

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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March 11, 2015
Start: 10:31 a.m.
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HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: JULISSA FERRERAS
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Ydanis A. Rodriguez
James G. Van Bramer
Vanessa L. Gibson
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Laurie A. Cumbo
Corey D. Johnson
Mark Levine
I. Daneek Miller
Helen K. Rosenthal
Vanessa M. Ignizio

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

Blaise Backer
Deputy Commissioner
Neighborhood Development
Department of Small Business Services

Chris Goddard
Executive Director
BID Program
Department of Small Business Services

Lauren Danziger
Executive Director
Meat Packing District Improvement Association and
Chelsea Improvement Company

Paul Pariser
Co-founder and Co-CEO
Taconic Investment Partners

Irene Pamela Doyle
Jewelry Store Owner

Erica Montoya
Community Engagement Manager
Friends of the Highline

Brad Pascarella
Community Board 4

Ivy Brown
Resident
Meat Packing District BID

1 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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2 [sound check, pause]

3 [gavel]

4 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Quiet please. Quiet
5 please.

6 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Good morning.

7 Welcome to today's Finance Committee hearing. I am
8 Julissa Ferreras and I am the Chair of this
9 committee. I want to thank everyone for joining us
10 today. We've been joined by Council Member Johnson,
11 Council Member Rosenthal, and Council Member Cornegy.
12 I'm sorry. I don't--I was going to call you by your
13 first name. [laughs] Today we will consider two
14 Land Use items and a BID item. Let's start with the
15 Land Use items. Both Land Use items are ones that
16 the Council has voted on previously, but they
17 required technical amendments to protect certain
18 errors contained in the previous resolution. First,
19 we have the Schervier Apartments in Council Member
20 Cohen's district in the Bronx. This property
21 provides 155 units of affordable housing for low-
22 income senior citizens. This property will receive a
23 partial property tax exemption for 35 years through
24 the City's HDFC Program. Council Member Cohen
25 supports this project.

2 Next, we will have the Tweemill Houses
3 in Council Member Dickens' district in Manhattan.
4 This property provides 40 units of affordable housing
5 for low-income senior citizens. This property will
6 receive a retrospective full property tax exemption
7 and a prospective partial property tax exemption for
8 a total of 30 years through the City's HDFC program.
9 Council Member Dickens supports this project.

10 Next, we will have the BID item, which is
11 Intro 681 to establish the Meat Packing Area Business
12 Improvement District in Council Member Johnson's
13 district.

14 On February 26th, this committee voted on
15 Resolution 591 to set today as the hearing date to
16 hear from individuals who may be affected by the
17 establishment of the Meat Packing Area BID. First,
18 we will hear from any witnesses who wish to testify.
19 Once we've heard any testimony, we will then adjourn
20 the hearing for at least 30 days to allow any
21 property owners within the proposed BID to file an
22 objection to the establishment of the BID with the
23 City Clerk. In the absence of objections filed
24 either by a majority of all the impacted property
25 owners or of property owners owning the majority of

2 the assessed value of the property with the BID, the
3 committee and the full Council may adopt the
4 legislation establishing the meat packing BID--meat
5 packing district BID. In order to do so, the
6 committee and the Full Council must be prepared to
7 answer the following four questions in the
8 affirmative.

9 1. Were all notices of the hearing for
10 all hearings required to be held published and mailed
11 as required by law and otherwise sufficient?

12 2. Does all--does all the real property
13 within the district boundaries benefit from the
14 establishment of the district except as otherwise
15 provided by the law?

16 3. Is all the real property benefited by
17 the district include--included within the district?

18 4. Is the establishment of the district
19 in the best interest of the public?

20 If the committee and the Full Council
21 finds in the--finds in the affirmative of these four
22 questions, and the number of objections required to
23 prevent the creation of the BID are not filed, then
24 the legislation can be adopted.

