

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS, AND
DISPOSITIONS

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CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC
SITINGS, AND DISPOSITIONS

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April 4, 2022
Start: 10:03 a.m.
Recess: 10:39 a.m.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING - VIRTUAL ROOM 2

B E F O R E: Farah N. Louis, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Carmen N. De La Rosa
Oswald Feliz
Christopher Marte
Sandra Ung
Inna Vernikov
Keith Powers

A P P E A R A N C E S

Joe O'Donnell
Tim Gianfrancesco
Robair Reichenstein

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS, AND
DISPOSITIONS

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2 SERGEANT LUGO: PC recording started.

3 SERGEANT BRADLEY: Cloud recording has
4 started. Good morning, and welcome to today's New
5 York City Council hearing on Landmarks, Public
6 Sitings, and Dispositions.

7 At this time, will all panelists please
8 turn on your videos for verification purposes?

9 To minimize disruption, can you please
10 place electronic devices on silent or on vibrate
11 mode?

12 If you wish to submit testimony, you may
13 do so at landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Again,
14 that is landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Thank you.

15 Chair, you may begin.

16 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Good morning. I'm
17 Council Member Farah Louis, Chair of the Subcommittee
18 on Landmarks, Public Sitings, and Dispositions. I'm
19 joined today by my Colleagues, Council Members De La
20 Rosa, Marte, Vernikov, and Majority Leader Powers.

21 Today, we will hear an application for
22 the disposition of city-owned property to the MTA for
23 the extension of the Second Avenue Subway.

24

25

2 First, we will vote to approve LU numbers
3 18 and 19, the New Providence development which we
4 heard at our meeting on March 3rd.

5 LU 18 is the application submitted by the
6 Department of Housing and Preservation and
7 Development and the Department of Homeless Services
8 pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City
9 Charter and requesting approval of public siting to
10 modify a restriction limiting the capacity of a
11 shelter facility.

12 LU 19 is an application submitted
13 pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law
14 and Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for
15 the designation of an urban development action area,
16 approval of an urban development action area project
17 for such area, and the disposition of such property
18 to a developer to be selected by HPD.

19 These applications would facilitate the
20 construction of a development containing
21 approximately 171 shelter beds and 130 supportive and
22 affordable housing units located at 215-225 East 45th
23 Street in Manhattan Council District represented by
24 Majority Leader Powers.

2 We have been joined by Majority Leader
3 Powers who I now recognize.

4 MAJORITY LEADER POWERS: Thank you, Chair
5 Louis. So nice to see all the Members of the
6 Committee here today. Today, we're voting on a
7 project, or you are voting on a project I should say,
8 the New Providence Shelter in my district. It's
9 located at 225 East 45th Street in Midtown. It's a
10 city-owned property and, as such, is a joint
11 application from the New York City Department of
12 Housing Preservation and Development and the New York
13 City Department of Homeless Services.

14 The New Providence Shelter has been in
15 existence serving shelter residents since 1997. It's
16 currently a 130-bed shelter for homeless women, and
17 this actual project will combine 2 old building
18 layouts into a more modern and efficiently designed
19 shelter that's also able to serve a now increased
20 number of 171 single adult women while also creating
21 130 new supportive and affordable housing units in
22 Midtown.

23 There's a lot of pieces of this including
24 a green roof terrace for the shelter and supportive
25 housing residents and a new Article 28 medical clinic

2 which will not serve the residents of the building
3 but also be available to members of the community. We
4 are also working and hopefully we'll have resolution
5 to some improvements to the surround community as a
6 result of this as well including some improvements to
7 the nearby Dag Hammarskjold Plaza which is widely
8 used by the community and the international community
9 as it's right across from the United Nations,
10 completing much-delayed capital projects there,
11 putting in additional safety measures at the park at
12 the request of the residents, and doing other
13 measures around there to make sure that we have a
14 good and thriving park for the long-term. The
15 Community Board here, Community Board 6, has been
16 supportive of this project and the shelter and are
17 excited to see the expansion and continued work in
18 the community and, of course, being able to deliver
19 affordable housing in East Midtown is a major
20 accomplishment, and I'm proud to be working with the
21 administration to help get this project done.

