

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND
FRANCHISES

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February 8, 2023
Start: 10:24 a.m.
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HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - COMMITTEE ROOM, 14TH
FLOOR

B E F O R E: Kevin C. Riley, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Erik D. Bottcher
David M. Carr
Farah N. Louis
Francisco P. Moya
Lynn C. Schulman
Oswald Feliz
Kalman Yeger

A P P E A R A N C E S

Emanuel Kokinakis, Mega Group Development

Michelle Ponce, Mega Group Development

Cal Hedigan, CEO Community Access

Joseph Sbarro, Akerman LLP

Thomas Furman

Eunia Destine-Latinwo, Vice President of 1199
SEIU

Paul Regoord, Community Healthcare Network

Cynthia Stuart, Chief Operating Officer of
Supportive Housing of New York

Kalisha Reid

Irene Lugo

Eric Palatnik, PC

Pastor Harold Beard, Associate Pastor Coney
Island Cathedral

Reverend Frank Mason, Senior Pastor Christ Temple
United Baptist Church

Tiara Williams, Local 79

Alvaro Gonzalez, Local 79

Beth Antibi

Joseph Martini

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

Eli Kady

Albert Turejo

Reuben (INAUDIBLE)

Mordechai Sharaby

Meyer Elnadav

Yaakov Kaplan

Jack Braha

Elizabeth Denys

Mark Grippo

Isaac Magraby

Miriam Klein

Elad Danino

Marvin Schlanger

Lawrence Dayan

Jane Choueka

Joyce Chabbott

Logan Phares, Political Director of Open New York

Daniel Setton

David Masrou

Chancy Blumenfrucht

Sam Levy-Kadi

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

Meir Erani

Jennifer Halfon

Freida Choueka

Robert Eissenberg

Murray Choueka

Linda Dayan

Bishop Waylyn Hobbs

Seema Stein

Avi Greenberger

Eliyahu Setton

Tery Blatt

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and
3 welcome to the New York City hybrid hearing on the
4 Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises.

5 Please silence all electronic devices to
6 vibrate.

7 Chair, we are ready to begin.

8 ACTING CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Good morning
9 and welcome to a meeting of the Subcommittee of
10 Zoning and Franchises. I am Council Member Lynn
11 Schulman. I'm going to be the temporary Chair of the
12 Subcommittee until our Chair arrives.

13 This morning I am joined by Council
14 Members Erik Bottcher, Farah Louis, Council Member
15 Carr, Council Member Moya, and Council Member Hanks.

16 Today, we will hold public hearings for
17 two rezoning proposals, one in the Bronx and one in
18 Brooklyn. Before we begin, I recognize the
19 Subcommittee Counsel to review the hearing
20 procedures.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Thank
22 you, Chair Schulman. I am Angelina Martinez-Rubio,
23 Counsel to the Subcommittee. This meeting is being
24 held in hybrid format. Members of the public who wish
25 to testify may testify in person or via Zoom. Members

2 of the public wishing to testify remotely may
3 register may visiting the New York City Council
4 website at www.council.nyc.gov/landuse to sign up or,
5 for those of you here in the Chambers, please see one
6 of the Sergeants-at-Arms to prepare and submit a
7 speaker card. I would just also say that we're going
8 to start with East Tremont so if there's anyone here
9 to testify for that item that has not signed up with
10 one of the Sergeants, please see one of them so you
11 can fill out a card.

12 Members of the public may also view a
13 livestream broadcast of this meeting at the Council's
14 website.

15 When you called to testify before the
16 Subcommittee, if you are joining us remotely, you
17 will remain muted until recognized by the Chair or I
18 to speak. When the Chair or I recognizes you, your
19 microphone will be unmuted. Please take a moment to
20 check your device and confirm that your mic is on
21 before you begin speaking. We will limit public
22 testimony to two minutes per witness. If you have
23 additional testimony you would like the Subcommittee
24 to consider or if you have written testimony you
25 would like to submit instead of appearing before the

2 Subcommittee, you may email it to

3 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Please indicate the

4 LU number and/or project name in the subject line of

5 your email. We request that witnesses joining us

6 remotely remain in the meeting until excused by the

7 Chair as Council Members may have questions.

8 Finally, there will be pauses over the

9 course of this hybrid meeting for various technical

10 reasons, and we know that for the second item we

11 expect a lot of witnesses, and I know that you guys

12 are patiently waiting online, we'll get to all of

13 you, so we ask that you please be patient as work

14 through any issues.

15 Chair Schulman will now continue with

16 today's agenda items.

17 If I could have the panel for East

18 Tremont join us up here on the table. Thank you.

19 ACTING CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you,

20 Counsel. I will now open the public hearing on

21 Preconsidered LUs related to ULURP numbers C 220306

22 ZMX and N 220307 ZRX relating to the 521 East Tremont

23 Avenue Rezoning Proposal in Council Member Feliz'

24 District in the Bronx. This application seeks a

25 zoning map amendment to rezone an existing C4-5X, M1-

2 4/R7A, and R6A zoning districts to a C4-4D zoning
3 district and a related zoning text amendment to map
4 an MIH program area.

5 For anyone wishing to testify on this
6 item remotely, if you have not already done so, you
7 must register online, and you may do that now by
8 visiting the Council's website at
9 council.nyc.gov/landuse. Once again, for anyone with
10 us in person, please see one of the Sergeants to
11 prepare and submit a speaker card.

12 Counsel, please call the first panel for
13 this item.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: The
15 applicant panel includes, and if I miss any of you,
16 please let me know, Emanuel Kokinakis, and apologies
17 if I mispronounce your name, Joseph A. Sbarro,
18 Michelle Ponce, and Chris Lacovara, and available for
19 questions are Thomas Furman and Paul Regoord.

20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Counsel,
21 please administer the affirmation.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Hold
23 on. I think there's...

24 CAL HEDIGAN: It's Cal Hedigan for
25 Community Access, not Chris Lacovara.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Okay,
3 so thank you. For those of you, can you please raise
4 your right hand so that I can administer the
5 affirmation?

6 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the
7 whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your
8 testimony before this Subcommittee and in your
9 answers to all Council Member questions?

10 ADMINISTRATION: (INAUDIBLE)

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Thank
12 you.

13 ACTING CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you.
14 For the viewing public, if you need an accessible
15 version of this presentation, please send an email
16 request to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Now, the
17 applicant team may begin. Panelists, as you begin,
18 I'll just ask you to please restate your name and
19 organization for the record when you speak. Thank
20 you.

21 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: Good morning, Council
22 Members. Thank you for having us this morning. My
23 name is Emanuel Kokinakis with Mega Group
24 Development, and we're very excited to present the
25 521 East Tremont Rezoning. This project is a 100

2 percent affordable mixed-use development that will
3 include a brand new federally qualified health center
4 as well as ground floor retail.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Do you
6 have a presentation you want us to load?

7 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: Yes.

8 MICHELLE PONCE: We do. We submitted it.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Okay.
10 Give me just one second while the Staff loads it up.

11 MICHELLE PONCE: Okay, great.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: And
13 then once you want her to move the slides, just let
14 her know, but it's coming.

15 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: Thank you very much.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: All
17 right, there you go.

18 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: Next slide, please.

19 The sponsorship for this project is a group of very
20 experienced operators and providers. Community Access
21 if our not-for-profit affordable housing co-developer
22 and will ultimately be the long-term owner, property
23 manager, and social service provider for the project.
24 We also have the Community Healthcare Network,
25 another not-for-profit organization that will operate

2 the federally qualified health center and will also
3 own that health center in the long-term. Mega Group
4 Development and Mega Contracting are your development
5 and building partners for this project, and we have
6 SLCE Architects as our project architect. Next slide,
7 please.

8 Community Access is a not-for-profit
9 firm. They've been serving the city for nearly 50
10 years and have well over 1,000 units in development
11 that they own and operate and provide property
12 management services and on-site supportive services
13 for. They also provide other services for Bronx
14 residents at their multiple projects that exist in
15 the Bronx. Next slide.

16 Community Healthcare Network is a
17 federally qualified health center with 14 facilities
18 throughout the city. They serve over 60,000 New York
19 City residents on an annual basis. They're actually a
20 current tenant at the site where they serve nearly
21 4,000 Bronx residents and will be able to
22 significantly expand those services with a brand new
23 facility that will be developed here. Next slide,
24 please.

25 We can go to the next slide.

2 Mega is an affordable housing builder
3 with over 30 years of experience building affordable
4 housing throughout the boroughs and has worked with
5 all the team members on this project on other
6 projects so this team has worked together and been
7 successful in completing other affordable housing in
8 the Bronx and throughout the boroughs. Next slide,
9 please.

10 SLCE Architects has been around since
11 1940. Vast experience in affordable housing design
12 and a lot of other prominent buildings throughout the
13 city. One notably is the Woolworth Building a block
14 away, and all team members have had great experience
15 working with SLCE in the past on other projects. Next
16 slide.

17 I'll turn it over to Joseph Sbarro from
18 Ackerman.

19 JOSEPH SBARRO: Good morning, Council
20 Members. Joseph Sbarro from Akerman, LLP, Land Use
21 Counsel representing the applicant. I'll quickly
22 introduce the application to be followed by Michelle
23 Ponce from Mega Development and Cal Hedigan from
24 Community Access who will provide more detail on the
25

2 transformational mixed-use development to be
3 facilitated by this land use application.

4 This slide shows the rezoning area and
5 the development site's location on a prominent corner
6 of East Tremont Avenue and 3rd Avenue, both wide
7 streets across from Walter Gladwin Park. The site is
8 well-served by public transit including the Bx15 bus
9 which runs along 3rd Avenue and 125th Street and the
10 Bx40 bus and the Bx42 bus, both of which run along
11 East Tremont Avenue. The Tremont Avenue B/D subway
12 station is located approximately 0.6 miles northwest
13 and the Tremont Metro North station is located
14 approximately 0.2 miles to the west. Next slide,
15 please.

16 This slide shows the development site
17 within the context of the neighborhood. The
18 surrounding area is generally characterized by a mix
19 of uses including residential, commercial, and a
20 range of building heights. You can see her just to
21 the south on 3rd Avenue another 100 percent
22 affordable development recently completed by Mega,
23 the Wilfrid. Next slide, please.

24 This slide shows photos of the current
25 conditions at the development site which consists of

four underutilized tax slots. One is unimproved and vacant, one is a commercial parking lot, and the building on the corner is a three-story commercial and community facility building that houses retail use on the ground floor and Community Healthcare Network on the second floor. The third floor is vacant. The remaining lot is a one-story commercial building with smaller retail tenants all with expiring or month-to-month leases. Next slide, please.

This slide shows the existing zoning map and notes the proposed change from the existing C4-5X/R7X equivalent and 1-4/R7A and R6A zoning districts to a C4-4D/R8 equivalent zoning district. Next slide, please.

This application proposes a zoning map change and zoning text amendment to establish a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing area Option 1 to replace the current Voluntary Inclusionary Housing designated area. It's important to note that the current zoning permits mixed-use development up to 5.0 FAR and 12 stories. The proposed rezoning coupled with the MIH designation would permit a moderate increase in density up to 7.2 FAR and an additional

two stories in height. The proposed land use actions are necessary to provide for a feasible affordable housing program while also permitting two full floors of commercial and community facility to accommodate a vibrant retail frontage and a significant expansion of Community Healthcare Network's operations in the neighborhood. I'll now turn it over to Michelle Ponce from Mega to discuss the proposed development in more detail.

MICHELLE PONCE: Thank you, Joe. My name is Michelle Ponce. I am a Project Manager at Mega Group Development. Good morning, Chair and Council Members, and thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 521 East Tremont Avenue Rezoning in more detail. Next slide, please.

As my Colleague, Joe, mentioned, we're asking for a rezoning that will facilitate additional density and a modest height increase of two floors which will allow us to address community needs through the project, highlighting specifically a Community District 6 2021 report where they cited issues concerning homelessness, health, and crime. This project will deliver on those community concerns by providing affordable housing and a significant

2 expansion of the Community Healthcare Network which
3 you'll hear in more detail from my Colleague, Paul,
4 from CHN during the public testimony piece, but also
5 building on our experience at the Wilfrid down the
6 block at 1880 Bathgate Avenue, we received over
7 35,000 applications for the affordable housing
8 lottery, at least 7,000 of which were from residents
9 of Community District 6. Next slide, please.

10 The proposed development that our team is
11 here to discuss has four components. The first is the
12 residential. We are going to build approximately 205
13 100 percent affordable units. You'll hear more about
14 the unit mix and the households from my Colleague,
15 Cal. The second is a Community Healthcare Network
16 expansion. As we mentioned already, CHN currently
17 exists on the site. They've been operating since
18 2011. They currently house 3,800 square feet. This
19 rezoning will allow for an expansion up to 10,000
20 square feet which is going to allow them to increase
21 the amount of services that they provide, a new
22 service would be dentistry, and they're going to be
23 able to double the amount of patients that they see.
24 They'll have the second floor and have a ground floor
25 lobby entrance. The third floor is the ground floor

1 retail. We will also have a ground floor retail
2 that's going to be approximately 12,900 square feet.
3 It'll wrap around East Tremont and 3rd Avenue, which
4 is again a prominent commercial corridor in the area
5 and will also help revitalize the commercial corridor
6 as we've heard many times from community members
7 throughout our public engagement process that they'd
8 like to see. The last component is parking where we
9 will have 17 surface parking spaces and approximately
10 103 bicycle parking spaces in the bicycle room. Next
11 slide.

12
13 With the rezoning and the construction of
14 the project, there will be a local economic
15 development impact in the community. The first is
16 through construction. The team is expecting to employ
17 approximately 350 workers through all trades and
18 subcontractors. Our team also has an excellent track
19 record of success with local hiring and maximizing
20 M/WBE hiring through our partnerships with
21 organizations like Hire NYC, and we're also super
22 excited to be providing OSHA-40 trainings to members
23 of the community in the area that are interested in
24 getting their OSHA certification. Also through
25 permanent operations, the local economic development

1 impact, CHN is going to expand their current 10 staff
2 to approximately 35. The building, itself, is
3 expected to employ approximately 10 new people
4 through the building operations and through Community
5 Access social service staff, and the new ground floor
6 retail is expected to generate approximately 38 new
7 jobs for the community. Next slide, please.

9 Now, I'll just go through more physical
10 descriptions of the project. Here, we have a site
11 plan. As you can see, the building has frontage along
12 East Tremont and 3rd Avenues. We have an inverted L-
13 shape. The building would be 14 stories, and you can
14 see the parking in the rear. That would be accessed
15 from Bathgate Avenue, addressing any concerns that
16 there might be too much congestion either on Tremont
17 or 3rd Avenue. Next slide, please.

18 Here we have a rendering of the project.
19 This view is from Walter Gladwin Park. As you can see
20 here, the building, we have frontage along Tremont
21 and 3rd Avenue, and you can see some of the setbacks
22 that we have on the 11th and 13th floors. These upper
23 floors will have green roofs and will have an
24 accessible outdoor space on the second floor for the
25

2 residents that will be accessed through a community
3 room. Next slide, please.

4 Here we have the view from 3rd Avenue.
5 I'd like to point out here that we have separate
6 entrances for the residential and for CHN space, but,
7 again, we can also see the setbacks on the 11th and
8 13th floors. Next slide, please.