2 Council Member Johnson supports the
3 establishment of the BID. The total first year
4 budget of the BID will be \$1.6 million, but in
5 subsequent years the BID's budget may raise to \$3.2
6 million as additional development occurs in the
7 district. The budget will go towards sanitation,
8 landscape and maintenance, beautification, public
9 safety and economic development initiatives, business
10 and community advocacy and general administration.
11 For further details on the management of structure
12 and the district profile of the Meat Packing Area
13 BID, a description of the services that will be
14 provided and information regarding the properties
15 located within the BID, please refer to the Committee
16 Report and the attached District Plan.

17 Those are the items for today. I know
18 Council Member Dickens may be joining us shortly to
19 talk about her HDFC. Are there any questions on the
20 Land Use Items? Do you want to--do you want to speak
21 now or have questions? Yeah. Now we have
22 representatives from the Small Business Services to
23 provide testimony on the Meat Packing Area BID. SBS,
24 please come up and my counsel will swear you in.

25 [pause]

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: And we've been
3 joined by Council Member Gibson.

4 LEGAL COUNSEL: Do you affirm that your
5 testimony will be truthful to the best of your
6 knowledge, information, and belief?

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BACKER: I do. Good
8 morning Chair Ferreras and members of the Finance
9 Committee. I am Blaise Backer, Deputy Commissioner
10 of Neighborhood Development at the Department of
11 Small Business Services. I am joined today by my
12 Executive Director of the BID Program, Chris Goddard.
13 SBS supports the establishment of the Meat Packing
14 Area of Business Improvement District in the Borough
15 of Manhattan. The Steering Committee has
16 successfully complete the planning and outreach work
17 consistent with SBS policy. In addition, they have
18 worked collectively with Councilman Johnson and
19 stakeholders from both CB2 and CB4 to establish
20 impact zones and a special memorandum of
21 understanding. Both of which will enable an
22 increased level of participation and transparency to
23 the BIDs governance structure. SBS would like to
24 acknowledge and thank Councilman Johnson for his help
25 in developing this unique agreement.

2 Geographically, the proposed BID includes
3 properties generally bounded on the north by West
4 17th Street, on the east by Eighth Avenue, on the
5 south by Horatio Street and on the west by Tenth
6 Avenue. SBS has reviewed the boundaries of the
7 proposed BID, and found them to be acceptable. The
8 proposed BID is within City Council District 3, which
9 is represented by Council Member Corey Johnson. And
10 the proposed BID also falls within Manhattan
11 Community Board 2 and 4, which both support the
12 effort.

13 Services to be provided in the Meat
14 Packing BID shall include, but not be limited to
15 sanitation and maintenance, security, beautification
16 and landscaping, economic development, advocacy,
17 administration and additional services as may be
18 required for the promotion and enhancement of the
19 district. The district will be managed by newly
20 formed district management association. The annual
21 budget for the district's first year of operation is
22 \$1.6 million and may rise to \$3.2 million in
23 subsequent years as additional development occurs in
24 the district.

2 As required by law, the Meat Packing Area
3 BID Steering Committee mailed a summary of the City
4 Council Resolution no less than ten days and no more
5 than 30 days before today's hearing to the following
6 parties: To each owner of real property within the
7 proposed district at the address shown on the latest
8 assessment roll. To such other persons as are
9 registered with the City to receive tax bills
10 concerning real property within the district. And to
11 tenants of each building within the proposed
12 district. In addition, SBS arranged for the
13 publication of a copy of the Summary of the
14 Resolution at least once in the City record.

15 I would also like acknowledge the members
16 of the BID Steering Committee who are present today
17 to testify and answer any questions about the
18 specifics of the BID plan. At this time, I'd be
19 happy to take any questions. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Thank you, and I
21 know that my counsel is going to call up someone else
22 to join you on the panel.

23 LEGAL COUNSEL: Lauren Danziger from
24 MPIA.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: They didn't sit
3 together. This is just for questions now.

4 [background comments]

5 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Bridget wants to
6 give testimony, your opening testimony? Yeah,
7 absolutely.

8 LAUREN DANZIGER: Good morning. My name
9 is Lauren Danziger, and I am the Executive Director
10 of the Meat Packing District Improvement Association
11 and the Chelsea Improvement Company. I have also
12 been the Project Manager for the BID effort since we
13 began. Thank you all for your time today to discuss
14 the creation of the Meat Packing Area BID. I would
15 also like to especially thank Council Member Corey
16 Johnson for his work over the past year to make this
17 day a reality.

