

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

LAND USE SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND
MARITIME USES

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March 4, 2009
Start: 11:19am
Recess: 11:30am

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E: JESSICA S. LAPPIN
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Council member Barron
Council member Comrie
Council member Liu
Council member Mendez
Council member Palma

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

Kate Daly
Executive Director
Landmarks Preservation Commission

CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: Good morning.

Welcome to the Land use Subcommittee on Landmarks,
Public Siting and Maritime Uses. My name is

Jessica Lappin, I'm the Chair. We're joined today
by Council member Charles Barron of Brooklyn,

Council member Leroy Comrie of Queens, Council

member John Liu of Queens, Councilwoman Rosie

Mendez of Manhattan, and Councilman Annabel Palma

from The Bronx. So, let's get started. [pause]

The--we have a few items on the agenda today.

Let's start in the--well, there, the items in The

Bronx are laid over, aren't those? Right? So,

the two items that are related in Bronx Muni Board

Eleven, in Council member Jimmy Vacca's district,

that we had a lengthy hearing about the other day

regarding the 911 call center, are being laid

over. Let's move to St. Nicholas of Myra Orthodox

Church, which is in Manhattan and Community Board

Three, this is in Councilwoman Mendez's district.

And I wanted to ask Kate Daly from the Commission

to come and testify. Thanks, Kate.

[pause]

KATE DALY: Good morning, council

members. My name is Kate Daly, executive director

1 of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I'm
2 here to testify on the commission's designation of
3 St. Nicholas of Myra Orthodox Church, at 288 East
4 10th Street in Manhattan. On October 28th, 2008,
5 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a
6 public hearing on the proposed designation. There
7 were seven speakers in favor of designation,
8 including Council member Rosie Mendez, and
9 representatives of various community
10 organizations. There were no speakers in
11 opposition. On December 16th, 2008, the Commission
12 voted to designate St. Nicholas of Myra Orthodox
13 Church an individual landmark. This picturesque
14 brick and terra cotta church complex was
15 constructed in 1883 as the memorial chapel of St.
16 Mark's Parish. Oh, I'm sorry. [off mic] Sure, I
17 thought I was being kind of loud, but I'll [off
18 mic] Sure. The church was constructed in 1883 as
19 the memorial chapel of St. Mark's Paris, and was
20 donated to the church by Rutherford Stuyvesant in
21 memory of his deceased wife. Since 1925, this
22 building has been occupied by the St. Nicholas of
23 Myra Orthodox Church, organized in New York by a
24 group of immigrants who would come from Carpathian
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1
2 mountain region of Czechoslovakia. Architect
3 James Renwick designed many of New York's most
4 well-known churches, including St. Patrick's
5 Cathedral, Grace Church and St. Steven's Church.
6 He worked in many different styles, but is
7 especially known for his gothic revival style
8 churches. St. Nicholas of Myra Church displays a
9 simplified gothic revival style, with a highly
10 varied roofline and intricate terra cotta trim.
11 This building has been an important part of this
12 densely populated neighborhood for more than 100
13 years, and through the work of various church
14 organizations, has served as a cornerstone for
15 many immigrants to New York City. The commission
16 urges you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: Thank you, Ms.
18 Daly. Councilwoman Mendez, would you like to say
19 anything about this item?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you
21 very much, Chair Lappin. This church is an
22 incredibly beautiful building, architecturally
23 from the outside. And while we do not landmark
24 religious institutes on the inside, it's even more
25 beautiful on the inside. I am very happy to

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2 support this designation of this incredible
3 architectural church located in my district.

4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: Thank you.

6 And I wanted to echo those comments and say that
7 I'm a big fan of James Renwick, and I think this
8 is an item very worth of designation. Seeing no
9 other speakers here to testify on this item, we're
10 going to close the hearing. And open the hearing
11 on an item in Speaker Quinn's district, which is
12 the Society House of the American Society of Civil
13 Engineers.

