

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES 1

2 CITY COUNCIL

3 CITY OF NEW YORK

4 ----- X

5 TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

6 Of the

7 SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND

8 FRANCHISES

9 ----- X

10 September 22, 2025

11 Start: 11:09 a.m.

12 Recess: 1:07 p.m.

13 HELD AT: 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing

14 Room 3

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

16 Chairperson

17 COUNCIL MEMBERS:

18 Shaun Abreu

19 David M. Carr

20 Kamillah Hanks

21 Shekar Krishnan

22 Francisco P. Moya

23 Yusef Salaam

24 Lynn C. Schulman

25

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

3 Frank St. Jacques
4 Akerman LLP

5 Andrew Esposito
6 7801 Queens (Applicant)

7 Brianna Cea
8 OCA New York

9 Alton Smith
10 Land Use Chair

11 Jennifer Ocha
12 Self

13 Mary Maria Geimpino
14 Community Board Chair

15 Clara Maria Solas
16 Self

17 Theodore Perez
18 SCIU Local 32 BJ

19 Adam Rothkrug
20 Rothkrug & Spector, Morgan Avenue

21 Ethan Goodman
22 Fox Rothchild

23 Paul Carr
24 UOVO

25 Caroline Page Katz
President and CEO of UOVO

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES 3

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

3 Cyril Piet Valasa
4 UOVO

5 Travis Bouer
6 Self

7 Brennan Lowery
8 Self

9 Ho Jae Kim

10 Jake Hellar
11 Self

12 Louise Villacci
13 LIFT

14 Latima King
15 LIFT

16 Yesiyu Zhaa (SP?)
17 UOVO

18 Sierra Maronta
19 Self

20 Tyron Armstrong
21 UOVO

22 Shawn Driscoll
23 Self

24 Daniel Morris
25 Self

 Paul Samulski
 North Brooklyn Chamber

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning. This is a microphone check for the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises, located on the 8th Floor here in Room Number 3, recorded on September 22, 2025, by Nazly Paytuvi.

Good morning and welcome to today's New York City Council hearing for the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. At this time, please silence all electronic devices. No one may approach the dais at any time during this hearing. Chair Riley, we are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [GAVEL] Good morning everyone and welcome to a meeting of the Subcommittee of Zoning and Franchises. I am Council Member Kevin Riley, Chair of this Subcommittee. This morning, I am joined by Council Member Abreu and Council Member Krishnan.

Today, we are holding public hearings on three new items. I want to let everyone know that a number of items originally scheduled for today's agenda have been laid over including LU's 351 and 352 for Park - excuse me, for 350 Park Avenue, 357 for the JFK conduit Logistic Center, 358 for the Broadway Junction Station City Map change, and LU's

379, 380, and 381 for the Sidewalk Café Application known as El Caldero, Lava Rock and Green Pavilion.

Once again, these items are laid over and now, before I go into details about today's hearing I will now go over the meeting procedures.

This meeting is being held in hybrid format.

Members of the public who wish to testify may testify in person or through Zoom. Members of the public wishing to testify remotely, may register by visiting the New York City Council's website at www.council.nyc.gov/landuse to sign up and for those of you here in person, please see one of the Sergeant at Arms to prepare and submit a speakers card. And please indicate if you're in opposition or if you're in favor of the project. Members of the public may also view a livestream broadcast of this meeting at the Council's website. When you are called to testify before this Subcommittee, if you are joining us remotely, you will remain muted until recognized by myself to speak. When you are recognized, your microphone will be unmuted.

We will limit public testimony to two minutes per witness. If you have additional testimony that you would like this Subcommittee to consider or if

you have written testimony that you would like to submit instead of appearing in person, please email it to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Written testimony may be submitted up to three days after the hearing is closed. Please indicate the LU numbers or project in the subject line of your email.

We request that the witnesses joining us remotely remain in the meeting until excused by myself as Council Members may have questions.

Lastly, for everyone attending today's meeting, this is a government proceeding and decorum must be observed at all times. Members of the public are asked not to speak during the meeting unless you are testifying. The witness table is reserved for people who are called to testify and no video recording or photography is allowed from the witness table. Further, members of the public may not present audio or video recording as testimony but may submit transcripts of such recording to the Sergeant at Arms for inclusion in the hearing record.

I will now open the public hearing on Preconsidered LU items under ULURP Number C 250044

ZMQ and N 250045 ZRQ for 78-01 Queens Boulevard Rezoning. An application by a private applicant to facilitate the redevelopment of a new 13 story mixed use building with approximately 314 dwelling units, including MIH units and a new local retail space in Queens in Council Member Krishnan's district.

The action includes a zoning map amendment to change an existing M1-1 zoning district to an R7X/C2-3 zoning district and a zoning text amendment to map MIH. For anyone wishing to testify regarding this proposal remotely, if you have not already done so, you must register online by visiting the Council's website at council.nyc.gov/landuse.