22 I want to thank everyone here today for
23 giving it your consideration and hope you'll support
24 it as well. I think it's really needed at this time
25 in the city and it's, I think, sometimes rare we have

2 the community and the Community Board come forward to
3 support a project, but I think it speaks a lot to
4 this specific project and the work that's been done
5 to imbed themselves into the community. With that, I
6 do support this project and hope you will as well. I
7 want to thank the applicant, the Chair, of course,
8 and all my Colleagues here today for everything
9 you're doing and hope you'll vote yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Majority
11 Leader Powers, for your work on this project. With
12 the support of the affected Council Member, we will
13 now vote to approve LUs 18 and 19. Counsel, please
14 call the roll.

15 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: Chair Louis.

16 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I vote aye.

17 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: Council Member
18 Feliz.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Good morning. I
20 vote aye.

21 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: Council Member
22 De La Rosa.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER DE LA ROSA: Aye.

24 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: Council Member
25 Marte.

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS, AND
2 DISPOSITIONS

8

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: Aye.

4 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: Council Member
5 Ung.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Aye.

7 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: Minority Whip
8 Vernikov.

9 MINORITY WHIP VERNIKOV: Aye.

10 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: With a vote of
11 6 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative, and 0
12 abstentions, the items are approved and recommended
13 to the full Land Use Committee, and the vote will be
14 held open for Council Member Nurse.

15 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. I don't
16 know if I mentioned this earlier, but we're joined by
17 Council Member Ung.

18 Before we move to our public hearing, I
19 want to recognize the Subcommittee Counsel to review
20 today's hearing procedures.

21 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: Thank you,
22 Chair Louis. I am Jeffrey Campagna, Counsel to the
23 Subcommittee.

24 Members of the public who wish to testify
25 were asked to register for today's hearing. If you
registered to testify and are not yet signed into

2 Zoom, please sign in now and remain signed in until
3 after you've testified.

4 If you wish to testify and have not
5 registered, please go to www.council.nyc.gov/landuse
6 to sign up now. If you're not planning to testify on
7 today's items, please watch the hearing on the New
8 York City Council website.

9 All people testifying before the
10 Subcommittee will be on mute until they are
11 recognized to testify. Please confirm that your mic is
12 unmuted before you begin speaking.

13 Public testimony will be limited to 2
14 minutes per witness.

15 If you have written testimony that you
16 would like the Subcommittee to consider in addition
17 to or in lieu of appearing before the Subcommittee or
18 if you require an accessible version of a
19 presentation given at today's meeting, please email
20 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Please indicate the
21 LU number or project name in the subject line of the
22 email.

23 During the hearing, Council Members who
24 would like to ask questions should use the Zoom raise
25 hand function. The raise hand button should appear at

2 the bottom of the participant panel. I will announce
3 Council Members who have questions in the order that
4 they raised their hands.

5 Witnesses are reminded to remain in the
6 meeting until they are excused by the Chair.

7 Lastly, there may be extended pauses if
8 we encounter technical problems. We ask that you
9 please be patient as we work through these issues.

10 Chair Louis will now continue with
11 today's agenda.

12 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. I will now
13 open the public hearing on the preconsidered LU for
14 applications 220010 TAM. This application was
15 submitted by Metropolitan Transit Authority pursuant
16 to Section 1266-c of the New York State Public
17 Authorities Law requesting approval of the
18 acquisition of city-owned property located at Block
19 1773, Lots 4 and 72, in the Borough of Manhattan to
20 facilitate the northward extension of the Second
21 Avenue Subway and the construction of a station at
22 125th Street. The property is located in Council
23 District represented by Deputy Speaker Ayala. I now
24 recognize Deputy Speaker Ayala as she's here for
25 remarks.

2 We are joined by Joe O'Donnell, Sean
3 Fitzpatrick, and Tim, forgive me, Gianfrancesco, and
4 Robair Reichenstein from the Metropolitan Transit
5 Authority, also known as MTA.

6 Counsel, please administer the
7 affirmation. Thank you.

8 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: Please raise
9 your right hands and respond when I call your name.
10 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and
11 nothing but the truth in your testimony and in
12 response to all Council Member questions? Joe
13 O'Donnell.

