relevant tax and debt limits will not be exceeded and
20 that the notice of increase proposed expenditure
21 amount was properly published. For further details
22 on the bid, please refer to the committee report on
23 the city planning commission report, and the bid's
24 proposed District plan. Representative from SBS are
25 here to testify to help us answer those questions on

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2 the bid item. SBS, please begin your testimony, and
3 we are now joined by Calvin T. Brown, the Assistant
4 Commissioner for the Department of Small Business
5 Services. Thank you, and please provide your
6 testimony. Thank you.

7 CALVIN T. BROWN: Thank you. Good
8 morning, Chair Dromm ... (crosstalk).

9 CHAIR DROMM: Excuse me, we have to swear
10 you in.

11 CALVIN T. BROWN: Sorry.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you affirm that
13 your testimony will be truthful to the best of your
14 knowledge, information, and belief?

15 CALVIN T. BROWN: I do.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

17 CALVIN T. BROWN: Good morning, Chair
18 Dromm and the members of the Finance Committee. I am
19 Calvin T. Brown, the Assistant Commission for
20 neighborhood development at the Department for Small
21 Business Services. I'm joined here by my colleagues.
22 The bid Program Director, Roxanne Early (SP?), and
23 the bid Senior Program Manager, Steven Lee (SP?). We
24 thank you for the opportunity to report in person on
25 the results of the objections filed with the city

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2 clerk again the proposed expansion for the Madison,
3 23rd Flatiron Chelsea business improvement district,
4 more commonly known as the Flatiron Partnership. As
5 required by law, the bid expansion's (inaudible)
6 committee mailed the summary of the City Council
7 Resolution to the following parties: To each owner
8 of real property within the existing district and
9 proposed expansion at the address shown at the latest
10 city assessment role, to such other person as are
11 registered with the city to receive tax billings
12 concerning real property within an existing district
13 and the proposed expansion, and to tenants of each
14 building within existing district and the proposed
15 expansion area. Additionally, the Flatiron
16 partnership published a notice of the public hearing
17 at least once in a local newspaper having general
18 circulation in a district. This notice specified the
19 time, place, and where the hearing will be held,
20 stated the proposed increase to the maximum amount to
21 be expended annually, and provided information on the
22 changes to the assessment formula and the geography
23 of the expansion area. Furthermore, SBS arranged for
24 publication of a copy of the summary of the
25 resolution at least once in the city record. We

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2 would like report on the results of the objections
3 filed with the city clerk against the proposed
4 expansion of the bid. At the conclusion of the 30-
5 day objection period, there were no objections filed
6 with the city clerk. The Department of Small
7 Business Services support the expansion of the bid,
8 and our judgement, the Flatiron partnership will
9 improve the quality of life and business conditions
10 in the district and surrounding area. At this time,
11 I'm happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

12 CHAIR DROMM: Okay, thank you very much,
13 and are there any questions on any of these items?
14 Okay, I do want to give Council Member Menchaca the
15 opportunity to say a few words as well, and I'm
16 asking everybody to come up to the microphones today
17 to speak because we don't have mics on our desks
18 necessarily for everyone.

19 CM MENCHACA: Thank you, Chair. Thank
20 you to the committee and members in the Council. I'm
21 here to talk about the article 11 that is presented
22 before the Council today for approval. It is
23 Maimonides Park portable portfolio. The neighborhood
24 of Sunset Park and Borough Park and really the
25 southwest part of Brooklyn is in need of many

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2 affordable units. This project presents a truly
3 unique opportunity for 67 immediate homeless
4 placements, 32 of which will be through health and
5 hospital referrals via HRA. The Developers funding
6 all the capital work making significant improvements
7 that will help current and future tenants of these
8 buildings understanding that community board, they
9 had some concerns. Community board 12 in Borough
10 Park really laid them out. I asked the sponsor to
11 commit in writing to provide quarterly updates to the
12 board on upcoming vacancies that will be advertised
13 on HPD's housing connect public portal in order to
14 share those opportunities with the community, talk
15 about the capital improvements, and really talk about
16 anything that's happening within this project. This
17 project is big. The sponsor expressed willingness to
18 work which is going to make it a precedent changing
19 opportunity for us all to look at how we can build a
20 bridge between these article 11s and the community.
21 In terms of concerns about the homeless facilities
22 and the families that will residing there. They are
23 New Yorkers who are just down on their luck and so
24 many of these days, we see the opportunities that
25 these facilities will have on their life. With that

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2 said, the developer will be working with CAMBA, a
3 respected non-profit that will provide services to
4 the formerly homeless residents including acclimating
5 tenants to the new apartment, engaging with case
6 managers, holding regular meetings with property
7 management, etc. These are great components of this
8 big project. CAMBA has also been working in the
9 district, so I really like CAMBA and what they do.
10 In securing my support, the sponsor agreed to work
11 with community board and my office to build
12 relationships so we can attack the skepticism head-
13 on, and I'm looking forward to doing that as soon as
14 this thing is approved, and as we move forward, I
15 just want to say thank you to HRA, to the Finance
16 team for negotiating this. This was not easy, but we
17 have arrived. Thank you so much.

18 CHAIR DROMM: Thank you very much, and
19 I'm now going to ask Billy Martin, the Committee
20 Clerk to call the Finance roll and remind everyone
21 you have to come up the mics to vote.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you. Good
23 morning, William Martin, Committee Clerk, roll call
24 vote, Committee on Finance. All items are coupled.
25 Chair Dromm

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2 CHAIR DROMM: I vote I.

3 COMMITTEE CLERK: Koslowitz.

4 CM KOSLOWITZ: I vote I.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK: Gibson.

6 CM GIBSON: I vote I.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK: Rosenthal.

8 CM ROSENTHAL: I vote I.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: Grodenchik.

10 CM GRODENCHIK: I.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank you. Adams.

12 CM ADAMS: I.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK: Ampry-Samuel.

14 CM AMPRY-SAMUEL: I vote I.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK: Ayala.

16 CM AYALA: I vote I.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK: Ayala votes I, thank

18 you. Moya.

19 CM MOYA: I vote I.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK: Powers.

21 CM POWERS: I vote I.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK: Diaz.

23 CM DARMA DIAZ: I vote I.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK: Brooks-Powers.

25 CM BROOKS-POWERS: I vote I.

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2 COMMITTEE CLERK: Matteo.

3 CM MATTEO: I'm voting I on all except
4 819, I vote no, thank you.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK: Just in case I missed
6 somebody. Van Bramer. Cornegy. Cumbo. Okay, by a
7 vote of 13 in the affirmative, zero in the negative,
8 and no abstentions, all items have been adopted by
9 the committee with preconsidered land use item 819 is
10 adopted by the committee, 12 in the affirmative, 1 in
11 the negative, and no abstentions.

12 CHAIR DROMM: Okay, thank you very much,
13 Committee Clerk, and with that this meeting is
14 adjourned at 10:50 A.M. in the morning.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date August 1, 2021