9 Lastly, we have here the aerial view of
10 the project. Again, you can see frontage along
11 Tremont and 3rd Avenue as well as all the setbacks on
12 the building across the 11th and 13th floors. Also,
13 down the block, if you can see just down 3rd Avenue
14 and Bathgate, that is the Wilfrid where Mega was
15 builder/developer as well.

16 With this slide, that concludes my
17 portion. I'm going to pass it along to my Colleague,
18 Cal Hedigan, from Community Access. Thank you.

19 CAL HEDIGAN: Hi. My name is Cal Hedigan.
20 I'm the CEO of Community Access, and we're really
21 excited to be part of this development. Just to go
22 into a little more detail on the residential units,
23 next slide please.

24 Of the 205 units, 143 of them will be
25 housing units for households earning between 30

percent and 80 percent of AMI including 54 family units, 28 two-bedroom, and 26 three-bedroom units. We've definitely heard from communities across New York City about the importance of three-bedroom units and are happy that they're part of this plan. Of the 61 supportive units, 45 will be studios for people living with mental health concerns and 15 two-bedrooms units for families who have experienced chronic homelessness. Social services and property management services will be provided by Community Access. We're going to have approximately 1,500 square feet of on-site support, supportive service office space and community space for tenant use. Amenities for tenants will include a fitness area, a computer lab, a library, and a laundry room. We're going to have green roofs, both on upper floors and an accessible roof on the second floor near the social service offices, and this building is part of HPD and HDC extremely low and low-income affordability program. In terms of the specific unit mix, there are going to be 66 studios, 69 one-bedrooms, 43 two-bedrooms, next slide, please, and 26 three-bedrooms for a total of 204 units with an additional unit for the on-site building

2 superintendent which really in our experience really
3 adds to higher quality maintenance and upkeep of the
4 building.

5 Now, I believe I'm turning it over to
6 someone else.

7 Thank you very much for hearing our
8 presentation, and we're open for...

9 ACTING CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: So what I'm
10 going to do first is I want to acknowledge we've been
11 joined by Council Member Feliz. I'm going to ask him
12 to make any opening statement he has, I'll ask some
13 questions, and then hand it back over to him to ask
14 questions.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Good morning,
16 everyone. I'm Council Member Oswald Feliz. My opening
17 statements are very brief. Just want to thank all of
18 you for presenting about this project and also want
19 to thank all of you for being very accessible. We've
20 had hours and hours and hours of conversations about
21 how to improve this project and how to make it work
22 for everyone in the community, and we're very
23 thankful for that. Thank you.

24 ACTING CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay, I have
25 a few questions for the applicant team regarding

2 these applications before I turn it back over to
3 Council Member Feliz. Given that this rezoning C4-5X
4 to C4-4D is fairly minor in terms of additional
5 height and use, can you please expand on the reasons
6 this change is necessary to fulfill the project
7 goals?

8 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: We're getting
9 additional roughly 60 units, and we went through
10 early exercises with HPD for project feasibility to
11 make the financing work so that's why we're seeking
12 the rezoning to get a density and a bulk that allows
13 us to have the project financially feasible.

14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you.
15 How does this rezoning impact the Community
16 Healthcare Network's ability to support its work and
17 mission here in the Bronx?

18 MICHELLE PONCE: The Community Healthcare
19 Network right now currently has the second floor.
20 It's subpar conditions, and it's impacting their
21 daily operations. During construction, they're going
22 to be temporarily operating down the block at 1880
23 Bathgate Avenue at the Wilfrid so they won't have any
24 interruption in services, and, once construction is
25 completed, they'll be able to move back into a 10,000

2 square foot new facility that's going to have an
3 additional four exam rooms and three dentistry room.
4 Dentistry is going to be a new service that the
5 current Tremont residents do not have.

6 ACTING CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Thank you.
7 This application proposes 100 percent affordability.
8 Where do conversations stand with HPD on supporting
9 the development of this proposal and what term sheet
10 is being sought to make this building a reality?

11 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: We've had multiple
12 conversations with HPD. They're fully aware of the
13 project, and we'd be utilizing the ELLA term sheet.

14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: Okay. I now
15 turn it over to Council Member Feliz to ask
16 questions.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Thank you so much,
18 Chair Schulman. A few questions. The first one was
19 why is the rezoning to the project and you mentioned
20 feasibility. How or why is it not feasible to build
21 the current project including expanding the
22 healthcare facility under the current rezoning? If
23 I'm correct, the East Tremont section of this part of
24 the Bronx was rezoned approximately 10 years ago, and

2 it was drastically rezoned so why is it not feasible
3 to build under the current zoning?

4 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: Thank you, Council
5 Member. The area was rezoned in 2010. We are looking
6 to facilitate many community needs here including
7 expanding or refreshing the ground floor retail so
8 maintaining that as well as expanding Community
9 Healthcare Network's healthcare services to the
10 community on the second floor. Under the current
11 program for providing supportive services and the
12 affordable housing, we were not hitting a critical
13 mass with the current zoning in order to achieve a
14 financially feasible with HPD. We went through
15 probably, three, four years ago a very detailed
16 feasibility analysis with HPD, and it was determined
17 that we needed additional units and these additional
18 two stories to accommodate those units in order to
19 make the project financially feasible.

20 MICHELLE PONCE: I would also add that the
21 critical mass also lets us provide a highly
22 (INAUDIBLE) building that's going to include 24/7
23 security.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Okay, so how many
25 stories is the building going go be? 12, 14, 13?

2 MICHELLE PONCE: 14. As of right, we can
3 build up to 12, and we're asking for an additional
4 two.

5 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: And those upper floors
6 would be set back.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Currently, there's,
8 if I'm correct, a three-story building on this lot.
9 We're going to be building 12 to 14 stories. What
10 effect is that going to have on the local park which
11 is right across the street, if any?

12 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: On the park across the
13 street, there will be no impact. There is a community
14 garden up the block on Bathgate Avenue where there
15 will be shadows cast in the winter months so it won't
16 be during growing season or a season when the park is
17 really active, but there will be some additional
18 shadows I think for a couple hours during the winter
19 months.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: And that will be a
21 couple hours per day for how long?

22 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: I think it's mostly in
23 the month of December.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Okay. Thank you. No
25 more questions for me. Thank you so much.

2 ACTING CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: I now turn
3 it over to invite my Colleagues to ask questions.
4 Council Member Louis has a question.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Thank you, Chair. I
6 just have a few quick questions, and I think you
7 probably answered it. The first one is the current
8 tenants that have leases that are expiring or they're
9 on month-to-month, are those the folks that you said
10 will be going into a new facility?

11 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: The Community
12 Healthcare Network is an existing tenant. They will
13 be going into a temporary facility during
14 construction. Most of the retail tenants have vacated
15 as a result of COVID. The tenants that are remaining
16 are getting lease buy-out payments so they are being
17 made whole on their lease payments. There's a handful
18 of tenants there including one that's the landowner.
19 He operates a pizzeria.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Okay. The OSHA
21 training that's going to be provided, who will be the
22 operator?

23 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: We would work with the
24 Council Member and the Community Board to find a
25

2 local provider to provide that training that we would
3 sponsor.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Okay. I just want
5 to caution you want to find a qualified one. The
6 green roofs that were mentioned and people suffering
7 with mental illness, what support will you provide to
8 those that will have access to that roof?

9 MICHELLE PONCE: The green roofs will be
10 on the upper floors that have the setbacks on the
11 11th and 13th. Those will be inaccessible for those
12 same concerns that you raised, Council Member. The
13 second floor will have an accessible roof that will
14 have the protective barriers.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Last question
16 regarding 17 parking spaces and 103 bike racks, is
17 that a sufficient amount of parking spaces for
18 providers that will be providing support?

19 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: The 17 parking spaces,
20 they're surface-level parking and self-park. We
21 expect the demand to be larger, hopefully, and would
22 be able to have an attended parking that would be
23 able to maximize the parking, including stackers and
24 whatnot. I think we just want to get a sense of the
25 demand before putting that infrastructure in.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Will you have EV
3 charging stations in those spaces?

4 EMANUEL KOKINAKIS: That's a good
5 question. I think that's something we can certainly
6 accommodate.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: I think you should
8 think about that.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: All right. Thank
10 you so much, Chair.

11 ACTING CHAIRPERSON SCHULMAN: There being
12 no further questions, the applicant panel is excused,
13 and I am now going to turn this hearing back over to
14 Chair Kevin Riley.

15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
16 Member Schulman, and excuse me for my tardiness,
17 everybody. Thank you to the applicant team for
18 presenting and answering all the Council Members'
19 questions.

20 Counsel, are there any members of the
21 public who wish to testify on 521 East Tremont Avenue
22 Rezoning Proposal remotely or in-person?

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Chair
24 Riley, we have about three people signed up online,
25 and I think there might be one of you here in

2 Chambers so if there's anyone that wants to testify
3 also here in the room, please see one of the
4 Sergeants to fill out a card, and I'll just make a
5 quick announcement that for those of you waiting to
6 testify, please note that you will be called in as a
7 panel and please standby when you hear your name
8 being called and prepare to speak when the Chair says
9 that you may begin. Please note that once all
10 panelists in your group have completely their
11 testimony, if remotely, you will be removed from the
12 meeting as a group and the next group of speakers
13 will be introduced. You can continue to view the
14 livestream on our website.

15 Now, we will hear from the first panel,
16 if the Chair wants to call the person if they're
17 here.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes. Members of the
19 public will be given two minutes to speak. We're
20 going to stick to our two-minute rule today because
21 we have a lot of testimonies today. Please do not
22 begin until the Sergeant-at-Arms has started the
23 clock.

24

25

2 The first panel we're going to call up is
3 an 1199 representative, I'm sorry if I mispronounce
4 your name, Eunia Destine-Latinwo.

5 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

6 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Let's give her one
7 second to get there, Sergeant.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: While
9 we have her set up here in the room, I'll just
10 announce for those of you that are remote, the next
11 panel will be Cynthia Stuart, Kalisha Reid, and Irene
12 Lugo.

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Can you
14 just state your name for the record? I'm sorry if I
15 mispronounced it.

16 EUNIA DESTINE-LATINWO: It's okay. It's
17 one of those unique names.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, it is.

19 EUNIA DESTINE-LATINWO: My name is Eunia
20 Destine-Latinwo. Good morning. My name is Eunia
21 Destine-Latinwo, Vice President of 1199 SEIU,
22 representing community-based organizations and
23 pharmacy division. I represent Community Healthcare
24 Network (CHN) workers, a network of 14 federally
25 qualified health centers that also staff school-based

1 health centers and mobile medical vans. CHN's
2 facilities are affiliated with the New York
3 Presbyterian Hospital Network and are located in the
4 Bronx, Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens. The
5 application presents a unique opportunity to expand
6 the existing medical clinic allowing CHN almost to
7 double its capacity. The application will enable the
8 construction of 205 affordable and supportive housing
9 units and the creation of retail space. The new
10 facility will expand to 10,000 square feet allowing
11 for a much-needed dental clinic and expanding the
12 number of exam rooms from 8 to 15. The clinic
13 consists of 3,800 square feet serving 3,400 patients
14 annually. With a modest increase in the staff, the
15 number of appointments is expected to double from
16 1,500 visits to about 3,200 in the larger space. The
17 benefits to the community will be enormous. CHN
18 provides comprehensive primary and behavioral
19 healthcare. Demands for the services increase as more
20 and more patients sought outpatient care outside of
21 hospital setting during the COVID-19 pandemic,
22 thereby growing the number of patients requesting
23 consideration. According to the District Needs
24 Statement of Bronx Community Board 6, high rates of
25

2 obesity, diabetes, child asthma, and adult
3 psychiatric hospitalizations (INAUDIBLE) in need of
4 expanded services at CHN. The expansion will also
5 include dental benefits. CHN offers judgement-free
6 care and high-quality care regardless of the ability
7 to pay. Adding dental care to the existing services
8 will enhance the community's assistance.

9 In closing, CHN's East Tremont facility's
10 expansion will increase and improve the healthcare
11 services provided to this community. 1199 SEIU
12 requests your support for this project. Thank you for
13 this opportunity to testify before you today.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. I believe
15 we also have Paul Regoord as part of this panel as
16 well. Sorry if I mispronounced your last name. You
17 may begin.

18 PAUL REGOORD: Paul Regoord for Community
19 Healthcare Network. I'm the Center Director of our
20 Tremont Site and also the Director of our Mobile
21 Health Clinics.

22 Just to add to Eunia's presentation, I
23 think some of the things that are of concern of us
24 now is the current conditions of the building. We
25 currently have a facility on the second floor with an

2 elevator that's inoperable and a landlord that is
3 slow to fix things. We've had heating issues which
4 Council Member Feliz' office was able to help us
5 with, and also I wanted to touch on some of the
6 supportive services that we would be able to add
7 including dentistry. We would be able to get our
8 (INAUDIBLE) facility to bring teens back to the
9 center. Tremont historically has really been a
10 provider of HIV prevention and STI counselling and
11 testing in the teen area and local high schools and
12 we obviously lost a lot of connections with them
13 during the pandemic, but this would allow for office
14 space as well for supportive services so that's all I
15 have.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much,
17 Paul. Do any Council Members have any questions for
18 this applicant panel?

19 Thank you. You are excused.

20 Counsel, can we call the panel that's
21 online remotely?

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Yes.
23 The panel will be Cynthia Stuart, Kalisha Reid, and
24 Irene Lugo. Cynthia Stuart will be first.

25 CYNTHIA STUART: Hi. Oh, wait. I wait.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, you may begin. Go
3 ahead.

4 CYNTHIA STUART: Oh, okay. Thank you so
5 much for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the
6 proposed rezoning to allow for the creation of this
7 extraordinary project proposed for 521 Tremont. My
8 name is Cynthia Stuart, and I'm the Chief Operating
9 Officer of the Supportive Housing Network of New
10 York. We're a membership organization that represents
11 200+ non-profits statewide that collectively run more
12 than 58,000 units of supportive housing. As someone
13 who has been working in the New York supportive
14 housing community for nearly 30 years, I
15 wholeheartedly support this stellar project and it's
16 A-list participants. Community Access is one of our
17 most treasured members, having helped start this
18 movement in the (INAUDIBLE) and continued to evolve
19 their approach since. They are one of the best
20 providers of housing and services in New York, and
21 they have, I think, 11 buildings in the Bronx and a
22 well-earned reputation for excellence. I really can't
23 say enough about them. Our community has also known
24 and prized Mega Group for decades, one of the
25 preeminent developers of supportive and affordable

2 housing. They're fast, they're excellent, and
3 probably of greatest interest to the community,
4 responsive. They've been great partners in creating
5 glorious high-quality affordable and supportive
6 housing and, during the pandemic, they actually let
7 us use one of their warehouses to distribute personal
8 protective equipment to our communities, workers, and
9 tenants. The architects too, SLCE, have been
10 designing gorgeous, high-quality affordable and
11 supportive housing forever so you're in excellent
12 hands there. Of course, Community Healthcare Network
13 is already in the neighborhood. All four partners are
14 extraordinary in their individual fields, and you'd
15 be hard-pressed to do better, and all have a long
16 history creating housing in the Bronx. The building
17 will be 143 top-quality apartments to the
18 neighborhood that fit a high swath of income levels,
19 providing much-needed quality affordable housing.
20 It'll have great security.