14 KATE DALY: Good morning. My name
15 for the record is Kate Daly, executive director of
16 the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I'm here
17 today to testify on the Commission's designation
18 of the Society House of the American Society of
19 Civil Engineers, at 220 West 57th Street, in
20 Manhattan. On March 18th, 2008, the Landmarks
21 Commission held a public hearing on the proposed
22 designation, which is within Speaker Quinn's
23 district. Two people spoke in favor of
24 designation. A representative of the building's
25 owner indicated that they did not oppose

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2 designation, but wanted regulation to be limited
3 to the front façade. In addition, the Commission
4 received a resolution from Community Board Five,
5 and a letter from State Senator Liz Kruger in
6 support of designation. On December 16th, 2008,
7 the Commission voted to designate the Society
8 House an individual landmark. Built in 1897, in
9 the French Renaissance, French Renaissance style,
10 by architect Cyrus L.W. Eidlitz, the Society House
11 of the American Society of Civil Engineers served
12 as the headquarters of the organization, which was
13 founded in 1852. The Society Houses is clad in
14 white glazed brick, with intricately carved
15 Indiana limestone ornament. From 1928 to 1973,
16 this was the location of one of the Schraft's
17 chain of restaurants, especially popular in its
18 earlier years as a center for women's dinners and
19 functions. Since 1975, the ground story has been
20 leased by Lee's Art Shop. The Commission urges
21 you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: Thank you very
23 much. I've been in that Lee's many times, and
24 it's a beautiful building. It's a great art
25 supply store. Any questions from my colleagues?

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2 Great. Seeing nobody else here to testify, the
3 hearing on this item is closed. Thank you, Ms.
4 Daly.

5 KATE DALY: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: I wanted to
7 move on to the next and final item, which is the
8 Queens Hospital/Gateway School, Mr. Laray Brown,
9 from HHC. I'm sorry, Ms., I'm sorry, excuse me.
10 [laughs] Is here to testify. Kenrick are you
11 going to also speak on this? [off mic] Okay. I
12 know you're not signed up to testify, but just in
13 case anybody has any questions. And I wanted to
14 just remind my colleagues, this is in Council
15 member Gennaro's district. When we approved this
16 school, oh a year ago, it seems like, my sense of
17 timing is not great, went last year. [off mic]
18 Last meeting? Oh my gosh. It only seems like a
19 year. Yeah, no, you're wrong, Carol, it's the
20 other Gateway school.

21 CAROL SHINE: Yeah.

22 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: That we did
23 last year.

24 CAROL SHINE: Right.

25 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: And we

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2 discussed as part of the approval, the parking
3 situation, in the area, and one of the things we
4 discussed at the time when we gave approval on the
5 subcommittee it was that there would be this
6 parking application coming later on down the line.
7 So, with that, Ms. Brown.

8 LARAY BROWN: And with that, you've
9 actually said everything that I would've said, but
10 I will add that the additional parcel, which is a
11 17,300 square feet, is needed by the Gateway
12 school, with which we enjoy a very great
13 relationship with now. And we'll be able to
14 accommodate the additional parking needs inasmuch
15 as the school is being rebuilt as an 800 seat
16 facility. We've also worked very closely with the
17 school construction authority. And our board
18 overwhelmingly supported the provision of this
19 additional parcel. And we look forward to your
20 approval. I don't know if my colleague Kenrick
21 would like to add anything.

22 KENRICK ON: All, all that I'd like
23 to add is really to take this opportunity to thank
24 the Council, and also HHC, for working with us to
25 make this great facility possible. And, and

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2 we're, we're very excited about this. I believe
3 it's scheduled to open in 2010.

4 LARAY BROWN: Which is wonderful.

5 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: Well, and we
6 like it when you follow through on your
7 commitment. Council member Comrie.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Are you in
9 the ground? Is construction started?

10 KENRICK ON: Yes, construction has
11 started. We've been, I believe that the
12 excavation is largely complete, and, and the
13 superstructure work is underway.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And the
15 parking lot is right adjacent to the property?
16 It's, which side of the property is it on? Is it
17 on the Parson side, or the--

18 LARAY BROWN: I have a, I have a,
19 it's--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --164th
21 Street side?