14 JOE O'DONNELL: I do.

15 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: Sean
16 Fitzpatrick.

17 JOE O'DONNELL: Sean's not joining us this
18 morning.

19 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: Tim
20 Gianfrancesco.

21 TIM GIANFRANCESCO: I do.

22 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: Robair
23 Reichenstein.

24 ROBAIR REICHENSTEIN: I do.
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1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS, AND
DISPOSITIONS

12

2 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: Thank you. You
3 may proceed.

4 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Your
5 PowerPoint presentation will be posted on the screen
6 when you're ready to request it, and you may begin at
7 that time.

8 JOE O'DONNELL: Thank you very much, Chair
9 Louis, and thank you all for having us here this
10 morning to the City Council's Subcommittee on
11 Landmarks, Public Sitings, and Dispositions.

12 As the Chair referenced, we're here to
13 speak to you this morning and to testify on behalf of
14 the disposition of parcels to advance the Second
15 Avenue Subway. These are Block 1773, Lots 4 and 72,
16 as the Chair noted.

17 A little bit about Second Avenue Subway
18 and then we'll get into the specifics of the
19 transfer. Just for identification purposes, my name
20 is Joe O'Donnell. I am the Director of Government and
21 Community Affair for MTA Construction and
22 Development. I will be presenting before you this
23 morning, and I'm also joined by the Senior Vice
24 President and Project CEO for the Second Avenue
25 Subway project phase 2, Tim Gianfrancesco, who will

2 assist in any technical information and answering of
3 any questions as well as Robair Reichenstein who is
4 the Senior Vice President of Transit Oriented
5 Development for MTA Council on Construction and
6 Development. If you can please put up the
7 presentation.

8 As noted, we are here to talk to you
9 about Second Avenue Subway Phase 2, Land Use Action
10 for transfer of city parcels to the MTA. Next slide.

11 Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway is
12 what we're here to speak about, but just as a primer
13 our Second Avenue Subway in general as it was fully
14 conceived in 2004, it was always conceived as of 2004
15 as a 4-phase project. Phase 1 was completed in 2017,
16 and that extended Q service from 63rd Street to 3 new
17 stations at 77nd, 86th, and 96th. Phase 2 would
18 propose to bring that Q service, which now terminates
19 at 96th Street, up into East Harlem terminating at
20 125th Street with new stations at 106th and 116th
21 Street. Phases 3 and 4 are not yet in the works.
22 Phase 1 serves approximately 200,000 daily riders.
23 This was pre-COVID. That's about the same ridership
24 as the MARTA, or Metro Atlanta Rapid Transit
25 Authority service, which is 205,000 riders and more

2 than the combined LA Metro and Baltimore ridership,
3 which is 152,000 riders. As noted, we are here to
4 speak to you specifically about Phase 2 today. Next
5 slide.

6 Phase 2 is a vital equity project for the
7 residents of East Harlem. The 125th Street terminus
8 is in the heart of historic Harlem and connects with
9 the Lexington Avenue 4, 5, 6, and the 125th Street
10 Metro North station. Over 70 percent of the residents
11 in this area use public transportation to get to work
12 versus 55 percent citywide. East Harlem has grown by
13 over 14 percent since 2010. Similarly, vitality of
14 this service is noted in East Harlem because there
15 are over 12 percent seniors, 55 percent Hispanic, 30
16 percent black, higher than the city overall average.
17 This project was promised to the residents of East
18 Harlem since the Second and Third Avenue Els were
19 removed from service in the 1940s and 1950s. It's
20 going to increase transit equity. It's going to
21 increase accessibility to employment opportunities
22 outside of the immediate area. It's going to increase
23 accessibility for workers and consumers traveling to
24 and from East Harlem, and it's going to increase

2 access to hospitals and special medical care on the
3 Upper East Side. Next slide.

4 Just to give you a sense of the area that
5 we're talking about, this is the proposed alignment
6 of Second Avenue Subway Phase 2. As you will see on
7 the screen, there are stations at 106th Street, 116th
8 Street, and then a terminal station at 125th Street.
9 The project proposes to make use of existing tunnel
10 work as noted in green from 105 to 110 and then from
11 110 to 120. The area from 110 to 120 will be
12 repurposed as the 116th Street station. This will
13 help us make an adaptive reuse of the tunnel work
14 that was started in 1970s but had to be abandoned due
15 to the lack of financial capacity to complete the
16 process. Next slide.