21 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

22 CYNTHIA STUART: Okay. Thank you very much
23 for the opportunity.
24
25

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Cynthia.

3 The next witness will be Kalisha Reid. Kalisha, you
4 may begin.

5 KALISHA REID: Hi. Good morning. My name
6 is Kalish Reid. I'm a tenant here at 985 Bruckner
7 Boulevard. I don't know where to begin. Just please
8 be patient with me. My children are home. I've been
9 living here for the past two years now, and Community
10 Access has definitely been (INAUDIBLE) create a
11 foundation for my children coming out of the shelter
12 system. I can't say enough how much Community Access
13 has given me the opportunity to give my children a
14 firm foundation. The different workshops here, the
15 staff here, they've really been amazing. I've had
16 opportunity to have a space with my children which is
17 great. They have a lot of festivities for holidays
18 and things like that. We get pantry, produce. It's
19 really been a good opportunity for me. I wouldn't
20 have it any other way, me coming into my first
21 apartment. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Kalisha.

23 The next witness that will testify is Irene Lugo.
24 Irene, you may begin.

2 IRENE LUGO: Good morning, everyone. My
3 name is Irene Lugo. I've been going to Community
4 Healthcare Network on East Tremont for about 10
5 years. My youngest son was 3; he's now 13. First
6 thing I want to say the staff, the doctors, the
7 nurses, psychiatrists, therapists are all amazing. I
8 always feel welcome. Whenever my sons' doctors are
9 not available, they always find a way to make sure my
10 kids are being seen. Whenever I need anything for
11 myself, they are there. They show support. They ask
12 you if you need anything. I think it will be a great
13 asset to the community to make sure that we have a
14 bigger location for East Tremont because I think it
15 will benefit a lot of people. Also, I love the idea
16 that they will now have dentists available because
17 it's hard to find a good location, speaking from
18 experience, that are good with taking care of your
19 teeth. I just want to say I've been going there for
20 about 10 years, and I've moved all the way to
21 (INAUDIBLE) Parkway, and I still would travel and not
22 go nowhere else but Community Healthcare Network.
23 Thumbs up. I really hope that this is approved for
24 them. Thank you so much for your time.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much,
3 Irene.

4 I'm just going to do a last call to make
5 sure no one here wants to testify on 521 East
6 Tremont.

7 Okay, do any Council Members have any
8 questions for this panel?

9 Thank you. There being no more members of
10 the public who wish to testify on Preconsidered LUs
11 related to ULURPs C 220306 ZMX and N 220307 ZRX
12 relating to the 521 East Tremont Avenue Rezoning
13 Proposal, the public hearing is now closed, and the
14 items are laid over.

15 Thank you, Counsel.

16 I will now open the public hearing on LUs
17 168 and 169 relating to the 1880-1888 Rezoning
18 Proposal in Council Member Yeger's District in
19 Brooklyn. This application seeks a zoning map
20 amendment to rezone an existing C8-2 zoning district
21 to a C4-5A zoning district and the related zoning
22 text amendment to map an MIH program area.

23 For anyone wishing to testify on this
24 item remotely, if you have not already done so, you
25 must register online, and you may do that now by

2 visiting the Council's website at
3 council.nyc.gov/landuse. Once again, for anyone with
4 us in person, please see one of the Sergeants to
5 prepare and submit a speaker's card.

6 I just want to take a brief recess. One
7 second. Thank you.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: We can
9 have the applicant panel, Eric, you guys can set up
10 at the table already.

11 The Chair did the opening statement. We
12 just took a brief recess so you guys can set up.

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, everyone. I
14 will now open again the public hearing of LUs 168 and
15 169 relating to the 1880-1888 Rezoning Proposal in
16 Council Member Yeger's District in Brooklyn. This
17 application seeks a zoning map amendment to rezone an
18 existing C8-2 zoning district to a C4-5A zoning
19 district and the related zoning text amendment to map
20 an MIH program area.

21 For anyone wishing to testify on this
22 item remotely, if you have not already done so, you
23 must register online, and you may do that now by
24 visiting the Council's website at
25 council.nyc.gov/landuse.

2 Once again, for anyone with us in person,
3 please see one of the Sergeants-at-Arms to prepare
4 and submit a speaker's card. I will now like to allow
5 Council Member Yeger to give any opening remarks
6 regarding this project. Council Member Yeger.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you, Mr.
8 Chair. I'd like to let the applicant go straight in
9 and then I'll do my opening as part of my questions.

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
11 Member Yeger.

12 Counsel, can you please call the first
13 applicant panel to this item?

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Eric,
15 I'm going to need your help in case any of the names
16 are not correct. I have Eric Palatnik, Bishop
17 Mitchell Taylor, Jessica (INAUDIBLE), Anna
18 (INAUDIBLE), and Frankie Nunez.

19 ERIC PALATNIK: You got them all.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: All
21 right.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Counsel, please
23 administer the affirmation.

24

25

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: If you
3 could all raise your right hand and answer the
4 following question.

5 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the
6 whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your
7 testimony before the Subcommittee and in your answers
8 to all Council Member questions?

9 ERIC PALATNIK: I do.

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. For the
11 viewing public, if you need an accessible version of
12 this presentation, please send an email request to
13 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov.

14 Now, the applicant team may begin.
15 Panelists, as you begin, I'll just ask that you
16 please restate your name and organization for the
17 record.

18 ERIC PALATNIK: Thank you, Councilman
19 Riley. My name is Eric Palatnik, and I am an attorney
20 representing 1880 Coney Island Avenue. If I may just
21 request at the outset, Councilman Riley, I know we're
22 allocated 10 minutes, if we may have maybe 12 minutes
23 or so, that would be great, let us talk a little bit
24 at ease. We have a lot to tell you.

2 First, I wanted to comment before we go
3 into the formal presentation that I sense as we all
4 sense that we're at a watershed moment when it comes
5 to affordable housing in New York City. We want to
6 thank you for taking the time to study the obstacles
7 that we're confronting in making this development
8 work.

9 We started this process four years ago
10 hoping to build an eight-story building working with
11 Councilman Yeger. We've come to the position where
12 Councilman Yeger has indicated, and I'll let him
13 speak, that he would be happy with a five-story
14 building. Unfortunately, a five-story building at
15 this location with the provision of MIH housing with
16 the lack of 421 with the inflation that we're all
17 confronting in our daily life with the interest rates
18 as high as they are, with the cost of construction, a
19 five-story building is simply not buildable.
20 Consequently, nobody can afford to build it. We've
21 studied at a five-story building, we've studied at a
22 six- and a seven-story building, and we've got some
23 reports here, and we have an expert to speak to you.
24 It's pretty common now in New York City that without
25 the 421 with the interest rates where they are it is

1 very difficult to build, and this building is no
2 different. Eight stories makes financial sense and it
3 fits within the character of the neighborhood. I'm
4 going to show you picture after picture of building
5 after building all around this building that are
6 eight stories tall, similar in height to what we're
7 asking for here and do not provide a shred of MIH
8 housing. As a matter of fact, this development will
9 double the amount of MIH housing built within the
10 district in the last decade. The irony is that the
11 proposed residential building that we're seeking to
12 speak which is eight stories is just a fraction of
13 the allowable building. The C8-2 district that we're
14 in allows for a 23-story sky exposure plane community
15 facility building similar in density to one that was
16 just build a few feet away at the corner of Avenue P
17 that's at nine stories. That building was limited by
18 its lot size. We're four times larger in lot size. We
19 could go four times higher. That building is nine
20 stories; we could be 23. The property could also be
21 put to use as an automotive service station or an
22 automobile dealership, which Plaza Auto Mall, the
23 operator, the owner of the property runs. We have no
24 desire to build an automobile dealership here, an
25

2 auto body shop, a self-storage facility, or a 23-
3 story community facility. We want to build an eight-
4 story housing development with affordable MIH housing
5 that matches the heights of all the buildings across
6 the street in the R7A district which rests just
7 across the street. The C8-2 line runs down Coney
8 Island Avenue.

9 This property is being developed without
10 any money at all from the government. There's no tax
11 abatement. There's no federal subsidies. There's no
12 city subsidies. It's near mass transit. It has a
13 union labor component. It has many green features. It
14 will create much-needed market-rate housing. The
15 avenue itself, Coney Island Avenue, is akin to one of
16 the great boulevards of New York City. We have Coney
17 Island Avenue, the Grand Concourse, Ocean Parkway,
18 Queens Boulevard, all well-known avenues. Of all
19 those avenues, Coney Island Avenue is the only one
20 that is littered with cars being repaired with their
21 radiators off on the street and one-story pre-war
22 three-story walkups as the main source of housing. I
23 dare say we can do better as a city so we're here
24 today to ask you to make a difference with us, and we
25 recognize that the Councilman is opposed to it, and I

2 know there are many people here who live on East 10th
3 Street that's behind it that don't like the size of
4 it. I'm also going to show you information that's
5 going to show how it may improve some people's lives.
6 If I can go now to the next slide and thank you for
7 giving me the introduction.

8 This slide, which you can't really see
9 probably from where you are, but what's important to
10 note on it is that the middle slide at the bottom dot
11 speaks to the fact that the C8-2 zoning district in
12 this area has been here since 1961. It was created by
13 Robert Moses himself who we are now spending time
14 trying to undo the legacy of in the Cross Bronx
15 Expressway. He created the C8-2 district in 1960,
16 three months before he left office in 1961, and it's
17 remained as the racial barrier that it's been for the
18 past 60 years preventing any new development on this
19 side of the street. Next slide, please.

20 The slide you can see here on the left
21 side is the existing and proposed zoning map. As you
22 can see on the left side, the existing condition in
23 the Ocean Parkway Subdistrict which is the jewel of
24 Ocean Parkway was created to make sure that
25 communities thrive with beautiful structures and

2 there's all sorts of design regulations. The C8 rests
3 within that as you can see here. Ironically, as you
4 can see, the R7A district runs the entire length of
5 Coney Island Avenue across the street. It's almost as
6 if somebody intentionally decided that one side of
7 Coney Island Avenue should have housing and the other
8 side of Coney Island Avenue should be relegated to
9 automotive uses for eternity. We're here to ask you
10 to change that. Next slide, please.

11 This shows you what the proposal is. It's
12 a C4-5A, the right side, it gives you all the
13 dimensions I gave you before, but basically it's a
14 90-foot tall building, eight stories, 49 MIH units,
15 doubling the amount built within the last decade, and
16 191 total apartments with 49 at a market rate. Next
17 slide, please.

18 This slide just gives you a depiction of
19 the building. I'm going to skip through it and go to
20 the next slide, please.

21 This slide is where the guts of things
22 are at, and I'd like to spend a minute calling to
23 your attention. This was all taken from the Racial
24 Equity Report, which as you know the City recently
25 enacted for us to study. When we studied it and we

1 started going into the PUMA tract, what you'll start
2 to notice is this area is grossly underserved with
3 housing. The population in this area, the right top
4 dot, shows you that it's gone up by 6 percent in
5 population in the last decade. However, the second
6 DOT shows you that housing in this area only went up
7 by 2 percent. In contrast, Brooklyn went up by 8
8 percent, and the City went up by 6. We're way behind
9 in this area. We're underperforming. Next slide,
10 please.

11
12 Next slide is just the Mayor's, what
13 we've all heard and what we all know, nobody can
14 afford to live in New York right now and we need more
15 housing. Next slide, please.

16 This slide tells more tales. I'm giving
17 you a lot of statistics. This slide, again, was taken
18 from the Racial Equity Report from the City's
19 Equitable Data Map. The bottom 99.5 percent is
20 showing you that that is all the housing that has no
21 affordable housing in the area. 99.5 percent, no
22 affordable housing in the area. The top two numbers
23 are telling you that 53 units have been created in
24 Community Board 12, that's what the map on the right
25 is showing you, that's Community District 12, those

2 numbers in the dots and the number of housing units
3 that have been built, you add those up, they add up
4 to 53. Look at ours; we're at 49. We're nearly
5 doubling the amount of MIH housing. I know the
6 Councilman wants a five-story building here. We can't
7 afford to build it. If we build eight, we can include
8 the affordable housing that we need. Next slide,
9 please.

10 Next slide shows you 65,000 dollars on
11 the righthand side is the community median income.
12 That's what we're all talking about now. We all
13 realize the AMI is nonsense. It's the community
14 median income that means somethings. The CMI here,
15 the average median income for the PUMA tract 4016 is
16 65,000 dollars which is a spot on to our 60 percent
17 MIH targeting the exact people and demographic that
18 need the affordable housing. Next slide.

19 The unit distribution slide was done in
20 response to Councilman Yeger's request to increase
21 the number of larger units. We had a lot of studios
22 before. He asked us to bring the building down to
23 five stories. I said I could not do it. He asked to
24 mix up the unit count. I said I could. This is what I
25 can do to accommodate his request, and this is what

you're seeing here with a vast majority of the units being two bedrooms and others being one and three and no studios. Next slide.

The next slide is great, full of information. This slide is all taken from the Racial Equity Report. Going from the top left, I'm going to go down, and then I'm going to go to the right side. The population in the area is made up of 63.2 percent white non-Hispanic, that's me. The remaining 37 percent are ethnic. That's gone up by 9 percent over the past decade so it's trending away from white non-Hispanic and towards the other ethnicities. It's 19 percent Asian. Its foreign-born population is 49 percent. That's astronomical to me, nearly 50 percent of people are born in another country, and limited English proficiency, 36 percent have limited English. The right side shows you the housing shortage. Specifically, the housing units at the top are what I told you before, all the same stats, but the affordability, the third one down, 21 percent of the units in the area, the people that need affordable housing is only available to 21 percent of them. Low- and moderate-income, it's only available to 75 percent of them. There's a 25 percent need for

1 moderate-income housing, there's an 80 percent need
2 for low-income housing, and I'll go up to the rent,
3 the dot above that which I should've mentioned, the
4 rent burden. 53 percent of the people in the
5 community are rent-burdened and 28 percent of that 53
6 percent are severely rent-burdened. All of this
7 information is taken from the City's Racial Equity
8 Report, which is all online. Next slide, please.

10 These show you the buildings that are
11 built all around us within feet, within walking
12 distance, spitting distance. The building on the top
13 left is the as-of-right community facility built on a
14 much smaller lot than us using a sky exposure plane.
15 It's a medical office building. It's built by a local
16 person in the community. It rests lot-line to lot-
17 line and goes up the identical height to what we're
18 requesting. They built in the C8-2 because the C8-2
19 allows a 6.5 community facility FAR with a sky
20 exposure plane. Our lot is 50,000 square feet, 60,000
21 square feet, the size of our lot lets us go up like
22 the Empire State Building for an as-of-right
23 development. I'm simply suggesting that because
24 people are here today opposing what we want to build
25 which has a benefit to the city. What's allowed to

2 built there can go much higher, and I don't know what
3 a 23-story medical building could do, but even the
4 as-of-right for an automotive use, which is Plaza
5 Auto Mall who owns the property could be an auto
6 repair, auto body, things like that, none of which I
7 think has any tangible beneficial use. Next slide,
8 please.

