

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND
MARITIME USES

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August 22, 2012
Start: 10:18 a.m.
Recess: 10:35 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E: MARIA DEL CARMEN ARROYO
Acting Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Rosie Mendez
Annabel Palma
James Sanders, Jr.
Jumaane D. Williams
Daniel J. Halloran III
Brad S. Lander

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2 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ARROYO: My name
3 is Maria del Carmen Arroyo, and I am chairing the
4 Council's Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public
5 Siting, and Maritime Uses in absence of the chair,
6 Brad Lander, who hopefully is enjoying his
7 vacation wherever he is at. The Committee heard
8 from the New York City Health and Hospitals
9 Corporation during the hearing portion on Land Use
10 No. 648 related to an application submitted by
11 the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation
12 requesting the approval of the leasing of a parcel
13 of land to develop housing for low income elderly
14 and/or disabled individuals. We laid over the
15 vote in deference to the Council Member whose
16 district the project is in, Council Member Melissa
17 Mark-Viverito, who will make a statement on this
18 project.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO:

20 Thank you, Madam Chair and good morning to my
21 colleagues. I'll try to be brief, but just you
22 know, in terms of this item, which is not an easy-
23 it's quite a complicated issue 'cause it's part of
24 a greater picture. You know, these situations are
25 never easy and unfortunately sometimes dealing

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2 with this administration is not an easy task
3 either. The situation that we're voting on today
4 is part of a larger picture when it comes to the
5 relocation of patients from Coler Goldwater, which
6 is currently on Roosevelt Island. Yes, there had
7 been conversations from HHC on this transitioning
8 and the relocation of these patients for some
9 time, but there is a direct link between the
10 Cornell Techneon [phonetic] project and the
11 relocation of these patients. If this item were
12 not to happen, that would delay and compromise
13 these units being built and it would delay the
14 timeline that the administration has in terms of
15 moving forward with the Cornell Techneon project
16 and the Land Use items that that entails. Having
17 said that, you know, the East Harlem community is
18 concerned. This particular project is 176 housing
19 units for low income elderly and/or disabled
20 individuals that are being discharged from Coler
21 Goldwater that don't need the level of intense
22 institutional care they are receiving right now.
23 There is also another portion of the relocation,
24 which entails the building of an institution on
25 the old premises of North General Hospital, which

1 is technically not in my district, but it is
2 within the boundaries of Community Board 11, which
3 I represent, and also in the future it will also
4 entail development on 1st Avenue between 99th and
5 100th Street with the Draper Hall renovation. So
6 there's a lot that the East Harlem community is
7 going to be taking on and at minimum what has been
8 requested in some level of consideration to the
9 concerns that have been raised. The Metropolitan
10 Hospital Community Advisory Board has had
11 extensive concerns about the sanitation garage
12 that is between 99th Street, but also on 1st Avenue
13 and some of those concerns are being addressed.
14 Obviously we would love ideally the relocation of
15 that garage. That is not going to happen, but we
16 do have a commitment to a reduction of 20% in the
17 number of collection trucks that will be based at
18 that garage. They will be mostly on 1st Avenue and
19 not within the 99th Street, 1st Avenue to 2nd Avenue
20 corridor, which is where this facility will be
21 built. There was also concerns of remediation
22 because the lots in which this development is
23 going to be built does have some environmental
24 remediation necessary. We do have the assessment
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1 and it's clearly delineated that there is an
2 extensive remediation program that that the
3 developer is responsible for and that will happen.
4 So I think that that issue was somewhat addressed.
5 Having said all of that, we also want an ongoing
6 engagement not only with HHC, but with the
7 administration. Cornell University has made some
8 commitments to the city of New York in light of
9 the project on Roosevelt Island and the East
10 Harlem Community considering the burden that we
11 will be assuming is asking for some of those
12 commitments to come directly to East Harlem, and
13 so I understand that the administration is setting
14 up some meetings with Deputy Mayor Steel and my
15 office so that we can have those conversations,
16 but there is an expectation that as the project
17 develops and goes online in a couple of years that
18 we will get that. So there's a lot of work still
19 to be done and I really do hope there is a genuine
20 commitment on the part of the administration and
21 HHC to engage on an ongoing basis the community as
22 this project moves forward. There is a time line
23 sensitivity here because there is financing that
24 is necessary from the state Medicaid redesign and
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2 there is—if this top project does not move
3 forward, we would compromise the ability for these
4 patients to get the care that they need. So I
5 will be voting on this project yes. I am yes, and
6 I would ask my colleagues to do the same. It is a
7 complex issue, but my hope and expectation is that
8 we can continue to have the dialogue we've been
9 having and have the administration and HHC really
10 hear the community's concern to the extent that we
11 can address them to address them. So having said
12 that, I thank you for your patience and I ask my
13 colleagues to vote yes on this item.