18 Running the MPIA and the CIC, I have been
19 able to see first hand the good and impactful work
20 that an organization like a BID can do, the change it
21 can effect. We have been working on the creation of
22 the BID for two years in conjunction with NYC
23 Department of Small Business Services, local elected
24 officials, Community Boards 2 and 4, local property
25 owners and local businesses, and the businesses that

2 the proposed BID would serve. As well as residents
3 from the area and the surrounding areas. All of
4 these groups agree that the greater meat packing
5 neighborhood is not only one of historic importance,
6 but one that has become a global destination. It has
7 also become clear that the rate by which they will
8 expand, and the amount of visitation both local, and
9 from abroad will far exceed what MPIA and CIC has the
10 ability to raise dollars required to address the
11 needs of the neighborhood.

12 In developing our plan for our BID, a 25-
13 person steering committee surveyed the community to
14 determine the public perception of needs for the
15 district. To spread the word about the proposed BID,
16 we created a website, meatpackingbid.org where all
17 information was posted in real time. We held four
18 community meetings; two meetings specific to the
19 business community. We included information in at
20 least four community board newsletters; eight MPIA
21 newsletters; produced three mass mailings to over
22 3,500 addresses; took out both digital and printed
23 advertisements in the local papers, for us that's the
24 Villager and Chelsea Now. And visited every ground
25 floor business at least twice in person. Input from

2 the community both within the boundaries and beyond
3 has been critical to the success of this process. We
4 ended up creating an organization that is funded to
5 serve the neighborhood in a meaningful way. Without
6 the input of the residents, elected officials and the
7 community boards, I think it's fair to say we don't--
8 we would not stand before you with a solid, fair, and
9 encompassing a plan as we do today.

10 The conversations with the community
11 resulted in the creation of both the Memorandum of
12 Understanding or an MOU and Vision Statement. The
13 MOU creates an unprecedented mechanism for a BID.
14 The Impact Area Advisory Council. The IAAC will be
15 made up of residents from a designated series of
16 blocks both in the northern and southern sections
17 surrounding the designated BID area. And they will
18 elect non-voting representatives to the BID Board of
19 Directors. The BID Executive Director will meet with
20 the IAAC quarterly prior to board meetings, and
21 members of the IAAC will serve on committees relevant
22 to the impact areas such sanitation, traffic
23 mitigation, and public safety.

24 The Vision Statement created language
25 around the purpose of the proposed BID and provided a

2 clear statement of intent. A generated a widespread
3 comfort level with the purposes of the organization.
4 Upon BID formation, all stakeholders will work
5 together to use the funds procured to execute
6 programs needed to support the evolution of this
7 dynamic community.

8 In addition to those of us testifying
9 today, we have also submitted letters of support for
10 the record from the following people who wished to be
11 here today, but could not:

12 Donna Rafferty [sp?], resident 32
13 Gansevoort Street.

14 Elaine Young, Community Board 2 Member,
15 61 Jane Street.

16 Thomas Nakios [sp?] both a resident and a
17 business owner in the area.

18 Jim Martin, Executive Director of ACE
19 Programs for the Homeless who MPIA has worked with
20 over the last four years to run sanitation
21 programming.

22 I appreciate the time that you're taking
23 today to review this. It's super important, and
24 we're really thrilled with the outcome of all of the
25 work. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Thank you. Thank
3 you for your testimony, and I know that Council
4 Member Johnson would like to say a few words and ask
5 questions. So I'll open up the mic to Council Member
6 Johnson.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam
8 Chair. Good morning. Thank you for being here.
9 It's good to see you all. I know this has been a
10 long road, and I think as you all just outlined, a
11 really important process that I think at the end for
12 the day has put together a very good package for us
13 to look at. And it's been meaningful for the
14 community as the former Chair of Manhattan Community
15 Board 4. Anything that involves Community Board 2
16 and 4 is going to be difficult. So to be able to
17 successfully navigate that, and gain both the
18 backings of those community boards I think is
19 important. So I look forward to supporting this BID,
20 and seeing it come into existence. You guys are
21 going to do important work, and you've already done
22 that work from MPIA and CIC. I do have a few
23 questions. I want to acknowledge Paul Pariser who is
24 here, who has been one of the driving forces behind
25 this for years. Thank you for being here, and I also