17 For orientation and awareness purposes,
18 all of the stations for Second Avenue Station Phase 2
19 are configured similarly. There are ancillary
20 structures at the north and south ends of the station
21 on Second Avenue proper. On 125th Street, they will
22 be on the east and west extremes of the station and
23 in between those ancillary structures you'll have
24 entrance facilities, whether they are ADA accessible
25 elevator and escalator entrances or stair entrances.

2 For those of you who are not familiar, an ancillary
3 structure houses all of our back of the house
4 equipment, typically ventilation systems, emergency
5 fans, power equipment, signals, things of that
6 nature. Next slide.

7 Drilling down a little bit deeper to use
8 an unfortunate construction metaphor, we're talking
9 now specifically about the area that we are here to
10 testify about today. As you see in the red circle,
11 just about the center of your screen, that is the
12 125th station Entrance 3 and Ancillary 2. The
13 entrance and ancillary are proposed on Park Avenue
14 between 124th and 125th Street. The ancillary
15 facility, or that back of the house equipment, is
16 conceived to be located closer to 124th Street with
17 the entrance to the station here at 125th Street with
18 close proximity to the Metro North station as well as
19 the 125th Street Lex Line station. It was originally
20 conceived that we would work on both sides of the
21 viaduct here. In conjunction with our consultation
22 with the developers in this area, we thought it
23 prudent to move all of the vital equipment or vital
24 components to the east side of the viaduct so as you
25 see in that circle there, the area in blue is land

2 that we would look to acquire. The parcel that is
3 marked out in a square is the actual HPD or city-
4 owned parcels that we are talking about today, and
5 there would still be an emergency on the west side of
6 the Park Avenue viaduct. Next slide.

7 This drills it down even a little bit
8 further. The area hashed out in the red mark are HPD
9 parcels Block 1773, Lots 4 and 72. The surrounding
10 areas are Durst lots, and we would look to acquire
11 those parcels as well. This is a very unique
12 circumstance of transfer of city parcels. There was a
13 commitment for use for transit purposes of these
14 parcels. The sites are not suitable for other types
15 of public uses before they were incorporated into the
16 Second Avenue Subway project, and the transfer serves
17 critical to the advancement of the Second Avenue
18 Subway project. As noted, this is anticipated to be
19 the entrance and ancillary structure for the
20 westernmost component of the 125th station. Next
21 slide.

22 A little bit of background on the
23 particularity and the nature of this agreement and
24 where we are today. In 2016, the MTA gave city land
25 at 126th Street for EDC's New York Proton Center

2 development. In return for that, MTA received city
3 commitment to deliver these HPD parcels to the MTA.
4 In 2021, the MTA and the City agreed to pay HPD the
5 established difference in the property values, and I
6 believe that was in the range of 3.2 million dollars,
7 and then in January 2022, the MTA Board authorized
8 that payment to HPD for this difference. To advance
9 this further and to finalize the steps in this
10 agreement, the Deputy Mayor requires Mini-ULURP
11 authorized under PAL 1266-c(5) to sign and transfer
12 the deed and receive MTA payment. On January 12,
13 2022, the MTA presented this proposed transfer of
14 property, a disposition of property, to Community
15 Board 11. On March 29th, we updated Council Member
16 Ayala and then here we are on April 4th as part of
17 the final presentation for the City Council's Land
18 Use Committee and the Subcommittee on Landmarks,
19 Public Sitings, and Dispositions. Next slide.