9 The top left slide here shows you what
10 goes on at Coney Island right now. You go out to this
11 property right now, you walk around the block, and
12 you will see radiators on the street, you'll see
13 toilet seats under cars, you will see tires off of
14 cars, hoods up, engines out, windshields off, it's a
15 chop shop on the auto body shops. Now, we understand
16 that cars need to be repaired, but as you can see
17 parked perpendicular to the sidewalk on the major
18 arterial roadway of New York City that should have
19 housing doesn't really work. If you look at the
20 middle, that's what's on the block right now in the
21 R7. I think we can do better than that. If you look
22 at the bottom, I think that we all know what a block
23 looks like. I'm almost down with my presentation.
24 Thank you for giving me the time. I have three or
25 four more slides. The next slide, please.

1 This slide, the entire gray matter on the
2 other side of Coney Island Avenue, our site's in the
3 red, is zoned R7A and would allow for a development
4 of exactly the same height as we are seeking here
5 with no MIH housing whatsoever, and I showed you
6 already and I'll show you a few more pictures of the
7 buildings that have been built in that picture that
8 you're looking at right now across the street that
9 exist. They're eight stories, seven stories. They're
10 beautiful. They're glass. They're brand new, and they
11 don't have a stitch of affordable housing. We're
12 simply asking that we be allowed to do the same thing
13 on our side of the block. We understand that the
14 zoning is C8-2, but we're to ask to change it. Two
15 more slides, or three more. Next slide, please.

17 This slide just shows you in more detail
18 what I was speaking to and thank you for paying such
19 close attention, Council Member, I greatly appreciate
20 it. If you can see up in the right side of your page
21 are the two buildings that are up in the air built,
22 an 85-foot, seven-story residential building in the
23 R7 district, the lower side on the right, 95-foot,
24 seven-story office building, same size we want to
25

2 build as of right, exactly what we could build where
3 we are.

4 Next slide just simply shows you the
5 automotive uses. Next slide, please.

6 This shows simply what I'm speaking to
7 about Coney Island Avenue. Next slide, please.

8 This shows you what could be constructed
9 here as-of-right. I think it's quite compelling since
10 the objectors are here mainly opposed to what we are
11 proposing to build saying it's going to affect them.
12 This could be lot-line to lot-line. Our building
13 cannot. It can go 23 stories tall. Our building
14 cannot. Something will be built. There's a building
15 on the property now occupied by Staples. They're
16 closing. It will be demolished, and there's another
17 building that was operated by Esty's, a very famous
18 local wig maker, demolished and gone. The site is
19 ready to be developed. The question for everybody in
20 the room is do we develop it with an automobile
21 dealership, a community facility, or a residential
22 apartment building that could support the affordable
23 housing that the city and this Committee is asking us
24 to provide without any state, city, or federal
25 subsidies. Next slide, please.

2 This slide, there are people here that
3 are speaking on East 10th Street. I'm here to tell
4 you that, next slide, please, next slide, there you
5 go, this is interesting and from a land use
6 perspective, if you look at the bottom of the slide
7 you'll see the landscaped rear yard. That's the
8 dumpsters you see in the picture at the top. The site
9 jigs into the properties behind us. The people that
10 are here opposing live on that block that the site
11 jigs into. The parking lot for Staples goes right up
12 to their back doors, you can see it in the picture,
13 right there, the dumpsters, the kids hanging out,
14 everybody drinking, deliveries, cars, the works,
15 right up against the houses, you can see the
16 dumpsters here. We're asking to turn that into a
17 landscaped area. When we're done, they'll be a 50-
18 foot buffer area from those homes and then they'll be
19 an additional 30 feet above the first floor
20 separating our building from those homes by up to 80
21 feet, and that concludes my presentation.

22 I thank you for giving us the time to
23 present it, and I'd be happy to answer any questions,
24 and Bishop Taylor I think has a few words as well.

2 BISHOP MITCHELL TAYLOR: Okay. Good
3 morning. I'm Bishop Mitchell G. Taylor from Inside
4 Track PR. I was engaged by the owner to do some
5 outreach and some research on this community and to
6 offer my expertise as it relates to this project.

7 Thank you for the time to learn about the
8 issues that are preventing us as a city from catching
9 up on the housing crisis. As Eric was talking and
10 referring to the Racial Equity Report, which I have
11 combed through days and days with Sedia (phonetic)
12 and others that were on that committee, I feel like
13 this was exactly why that report was done. When I
14 look at the lines of demarcation that prevent
15 prosperity from one side of the community and allows
16 it for the other side of the community and when I
17 think about what Governor Hochul said at a State of
18 the State about 800,000 units of housing and then
19 what Mayor Adams said about 500,000 units of housing
20 in New York City, 1.3 million units of housing in the
21 midst of a housing crisis where we have 75,000
22 migrants, 47,000 homeless New Yorkers depending on
23 who's counting, and we don't have enough places to
24 put them, and so here we have a project that is
25 contextual, that makes sense in a neighborhood that

2 has been disproportionately ignored and overlooked
3 for so many years, and I don't want to pull the race
4 card, I don't want to talk about the redlining that
5 seems to be here that was developed by Robert Moses
6 so long ago that even right now City Planning is
7 studying some of the stuff that he put into place
8 because it is disproportionately impacting people of
9 color, people in urban tracts, and we don't want this
10 project to be cast in that same light. Mr. Palatnik
11 said so eloquently that eight stories is just not
12 appropriate for this neighborhood, but it's not only...

13 ERIC PALATNIK: Councilman Yeger did.

14 BISHOP MITCHELL TAYLOR: I'm sorry.

15 Councilman Yeger said it's not appropriate for this
16 neighborhood, but it only becomes viable when it's an
17 eight-story building. There's no 421-A, there's no
18 subsidies, this project is almost impossible to
19 build. If you look at the margins and these reports
20 about how much money will be made, you almost think
21 that the developer of this property is doing it for
22 altruistic reasons, and I believe that it is. We all
23 sense the watershed moment we are collectively
24 experiencing in housing, a shortage across all income
25 levels, the proposed 191 units of housing including

1 49 MIH units targeting 60 percent of the AMI with a
2 percentage of those units matching the CMI is a
3 perfect storm for people that need housing. We are
4 seeking a zoning designation of C4-5A, the
5 residential equivalent of the R7A district which
6 already exists all around this building. I want to
7 say what could be built as-of-right will not only be
8 intrusive, not only block views, not only be
9 burdensome to the residents that are on that block
10 that we see up here on the screen, it'll be something
11 that we'll all be regretting for years and years to
12 come. It makes no sense to me, but make no mistake
13 about it the surrounding R7A district has recently
14 seen the addition of numerous seven- and eight-story
15 multiple dwellings identical to that which is
16 proposed here, yet none of which, which was already
17 said, include any affordable housing. I want to skip
18 over here a little bit. Our side of Coney Island
19 Avenue is zoned as it has been for the past 65
20 archaic years, 65 years. Go to that block. I was just
21 there last week. It's a blight on the neighborhood.
22 It's a mark, it's a stain, I can't even believe it,
23 and it was designed for automobile use, allowing
24 towering community facility structures, one has
25

2 already been built just a few feet away from our site
3 that our site can accommodate one as well that can
4 rest lot-line to lot-line and raise more than 100
5 feet tall on that site. It was created by the
6 previous Commissioner, Robert Moses, and I believe
7 that this is a time now for us to look at this
8 critically because people need housing today. Thank
9 you.

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Eric and Bishop, it's
11 a pleasure to see you both today and to everybody
12 here today.

13 I'm just going to get right to it. I know
14 this is a sensitive topic, this particular project,
15 so I'm just going to ask everybody to please have
16 respect to each other and when you're asking
17 questions to please answer them in respect.

18 Housing is an issue that we want to
19 address within New York City so every community has
20 to play their part but also every developer has to
21 play their part as well when they're talking and
22 negotiating with the community. It looks like eight
23 stories isn't what the community wants. It looks like
24 five stories isn't what the developer wants so
25 hopefully we can come to the table and come up with

2 some good faith negotiations. With that being said,
3 I'm going to ask a few questions. I did see you
4 presenting a chart with the demographic of ethnicity
5 within the community, if I'm not mistaken, because it
6 was a little small, I couldn't really see it. Could
7 you talk about the non-Hispanic black, I think it was
8 at 42 percent in the community and you said it
9 increased?

10 ERIC PALATNIK: If whoever's controlling
11 the screen, you could pull up page 11 of the screen.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: It's all right. I
13 couldn't see anyway. It's all right.

14 ERIC PALATNIK: I'll read it, but your
15 question is what percentage, it says 4.2 black non-
16 Hispanic.

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay, it's 4.2, okay.
18 The site is currently zoned C8-2 which limits
19 development to a nonresidential use. You mentioned
20 this in your presentation but want to confirm, if
21 these zoning changes are not approved, what does the
22 applicant envision? I know you stated there could be
23 a building there for 23 feet, but what is realistic?

24 ERIC PALATNIK: Here are the two realistic
25 opportunities that have come his way. One is self-

2 storage. Self-storage is viable. It's returns, we
3 have it here, we could show you it does very good
4 returns. He's (INAUDIBLE) analyzed it. That's one
5 opportunity. The second opportunity is they run Plaza
6 Auto Mall so they could obviously put their
7 automobile dealership or repair or prep yards or
8 whatever is related to their business there for that,
9 but it's more unlikely than not that it'll become a
10 self-storage facility, probably of a similar height,
11 if not more, than what we're proposing here with a
12 larger bulk.

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. I know
14 Council Member Yeger has a few questions and his
15 intro so I'm going to let Council Member Yeger go.
16 Thank you, Council Member Yeger.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you, Mr.
18 Chairman. I'm glad that you began by talking about
19 the blight on the neighborhood because in good part
20 the blight on the neighborhood is caused by the
21 people who you are here representing. I'm glad that
22 the Bishop took the time to visit Coney Island
23 Avenue. I wish you would've gone just a few blocks
24 over to see Nostrand Avenue. Nostrand Avenue where
25 the client that you represent has literally destroyed

2 a neighborhood, destroyed a neighborhood from Avenue
3 L Street to Kings Highway, taken over two drugstores,
4 a Rite Aid and a CVS and created parking lots, taken
5 over a synagogue and created his car leasing company,
6 taken over privately owned and operated businesses
7 with residents on top, crushed them to the ground,
8 paved it over, and put his used car rental lot while
9 he, at the same time, is banging on the doors of
10 homes on East 29th Street to try to buy them so that
11 he can increase the size of his parking lot. We have
12 dark holes in our neighborhood created by your
13 client. That's the blight that exists. Mr. Palatnik
14 and I visited Coney Island Avenue, and he took great
15 joy in telling me what a disgusting neighborhood I
16 represent. The street is disgusting. He said,
17 Councilman, don't you want this cleaned up, and I
18 said, Eric, it's your client's property that this
19 filth is in front of, your client has owned this
20 property in your words to me for 40 years and it is
21 disgusting. He doesn't take care of the street and
22 then you come here and you tell us what a disgusting
23 avenue Coney Island Avenue is. The homes across the
24 street that you pointed to and said, well, couldn't
25 there be something better there, there are real

2 people living in those homes, real people who make up
3 the demographic mix of our neighborhood, Latino,
4 Bangladeshi, Pakistani, black, real people, and in
5 your view that doesn't belong there because they can
6 go up so high so why not across the street as well
7 tear it down and build up seven, eight stories on
8 that side where it is allowed? Real people in our
9 neighborhood. Real people live in a low-rise
10 neighborhood. One-, two-, and three-family homes, and
11 they have made this their home, and they've made this
12 their home not because Robert Moses sent them there.
13 The zoning that was drawn is always subject to the
14 discretionary action of the Council, but it is
15 discretionary for a reason, and the reason is because
16 those of us who are elected represent neighborhoods.
17 There is nobody on this Council who will tell you
18 that I have said no to a single project that has come
19 before this Council. I have been here five years, one
20 month, and 10 days. I have never said no to a project
21 in my neighborhood. We have built in Borough Park
22 six, seven, eight stories. We've done it in the
23 Bensonhurst part of my neighborhood, we've done it in
24 the Midwood part of my neighborhood, we've done it
25 for clients of yours, Eric, and my opposition is the

2 height. Not don't build, not don't build, so when you
3 tell us that every neighborhood needs apartments, and
4 our neighborhood needs apartments and you bring
5 strangers into our neighborhood to tell us what we
6 need, and I appreciate being schooled by other people
7 from other neighborhoods to tell us what it is we
8 need in our neighborhood, what we're telling you is
9 the same thing. We also need housing, but there is
10 responsibility in development. We don't build towers
11 on top of people's homes. We don't do that anywhere
12 in the city. It's a big city, and it's a different
13 kind of city and a lot of different neighborhoods and
14 the city is made up of neighborhoods, and when we
15 have a neighborhood that is a typical low-rise
16 neighborhood where we can welcome apartment buildings
17 because we do have apartment buildings, there is a
18 responsibility to develop it in a way that fits into
19 the neighborhood so let's talk a little bit about
20 what it is that your client has done in terms of, I
21 haven't asked a question yet so don't worry about the
22 mic, to our neighborhood and why it is that there are
23 a lot of people who feel he can't be trusted and why
24 a lot of people feel look, if he wants to build five
25 stories that's great, and we'll try to welcome that

2 and try to hold him to promises that he made, but
3 he's not been somebody whose promises have been
4 trustworthy. He has ruined, ruined the Nostrand
5 Avenue corridor between Avenue L and Kings Highway,
6 Avenue M, Avenue N, Avenue O, Kings Highway, he's
7 ruined them, destroyed them, destroyed them for
8 profit, his own profit. Altruistic was a word that
9 was used here today. I tried very hard to hold my
10 face from laughing. He's not altruistic. Giving out
11 turkeys on Thanksgiving is very nice, but he's not
12 altruistic. He has destroyed a neighborhood, and now
13 he proposes to do similar destruction on Coney Island
14 Avenue. Nobody is saying that we want a Staples
15 instead of housing. We don't, and if Staples has to
16 go, that's fine, but we didn't want to lose a Rite
17 Aid and we didn't want to lose a CVS two blocks away
18 from each other because your client's greed forced
19 those businesses out. We didn't want to lose all the
20 small businesses along Avenue M between East 29th
21 Street and Nostrand Avenue, my childhood barbershop
22 being one of them, that was bought out, crushed to
23 the ground, and had a paved parking lot put over it.
24 Literally paving paradise to put up parking lots is
25 your client's business model so when you tell us that

2 the other option for him is either a self-storage or
3 building his auto mall, then don't come here. This is
4 the place where discretionary actions are granted,
5 not where threats and bullying is happening. Don't
6 tell us that if you don't do this, then this is
7 what's coming your way. Do whatever you want. We're
8 offering an opportunity to welcome apartments into
9 our neighborhood, we do need them, but it has to be
10 responsible.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Council Member Yeger...

12 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you very
13 much, Mr. Chairman.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: No, I know you have
15 some questions.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I haven't asked a
17 question. I'm not going to ask one.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: You have no questions?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: None, because he
20 said everything we needed to say. I just needed to
21 clarify and put it into the proper context.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. We have a
23 lot of people signed up to testify so I just want to
24 make sure we get to everybody. I don't think there's

2 any more questions or comments for this applicant
3 panel so you guys are excused.