2 want to say that I am thrilled that my former Chief
3 of Staff Jeffrey Lefrancois is going to be associated
4 and working with the BID. It was a very smart hire
5 and move on your part. So with that, you all know
6 this but for me one of the overriding concerns has
7 been from the very outset the public safety component
8 to the BID given the impact that the businesses have-
9 -night life businesses have during the long summer
10 months on areas, especially the residential area. I
11 want to understand that. I know what it says in the
12 District Plan. I appreciate that SBS sent me this
13 yesterday and highlighted it for me. But I wanted to
14 understand one, I know that the board really has to
15 be constituted and decide how they're going to move
16 forward. It would be helpful to understand. I
17 assume you're going to be the Executive Director. I
18 hope you're the Executive Director of the BID. What
19 is your vision or what do you think is most
20 appropriate

21 LAUREN DANZIGER: Thank you, Council
22 Member Johnson. You know, what's been really
23 interesting over this entire process is discovering
24 how aligned both the residential community and the
25 business community is on public safety and traffic

2 mitigation. We talked about public safety a lot, but
3 it is also traffic mitigation. There Ninth Avenue
4 runs north when you're coming from the south, and it
5 also runs south when you're coming from the north,
6 and it all converges on 14th Street. It causes a lot
7 of traffic concerns particularly late at night. From
8 a security perspective, I can't say what the board
9 obviously will put together. But, what we run right
10 now is in the Chelsea area we have a small team of
11 three unarmed guards that we have patrolling the
12 streets 9:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. from the area of 14th
13 Street to 17th Street. What we've seen is that it's--
14 --while it's not armed NYPD or a whole--a diverse
15 program of both, you know, education and--and guys on
16 the ground in video just yet. But it is affecting
17 change on a daily basis. We've been able to see
18 issues that were escalating, and have the NYPD come
19 out nip them in the bud. So what I envision, and I
20 hope that the BID board will execute, ultimately is a
21 lot of eyes on the ground. So a determined number of
22 unarmed security guards in conjunction with video
23 cameras, in conjunction with education. I think
24 communication has been key to moving this forward on
25 the discussion of public safety in particular. And I

2 think education for both the residential community
3 about what those programs will be once that perfect
4 mix is decided will be key to whatever successful--
5 whatever the program they put out will be a success.
6 The District Plan allows for all of those options,
7 but again, it hasn't been determined yet.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you. It's
9 good to hear that. I actually did not know about the
10 individuals you've hired from 14th Street to 17th
11 Street and think it would be great if a similar
12 program was used south of 14th Street in the proposed
13 BID are to do similar things. I look forward to
14 working [coughs] with all of you and the Department
15 of Transportation on the Street Redesign Plan. And I
16 know DOT has to rip up the road, which is going to be
17 painful, but ultimately it's a good thing for the
18 community. And during that time it could make it
19 even more difficult, during the months when
20 construction is happening. So I really want it to be
21 a collaborative process, but I think we're going to
22 need a certain amount of personnel to actually
23 effectuate some change.

24 I have one more question, Madam Chair.
25 So, I know that [coughs] this is a broader city issue

2 as it relates to pedestrian public plazas [coughs]
3 and I know that the public plazas that are located
4 within the BID area have been very successful. And
5 you all have thrown community minded events that have
6 really incorporated the local community. I want to
7 understand how many events you think there will be
8 per year that you all will put on on your own through
9 your own public programming. And the kind of gist of
10 what a majority of those events will be?