20 This will give you a little more sense. I
21 won't go into too much detail because you can read it
22 all on the screen, but as to where we are in the
23 project's life cycle today and why this is important.
24 As you know, this project has been in the works for a
25 considerable amount of time. It entered development

2 in 2016. It has picked up some steam of late. Not
3 only did we get favorable word from the FTA in the
4 beginning of the year that we were going to be moved
5 into the engineering phase of the project which had
6 been stagnated for several years. This was good news
7 to us because it gave us the hope that this project
8 was in fact moving forward in the FTA's process and
9 moving towards a fully funded grant agreement, which
10 is vital to the actual implementation of this
11 project. Further, we were advised, and I'm sure you
12 saw the news of late, that 100 million dollars was
13 being earmarked by the federal government in this
14 year's budget, which was another positive sign.
15 Certainly not the fully funded grant agreement
16 commitment that we're looking to advance this project
17 so that we don't find ourselves in a similar
18 situation like they did in the 1970s and we don't
19 have the necessary funds to complete this project,
20 but that 100 million dollars was an earmark in the
21 new budget. It is not a guarantee, but it's certainly
22 another step in the right direction. It gives us the
23 confidence to advance early property acquisition like
24 we're speaking to you about today and the potential
25 for awarding an early utility work contract sometime

2 later this summer. The goal on all of this will be to
3 achieve a fully funded grant agreement by the end of
4 this year, the goal is November 2022. Next slide.

5 The advance work project, which I
6 referenced the early utility work, the design is
7 completed on that project. There have been meetings
8 that are ongoing with property owners and impacted
9 individuals, whether it's residents or schools,
10 stakeholders in the community so those advanced
11 meetings have been underway. As part of the lessons
12 learned from Second Avenue Subway Phase 1, the
13 project established a community information center
14 very early on in this project, in fact in 2017 well
15 before any shovels were on the ground or work was
16 underway so that we are having collaborative and
17 detailed lengthy conversations with not only the
18 elected officials in the East Harlem area, Community
19 Board 11 as I mentioned as well as Community Board
20 10, the stakeholders in this community, and the
21 residents at large so we have a concerted effort to
22 keep folks apprised of development on this project as
23 we move forward so we will continue to do that as
24 this does, in fact, move forward. The second contract
25 and third contract, which are the civil, structural,

2 and design build contracts, those documents are being
3 updated and incorporated with additional cost
4 containment measures and based on developer
5 coordination at 125th Street so that has been ongoing
6 all throughout COVID and in this post-COVID
7 environment. Our mechanical engineering, electrical,
8 and plumbing systems, architectural fit-out and
9 design build contract for contract 4. Those draft
10 documents were completed in Q1 of 2021, and the
11 anticipation of the completion of those final
12 documents is 2022. When I say final, those are not
13 completed designs. Those are simply brought to the
14 point where we can then turn it over to the design
15 builder who will advance and complete the design once
16 they are brought on board. The ongoing coordination
17 with the developers at 125th Street at both Park
18 Avenue and Lexington Avenue continues and, as you are
19 aware from the some of the interaction with myself
20 and my team, there's ongoing geological boring
21 investigation, subsurface investigation work going on
22 here, and this is largely to identify and confirm the
23 subsurface conditions, soil, rock, etc. that we would
24 find once we get out there and get our work going
25 underway so that we minimize the curveballs and

2 challenges that we'll find once we get out there.

3 Next slide.

4 I mentioned that we've established a
5 presence early there in East Harlem. We have a
6 community information center at 69 East 125th Street.
7 It's fully staffed. My staff there is fully bilingual
8 as well to be able to help the folks who might have
9 Spanish as a first language navigate questions or
10 concerns about this project. Jose Carrero who is
11 someone who's familiar to that community, he joined
12 us in the middle of COVID. Alex Zamudio is a holdover
13 from Phase 1 so he helped us deliver Phase 1 of this
14 project and has the institutional knowledge of
15 lessons learned from Phase 1 so those 2 gentleman are
16 my boots on the ground for lack of a better word up
17 in the East Harlem area and then obviously also I
18 play a key role in the interaction here. With that, I
19 will turn it back over to the Chair. If there are any
20 questions, obviously as I mentioned I have Tim
21 Gianfrancesco from the project here and Robair
22 Reichenstein from real estate so between the 3 of us,
23 we would be happy to entertain many questions you all
24 might have.

2 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Joe, for
3 your testimony. Are there any Council Members with
4 questions?

5 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: If any Council
6 Members have questions, please use the raise hand
7 button now.

8 There are no Council Member questions at
9 this time.

10 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: All right, thank you.
11 I do have a few. Joe, thank you for your testimony
12 and for your work on this project.

