

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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November 16, 2009
Start: 10:56 am
Recess: 11:03 am

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Council Member Maria del Carmen Arroyo
Council Member Tony Avella
Council Member Leroy G. Comrie, Jr.
Council Member Elizabeth Crowley
Council Member Robert Jackson
Council Member John C. Liu
Council Member Rose Mendez
Council Member Annabel Palma
Council Member Larry B. Seabrook

2 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: Good morning,
3 welcome to the Land Use Subcommittee on Landmarks,
4 Public Siting and Maritime Uses. I'm Jessica
5 Lappin, the Chair, joined today by Council Member
6 Leroy Comrie of Queens, Council Member Rosie
7 Mendez of Manhattan, Council Elizabeth Crowley of
8 Queens, Council Member John Liu of Queens, Council
9 Member Maria del Carmen Arroyo of The Bronx, and
10 Council Member Tony Avella of Queens. That is my
11 nanny calling 'cause my son is sick. We have one
12 item on the agenda today, the Police Academy,
13 which his item number 1240. We had the hearing on
14 this item last week. Before we have a vote, I
15 wanted to open this up to some discussion, and
16 offer Council Member Mendez and Council Avella the
17 opportunity to make some statements for the
18 record. This is in Council Member Avella's
19 district. There obviously have been a lot of
20 discussion in the Subcommittee about this
21 application. Council Member Vacca is not here
22 today, but he discussed the range in his district,
23 and I understand there have been--do you have the--
24 -thank you. Some significant changes made
25 regarding the firearms range at Rodman's Neck.

2 They're going to [pause] revise the master plan to
3 incorporate rifle and shotgun training at the
4 College Point site, so that no other firearms
5 training, other than sniper training, will be at
6 Rodman's Neck. That means as a result, there will
7 be approximately 19,000 rounds discharged there,
8 which is about a 99 percent decrease in the number
9 of firearm discharges at that site, and Council
10 Member Vacca is pleased with that change. There
11 has been an addition in the final second phase
12 build out of an addition of 1,000 parking spots.
13 There has also been a change in terms of the drop
14 off area for the museum, which should hopefully
15 help in terms of traffic flow in that area. And I
16 wanted to now ask Council Member Mendez to give a
17 statement and talk about some of the changes
18 regarding the 20th Street facility, and the process
19 for vacating that site.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you,
21 Chair Lappin. I will make a comment after
22 Councilman Avella, since it is his district, I
23 want to give him that respect.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: Thank you
25 for the opportunity to make a few comments,

2 although I'm not on the Committee. I appreciate
3 the Chair and the Council Members who sort of went
4 to bat not only for me but for some of the issues
5 in the district. Although there's been some minor
6 changes in my opinion to the application, I still
7 oppose it. It is a huge facility, and I think
8 it's more about having Commissioner Kelly go
9 around the, this country, and probably beyond, to
10 say he's built the Taj Mahal of police academies,
11 without really improving the operation of the
12 Police Department. There has been very little
13 improvement in terms of the traffic impact in
14 this--for the College Point and Whitestone and
15 Mitchell-Linden communities. In the very
16 beginning I supported the Academy, but it is well
17 beyond what I originally thought the application
18 was going to entail. I would still ask my
19 colleagues to vote against it, but I can
20 understand if you don't. But I have to say for
21 the future, the College Point, Mitchell-Linden,
22 and Whitestone communities are going to be
23 severely impacted by the traffic for this facility
24 and virtually nothing has been done in that aspect
25 to improve the application.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you,
3 Councilman Avella, and thank you Chair Lappin.
4 I'm going to be voting in favor, and while I have
5 a lot of concerns about the cost, and what
6 actually might get done during the second phase,
7 the reality is having toured the Police Academy in
8 my district, that it is a very overcrowded
9 facility, and to keep up with new training
10 methods, it would be in the City's best interest
11 to build a new space for police officers to get
12 trained. The current facility was built back in
13 1964, and it's been serving in that capacity until
14 today. My initial problem with this, besides the
15 fiscal impact on the City, was also that we were
16 led to believe that the consolidation of all the
17 police services at College Point would free up
18 other City owned spaces throughout the City, which
19 may happen during the first phase or the second
20 phase. And my community, particularly, was
21 interested in looking at this site, in addition to
22 other sites, as possible school buildings, since
23 we have a huge overcrowding problem in this City,
24 that has not been addressed by this
25 Administration. However, after reviewing the

2 changes that have been made, and getting a
3 commitment that once the building becomes
4 substantially empty, or once they're going into
5 the full build out, a community advisory committee
6 will be put in place, with community
7 representatives, and the elected officials that
8 would be me, if I'm still around, and others. I
9 think, and after speaking to some of my other
10 colleagues on how this advisory committee has
11 worked with fire station closings, I hear that
12 it's been a very helpful process for the
13 community. So, with all that I will be voting
14 aye, and thank you very much for this opportunity
15 to speak, Madam Chair.

16 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: Thank you, and
17 thank you for your leadership. I know there has
18 been a lot of discussion, not just in your
19 neighborhood, but in all District Two about the
20 need to find new locations for schools, and this
21 is one that has popped up consistently over time.
22 And giving the community an opportunity when the
23 times arises to have a meaningful say in what
24 happens in this building is very important. So,
25 thank you. Any other comments from anybody else

2 on the Committee? Great. I wanted to note we've
3 been joined by Councilwoman Annabel Palma, and
4 Council Member Melinda Katz, chair of the
5 Committee, and Council Member Larry Seabrook, and
6 Council Member Robert Jackson. And ask for the
7 Counsel to call for a vote, I recommend a
8 favorable vote.

9 COUNSEL TO THE COMMITTEE:
10 Christian Hilton, Counsel to the Committee. Chair
11 Lappin?

12 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: Aye.

13 COUNSEL TO THE COMMITTEE: Council
14 Member Comrie.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: [off mic]
16 Aye.

17 COUNSEL TO THE COMMITTEE: Council
18 Member Liu.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LIU: Yes.

20 COUNSEL TO THE COMMITTEE: Council
21 Member Palma.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: [off mic]
23 Yes.

24 COUNSEL TO THE COMMITTEE: Council
25 Member Arroyo.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [off mic]

3 Yes.

4 COUNSEL TO THE COMMITTEE: Council
5 Member Mendez.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Aye.

7 COUNSEL TO THE COMMITTEE: Council
8 Member Crowley.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: [off mic]
10 Yes.

11 COUNSEL TO THE COMMITTEE: By a
12 vote of seven in the affirmative, none in the
13 negative, no abstentions, LU1240 is approved and
14 referred to the full Land Use Committee.

15 CHAIRPERSON LAPPIN: I'm going to
16 adjourn this meeting.

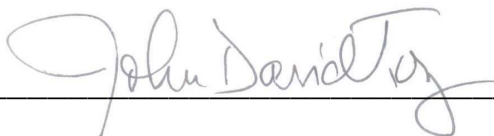
17 [gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

Signature _____

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John David Tong". The signature is written over a horizontal line that serves as a baseline for the signature field.

Date November 24, 2009