11 LAUREN DANZIGER: Sure. [coughs]
12 Currently-- Well, MPIA was founded for a lot of
13 reasons, but a primary reason was to manage and
14 program the public plazas with community events.
15 Because they had fallen into disrepair. So I
16 appreciate your comments about them being successful.
17 We've really worked hard to do that. Right now, what
18 we do is a series of community based free--open to
19 the public programming including free exercise. We
20 call it Classes on the Cobbles. We have Yoga,
21 boxing. We partner with local businesses like A6 and
22 Move Them In [sic] and Exhale Spa and Chelsea Piers
23 to program those--those classes. And they've been
24 really fun and successful, and started to frame the
25 neighborhood in a very day life way versus the

2 nightlife that we're already known for. Other
3 activities that we intend to continue to do, and
4 expand upon are Harvest Fest, which we do in
5 partnership with the Highline, who I know is here
6 today, which is an--it's a day long harvest fest.
7 It's all the local businesses. We had 30
8 participating businesses last year doing activities
9 that are specific to families and children including
10 Doyle and Doyle did crown making, and they're also
11 here today, too, to speak on behalf of our effort.
12 We are producing a technology centered science
13 technology and culture festival in partnership with
14 Google that is all centered around kids' activities.
15 And promoting the--the diversity of technology and
16 science and culture that's actually located on the
17 upper floor buildings in the neighborhood. That's
18 the type of programming. A lot of that comes from
19 discussions with local businesses and what's
20 happening in the neighborhood. It's an important
21 conversation to talk about that there is a ton of,
22 you know, STEM, Science, Technology, Engineering,
23 Education and something, in the neighborhood. And we
24 want to promote that as well as the fact that there's
25 a ton of businesses that cater to families and

2 children. So it's that type of programming that we
3 continue to produce. Ultimately, I'd love to, you
4 know, grow the conversation about what other people
5 see as being important factors of the neighborhood,
6 important lines of business so that we can do other
7 types of programming in the public space. That is
8 again, free and open to the public.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you.

10 [coughs] My concern actually is not borne out of
11 things that you all specifically have done, but
12 recent instances near Madison Square Park for the
13 Flatiron BID or large scale [coughs] what I would
14 deem non-community minded events that have
15 overwhelmed areas, and have been disruptive to
16 residential communities. That is a larger SAPO
17 question. But it interlocks with how SAPO determines
18 what BIDs should be able to do. And typically, the
19 money that's raised is to go into the City's General
20 Fund. And so, that's a larger SAPO conversation.
21 I'm happy to hear that you continue to have these
22 community minded events. I again want to thank you
23 for being here this morning. I want to thank you for
24 engaging [coughs] in a very long community minded
25 collaborative process, as you outlined. And I think

2 ultimately the list of people that you read off, who
3 are supporting this BID, some of these people were
4 the most vehement opponents of the BID at the outset.
5 So I think that tells a lot about how successful you
6 all have been able to be in bringing this to a place
7 where everyone supports it. So thank you very much
8 for being here. Thank you to SBS. Thank you Lauren
9 and Paul--

10 PAUL PARISER: [interposing] Thank you.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: --and Jeffrey,
12 and with that, I urge my colleagues to vote yes on
13 this BID. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Thank you Council
15 Member Johnson, and again I can't be remiss without
16 praising your work, and the BID's work. It was
17 watching what was happening the Meat Packing District
18 that actually inspired us at the 82nd Street BID.
19 And, we're going through an expansion in taking into
20 consideration this MOU and how we can include that.
21 Ours is a little different, but I just thank for your
22 leadership in being able to bring this BID to this
23 point. And I'm sure that we're very excited to vote.
24 I know that others would like to testify. Do you
25 have a statement that you would like to make?

2 PAUL PARISER: I do.

3 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: You do. Okay,
4 well then you can do that before we close out this
5 panel, and then we'll have.

6 PAUL PARISER: Hello. Okay. Good
7 morning. My name is Paul Pariser. I'm the co-
8 founder and the co-CEO of the Taconic Investment
9 Partners, and I thank you for the opportunity to
10 testify in support of the Meat Packing BID. Since
11 the mid 1990s, Taconic has developed and restored
12 numerous properties in the meat packing area,
13 including 111 Eighth Avenue, which is now home to
14 Google. we sold it to them three years ago, and we
15 are the managing agent for 111 Eighth. I'm proud to
16 say on behalf of Google that they are supportive and
17 as excited about this endeavor as I am. We recognize
18 that it's crucial to maintain appreciate for and
19 respect for the historical context of this unique
20 neighborhood.