13 I know that you mentioned some components
14 of this already, but if you can please briefly
15 discuss the scale and use of the future development
16 given that it is in a special 125th Street district
17 and also subject to special zoning rules.

18 JOE O'DONNELL: Tim, do you want to take
19 that or do you want me to, I mean, essentially, I
20 don't know if Tim's unmuted or has the ability to
21 unmute, but essentially again that parcel, we
22 envision the acquisition of that entire east side
23 portion between 124th Street and 125th Street. We're
24 here specifically to talk about the HPD parcels, but
25 we are also in conjunction to that transfer working

2 the private developer and owner there to acquire the
3 parcels in the C or U shape around the HPD parcels.

4 The anticipation is that this will be a mixed
5 ancillary and entrance structure. Prior to the
6 advancement of the Second Avenue Subway, it would be
7 the entrance to the westernmost extreme of the 125th
8 Street station, and it would also house closer to
9 124th Street the ancillary components of the 125th
10 station. As I mentioned, the ancillary components are
11 back of the house equipment like fans, ventilation
12 equipment, power signals, things of that nature. Tim,
13 I don't know if you had anything you wanted to add or
14 even Robair with regard to the acquisition.

15 TIM GIANFRANCESCO: As far as the
16 structure goes, Joe, and what's going there, I think
17 you hit it. The entrance would open to the 125th
18 Street side. The ancillary facilities would be closer
19 to the 124th Street side, but they would include all
20 of the typical facilities that we have at each of the
21 stations, being the emergency ventilation systems,
22 the emergency fans for evacuating smoke from the
23 stations or the tunnels in the event of a fire inside
24 the tunnel or in the stations, the facility power and
25 the backup power systems, communication systems, and

2 emergency egress for that portion of the station. All
3 of those facilities would be part of the ancillary
4 structure and then, of course, the entrance, fully
5 ADA accessible entrance would be at the corner of
6 125th Street and Park.

7 JOE O'DONNELL: I just might also note,
8 Chair, for the Committee's understanding, as a design
9 build project, we contemplate and Tim's team
10 contemplates the use and the need, the critical
11 elements for this station, and so the critical nature
12 of this particular location is for that ancillary and
13 entrance structure. Beyond that, this is a design
14 build contract so we would be looking heavily to the
15 design builder once they're eventually brought on
16 board. We do not have a designer identified awarded
17 for this particular project so once they get on
18 board, we would be looking to them to understand how
19 they could innovatively and effectively and
20 efficiently design and deliver this location so we
21 would be looking to them for some more specificity as
22 to the orientation. Tim would give them the guts,
23 what we need there, for lack of a better word, that
24 would be prescribed, but it would be up to them or we

2 would be leaning on them for the design to finalize
3 the design.

4 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Is MTA open getting
5 someone from the BIPOC community or M/WBE for design
6 build? Are you guys looking into that?

7 TIM GIANFRANCESCO: The design build
8 contracts, these are federally funded contracts so
9 they will be following the DBE requirements. I
10 believe the requirements of this contract are going
11 to be between 17 and 20 percent DBE participation.

12 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Okay. This was
13 mentioned earlier, but can you share where you are in
14 your outreach process with the Community Board, local
15 schools and institutions that would be impacted by
16 this project and how you're going to incorporate
17 their feedback into your planning process?

18 JOE O'DONNELL: As I mentioned, we had a
19 community information center as part of Second Avenue
20 Subway Phase 1. We established that center, the
21 physical presence in the community probably about
22 halfway through the program, and one of the things
23 that we learned from that was the only knock that we
24 had on the community information center is why didn't
25 you do it sooner so taking that lesson learned from

2 Phase 1, we established that physical presence in the
3 community in 2017, well before we had a shovel in the
4 ground. As I noted already, we don't have a contract
5 so well before we even had a contract to start work
6 up here so we've been there since 2017. Our community
7 information center has entertained prior to COVID,
8 the public engagement process is a little unique now
9 as we emerge from COVID, but prior to COVID we had
10 over 10,000 visitors come through our doors at the
11 community information center. One of the things that
12 we learned from being in the community early on was
13 that the East Harlem community was appreciative of
14 the fact, we shouldn't have sat around and wait for
15 them to come to us for the information. It was
16 expressed very early one, and I see Council Member
17 Brewer, and she was one of the ones that expressed
18 that to us. We needed to bring that message to the
19 community so along with the community information
20 center, and again this is prior to COVID, things are
21 a little bit different as we emerge from the COVID
22 fog, haze, we have popup centers that we created all
23 over the East Harlem area. Typically, what we
24 would've done was we had a popup center at each of
25 the corresponding station areas on the Lex line to

