

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON LAND USE

----- X

November 5, 2018  
Start: 11:18 a.m.  
Recess: 11:28 a.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: RAFAEL SALAMANCA, JR.  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Adrienne E. Adams  
Inez D. Barron  
Costa G. Constantinides  
Chaim M. Deutsch  
Ruben Diaz, Sr.  
Vanessa L. Gibson  
Barry S. Grodenchik  
Ben Kallos  
Andy L. King  
Peter A. Koo  
Rory I. Lancman  
Stephen T. Levin  
I. Daneek Miller  
Franciso P. Moya  
Antonio Reynoso  
Donovan J. Richards  
Carlina Rivera  
Ritchie J. Torres  
Mark Treyger

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

2 [sound check] [gavel]

3 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet, please.

4 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Alright, good  
5 morning everyone. Welcome to the Committee on Land  
6 Use. I am Council Member Rafael Salamanca, the Chair  
7 of this committee. I would like to welcome my  
8 esteemed colleagues who are members of the committee.  
9 Today we have Council Members Constantinides,  
10 Deutsch, King, Koo, Lancman, Reynoso, Richards,  
11 Torres, Grodenchik, Chair Adams, Diaz, Chair Moya,  
12 and Rivera and Council Member Gibson. I want to  
13 thank Chair Moya, Chair Adams and Chair Kallos for  
14 their work on our Land Use Subcommittees. Today, we  
15 will be voting on applications referred out of our  
16 three subcommittees. This morning we will vote  
17 approve LUs 250, 251 and 252, the St. Michael's  
18 Cemetery Park elimination and cemetery land  
19 acquisition applications for property a 72-02 Astoria  
20 Boulevard in Council Member Constantinides' district  
21 in Queens. These applications will facilitate the  
22 expansion of the existing cemetery. We will vote to  
23 approve for modifications LU 253, the Hebrew Home  
24 application for a special permit to allow a long-term  
25 care facility use in and R1-1 district in Council

2 Member Cohen's district in the Bronx. The Special  
3 Permit will facilitate a continuing care retirement  
4 community including in total 388 independent living  
5 dwelling units for seniors. Our modifications will  
6 establish a designation buffer area ensuring that  
7 only the proposed continuing care retirement  
8 community is built into R1-1 portion of the zoning  
9 lot. I know Council Member Cohen has worked very  
10 hard on this one. So, congratulations to him for all  
11 of his work. We will also vote to approve LUs 254 an  
12 authorization for the Speaker of the Council to  
13 execute the Second Amendment of the Coney Island  
14 Special Process Agreement for proper in Council  
15 Member Treyger's district in Brooklyn. This  
16 amendment is regarding the additional properties  
17 locates adjacent to the Boardwalk, to the Coney  
18 Island Amusement area. This property will eventually  
19 be mapped as a parkland. We will vote approve LUs  
20 241, 242 and 243 related to property at 599  
21 Courtlandt Avenue in my district in the Bronx. These  
22 approvals for disposition, acquisition, Urban  
23 Development Action Area designation, and project  
24 approval will facilitate the construction of a new 4-  
25 story building with approximately eight affordable

2 residential units. In addition to these approvals, a  
3 new Article XI Tax Exemption pursuant will be  
4 granted. We will also call out to committee pursuant  
5 to Council Rules 11-1(e), LU 231 an application for  
6 the site selection of property located at 2050 Bartow  
7 Avenue in Council Member King's district in the  
8 Bronx. We will vote to approve its use as a full  
9 service adoption center veterinarian clinic and  
10 accompanying office space. The application was  
11 submitted by the Department of Health and Mental  
12 Hygiene and DCAS in order to comply with Local Law  
13 123 of 2018, which requires the city to maintain a  
14 full service animal shelter in each borough by July  
15 1, 2024. I want to echo Chair Adams remarks and  
16 acknowledge a tremendous amount of time and effort  
17 Council Member King spent on this application to  
18 ensure very meaningful benefits for his community.  
19 Now, I will take questions or remarks from the  
20 members of the committee, and I will start with  
21 Council Member Cohen.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Thank you, Chair.  
23 I will be very brief. I just really want to thank  
24 City Planning, the local advocates, the renown (sic)  
25 Nature Conservancy, the Signal Place Neighborhood

2 Association, the hard work--the tremendous hard work  
3 of the applicant Dan Reingold and the Hebrew Home and  
4 his team. When this project started it was  
5 incredibly controversial, and they really worked  
6 very, very hard to address every single concern of  
7 the community. This project is going to preserve a  
8 tremendous amount of open space. Ninety percent of  
9 the--of the campus--the south campus will be preserved  
10 in open space. There's a--an MOU signed by the--the  
11 Hebrew Home and the neighbors. So, really it's just  
12 a tremendous amount of work to preserve the character  
13 of the neighborhood and serve the needs of the Hebrew  
14 Home. I just want to thank Jeff, Julie, Amy and  
15 Roger for all of their hard work, hand-holding and  
16 literally I don't know how many meetings to get us to  
17 this place. So, I just wanted to say thank you and  
18 thank you Chair, and I urge my colleagues to vote  
19 aye. [laughs]

20 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you,  
21 Council Member Cohen. Council Member King.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Good morning, Mr.  
23 Chair and good morning committee. Thank you again  
24 for your conversation and being there in support in  
25 regards to this whole process of how to use 20-2550