21 In 2007 the CIC, Chelsea Improvement
22 Company was created to address the capital needs
23 north of 14th Street and a few blocks around the
24 Chelsea Market and 111 Eighth Avenue. Since its
25 inception, this organization has installed nearly \$4

2 million in capital improvements throughout the
3 district. The Department of Transportation installed
4 public plazas without a maintenance partner in 2008.
5 A year later with the plaza in disrepair, a call to
6 action was felt for the area below 14th Street where
7 BID like services were needed, and in response a
8 small group of active property owners partnered
9 together a local business association to create the
10 Meat Packing Improvement Association.

11 In addition to the public realm of
12 services, MIPA provides community program, as
13 discussed by Lauren, economic development
14 initiatives, marketing initiatives like a maiden
15 neighborhood map, and advocates on behalf of local
16 businesses within the city and utility companies.
17 All of these services are contingent on membership
18 dues and annual fundraisers. As we look to the
19 future, there's a tremendous amount of development
20 coming down the pipe to the area, broadly known as
21 the meat packing district. We're looking at opening
22 its doors May 1st and bringing an estimated million
23 more visitors from at home and abroad to this already
24 bustling area. Piers 54 and 57 will be developed
25 extensively into a cultural park and commercial hub

2 effectively. Hundreds of thousands of commercial
3 square feet will come online in the next few years
4 further cementing the area into a robust 24-hour
5 epicenter of activity.

6 The management of this dynamic
7 neighborhood is key to its success, and will be to
8 the benefit of all stakeholders. The creation of a
9 BID for the Meat Packing District will eliminate the
10 question mark of annual dollars to fund the range of
11 services for this highly trafficked and high profile
12 neighborhood. The Meat Packing District can be
13 defined by a work hard, play hard ethos. It's a 24-
14 hour neighborhood with demands that are unique. As a
15 community partner and stakeholder, I believe the
16 proposed BID is the appropriate response to managing
17 the district's needs to its next evolution. And I
18 ask the Finance Committee to support this proposal
19 today, and I thank everyone here for listening to us.
20 Thank you very much.

21 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Thank you very
22 much and Council Member Cornegy has a question or
23 comment.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Sure. On behalf
25 of the Small Business Committee and on behalf of what

2 I believe to be the best BID in the city, which is
3 the best our Gateway BID, I just want to say that
4 BIDs rock.

5 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Well, thank you.
6 I think we can argue which are the best BIDs in New
7 York City, and it's exactly what SBS wants us to do
8 is to have competitive BIDs. We've been joined by
9 Minority Leader Ignizio, Council Member Miller, and
10 Majority Leader Van Bramer. Thank you very much for
11 this panel. We're going to call up our next panel
12 before we go into the vote. Thank you for your
13 testimony.

14 LEGAL COUNCIL: Erica Montoya, Brad
15 Pascarella, Ivy Brown, and Irene Pamela Doyle.

16 [background comments]

17 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: If anybody else
18 would like to testify, please fill out a form with
19 the Sergeant-at-Arms, but from this perspective, this
20 is the last panel before the vote. Hi, Erica, how
21 are you?

22 ERICA MONTOYA: [off mic] I'm good.

23 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Good. We've been
24 joined by Council Member Cumbo, and you may begin
25 your testimony.

2 [background comments, pause]

3 IRENE PAMELA DOYLE: I'm Irene Pamela
4 Doyle. I have a jewelry store that would be in the--
5 the proposed BID area. I'm a small store. I employ
6 nine people. The impact of having a safe and clean
7 area on my business is direct because it is a retail
8 jewelry store. I actually came to--I have had my
9 store for 15 years. I actually came to the Meat
10 Packing District in 2000--approximately 2003 thinking
11 that I would move my business to that area, and the
12 area at the time I did not feel that I could move my
13 store there because it was dirty. And I didn't think
14 that my customers would come there. I actually moved
15 my store there in 2013. I would say that probably--I
16 didn't know it at the time, but the work that the
17 MPIA have done in the area for the cleanliness and
18 the feeling of when you're walking down the street
19 was one of the reasons that I was able to become part
20 of that meat packing community. Because before when
21 I visited it, I did not feel that I could be part of
22 that community with my--in my store. I'm sorry. My
23 phone's batteries died so I--[laughs]