4 ERIC PALATNIK: Thank you.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: We have
6 a few people to testify so I'm going to make a few
7 announcements regarding that. We have a few of you
8 here in person, we're going to call you in panels,
9 and a few waiting online, thanks for your patience.

10 For those of you that are here to
11 testify, please know that you will be called in
12 panels of four or five. If you're a member of the
13 public signed up to testify on the proposal, please
14 stand by when you hear your name being called and
15 prepare to speak when Chair says that you may begin.

16 Please also note that once all panelists
17 in your group have completed their testimony if
18 remotely you will be removed from the meeting as a
19 group and the next group of speakers will be
20 introduced. Once removed, participants may continue
21 to view the livestream broadcast of this hearing on
22 the Council website.

23 We will now hear from the first panel. If
24 the Chair wants to read the names of the panels in-
25 person so you can set up and we can call you.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, I'm going to call
3 on Tiara Williams, Alvaro Gonzalez (phonetic),
4 Reverend Frank Mason, and Pastor Beard. You can come
5 up there.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: You can
7 come up there and we'll...

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Members of the public
9 will be given two minutes to speak. I will be cutting
10 everybody off at two minutes. I'm so sorry. There's a
11 lot of people signed up to testify today. All right,
12 so you will be given two minutes to speak. Please do
13 not begin until the Sergeant-at-Arms has started the
14 clock.

15 First, I'm going to start with Pastor
16 Beard. Pastor Beard. You may begin.

17 PASTOR BEARD: Good morning. My name is
18 Pastor Beard. I'm Associate Pastor of Coney Island
19 Cathedral, and I've often heard of projects coming to
20 my community with promises of progress, but it's rare
21 to find a project that is focused on affordable
22 housing. As an advocate for my community, we fight
23 for fair, equitable housing every day to foster
24 social, economic, and community advancement. However,
25 it is impossible without stable housing. I strongly

2 believe that this development will be part of solving
3 housing crisis in our neighborhood. Additionally,
4 this project will benefit our community and residents
5 because it will generate opportunities for economic
6 and social growth. It will not only bring affordable
7 housing but jobs, retail space, a significant
8 facelift among Coney Island Avenue. In my opinion,
9 this is more than just a development. It is a much
10 needed housing solution for our neighborhood, and to
11 add it would be an upgrade to what we have now.

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Pastor
13 Beard. Next is Reverend Frank Mason.

14 REVEREND FRANK MASON: My name is Reverend
15 Frank Mason. I'm the Senior Pastor of the Christ
16 Temple United Baptist Church. As an advocate for my
17 community, I am very concerned about the lack of
18 affordable housing that has been made available to
19 our community. In order to keep up with the growing
20 needs of our community, we need more housing and a
21 secure interest in investments into our community.
22 That is why I am in support of the 1880-1888 Coney
23 Island Avenue Project. The 1880-1888 Coney Island
24 Avenue Project has the potential to be a real
25 gamechanger in our community. This project has many

1 community benefits including retail jobs,
2 opportunity, affordable housing options that will
3 help generate revenue for the small businesses and
4 force the economic growth which is a step in the
5 right direction. We need new, smart, and creative
6 development in our community. This project checks all
7 those boxes and helps improve the quality of life for
8 the whole community. I am confident that the 1880-
9 1888 Coney Island Avenue Project will be a blessing
10 to our growing community and fully support this
11 project. On behalf of myself and the Christ Temple
12 United Baptist Church, we support the rezoning of the
13 1880-1888 Coney Island Avenue Project and ask that
14 you consider its approval.
15

16 I'd like to say thank you to all of you
17 for your time and consideration. I also have with me
18 letters that's been signed from other people in our
19 community that was not able to be here because of
20 work and so we are definitely in support of the
21 project.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Reverend
23 Mason.
24
25

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Thank
3 you, and we will take your letters so we can include
4 them in the record.

5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Next, I will have
6 Tiara Williams. Tiara, you may begin.

7 TIARA WILLIAMS: Good morning. Excuse my
8 voice but thank you for the opportunity to testify
9 today. My name is Tiara Williams, and I'm a proud
10 six-year member of Local 79 and a former resident of
11 District 44. I grew up with my grandparents and
12 enjoyed walks on Coney Island Avenue to get a Kosher
13 pickle with my grandparents and the frequent visits
14 to various bakeries in the area, the trips to Midwood
15 to Murrow to watch high school games are some of my
16 pleasant memories there that I had as a child. At the
17 age of seven, my grandfather passed away. Four years
18 later, my grandmother fell ill as she fought to keep
19 her apartment. Sadly, she died when I was 14. My aunt
20 tried keeping her apartment because she was pushed
21 out of the one that she had directly upstairs. She
22 could only maintain for a few years. The rent
23 increases on these old apartments were heavy burdens.
24 I had no choice but to move into my mother's already
25 crowded apartment in Flatbush, which is a very

1 different and much more complicated area. Then and
2 now, as decision-makers in New York City, you have
3 the responsibility to build affordable housing. We
4 need to create housing opportunities for the people
5 who cannot afford market-rate apartments like my
6 aunt, my grandmother, and my grandfather. We need to
7 create family-sustaining jobs as well when we
8 consider building these apartments for the members of
9 those communities. These opportunities can help shape
10 a child's future that they don't have to heal from.
11 It's very important that we all do our fair share of
12 creating housing that doesn't burden a family in old
13 or young age. Fair meaning inclusive to the whole 100
14 of the said community, not just a percentage of the
15 whole. It's essential to create jobs that help those
16 people as well to dictate their financial future.
17 1880 allows both, and I support the project's eight-
18 story plan. At eight stories, it is not only
19 financially viable, but it offers more affordable
20 units than any other project in District 44 in the
21 last 10 years. The more this project offers, the less
22 families fall into unfortunate situations as mine
23 did. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Miss
3 Williams. Next, I'll have Alvaro Gonzalez. Alvaro,
4 you may begin.

5 ALVARO GONZALEZ: Hello. Thank you for the
6 opportunity to testify. My name is Alvaro Gonzalez.
7 I'm a proud six-year member of Local 79, and I am
8 here to testify in favor of the rezoning located at
9 1880 Coney Island Avenue. When I started in the
10 construction industry, I used to work non-union in
11 the Midwood neighborhood. I worked on apartments,
12 houses, commercial buildings. Through my time working
13 there, what I thought was first a good opportunity I
14 came to realize I was being exploited. I worked with
15 no safety standards, no living wages. Accidents on
16 job sites always went unreported. We were always
17 pushed to the point where it became dangerous. During
18 demolition phases, there was never any test done to
19 see if there was asbestos or anything harmful. PPE
20 was rarely provided. Something as simple as wearing
21 your hard hat was a rare site. While industry safety
22 standards have increased, many construction companies
23 in Midwood still do not follow basic safety
24 regulations. By working and earning low wages, I
25 could never have afforded to live in one of those

2 apartments where I was working on. Buying meals and
3 transportation for work took away 25 percent of my
4 income. While making around 550 dollars a week, I
5 used to struggle paying 1,200 dollars in rent.
6 Healthcare coverage was not even an option as I was
7 quoted 250 dollars a month for basic coverage. I
8 could not afford it now was it offered to me through
9 my job. When I got hurt, I was told to stay home
10 until I got better, but I was not paid for my time
11 off or company offered to pay my medical bills.
12 Today, as a union member, I know my rights. There are
13 people in this District who desperately need
14 affordable housing due to their low wages. The
15 project offers real opportunity, good wages, and
16 housing that workers can afford. We need every unit
17 of affordable housing we can get to make our city
18 livable. Please consider my testimony and open the
19 doors to a dignified future by approving this
20 rezoning. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Council
22 Member Yeger, do you have any questions for this
23 panel?

24

25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Very brief
3 question. Good morning, Pastor Beard. Just wondering
4 if you can tell us where is your church located?

5 PASTOR BEARD: 2816 Mermaid Avenue.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, and good
7 morning, Reverend Mason. Where's your church located?

8 REVEREND MASON: 2678 86th Street in the
9 Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, beautiful
11 neighborhoods both. Those are about a 20-minute
12 drive, 25-minute drive from this location. Is that
13 correct?

14 REVEREND MASON: Yes.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay. That's all
16 that I have in terms of questions. Just in terms of
17 my friends from Local 79, I just want to tell you
18 that in my District there's not been a single project
19 that has built that has come before this Council that
20 hasn't been a union job that hasn't been with
21 prevailing wages, not a single approval has come out
22 of, from me, from my good Colleagues on this
23 Committee or from Land Use Committee that hasn't been
24 a union job. This will be a union job. If they want
25 to build a five-story building, they can get started

2 tomorrow. They just don't want to do that. The people
3 who are denying Local 79 good jobs right now are the
4 people who asked you to come here today, not the
5 Council. They're the ones who are taking these jobs
6 away. That's all from me, Mr. Chair.

7 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
8 Member Yeger. This applicant panel is excused.

9 I will call up the next applicant panel.
10 Albert Turejo (phonetic), Raun Yakkov (phonetic),
11 excuse me if I mispronounce your name, Eli Kady
12 (phonetic), Joseph Matrini (phonetic), and Beth
13 Antibi (phonetic).

14 Do we have Beth? I'm going to make you go
15 first, Beth.

16 BETH ANTIBI: Hi. Thank you so much for
17 your time and attention. I really appreciate.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Non-profit.

19 BETH ANTIBI: This is sort of a thrill of
20 mine to participate in the sort of civic American
21 situation, very great honor and responsibility.

22 First of all, I'd like to say that I am
23 unofficially representing the 650 signators to this
24 very quickly put together petition, all of whom are
25 strongly against this variance, almost all of whom

2 are very local residents, each of whom has their own
3 personal view and personal reasons for feeling the
4 way they do and not wanting this monstrosity,
5 monolithic thing built in our neighborhood. I really
6 respect the citywide need for affordable housing and
7 the fact that this owner has not been able to figure
8 out a way to make a five-story building that does fit
9 within the context of our neighborhood. The fact that
10 he hasn't been able to figure out a way to make it
11 work financially for him does not in any way mean
12 that making it bigger so that it's of benefit to him,
13 no, that doesn't make any sense. He's in it for the
14 money, and I certainly respect the American dream of
15 owning real estate and making that of financial
16 benefit, that's wonderful, but not on our backs, not
17 by ruining our neighborhood.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Beth. The
19 next person to testify is Joseph. Joseph, please
20 state your name for the record and you may begin.

21 JOSEPH MATRINI: Joseph Matrini.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

23 JOSEPH MATRINI: There's a few things that
24 I'd like to say. She mentioned that we do have 650
25 people that are opposed to this project, opposed. We

2 do not want it. People that live in the neighborhood,
3 people that live in the blocks around this area, that
4 know what this is going to do to the neighborhood so
5 I just want to quickly mention that and make sure we
6 have it on the record that there are 650 people
7 opposed to it.

8 I also want to mention that the Community
9 Board voted on this project, and they turned it down.
10 They're the people that live in the neighborhood and
11 on the ground and know what the people of the
12 community need. This is not something that we need.
13 This monstrosity is not something that we need. They
14 want to put 230 apartments. That easily over 1,000
15 people in our backyards. Where is the infrastructure
16 for that? Where is the plan for that? The kids going
17 to school, the supermarkets, there's no plan for
18 that. It's just going to create a huge mess on top of
19 an already congested area. We're living in this area
20 for over 20 years, paying taxes, we are the ones that
21 made the neighborhood, and now they want to shove
22 this project down our necks. It's not fair. It's not
23 fair to anybody. It really is not. If this was of
24 much smaller footprint, much smaller scale, we'd want
25 it. We want affordable good housing, but it's not the

1 case. What are the benefits for the neighborhood?
2 What benefits are the neighborhood getting from this
3 project? They haven't said one thing the
4 neighborhood's getting from this project. A building
5 like this should built in a different area and not
6 infringe on our neighborhood. That's all I gotta say.
7 Thank you so much.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Joseph.

10 Next person to testify is Eli Kady.

11 ELI KADY: Good morning, Chair and Council
12 Members. My name is Eli Kady. I looked at the
13 environmental assessment that they proposed. There's
14 many inconsistencies over there, but one of the
15 things is that the traffic, they went and reported
16 the traffic. If you look at the traffic, and it was
17 on January 7, 2021, right when the second COVID wave
18 came about. Everybody was home. January 7th is also
19 the Greek Orthodox Christmas which is in our
20 neighborhood, also there's a Greek Orthodox Church.
21 Many people stayed home. You had in one hour 475 cars
22 and taxis, 739 light trucks and SUVs, 49 medium
23 trucks, 18 heavy trucks, 94 buses, that's 1,375
24 vehicles in one hour between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. on a
25 day that's supposed to be no traffic at all. One of

2 the causes of the traffic is because there's too many
3 people. We are bursting out at scenes. Another thing
4 in that environmental assessment, it says that the
5 schools are at 104 percent capacity, the public
6 schools in our area. Where are you going to put 1,000
7 people, they say that it's going to be 150 children,
8 most probably is going to be more, it's about 8
9 percent more. This was two years ago. You're going to
10 overburden our public school systems. Our streets are
11 dangerous. Plaza Auto Mall parks their cars at 1797
12 in an (INAUDIBLE) zone. They park their cars without
13 plates, and over there people that are trying to get...

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

15 ELI KADY: They have to go out and double
16 park. They're causing danger. Please, please...

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

18 ELI KADY: Keep us safe.

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next person
20 will be Albert. Albert, you may begin.