2 Bartow Avenue as an animal care center. Over the  
3 last year, we've had a rough emotional conversation  
4 with the neighborhood as well as animal rights  
5 activists. It's been one of those times that trying  
6 to figure out how to make sure that service our  
7 neighborhoods as well as provide—be in compliance  
8 with the law. A lot of the conversations--and I'm  
9 putting it on the record—a lot of the conversations  
10 were not as cordial as they should have been. They  
11 shouldn't—they weren't as respectful as they should  
12 have been. So, I say we in government are tasked  
13 with the duty of being able to lead our  
14 neighborhoods, but it doesn't mean that we should  
15 tolerate ugly and nasty conversations from advocates  
16 because they're not getting—they think they're not  
17 getting their way, and I put that on the record  
18 because this disrespects all of us who work  
19 tirelessly in the city of New York to service our  
20 residents and our constituents. And that all being  
21 said, when we started this conversation, this process  
22 over three years ago, the conversation has changed.  
23 The Community Board 10 voted to support an animal  
24 shelter, but not at this location at this time. The  
25 Borough President also came back with a

2 recommendation that this may not be the best site.  
3 At that point in time, I told my residents and on  
4 constituents that I will stand with them on whatever  
5 decision they want to make. During that time the  
6 conversation has changed that not only will animal  
7 shelters be offered at this location, but a number  
8 of community benefits agreements that will help  
9 improve the residents and co-ops' quality of life as  
10 well as the children as well as the seniors as well  
11 as traffic conditions as well as our development  
12 issues that have been stalled in the past. So, it's  
13 my responsibility to be able to educate the people of  
14 how the conversation has transitioned from day one to  
15 this fifth day that we're in right now. And sticking  
16 with my neighborhood, a number of residents have gone  
17 from an emphatic no saying we can live with the  
18 animal care center in the neighborhood providing that  
19 these agreements are fulfilled, which I'm very  
20 confident in the Speaker and the Mayor's Office and  
21 their fulfillment to making sure that everyone  
22 benefits not only just the animals, but the human  
23 beings who live each and every day in the co-ops of  
24 the area. So, with that all being said, I want to  
25 thank everyone for their patience, their help, and



2 for my colleagues. They're going to get a phone call  
3 back from me. I just realized I was dealing with a  
4 whole lot, trying to manage a whole lot to make sure  
5 that they was more stable and—and not get—didn't get  
6 too much out of hand. So, with that all being said,  
7 I am supporting this project, and I'm asking my  
8 colleagues to stand and support it with me as well as  
9 we continue to serve the residents of the Bronx, and  
10 all the animal lovers, our dog lovers, and I grew up  
11 with a dog. So, I'm there with everyone as well.  
12 So, with that being said, I'll be voting aye and ask  
13 you all to join me on that, and thank you again, Mr.  
14 Chair.

15 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Congratulations,  
16 Sir—Council Member king. Any other comments or  
17 remarks from members of the committee? Alright,  
18 seeing none, I will now call a vote in accordance  
19 with recommendations of the Subcommittees and the  
20 local Council members to approve LUs 231, 241, 242,  
21 243, 250, 251, 252 and 254, and to approve with the  
22 modifications I have described LUs 253. Will the  
23 Clerk please call the roll.

24

25

1 COMMITTEE ON LAND USE 10

2 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk.

3 Roll call vote Committee on Land Use. Chair  
4 Salamanca.

5 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Aye on all.

6 CLERK: Gibson.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Congratulations,  
8 Council Member King. Thank you for your leadership.  
9 I know this process has not been easy. I think all  
10 of us especially Bronx membered received a lot of  
11 emails both in support and in opposition. I'm  
12 grateful that a compromise has been made, and you are  
13 supportive. I'm proud to support this effort and  
14 make sure that a full fledged animal shelter comes to  
15 the Borough of the Bronx. Congratulations to all of  
16 my colleagues, and I vote aye on all.

17 CLERK: Constantinides.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Aye on  
19 all.

20 CLERK: Deutsch.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Aye on all.

22 CLERK: King.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Aye on all.

24 CLERK: Koo.

25

1 COMMITTEE ON LAND USE 11

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

4 CLERK: Lancman.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LANCMAN: Aye.

6 CLERK: Reynoso.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: I vote aye on  
8 all.

9 CLERK: Richards.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Aye on all.

11 CLERK: Torres.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Congratulations t  
13 the Andys. I vote aye on all so--

14 CLERK: Grodenchik.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Aye.

16 CLERK: Adams.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: I'd like to say  
18 congratulations to--to Council Member Cohen and King.

19 Council Member King, this has been extremely  
20 difficult for you. I congratulate you for doing  
21 everything in your power to protect both your  
22 constituents [cell phone ringing] and the animals. I  
23 will vote aye on all.

24 CLERK: Diaz.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER DIAZ: Si on both.

2 CLERK: Moya.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Aye on all.

4 CLERK: Rivera.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: [off mic] Aye on  
6 all.

7 CLERK: Kallos.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: [off mic] Aye.

9 (sic)

10 CLERK: Levin

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Aye on all.

12 CLERK: By a vote of 7-Council Member  
13 Miller

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [off mic] I vote  
15 aye. Congratulations, and I vote aye on all.

16 CLERK: By a vote of 18 in the  
17 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,  
18 all items have been adopted by the committee.

19 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: I would like to  
20 thank members of the public, my colleagues, Council  
21 and Land Use staff for attending today's hearing.  
22 This meeting is hereby adjourned. [gavel]

23

24

25

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 November 21, 2018