24 So the safety--the safety and the
25 cleanliness is a really big thing for my store the

2 secondary thing that I have seen that MPIA has done,
3 and I know that they are not the BID, but from what I
4 have seen. Having one body that is--that is kind of
5 spearheading initiatives to make a community. As I
6 see it, it is a much more efficient way to operate.
7 I have been to retailer's meetings where I have met
8 other retailers in my community, and we've come up
9 with plans or we've all joined and done groups like
10 the Google Night Out. I wouldn't have had the
11 opportunity to meet those people and the retailers
12 wouldn't be as strong as a community if we weren't
13 given those opportunities, which makes everybody
14 stronger. And secondarily, this community, the
15 residents who were a real part of Harvest Fest. And
16 the part of allowing stores to be part of the
17 community or making community spaces and welcoming
18 stores to be part of that community to be part of the
19 residents has been very, very impactful for me. So I
20 support the BID especially because of the groundwork
21 that MPIA has done.

22 [pause]

23 ERICA MONTOYA: Hello. My name is Erica
24 Montoya. I have a bad cold today. I'm the Community
25 Engagement Manager for Friends of the Highline and

2 I'm here to testify in support of the BID. You know,
3 I've worked closely with Lauren in the past 2-1/2,
4 almost 3 years that I've been there And being able
5 to work with Lauren and MPIA as we try to reach the
6 community around the Friends of the Highline has been
7 really helpful as we think about the programming that
8 we do be--for New Yorkers. It allows us to connect
9 to--to people that live and work in New York in these
10 businesses. Obviously, the work that they do to
11 maintain the streets is extremely important as we
12 think of a large visitorship to Friends of the
13 Highline. So it directly impacts, you know, the
14 experience that visitors have when they come to
15 Friends of the Highline to have, you know, these
16 areas by these entrances be so well maintained. And,
17 you know, I've been part of the networking events.
18 It definitely helps in getting to know the
19 businesses. There have also been meetings where they
20 host with the precincts, which have really been
21 helpful in knowing what's going on, and being able to
22 connect with the precincts and working in conjunction
23 as we think about the programming that MPIA is doing,
24 the programming that the Highline is doing. It just--
25 -I think it's a great benefit for all of us around.

2 And I really enjoyed the work that they've done.

3 We've enjoyed being able to connect to the retailers
4 and the business owners that they help us connect to.

5 And obviously, seeing that area well maintained is
6 extremely important, and it makes everyone's day, you
7 know, a much better day in and day out. So the
8 Friends of the Highline is in support of the BID.

9 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Thank you and for
10 full disclosure, I've know Erica for 15 years and
11 congratulations. She just became a new mommy. So
12 congratulations. I know that that cold--I know what
13 that is. It's because you haven't slept. But I'm
14 very happy to have you testify before my committee.
15 Thank you, Erica. And you may begin.

16 BRAD PASCARELLA: Hi. Good morning. My
17 name is Brad Pascarella. I'm here on behalf of
18 Community Board 4. I'm also on the steering
19 committee, and I'd like to thank our former member OF
20 CB4, Betty MacIntosh who I'm taking over for and she
21 did a lot of work. CB4 strongly supports the
22 creation of the Meat Packing Area BID. We voted
23 unanimously in favor at our December 3rd board
24 meeting. The BID area is bisected by West 14th
25 Street, the area between Community Board 4 and 2. We

2 recognize the need for additional services in the
3 Meat Packing Areas as its commercial uses have
4 increased and the popularity of the area has grown.
5 The addition of the museum and development of Piers
6 54 and 57 will bring more visitors to the area. We
7 are pleased that there's a Memorandum of Understanding
8 cited by Cory Johnson, our Council Member the Chairs
9 of CB2 and CB4 and the BID Steering Committee. The
10 MOU creates a mechanism for residents just outside
11 the BID boundaries to raise quality of life issues
12 with the BID Board of Directors. Obviously, it was
13 spoken by Corey Johnson what a big win that is for
14 all of us in the area for the residents. CB4 looks
15 forward to the BID providing service in addition to
16 city services to remote a vibrant diverse business
17 district while at the same time addressing the nearby
18 residents for peaceful evenings in a safe, attractive
19 and a clean pedestrian environment. We urge you to
20 vote for the BID. Thank you very much.