21 ALBERT TUREJO: Thank you for having us
22 here, giving us the opportunity to make our voices
23 heard. It's very much appreciated. There are many
24 reasons for my opposition to this proposed zoning
25 change. For the sake of the two-minute, we'll only be

2 able to mention a few. Be happy to speak about it
3 further later. The first thing is the traffic. The
4 existing traffic in and around that area creates
5 gridlock. Taking the children to school just four
6 blocks away could take 45 minutes on an average
7 morning. Anybody who lives in that area knows that.
8 This proposed building would be between Avenue O and
9 Avenue P. Avenue O as it goes towards Coney Island
10 Avenue does not go through (INAUDIBLE) as there's a
11 one-way street oncoming the other way so anybody who
12 is going up Avenue O towards Coney Island Avenue
13 needs to make a right turn, which would be right
14 where this building would be which would take up
15 almost an entire city block or make a left which is
16 nearly impossible because of the oncoming traffic the
17 other way. The existing infrastructure and traffic in
18 our area cannot support a ton more cars and massive
19 influx of approximately 1,000 new residents in a one-
20 block area. As a lifelong Brooklynite, we live in a
21 diverse, multicultural, hardworking, family-oriented
22 community, and I stress the word family. Indeed,
23 almost all the residents in our area regardless of
24 background, race, religion are all families, many of
25 them large families. When reviewing the proposed

2 plans for this building, it seems there was zero care
3 taken to make it livable for the local residents of
4 our community. All the apartments are tiny, even with
5 the changes that Mr. Palatnik proposed and don't have
6 enough bedrooms while in our area, it's typically
7 large families who live in the area, they need three-
8 , four-, five-bedroom apartments so I understand the
9 goal of the city is to provide more housing and
10 affordable housing, but care should be taken to put
11 it in the right spot and to make it suitable for
12 residents of the community. This building doesn't do
13 any of that. Should this zoning change be approved,
14 it would open the floodgates to buildings like this
15 on every block up and down Coney Island Avenue and
16 cross-streets, literally overwhelming the single-
17 family homes and multifamily homes of people that
18 have been living in this area for generations.
19 Indeed, if I may just finish, 10 more seconds,
20 myself, I'm a fourth generation Brooklynite. My great
21 grandfather was an immigrant who came to this country
22 over from Syria, and my children are fifth generation
23 so I've been living in this area for quite a long
24 time and I know what we need. This is not what we
25 need.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

3 ALBERT TUREJO: I respectfully ask you to
4 stand with the local community, the local Community
5 Board, and the local Council Members who know what's
6 best for this community and oppose this zoning
7 change. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Next we will have,
9 excuse me if I mispronounce your name, Raun, Reuben
10 (INAUDIBLE)

11 REUBEN (INAUDIBLE): As a grandfather,
12 when I receive a phone call from my grandchildren,
13 they tell me, Saba, how do we cross the street, which
14 way should we go. Anyone of you came in the morning
15 or in the afternoon when kids coming out of school or
16 going into school, did you ever see them frightened
17 and can barely walk on a green light. We're not
18 talking about red. We're talking about green. They
19 cannot pass the street. They call me, can you come
20 pick us up. We're coming to a point where they're
21 trying to fit a 53-foot trailer into that dead-end
22 street and tell them make a turn, you can make a
23 turn, you can turn, but we can't. Where do we draw
24 the line? Where does it stop? Where and when? Some
25 common sense over here. You're representing somebody.

2 I get it. Something has to be built over there. We
3 get it, but it has to make sense for everyone, not
4 just for one side. It has to go both sides. Thank
5 you.

6 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.
7 Council Member Yeger, do you have questions for this
8 panel?

9 This panel is excused. Thank you so much.
10 Do we have anyone else here who wants to
11 testify on this item? If not, we're going to move to
12 the ones that we have remote.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Again,
14 just a reminder, we'll call you in panels of four,
15 and we'll ask you to unmute, make sure your
16 microphone is working, and we will call for the first
17 panel is Mordechai Sharaby, Meyer Elnadav, and
18 apologies if I'm mispronouncing names, Yaakov Kaplan,
19 and Jack Braha.

20 We'll have Mordechi Sharaby as the first
21 witness.

22 MORDECHAI SHARABY: Hi, can you hear me?

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: We can
24 hear you.

2 MORDECHAI SHARABY: Hi, my name is
3 Mordechai Sharaby, and I live on East 7th Street. I
4 do not live on East 10th where they're planning to
5 build the building. I live on East 7th. I'm a Rabbi
6 of a shul community, have over 60 members in the
7 shul. We all suffer daily from parking. I come back
8 at night after giving classes. I cannot find parking.
9 I don't believe if you build a building with so many
10 apartments and so many new people coming down with
11 their cars to park, there's no way where they're
12 going to park. It's not that they're planning to give
13 three floors for parking, but if we now, where we
14 live, I live on East 7th, I do not live on East 10th,
15 East 7th there's no parking, East 8th there's no
16 parking, East 9th there's no parking, East 10th
17 there's no parking. I can go to East 12th, East 13th,
18 East 14th, there's no parking, and now you want to
19 add on another 50 apartments, another 100 apartments,
20 another 400 apartments. I just don't believe it makes
21 any sense. It's going to ruin the community from A to
22 Z. I just don't see how it's going to help anybody
23 that lives in the area. I understand people need
24 places to live, they need houses, I respect that we

2 all need it, but don't put it in an area that already
3 has no space. Thank you.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Thank
5 you. The next speaker is Meyer Elnadav.

6 MEYER ELNADAV: Thank you for this
7 opportunity. Can you hear me?

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: We can
9 hear you. Go ahead.

10 MEYER ELNADAV: Okay, thank you. First
11 off, I'd like to ask for the reverends that came
12 today if you have an attendance of maybe I'm going to
13 guess 200, 250 people that come to your church on a
14 Sunday morning one day a week, would you be willing
15 to flatten your buildings, put everybody on the first
16 floor for a few hours on a Sunday morning and build
17 an eight-story project on top of you, how would the
18 rest of the residents of your area, how would they
19 like it? That's one question. I mean that's exactly
20 what's happening to us. I don't know about complaints
21 that have been happening on Coney Island Avenue for
22 what the lawyer has pointed out. I do see garbage. I
23 do see cars. It's kind of par for the course, but
24 it's not something that is disgusting as he had
25 placed it or anything that's unsightly or a blight to

1 the community. I really oppose such statements and do
2 you have a list of people that have opposed over the
3 years the conditions of that area? When I need to go
4 somewhere, I walk right by it. Nobody says boo to me,
5 and I don't have a problem walking down there.

6 There's garbage because there's always garbage, and
7 where you're placing this new building, how many more
8 mom and pop are you going to be able to fit there? If
9 the State wants to build 800,000 additional
10 affordable housing units, and I may add affordable
11 housing units, I understand that it's important, but
12 you have to understand that the price of housing and
13 rent in our area is based on supply and demand.

14 There's a great demand, and, therefore, the prices
15 are high, and that's an economic property that works
16 everywhere in the world, supply and demand. If you
17 would like to have a lot of housing, go to an open
18 area. I'm not saying specifically this coming area
19 that I'm going to mention the name like Floyd Bennett
20 Field, very wide area. If the State or the City would
21 like to, they can build thousands of housing units
22 over there and build groceries and businesses and
23 supermarkets and tailor shops and all kinds of
24 things..
25

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

3 MEYER ELNADAV: Sorry. And be able to
4 support a new community instead of building on top of
5 an existing community. Everybody out there who wants
6 to have this project should think, do you want an
7 eight-story building in addition to where you live
8 now? Thank you very much. I oppose the project.

9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much. The
10 next person I will have present is Jack Kaplan. Jack,
11 you may begin.

12 YAAKOV KAPLAN: Hello. Good morning. Thank
13 you, everyone, for listening. I have an opportunity
14 to both be someone who lives four blocks away as well
15 as being the Vice Chair of Community Board 12
16 (INAUDIBLE) represents the area. Everyone knows that
17 Brooklyn needs housing desperately, especially in
18 parts of Midwood, and we're at the crossroads here.
19 Either we're going to let people (INAUDIBLE) our
20 community, buy out and build out our community, or
21 we're going to stand short and hold developers
22 accountable to build housing that looks and feels
23 right for our community. We're going to choose people
24 over profit, the backbone of the community over the
25 bank accounts of the developers. When you have a

2 massive amount of local people, the local Councilman,
3 the Community Board, all voting unanimously against
4 this project, it brings into question why people not
5 from the neighborhood are coming here in support of
6 the project. (INAUDIBLE) Community Boards, and
7 usually it has to do with people getting something on
8 the side to show up to speak. You've seen this
9 multiple times. We need housing in our community, and
10 someone like myself who needs to live as well. One-
11 and two-bedroom apartments doesn't fit our community.
12 It doesn't fit the (INAUDIBLE) community. As stated
13 before, the demographic makeup is mostly Jewish
14 people, it's mostly Hispanics, and it's mostly Asians
15 which are our (INAUDIBLE) community, which all have
16 large families. One- and two-bedroom apartments don't
17 cut it. One- and two-bedroom apartments are the most
18 profitable apartments, which is why that's what
19 they're building, and we need to build for our
20 community, not for profit, not that for-profit can
21 make money but when you can build for our community
22 in our community (INAUDIBLE) Thank you very much.

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. The next
24 person to present is Jack Braha.

2 JACK BRAHA: Good morning. Can you guys
3 hear?

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.
5 You may begin.

6 JACK BRAHA: Thank you. Thank you for
7 giving us time and allowing us to voice our opinion
8 on a matter that affects the neighborhood at large.
9 First off, I, myself, am living in this neighborhood
10 for over four decades. I have a very good beat on the
11 community and what transpires daily within the
12 community. I believe that at the beginning when the
13 lawyer spoke for about 12 minutes, he did not address
14 the key issues that have to be addressed. It's not an
15 emotional thing. It's a serious thing. It has to do
16 with parking, safety, garbage, and all that fun stuff
17 that comes with 100+ apartments that are being
18 developed. We keep hearing about affordable housing,
19 but no one has said how many of the apartments are
20 affordable housing, what is the percentage of this
21 big structure that is being built that is going to
22 have affordable housing. No one has mentioned that.
23 Is it 20 of them? Is it 40 of them? We don't believe
24 that the reason for this project is in the benefit of
25 the neighborhood and affordable housing, but rather

2 has been said prior it is a business decision. The
3 lawyer, himself, has said very clearly that five
4 stories doesn't work because of the interest rates. I
5 implore you to vote in a new President that hopefully
6 will have better interest rates like we did a few
7 years ago and then five stories will be a profitable
8 center. You also have the ability to take out a
9 mortgage at this time and then refinance at a later
10 time. Your decisions can't be based on a business
11 practicality or the profitability of a finance
12 situation. Mortgages go up and go down. The
13 neighborhood stays in constant. Those who live
14 behind, and I do not, will be totally disturbed for
15 years between foundation and shoring, who knows what
16 will come with that. We're not looking to have an
17 earthquake in our neighborhood. The size of this lot
18 is very, very large. As you've seen in the
19 neighborhood, we've had some issues..

20 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Jack, for
22 your testimony.

23 JACK BRAHA: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Just for the record, I
25 do believe that the applicant team did provide some

2 numbers of the affordable housing that will be there,
3 and I think you can find that on the record if you
4 look back, but we appreciate your testimony and this
5 applicant panel, Council Member Yeger, do you have
6 any questions for this panel?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Just very brief,
8 Mr. Chair, to one of the panelists. Mr. Kaplan, if
9 Mr. Kaplan is still there. Mr. Kaplan said he was a
10 member of Community Board 12. He's actually the Vice
11 Chair of Community Board 12, and I just wanted to ask
12 if he can tell us for the record if he recalls any
13 time at least in the last five years that Community
14 Board 12 has rejected a strictly residential proposal
15 to build in our Community Board?

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: I
17 believe that Mr. Kaplan has left the meeting.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Mr. Kaplan has left
19 the building. Okay, all right. Thank you, Council
20 Member Yeger.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you, Mr.
22 Chairman.

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. The next
24 panel that we're going to call is Elizabeth Denys and
25 Mark Grippo.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO:

3 Elizabeth, you'll go first, but, again, just a
4 reminder that for those of you who are testifying
5 online, please stay on the meeting in case the
6 Council Members have questions for you. Elizabeth
7 Denys will be our first speaker on this next panel.

8 ELIZABETH DENYS: Hi, my name is Elizabeth
9 Denys, and I live just two miles north of the project
10 along Coney Island Avenue on the other side. I'm
11 speaking in favor of the project today. It's well-
12 matched in scale for the surrounding neighborhood. I
13 regularly take the B-68 bus to get around, and I see
14 buildings that look like this on both sides of the
15 street. I also think it's a really important step
16 towards relieving the pressures the housing crisis
17 brings to our area. Rents are skyrocketing throughout
18 our neighborhood with many folks having experienced
19 huge rent increases in 2022, putting them into the
20 severely rent-burned category, and these new 190
21 homes with 49 permanently affordable is really what
22 we need. It's the kind of development every Council
23 Member should want in their district, a mixed-use
24 development with the ample affordable housing well-
25 matched to the incomes in the neighborhood as

1 presented. We're suffering in this area because it's
2 an area that hasn't built a lot of affordable housing
3 or even housing, and it's surrounded by other areas
4 that have the same problem, and you don't need to
5 look to the experiences that I've seen with my
6 neighbors and throughout this area, but also it's
7 directly reflected by Community Board 12's District
8 Needs Statement where additional affordable housing
9 is listed as their top need. Yet, the Council
10 District 44 has only created 116 units of affordable
11 housing since 2014, and this project along would
12 bring nearly double the number of affordable units
13 within Community Board 12's boundaries as well. It
14 will revitalize the immediate neighborhood, replacing
15 a one-story Staples that's already closing and a
16 large parking lot. Much needed housing. In addition
17 to my experiences living in the area, I'm also the
18 co-leader of Open New York's mid-Brooklyn chapter,
19 and our members and supporters have sent over 132
20 letters in favor of this project because we know it
21 will help reduce the housing crisis that's happening
22 in not just this area but throughout the city. I
23 thank you so much for allowing me the time to speak
24 about this project, and I really hope the
25

2 Subcommittee votes to approve the 190 more very badly
3 needed...

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Elizabeth.
5 Next person to speak is Mark Grippo. Mark, you may
6 begin.

7 MARK GRIPPO: Hi, my name is Mark Grippo,
8 and I reside in District 44. I'm testifying in
9 support of rezoning on 1880 Coney Island Avenue. I've
10 been living in this district for 15 years. Like me,
11 the majority of the people that live in this district
12 are renters. Living in an apartment that's affordable
13 and rent-stabilized has been key to making sure I can
14 provide for my wife and two kids. As a member of
15 Local 79, I'm able to receive a living wage and
16 benefits. Thanks to these two factors, I'm able to
17 create beautiful memories in this district alongside
18 my family. Today, I enjoy the financial stability to
19 not have to worry about living paycheck to paycheck.
20 I'm able to take vacations, personal days off, and to
21 contribute to my local economy by spending money at
22 the local businesses. Not having to worry about
23 paying a high rent has allowed me to concentrate on
24 building a future for my family and concentrate on
25 other things. People in this district deserve

2 affordable housing and living wages, which both will
3 be generated by this project. With my testimony
4 today, I hope you vote in support of this project and
5 provide as many people as possible with the same
6 opportunities I was provided. Thank you very much for
7 your time.

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Mark.

9 Council Member Yeger, do you have any questions for
10 this panel?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Just very briefly,
12 Mr. Grippo, I, too, am a resident of the 44th Council
13 District, and, like you, I too am a renter. I'm a
14 renter my whole life, but I want to make sure that
15 you heard what I said earlier to your Colleagues from
16 Local 79. Never, never has there been a job that got
17 approved by me, by this Subcommittee, by the Land Use
18 Committee, by this Council in my District that was
19 not a union job. This is going to be a union job if
20 the developer wants to build. He does not want to
21 build, and that's why the union's not getting jobs,
22 and I just want to make sure that you understand that
23 the impediment to Local 79 getting good, safe, union
24 jobs on Coney Island Avenue is because the developer

2 doesn't want them, not because the Council doesn't.
3 That's it for me, Mr. Chair.

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. I'm just
5 going to ask if we can allow Jack Kaplan to come back
6 in so Council Member Yeger can ask him the question.
7 I believe we lost him. Jack is back. Council Member
8 Yeger, go ahead.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you, Mr.
10 Chairman, I appreciate it, and we are still working
11 out the kinks of the technology and we're three years
12 in but it works sometimes.