2 create an awareness for how the project was going to
3 be implemented and what the new stations would do to
4 relieve overcrowding and the options that would be
5 available to the folks who are using the 4, 5, 6 now
6 once Second Avenue Subway is fully realized.

7 Additionally, as I noted, we are fully engaged with
8 the Community Board. We meet regularly. We meet

9 quarterly with them at the very least at their

10 Transportation and Land Use Committees to talk to

11 them about developments with the project. We update

12 the East Harlem elected contingent. We work with the

13 likes of WE ACT and Uptown Grand Central as part of

14 their visioning process to understand how that 125th

15 Street, Park Avenue corridor, that intersection of

16 those 2 main arteries can be reimaged. I also might

17 point out for the benefit of the Committee as part of

18 the MTA's transformation, the construction arm that I

19 have worked for for over 10 years had previously been

20 known as MTA Capital Construction. In 2019, we were

21 ordered by executive order to undergo a

22 transformation, and we created in early 2020, prior

23 to COVID, MTA Construction and Development, and what

24 that did was it consolidated all of the construction

25 or capital projects of all of the agencies, transit,

2 capital, the commuter rails like MNR and LIRR,
3 bridges and tunnels, buses, etc. underneath one roof
4 so now rather than have a disparate Park Avenue
5 viaduct project over here, a Second Avenue Subway
6 project over here, and somebody not talking to the
7 other we have a much more unified and cohesive effort
8 to move forward so that we are working
9 collaboratively together to ensure that we are
10 minimizing impacts on the surrounding community, so I
11 hope that's helpful.

12 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: That was very helpful.
13 I know we've had this discussion before but, for the
14 record, I know that currently this project is for
15 transit purposes and uses, particularly for those
16 parcels, are you thinking or is MTA thinking about
17 future capital related uses for this area?

18 JOE O'DONNELL: This ancillary and
19 entrance structure is a transit designated use for
20 the purposes of the Second Avenue Subway. We've had
21 conversations with several of the Council Members
22 about making sure that, certainly the ground floor
23 use of these facilities to the extent possible are
24 not dead spaces. That's another lesson learned that
25 we've taken from other projects and specifically from

2 Phase 1. 125th Street is a vital and vibrant
3 commercial corridor in East Harlem so we want to make
4 sure that as this design process moves forward we're
5 incorporating things, commercial space, etc. that
6 does not create dead space in this area and then also
7 as this project advances it does not preclude joint
8 development down the road. We do not have a joint
9 development project in place at the moment or a
10 developer in place, but the design that we are
11 putting are forward or the design builder puts
12 forward would not preclude joint development in the
13 future. Robair, Tim, if you wanted to add anything to
14 that.

15 TIM GIANFRANCESCO: No, Joe, I think that
16 covered it.

17 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. If there
18 aren't Council Member questions, this panel is
19 excused. Are there any members of the public who wish
20 to testify on this item?

21 JEFFREY CAMPAGNA, COUNSEL: There are no
22 members of the public who are signed up to testify
23 for this item.

24 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Seeing no
25 other members of the public or Council Members who

2 want to ask questions for preconsidered LU item for
3 application, number 220010 TAM, the public hearing on
4 these items are now closed. That concludes today's
5 business.

6 I want to remind you all again that if
7 you have written testimony on today's items, you may
8 submit it at landusetestimony@concil.nyc.gov. Please
9 indicate the LU number or the project name in the
10 subject heading. I would like to thank the
11 applicants, members of the public, my Colleagues,
12 Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use staff, and Sergeants-
13 at-Arms for participating in today's hearing. This
14 meeting is now adjourned. Thank you.

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS, AND
DISPOSITIONS

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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 May 10, 2022