21 [pause]

22 IVY BROWN: Good morning. Well, it
23 works. Hi. My name is Ivy Brown. [coughs] Excuse
24 me. And I'm here to speak for the BID obviously.
25 I've lived in the Meat Packing District since 1985

2 coming up on 30 years on March 15th, and I opened up
3 my gallery there 14 years ago. I've watched this
4 neighborhood go from something where my parents were
5 horrified that I lived there besides the, you know,
6 what it looked like and smelled like to think that
7 I'm sort of visionary. And I cannot tell you what it
8 would be like to live there right now without MPDI or
9 MPDA or whatever we are now. Sorry. But the
10 increase--I mean I remember the first time I saw
11 people strolling in the neighborhood. I felt that
12 someone had gotten killed and that they were there to
13 identify a body, you know. And now I look out a
14 window and it's, you know-- Needless to say, it's a
15 very different neighborhood from the one that I moved
16 into, and it would a very sorry state if we did not
17 have these organizations. And as this neighborhood
18 is about to get the next huge increase of humanity
19 coming its way, the BID is really a necessity.
20 Because not only has this been managed well, but the
21 people that they've hired have been outstanding, and
22 it's made a huge difference for those of us that are
23 both residents and business owners.

24 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Thank you, I don't
25 know if any members have any additional comments or--

2 Now, we're good, Council Member John. Excellent.

3 Thank you for coming to testify today. And we have
4 additional.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Right. Thank
6 you all for taking time out of your day to be here to
7 support this. Thank you very much.

8 IVY BROWN: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: So I just wanted
10 to include in the record that we have the letters of
11 support that will be added to the record, and will be
12 made public online for anyone that would like to see
13 those statements that were included. And Council
14 Member Ignizio's South Shore BID will be created on
15 March 31st [applause] when the Finance Committee will
16 sit down. [sic] [laughs] So yes, you don't have to
17 be jealous. It's coming. Thank you. And with no
18 further questions or testimonies, we're going to ask
19 Billy Martin the Committee Clerk will you now read
20 the call--the roll.

21 CLERK: William Martin, roll call vote
22 Committee on Finance. Chair Ferreras.

23 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: I vote aye and I
24 urge all my colleagues to do the same.

25 CLERK: Van Bramer.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: [off mic] Aye
3 on all.

4 CLERK: Gibson.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: With a warm
6 congratulations to Council Members Ignizio and
7 Johnson on a job well done, I vote aye on all.

8 CLERK: Cornegy.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: I vote aye and
10 suggest that you get in contact with the Bed-Stuy
11 Gateway BID to see how the model is done correctly?

12 CLERK: Cumbo.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I want to
14 congratulate both of my colleagues. I'm so proud of
15 Council Member Corey Johnson doing big things in his
16 district and we're so proud of him, and to celebrate
17 with your colleague and friend Council Member Ignizio
18 is a huge win for the whole Council. So thank you
19 very much, and I vote aye.

20 CLERK: Johnson.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: I proudly vote
22 aye on all.

23 CLERK: Miller.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [off mic] I vote
25 aye.

2 CLERK: Rosenthal.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [off mic] Aye
4 on all.

5 CLERK: Ignizio.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: I've never gotten
7 so much thanks for doing so little in my life. My
8 BID is actually up in the next meeting. That's why
9 I'm laughing, but I vote--I vote aye. [laughter]

10 CLERK: By a vote of 9 in the
11 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions, no
12 resolutions--

13 [background comments, pause]

14 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: [interposing]
15 Well, congratulations.

16 CLERK: --both items have been adopted.
17 [background comments]

18 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS: Shh! I have to
19 close out the hearing. I know we're all excited.
20 Thank you all for coming to testify and I will
21 adjourn.

22 [gavel]

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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 March 27, 2015