13 Mr. Kaplan, thank you for being here. You
14 are the Vice Chair of Community Board 12, and my
15 question to you is, because we have had in our
16 Community Board many, many multiples of hearings on
17 housing proposals and various kinds of proposals, not
18 just housing, but commercial and all kinds of
19 development throughout our District. To your
20 recollection, is there ever a time that a strictly
21 residential proposal in our Community Board at any
22 time in the last five, six years has been rejected by
23 our Community Board?

24 YAAKOV KAPLAN: No. The only times we've
25 talked when developers come to our Community Board to

2 hear from what the Community Board wants, we always
3 iterate the same thing, that we want housing for our
4 community in our community. When developers come to
5 build for profit and not for the need of the
6 community, what that does is it displaces people who
7 grew up in the community, who spent their life in the
8 community, whose grandparents, great grandparents, or
9 people who just came to the community a few years
10 earlier, they get displaced when developers build for
11 people outside the community for profit versus
12 building for people inside the community for what the
13 community needs.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, so just to be
15 clear, the no vote from Community Board 12 on 1880
16 Coney Island Avenue on this project is the first
17 strictly residential proposal that received a no
18 vote, there has never been a no vote to your
19 recollection in the last five years or six years for
20 a strictly residential proposal that received a no
21 vote. This is unique in our Community Board. Is that
22 correct?

23 YAAKOV KAPLAN: Correct, in the five, six
24 years I'm at the Community Board, maybe even a little
25 bit longer, maybe seven years now, we have never

2 voted no on a project. Over here, the local community
3 came out unanimously. We have I think 45 people
4 signed up to speak at the Community Board hearing,
5 and they all voted, I think there were three people
6 who voted in favor of it, and the rest of the
7 Community Board voted against it, and about 45 people
8 came out to speak against the project at the
9 Community Board hearing.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, thank you
11 very much. I want to give it back to Mr. Chair so we
12 can get on with the order of the day. Thank you for
13 coming back into the meeting.

14 YAAKOV KAPLAN: Thank you, Councilman.

15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much. The
16 next panel I'm going to call up is Isaac Mograby,
17 Miriam Klein, Elaid Denino (phonetic), and Marvin
18 Schlanger.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Just a
20 reminder since some of you are on the phone, it's
21 star 6 on your phone to unmute.

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: First to begin is
23 Isaac Mograby. Isaac, if you can hear me, you may
24 begin and please start your video if you're here on
25 Zoom, please.

2 ISAAC MOGRABY: Hi, can you see me okay?

3 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can see you
4 and hear you. Go ahead.

5 ISAAC MOGRABY: Okay, great. Thanks. My
6 name is Isaac Mograby. I do live within the area on
7 the East 10th block, which has been the opposing
8 block, but I want to say the reason I'm opposed to
9 this structure that's being built on East 10th has
10 nothing to do with it interfering with what some
11 might say my light, my view, that's all irrelevant to
12 me. I'm closer to the corner where it's not, mind
13 you, it's almost one block long, this structure, and
14 I'm not directly in back of it so it's not why I'm
15 opposing it. Something I've just been watching and
16 noticing and I heard the prior people that spoke on
17 the panel, it became great that everybody here wants
18 families to move in, wants a big structure, but all
19 within reason, within limits of the community.
20 Everybody is mentioning five stories. It looks like
21 without a doubt everybody's for that, which the
22 Councilman and everybody else had mentioned so
23 they're not saying no to this project. They're just
24 saying do it with the way it'll fit and not just the
25 way that the dollars will fit within the developer's

2 pocket. Rather, it will have to flow with the
3 community. We've heard from five or six people I
4 believe that spoke, mind you, all of them were within
5 a 25- to 30-minute drive just to get to this property
6 at the soonest I would say so I don't know how
7 relevant that might be. People that are speaking
8 here, people that are saying to build the five
9 stories are people that live within the area, people
10 that understand traffic. I am very well affected by
11 the traffic. I live, again, right in back, but that
12 part does affect me more than anything. Parking, not
13 a question. Driving distance to Ocean Parkway to
14 Coney Island, it's a minimum of 30 minutes just to
15 reach any one of those main intersections. It's a big
16 issue. People are not coming and making up topics on
17 why they oppose it. They're saying valid reasons on
18 why the structure doesn't fit. You can't build a
19 city-long block, 95-feet in the air..

20 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

21 ISAAC MOGRABY: And say it won't affect
22 the people in the neighborhood.

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Isaac.

24 ISAAC MOGRABY: As their asking is the
25 right thing to do.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Isaac.

3 ISAAC MOGRABY: Thank you so much.

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Next, I'm going to
5 have Miriam Klein. Miriam, you may begin. Miriam, you
6 could press star 6 to unmute yourself and you may
7 begin.

8 MIRIAM KLEIN: Hi. I'm Miriam. Can you
9 hear me?

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.

11 MIRIAM KLEIN: It's Miriam Klein. Thank
12 you for having me. I am very strongly opposed to this
13 for safety reasons of the whole neighborhood. There
14 are not enough streets for parking, for traffic. If
15 an ambulance has to get through, it's a matter of
16 minutes, it's a matter of life and death. There's
17 just no room. It has to go somewhere else. That's
18 all. Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.

20 Next, we will have Elad Danino. Elad, if you can hear
21 me, please unmute yourself and you may begin.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: I think
23 we're having trouble with him so we can call on the
24 next one and then we can come back to him.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay, the next person
3 I'll call on is Marvin Schlanger. Marvin, if you can
4 hear me, please unmute yourself and you may begin.
5 You can press star 6 to unmute yourself and you may
6 begin.

7 MARVIN SCHLANGER: Hello, can you hear me
8 now?

9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can.

10 MARVIN SCHLANGER: Okay, my name is Marvin
11 Schlanger. I live just two blocks away on East 9th
12 Street and I've been living here for 36 years. One of
13 the things that I find remarkable about those people
14 who have been speaking in favor of this project
15 including the members of the clergy that none of them
16 live in the immediate area. They're speaking about
17 people who are churches that are 20 minutes away. I
18 don't know exactly where they live, but they live
19 also probably in proximity to the churches so they
20 are not affected by anything that they're saying now.
21 It's the people here that are affected, and I'd like
22 to also speak about something that's very, very
23 different than anybody else has spoken. It's the
24 issue of crime. There have been statistics that are
25 available online, studies that have been done by the

2 John Jay School of Criminal Justice that low-income
3 housing has been a breeding ground of crime that has
4 increased way above the amount of increase in any
5 other area of the city, and one of the problems that
6 we have over here is there are a lot of children in
7 this area. I'm speaking as a member of the Jewish
8 community. There are yeshivas in very, very close
9 proximity to the area of this project. These people,
10 because of the dual nature of the program, they have
11 religious studies as well as secular studies, come
12 home rather late, for the most part in the dark a
13 very large part of the year. They have to pass by
14 this particular proposed project, and there's a
15 concern for their safety. There's a concern for their
16 safety, and this is some kind of a concern that
17 really..

18 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Your time expired.

19 MARVIN SCHLANGER: I'm sorry?

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much,
21 Marvin. We appreciate your testimony.

22 MARVIN SCHLANGER: THANK YOU.

23 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: The next person we'll
24 call is Elad Danino. Elad, can you please start your
25 camera and you may begin?

2 ELAD DANINO: Can you guys hear me?

3 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you,
4 but we need you to put your camera on as well.

5 Elad, you can go ahead if you're having
6 complications.

7 ELAD DANINO: Okay, you guys can hear me?

8 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.

9 ELAD DANINO: Is it better now?

10 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.
11 Go ahead.

12 ELAD DANINO: I'm a local broker and just
13 wanted to tell everybody that I understand that the
14 housing is needed, definitely needed, but at the same
15 time I live in the neighborhood and I know how
16 congested it is so I think it has to be done in a
17 logical way, and, as everybody has mentioned, it can
18 be done coming together, maybe making the building a
19 little smaller, less units, and that's what I think.

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Elad, for
21 your testimony. This panel is now excused, and the
22 next panel I will be calling up is Lawrence Dayan,
23 Jane Choueka, Elaine Laty (phonetic), and Joyce
24 Chabbott. Excuse me if I mispronounce your name.

25

2 Lawrence Dayan, if you can hear me, you may begin.

3 You may begin, Lawrence.

4 LAWRENCE DAYAN: Thank you. I just want to
5 thank this Committee and, of course, Councilman Yeger
6 for his hard work and his commitment and love for our
7 community and our neighborhood. I live in the
8 neighborhood, lived there for my whole life, and the
9 key factors like everybody's talking about is safety,
10 traffic, parking, all the above. It's not a place to
11 put an enormous structure of just countless
12 apartments and homes, and it's something that is just
13 too large for the spot. Thank you for your time and,
14 again, appreciate everybody's service to the
15 neighborhood.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Lawrence.
17 The next person that will testify is Jane Choueka.
18 Sorry if I mispronounced it. Jane, if you can hear
19 me, please unmute and you may begin.

20 JANE CHOUKEKA: Hi. I've lived in this area
21 for my entire life, 60 years. We've been living here
22 for generations, and the area is like everyone said,
23 a family area, large families, and the congestion is
24 just unbearable. As it is with the traffic, getting
25 from Ocean Parkway to Coney Island Avenue can take

2 someone 15 minutes in the morning and it is a 30-
3 second drive. Adding 1,000 people will only serve to
4 heighten that congestion, and it is totally just not
5 an area for this kind of housing. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much,
7 Jane. The next person to testify is Elaine Laty.
8 Elaine, you may begin.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Looks
10 like she may have dropped off, so we can call on
11 Joyce Chabbott. Are you there?

12 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Joyce, if you can hear
13 it, you may begin.

14 JOYCE CHABBOTT: Can you hear me?

15 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.

16 JOYCE CHABBOTT: Oh, okay. Hi. Thank you
17 for hearing me out today. I do appreciate the need
18 for low-income housing. I think everybody deserves
19 that, but you picked a spot where I don't think you
20 could get a more congested area than Coney Island
21 between O and P. It's impossible to drive there. It's
22 just very, very crowded. I agree with Councilman
23 Yeger a five-story building would be appropriate. A
24 tower would not. I stand against the rezoning and
25 stand with the current zoning of the building code.

2 Once again, thank you for hearing me out, and I do
3 appreciate it.

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Council
5 Member Yeger, do you have a question for this panel?

6 Thank you so much to this applicant team.
7 I'm going to call on Logan Phares and Asia Thomas for
8 the next witnesses. If you can hear me, Logan, you
9 may begin.

10 LOGAN PHARES: Great. Thank you, Chair
11 Riley, Council Member Yeger, and Members of the
12 Subcommittee for the opportunity to share testimony
13 in support of this project. My name is Logan Phares,
14 and I serve as the Political Director of Open New
15 York. Open New York is an independent grassroots pro-
16 housing non-profit. New York is in a housing crisis.
17 Over the past two decades, available jobs have grown
18 far faster in the city than the number of homes,
19 meaning more renters are competing for the same
20 number of apartments, and landlords hold all of the
21 bargaining power. Right now, New Yorkers are facing
22 rent increases of up to 50, 60, and 70 percent as
23 rent discounts offered during the pandemic expire.
24 This project would create over 200 apartments
25 including (INAUDIBLE) income-restricted apartments,

both of which are sorely needed in a city facing a severe housing shortage. To put that into perspective, Council District 44 only built 116 units of affordable housing between 2014 and 2021, meaning this project alone would create more than half the total number of income-restricted units built over the last eight years. The neighborhood around this property is also well-primed to accommodate new residents. The ZIP code in which 1880-1888 Coney Island Avenue is located has a high prevalence of supermarket, childcare facilities, and health clinics, and has extremely low crime rates.

(INAUDIBLE) neighborhoods must do their fair share to build more housing. While we are supportive of this project, the planned 242 parking spaces is disappointing, especially considering that this project is a short walk to the express station at Kings Highway. We must build more housing for people, not cars, and cannot continue to encourage or subsidize car use. We ask the Commission to recommend a reduction in parking. We were happy to see Speaker Adams' housing agenda to confront the city's housing crisis, and now she must act to enact her housing agenda. The City's failure to produce enough housing

2 has real and direct human consequences, high rents,
3 displacement, segregation, tenant harassment,
4 homelessness, and countless other problems. We cannot
5 address this crisis without building more homes, and
6 every neighborhood must do its part. We encourage the
7 Commission to vote to approve this project with
8 conditions. Thank you for your time.

9 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next, I'm
10 going to call Asia Thomas.

11 Do we have Asia Thomas?

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: It
13 looks like she dropped off the Zoom so, Council
14 Member Yeger, do you have any questions for Logan?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: No, Chairman, thank
16 you.

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay, we're going to
18 call the next panel. We have Daniel Setton, David
19 Masrou (phonetic), Chancy Blumenfrucht, and Yeta
20 Solomon (phonetic).

21 I'm going to begin with Daniel Setton.
22 Daniel, if you can hear me, please unmute yourself
23 and you may begin.

24 DANIEL SETTON: Hi, and thank you so much.
25 My name is Daniel Setton. I (INAUDIBLE) between 0 and

2 P right behind the property. I'm opposing of the
3 project even though, in essence, if they would work
4 with us and not make it seven stories, I would not
5 oppose it. I would be totally okay with it. If it was
6 five, I'd be totally okay with it. I think affordable
7 housing is very important. I think that we definitely
8 need to help the people that need the help, but it
9 doesn't seem like the developer is all into that
10 because if he was he would make it from seven to five
11 which other people have said so in that case I am in
12 support of a self-storage, and I would definitely be
13 the first customer to join the self-storage facility
14 if you ever open it up. Again, I oppose the plans.
15 Thank you so much.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Daniel. The
17 next person to speak will be David Masrou. David, if
18 you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: David,
20 it's star 6 on your phone to unmute.

21 DAVID MASROU: Yes. Good afternoon. Thank
22 you very much for hearing me. I live on East 10th
23 between P and O, right behind the proposed building.
24 Now, we are really very concerned about the zoning
25 change being considered for construction at the 1880-

2 1888 Coney Island Avenue. We think as it is Coney
3 Island Avenue is a highly travelled thoroughfare, and
4 adding to it the proposed construction and the
5 other vehicles would make it a nightmare. I have been
6 living in this house for over years, approximately
7 40-1/2 years, and parking in the area is now
8 extremely difficult, and, if not for the fact that we
9 have a small driveway, we would have to park several
10 blocks away if we can find a spot. Visits to our home
11 from family and friends , including our
12 grandchildren, has become a problem because of the
13 lack of parking. We shudder to think what will become
14 if this construction goes through. Because of the
15 above and all other problems that may result from
16 this, we entreat you, please deny the application to
17 this project. Sincerely yours, myself and my wife
18 included and children and grandchildren. Thank you
19 very much.

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, David. Next
21 person is Chancy Blumenfrucht.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: I think
23 I see Chancy on the Zoom. Chancy, can you unmute?

24 CHANCY BLUMENFRUCHT: Hi. Do you hear me?
25

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you,
3 Chancy.

4 CHANCY BLUMENFRUCHT: Hi, how are you?
5 I've been living in the neighborhood for over 30
6 years. I do have to agree with the Councilman what
7 happened on Nostrand Avenue was a disaster for the
8 neighborhood, destroyed the whole retail footprint,
9 and became actually a large parking lot. I don't know
10 enough about this because I was just notified about
11 this very, very shortly, like I was notified about
12 yesterday. I could not research everything, but if it
13 is the same developer that did Nostrand Avenue, I
14 would be very leery of what the true intentions are
15 and if it's really for all of those people seeking
16 affordable housing which I know is a need. I'm not
17 sure about the intentions so I definitely would be
18 opposed to it until much more is researched and much
19 more is told to the neighborhood that this is going
20 into. That's all.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Do we have
22 Yeta Solomon on the phone?