22 LARAY BROWN: In fact, it's, let's
23 see, I have a little map here, which I'll also
24 provide to you. But it's--I think it's on the,
25 let me just make sure. [pause]

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2 KENRICK ON: I believe it joins
3 Parson to the west.

4 LARAY BROWN: It's on, it's on the
5 west of the building.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: On the
7 west, okay.

8 LARAY BROWN: And on the Gofos
9 [phonetic]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: On the
11 Gofos.

12 LARAY BROWN: Gofos Avenue. But if
13 you want me to bring you a picture.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: No, no, I
15 just--

16 LARAY BROWN: Okay.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --I just
18 wanted to make sure it was on that side, because--

19 LARAY BROWN: Yeah. It's a
20 northern--

21 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --I'm
22 looking forward to, with the situation at Mary
23 Immaculate--

24 LARAY BROWN: Right.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: I think

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2 there's a need to expand the footprint at Queens
3 Hospital even larger, and I just want to make sure
4 that the eastern side of the property is not where
5 the lot is and--

6 LARAY BROWN: Right, and to your
7 point--It's--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay, okay.

9 LARAY BROWN: Yeah. In, in fact,
10 we very purposefully saved the A site, the old A
11 building site--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay.

13 LARAY BROWN: --for the potential
14 for growth of the hospital. And you may remember
15 that at some juncture, a few a years ago, there
16 was consideration of developing that.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Right.

18 LARAY BROWN: But we pulled that
19 back because of the volatility of what was going
20 on in the borough.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay.

22 LARAY BROWN: In terms of hospital
23 inpatient capacity.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Right.

25 And, and is there a possibility to, to make sure

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2 that that site could be built on in the future, in
3 case we had to do a above ground parking lot, due
4 to the expansion of the facility? Or is that just
5 going to be a flat parking lot?

6 LARAY BROWN: Surface, I think.

7 KENRICK ON: Yes, the current plans
8 are that it will be a surface lot, so it will not
9 be, will not have structures on it.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay,
11 alright. I'm, I'm in favor of it. I just wanted
12 to know that you're in the ground, 'cause people
13 are excited about Gateway. Thank you.

14 LARAY BROWN: Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: Thank you,
16 Council member Comrie. With that, and seeing
17 nobody else here to testify, we're going to close
18 the hearing on this item, and I'm going to ask for
19 the council Carol Shine, to call for a vote.

20 CAROL SHINE: Chair Lappin.

21 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: Aye.

22 CAROL SHINE: Council member
23 Barron?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Aye on all.

25 CAROL SHINE: Council member

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2 Comrie?

3 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Aye on all.

4 CAROL SHINE: Council member Liu?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: Yes.

6 CAROL SHINE: Council member Palma?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Yes.

8 CAROL SHINE: Council member

9 Arroyo? [off mic] Council member Mendez?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Yes.

11 CAROL SHINE: Vote stands at seven

12 in the affirmative, none in the negative, and no

13 abstentions.

14 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: We're going to

15 keep the vote open for a couple of minutes, to

16 allow for Council member Oddo to vote, and--Oh,

17 and Council member Arroyo, who just joined us.

18 Did she vote? Okay. And with that, we'll keep

19 the meeting, the vote open for five minutes, and

20 the meeting, oh there he is, and the meeting

21 subsequently will be adj--Okay.

22 CAROL SHINE: Council member Oddo?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Yes.

24 CAROL SHINE: The final vote is

25 eight in the affirmative, none in the negative and

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no abstentions.

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CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: Meeting

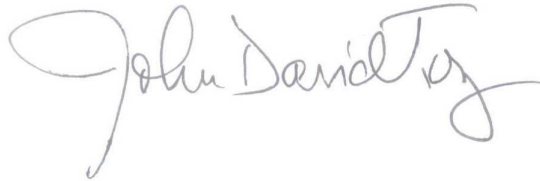
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adjourned. [gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, JOHN DAVID TONG 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.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John David Tong". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Signature _____

Date MARCH 18, 2009