14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ARROYO: I
15 neglected to mention the members of the Landmarks
16 Committee. First the Subcommittee Land Use,
17 Landmarks Subcommittee, Council Member Palma,
18 Council Member Mendez, Council Member Williams and
19 from the Land Use Committee, we have Council
20 Member Garodnick, Council Member Barron. Any
21 questions or comments, my colleagues? Council
22 Member Barron?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you.
24 Thank you very much. I have real concerns about
25 this project and wanted to raise some of them.

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2 While I'm all for special needs housing, we all
3 have that in our communities and sometimes they're
4 saturated with too much special needs housing and
5 usually what we try to do with special needs
6 housing is to have some percentage of the
7 affordable formula for the residents of that
8 particular community. In this case here, there
9 are three things that are troubling for me. One
10 is that the special needs housing program for the
11 city where this project's money will be housed,
12 the city claims that no money will be taken away
13 from the homeless budget to fund this project, but
14 the project does have a portion of the homeless
15 money in that special program will be a part of
16 this project's budget and they'll be no community
17 residents that will be allowed to get any
18 affordable housing in this project. It will be
19 100% for the Coler Goldwater Nursing Home
20 residents, and that is unacceptable to me. I
21 think at least 30-50% should be from the
22 community. If it had to go through this special
23 housing project, they would be required to do
24 that, but they usurped that by not doing that.
25 The other thing that's concerning—I think and

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2 Melissa could correct this—I think Community Board
3 11 voted against it.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: Yes.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: And I think
6 also the Metropolitan Hospital Committee also
7 voted against it. Both of those bodies are
8 against it and citing some of the environmental
9 impacts as part of the reason, but I just think
10 that we shouldn't allow the city to use the
11 housing program for the homeless to bring in 100%
12 of special needs housing. I think that's wrong.
13 I think we should have this project go back and
14 take care of some of the residents in the
15 community and not allow it to be 100% special
16 needs. And for the Mayor's Office to say it's
17 going to through that housing program, but it
18 won't use their funds is just not true, number
19 one. That's dishonest. This is according to a
20 Daily News article, and secondly, we should at
21 least require some percentage of this being for
22 affordable housing for community residents. So
23 this project I think that they're fast tracking
24 it. They had problems with the environmental
25 impact statement review. They had challenges with

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2 whether it's going to take money from homeless,
3 money for special housing, emergency housing for
4 the homeless, and whether in fact that all of
5 these residents, 100%, coming from the Coler
6 Goldwater project on Roosevelt Island are coming
7 into East Harlem I think is not the right way to
8 go and we need to send this project back and do it
9 the right way so that the community's interest
10 could be respected.

11 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ARROYO: Thank
12 you, Council Member. With that, I will ask the
13 clerk to call the roll. I recommend an aye vote.

14 COUNSEL: Christian Hilton, counsel
15 to the Committee. Chair Arroyo?

16 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ARROYO: Aye.

17 COUNSEL: Council Member Palma?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Yes.

19 COUNSEL: Council Member Mendez?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Aye.

21 COUNSEL: Council Member Williams?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Aye.

23 COUNSEL: By a vote of four in the
24 affirmative, none in the negative and no
25 abstentions, L.U. 648 is approved and referred to

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2 the full Land Use Committee.

3 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ARROYO: We will
4 leave the roll open until we must convene Land Use
5 and will close the meeting at that point.

6 [pause]

7 COUNSEL: Council Member Sanders?

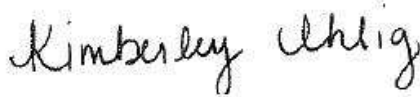
8 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: I vote
9 aye.

10 COUNSEL: The vote now stands at
11 five in the affirmative, none in the negative and
12 no abstentions.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Kimberley Uhlig certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature

Handwritten signature of Kimberley Uhlig in cursive script, written over a horizontal line.Date 8/29/12