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: I don't
24 believe we do. Oh, we do. Yeta, can you unmute
25 yourself?

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: You can press star 6
3 and you may begin.

4 Yeta, you may press star 6 and you may
5 begin. Yeta, are you there?

6 Okay, we'll move on to the next panel.
7 The next panel I'll call up will be Sam Levy-Kadi,
8 Meir Erani, Jennifer Halfon, and Freida Choueka. So
9 sorry for mispronouncing these names.

10 The first person to testify will be Sam
11 Levy-Kadi.

12 SAM LEVY-KADI: Can you hear me?

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can. Go ahead,
14 Sam.

15 SAM LEVY-KADI: Hi. I live on East 10th
16 (INAUDIBLE) behind the proposed structure. I can tell
17 you that there are times that I'll get home at 8, 9,
18 10 o'clock at night, and I will be circling around
19 within a four-block radius for 20, 30 minutes, and I
20 have to give up eventually and I'm like okay, I'm
21 going to park by Kings Highway and then I have to
22 wake up at 6:45 in the morning in order to walk the
23 10, 15 minutes in order to get to my car to go to
24 move it, to put money into the meter, and I have a
25 very busy day where I'm starting my day at like 7:15,

2 I have to run to a meeting. Everything is just crazy
3 in the area. Like everyone is saying, parking is
4 absurd. Traffic can sometimes 15, 20 minutes to go
5 four block, five blocks. I can only imagine what's
6 going to happen if you go and you put more. There is
7 a restaurant on Coney Island between O and P which
8 before they put in their eight or nine parking spots,
9 it used to be even worse, the parking, so now if
10 you're going to put in another 200 plus families ,
11 it's going to be an absolutely nightmare. I'm okay
12 with putting in five stories. I think that affordable
13 housing is a very important thing, but to go in to
14 put a seven-story monstrosity, eight-story
15 monstrosity is not the place. That's all.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much. The
17 next person we'll call is Meir Erani. Meir, you may
18 begin.

19 MEIR ERANI: Thank you very much. Thank
20 you, Mr. Riley. I'm a resident of East 10th Street,
21 almost right behind the center of the proposed
22 construction. I feel that building a monstrosity like
23 that is just not what the community needs. We need
24 affordable housing. Yes, we're in for that, but
25 affordable housing with three- and four-bedrooms,

2 that would work. That accommodates our community, and
3 I don't know that tugging on the heartstrings of
4 affordable housing coming in from places that take 20
5 minutes to get to and saying that they approve the
6 zoning, what are you doing in our neighborhood
7 approving zoning when you don't understand the
8 neighborhood? What about safety, about traffic and
9 parking, all that, we heard plenty. We also saw a
10 disingenuous photograph, or a mocked up photograph of
11 a backyard that's supposed to accommodate people in
12 the community when there's absolutely no access to
13 anybody but those living in the building so
14 presenting that as part of the plan is totally
15 ridiculous. We need affordable housing, four stories,
16 garden apartments, three-bedrooms, four-bedrooms,
17 yes, that would work, that helps the community.
18 Otherwise, build a storage facility or build
19 something else. Build medical facilities that
20 accommodate the community, but don't tell us that the
21 city deserve affordable housing of multiple hundreds
22 of units that are one- and two-bedroom which is just
23 a total, total, disingenuous, unrepresentative
24 proposal and will not help the community at all so I
25 am firmly against the building. My personal take

2 would be I don't want a big fat building right across
3 the front of my house, but putting my personal
4 desires aside, there's enough evidence and we have
5 enough people, over 600, who signed petitions against
6 this because it does not answer the needs of our
7 community. Our community..

8 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Your time expired.

9 MEIR ERANI: Affordable housing, larger,
10 three-, four-bedroom apartments.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Meir.

12 MEIR ERANI: All the other concerns being
13 addressed. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next person
15 to testify will be Jennifer Halfon. Jennifer, if you
16 can hear me, please unmute and you may begin.

17 Jennifer, you can press star 6 to unmute
18 yourself.

19 JENNIFER HALFON: Hi. My name is Jennifer
20 Halfon, and I do live in the area. I'd like to say
21 the infrastructure of the area is mainly for one- or
22 two-family homes. The buildings that do exist in the
23 area are buildings that are pre-war buildings,
24 buildings that maybe now (INAUDIBLE) new buildings
25 are built, but the infrastructure between the sewer,

2 the way that the streets are built for the traffic,
3 it's all made for one- and two-family homes. It's not
4 made for huge buildings that are going to come in and
5 they're going to have about 500 or 600 additional
6 people living in the area. The area is not built for
7 this kind of (INAUDIBLE) it's made for one- or two-
8 family homes. There's too much cars on the street as
9 it is. On a Friday, you can't travel Kings Highway to
10 Avenue P, and it doesn't take you more than one hour.
11 Please, if you want to build, build something that
12 suits the community. You want to build a nursing
13 home, maybe, a two-story or a three-story, but not
14 something that is going to overtake the community.
15 It's not a building community. It's a one- and a two-
16 family community. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Last, we're
18 going to have Freida Choueka. Freida, if you can hear
19 me, please unmute.

20 FREIDA CHOUKA: Can you hear me?

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.

22 FREIDA CHOUKA: Hi. How are you? I wanted
23 to thank you for your time, giving our community the
24 time to speak. I've been living between O and P my
25 entire life. Everybody knows you cannot drive down

2 Avenue O at any time of the day. It's always traffic.
3 This morning, it took me about 13 minutes to get from
4 East 10th between O and P, directly across the
5 building, to Coney Island. We were stuck in a massive
6 amount of traffic. My children go to school on Coney
7 Island. There's never a day that there's not double-
8 parked cars, insane traffic. I don't even know where
9 6, 7, 800 more people could fit into this area. I
10 strongly oppose this, but thank you for the time.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Council
12 Member Yeger, do you have any questions?

13 The next panel that I'm going to call up
14 is Robert Eissenberg, Murray Choueka, Linda Dayan,
15 and Waylyn Hobbs.

16 First person I'm going to call to testify
17 is Robert Eissenberg. Robert, you may begin.

18 ROBERT EISSSENBERG: My name is Robert
19 Eissenberg. I live in Flatbush, Midwood for over 50
20 years. Let me first thank the Zoning Board and the
21 Council to allow me to provide my comments on this
22 proposal. I've not had enough time to research the
23 proposal. I only heard about it recently. I've
24 listened to all of the comments, and I can tell you
25 as a resident and as someone who's been involved in

2 public things, it's a terrific thing. We do need
3 public housing, but this proposal provides for less
4 than 30 percent of the structure will be available
5 housing. The developer wants to make a great deal of
6 money. He's not interested in building it just for
7 public housing, affordable housing. Otherwise, he
8 would agree to building a five-story structure. The
9 proposal would create massive issues with traffic and
10 parking, and it's simply not in the context of our
11 neighborhood of one- and two-family homes. Going
12 straight from (INAUDIBLE) Avenue all the way to
13 Nostrand Avenue, we have many five-story structures,
14 six-story structures on Ocean Parkway. Affordable housing,
15 again, is extremely important, but this proposal is
16 not addressing that at all. It's simply a proposal
17 where the developer wants to make a great deal of
18 money, and I'm certainly opposed to it and I feel
19 that it's a no-brainer. Thank you for your time in
20 allowing me my comments.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Robert. The
22 next person to testify will be Murray Choueka.
23 Murray, you may begin.

24 MURRAY CHOUKEKA: Hi, I'm Murray Choueka.
25 (INAUDIBLE) time. I've lived in the area my entire

2 life and currently live on East 7th Street, very
3 close to where this project is. The traffic has never
4 been great in this neighborhood, but it's been
5 worsening over the last three to four years. We have
6 a lot of very large families in the neighborhood. It
7 means a lot of cars. Adding a project like this would
8 dramatically increase the amount of traffic. Someone
9 mentioned earlier that we shouldn't encourage people
10 to drive cars anymore which is ludicrous in this area
11 where we don't have a robust public transportation
12 system to get people to and from work at their local
13 jobs. Not everyone is travelling to Manhattan for
14 their job so a lot of us need the cars to take our
15 kids to school. Adding another few hundred people and
16 a lot more cars is going to make things much worse.
17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next to
19 testify is Linda Dayan. Linda, if you can hear me,
20 please unmute yourself and you may begin.

21 LINDA DAYAN: Hi. Do you hear me?

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we hear you.

23 LINDA DAYAN: Hi. My name is Linda Dayan.

24 I lived in the O and P area my whole life. I strongly
25 oppose this project. The traffic is insane. It just

1 keeps getting worse. I drove to my brother's house on
2 East 10th, O and P last week. I think I circled for
3 parking for about 30 minutes and ended up parking
4 blocks away. Adding this building is just going to
5 make it worse. There are many children that go to
6 school in the area. My nieces and nephews go to
7 school in the area. They walk home sometimes in the
8 dark. I think that this project is going to be
9 unsafe, cause tons of traffic. I think someone
10 mentioned ambulances can't get through. I strongly
11 oppose this. Thank you.

12
13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Lastly,
14 we'll have Bishop Waylyn Hobbs.

15 WAYLYN HOBBS: Yes, thank you. I'm here in
16 support of the project. We hear the Governor even now
17 talking about how New York State is growing in job
18 opportunities but places to live is not there and so
19 we need affordable housing that will help to keep our
20 Brooklyn, Coney Island what it is. I have many
21 members, although our church is not directly in that
22 area, but I have members that come from Long Island,
23 from New Jersey, and all parts of Brooklyn, and New
24 York needs more affordable housing. I'm in support of
25

2 it. I think it'll give people an opportunity for
3 better living and so I support it.

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Council
5 Member Yeger.

6 Thank you. This panel is excused. The
7 next panel I'm going to call up is Seema Stein.
8 Seema, if you can hear me, please unmute yourself and
9 you may begin. Seema Stein, and I'm going to call
10 again Yeta Solomon because I still see Yeta is in the
11 chat.

12 Seema, if you're calling in, please press
13 star 6 to unmute yourself. Okay, I think we lost
14 Seema.

15 Yeta Solomon. Yeta, if you're still here,
16 please unmute yourself and you may begin.

17 Okay, I don't believe we have neither
18 applicant. Counsel.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Chair,
20 so what we'll do now, we'll do a last call for those
21 of you who are still in the Zoom that have not
22 testified yet. If you can either raise your hand
23 using the Zoom function or if you're calling via
24 phone, do a star 9 so that staff can identify you and
25 we'll promote you so that you can unmute yourselves

2 and you can speak. Again, if you're on the phone,
3 star 9 to raise your hand and star 6 to unmute.

4 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: I see we have Seem
5 Stein. Seema, if you're here, please press star 6 and
6 unmute and you may begin.

7 SEEMA STEIN: Hi. My name is Seema Stein.
8 I live in the area for a few years now. I oppose this
9 very much. I see that the traffic has gotten so, so
10 bad just in the last few years that I've been here,
11 and I drive a lot locally for my job and it just
12 keeps getting harder and harder to get to all the
13 different places we need to go, whether it's picking
14 up our kids, work, appointments, meetings, and I
15 strongly oppose this. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Seema.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Looks
18 like we have Avi Greenberger with his hand up.

19 AVI GREENBERGER: Good afternoon, Counsel.

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Go ahead, Avi.

21 AVI GREENBERGER: My name is Avi
22 Greenberger, and I oppose the zoning change. I live
23 right behind the property for over 30 years, and my
24 primary concern is public safety. The cross streets
25 of Coney Island Avenue and Avenue O where this

2 building is being put up have resulted in many
3 accidents over the years. The Department of
4 Transportation has even installed a pedestrian island
5 to help mitigate the issue. Every few months, they
6 have to come back and replace the signage on the
7 island because another vehicle has crashed through
8 it. Adding this many more units than it is currently
9 zoned for and the vehicular traffic that will
10 accompany it is a terrible idea. If this gets
11 approved, it will result in an increase in pedestrian
12 injuries and hopefully no fatalities. Thank you for
13 your time.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL MARTINEZ-RUBIO: Thank
15 you, Avi. Our very, very last call. If you're on the
16 Zoom and you haven't testified, please raise your
17 hand using the Zoom raise hand function or star 9 on
18 your phone.

19 I see we have Eliyahu Setton.

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Eliyahu, go ahead.

21 ELIYAHU SETTON: Hello, can you hear me?

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, you may begin.

23 ELIYAHU SETTON: I'd like to point
24 something out which is that all the people that seem
25 to be in support of this measure are outsiders coming

2 in here. There's been multiple speakers, I think
3 probably at this point perhaps two dozen or something
4 like that, there have been two speakers from
5 supposedly Brooklyn who have been in support of this
6 rezoning, and one of them is around 45 minutes away
7 and one of them lives nearby. This represents
8 something, and it's that this community uniformly is
9 against this sort of rezoning in general and, not
10 only that, understand that it's not within the
11 interest of anybody living here to bring in these
12 sorts of people in. It's not that we don't need
13 housing. We need housing for the community. We need
14 housing that would represent what we want, and this
15 simply doesn't.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Do we have anyone else
17 registered to testify?

18 We have a Tery. Tery, please unmute
19 yourself and you may begin.

20 TERY BLATT (PHONETIC): Hello. Yes, thanks
21 for taking my call. I live in the neighborhood. My
22 name is Tery Blatt. My children grew up here. My
23 family's been living here for at least 60 years, and
24 my husband's family, and then when I got married, we
25 moved in about 30 years ago, and the traffic that has

2 become very unbearable. It's scary. The ambulances
3 can't get through. There's one-way streets here. The
4 streets are narrow. I take care of two elderly
5 ladies, my mother-in-law and her cousin, one is 103,
6 one is in her 90s, and we've had to call ambulances
7 and they have a hard time getting here. I had to go
8 to a doctor's appointment yesterday, and a normal
9 ride that would take literally 10 minutes took us at
10 least 25 minutes because we just were stuck in
11 traffic right on Coney Island Avenue, and I don't see
12 how this is going to help the neighborhood, the
13 people who live here or the people who are coming
14 here. I think people who need places to live, which I
15 understand a lot of people need places to live but
16 maybe it should be placed in a place that's not so
17 populated and densely populated and some place that
18 would have more room for them to live, and it's not
19 fair to them and not fair to the people who are
20 living here so I oppose. Thank you very much.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much.

22 Last call, last call if you want to testify and you
23 did not testify already, please raise your hand.

24 Thank you. There being no more members of
25 the public who wish to testify on LUs 168 and 169

2 relating to 1880-1888 Coney Island Avenue Rezoning
3 Proposal, the public hearing is now closed and the
4 items are laid over.

5 That concludes today's business. I would
6 like to thank the members of the public, my
7 Colleagues, Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use, and other
8 Council Staff and Sergeant-at-Arms for participating
9 in today's meeting.

10 This meeting is hereby adjourned. Thank
11 you. [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 February 13, 2023