For anyone with us in person, please see one of the Sergeant at Arms to submit a speakers card. If you prefer to submit written testimony, you can always do so by emailing it to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. I will now like to yield the floor to Council Member Krishnan for his opening remarks.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Good morning everyone. Thank you so much Chair Riley. As the Chair

1 mentioned, uh, I am Council Member Shekar Krishnan
2 representing Elmhurst as part of my district where
3 the proposed project on Queens Boulevard is
4 situated. Thank you all for coming out and for
5 today's hearing. I am looking forward to hearing
6 more from both my neighbors and community as well
7 as the developer APEX about the land use action
8 proposed in Elmhurst.
9

10 This currently, the proposal raises a number of
11 concerns for me. It is a mega project that
12 includes a number of sites where I have not heard
13 anything from the owners of those sites. No
14 outreach whatsoever and proposes a massive
15 residential rezoning when there are a number of
16 small businesses that thrive with the current
17 manufactured zoning, manufacturing zoning. On
18 their sites. In addition, the proposed project
19 raises a number of other fundamental issues and
20 concerns for me that I'd like to hear more about
21 today. One, affordability. There's no doubt that
22 our district, in Elmhurst in particular, and
23 frankly across the city, we are in the middle of a
24 grave housing crisis and we need action and
25 development that is going to address the issue of

both the lack of housing, as well as the affordability of that housing.

Elmhurst in particular, is in need of more affordable housing that meet the needs of our district. And so, I'd like to hear more today and I have serious concerns about the current project and proposal and the affordability issues that it raises.

Two, we are also a district that has the least amount of green space in all of New York City. That includes from Jackson Heights to Elmhurst. And so, when we think about housing development, it is also important to think about how that will also effect and impact the importance of creating an open space that is as much an issue of parks as it is an issue of climate in our districts.

Finally, we also require development that in being thoughtful respond to the need for community spaces that support the needs of our neighborhoods too. When we have development, it increases population, not only is it important to ensure the development meets the needs of residents but that also it creates the third community spaces that are needed to support the growing populations of our

neighborhood as well. And again, we ranked dead last when it comes to public community space as well and that's true for Elmhurst as much it is for other parts of my district. So, I look forward to hearing more today from APEX about its proposal and the other sites as well, and I look forward to hearing from my neighbors and constituents who might be here for your testimony about this proposal.

Thank you so much Chair Riley.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you Council Member. I just want to state for the record; we've been joined by Chair Hanks and also Council Member Moya remotely. I will now call the applicant panel for this proposal, which consists of Frank St. Jacques and Andrew Esposito. Counsel, can you please administer the affirmation?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Applicants would you please raise your right hands. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this Subcommittee and in answer to all Council Member questions Mr. St. Jacques?

FRANK ST. JACQUES: Yes, I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Mr. Esposito?

ANDREW ESPOSITO: Yes, I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. For the viewing public, if you need an accessible version of this presentation, please send an email request to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. And now the applicant team may begin, I just ask that you please reinstate your name and organization for the record. You may begin. Thank you.

FRANK ST. JACQUES: Good morning Chair Riley and Council Members. My names is Frank St. Jacques, I'm with Akerman LLP. We're a land use counsel for this project. I'm joined by Andrew Esposito representing the applicant 78 at 1 Holdings LLC. We have a presentation that I'll begin once it's loaded on the screen.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Can we upload the presentation? We can't see it in the room.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: The presentation is up. Please let me contact IT.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Excuse me fellows, just give it a second alright. Thank you for your patience.

FRANK ST. JACQUES: Thank you.

[00:12:18-00:15:23]

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Alright, I think we're good to go.

FRANK ST. JACQUES: Excellent, thank you.

Again, Frank St. Jacques with Akerman LLP. This project is a collaboration between two local development firms. Both have experience developing within Queens. The project architect is FX Collaborative and we worked with A CARE as our environmental consultant. Next slide please.

The rezoning area shown here on the zoning map and inset is located within Elmhurst. It's within an M1-1 zoning district that was established in 1961. Zoning districts mapped in the surrounding area in addition to the M1-1 are C4-2, which is a R6 resident commercial equivalent. R6 as well, R5, R4, and R4-B, 1989 and 1990 rezonings maps the R6 between Barnwell and Cornish and the R9-C23 between Cornish and Dongen replacing the existing M11.

On the map and on the next slide, I've highlighted where R7X is also mapped along Queens Boulevard to the west of the rezoning area and shown here on this detail. Much of the R7X was

mapped nearly 20 years ago and the 2006 Maspeth Woodside rezoning shown here.

The rezoning area is just off of this map, of course we're in a different community district. The district boundary is at the edge of the map but it's important to note that there's Preston 4-R7X with overlays along Queens Boulevard.

This 23 block span was mostly 68-1 and M1-1 along with lower density residential districts that was again mapped with R7X. The Commission, they City Planning Commission then indicated that R7X would foster opportunities for new housing and buildings of a scale and density appropriate for the wide Queens Boulevard thoroughfare and in inclusionary housing designated area was created to promote affordable housing production. And then MIH was mapped in separate actions more recently that also established R7X zoning districts at the eastern edge of this portion of Queens Boulevard. Next slide please.

The rezoning area as shown here on this land use map, uhm, the rezoning area includes the block front between Barnwell and Cornish and the development site is located between all beyond and

Barnwell. The rezoning area is similar to the underutilized C8-1 and M1-1 zone portions of Queens Boulevard that were rezoned in 2006 and then in more recent private actions. The rezoning area is primarily commercial despite this M1-1 designation and the proposed rezoning would serve to connect this portion of Queens Boulevard with the adjacent R6 and C4-2, which is an R6 equivalent. It maps immediately to the south where a mixed use development is permitted.

I'll note that the C4-2, again an R6 equivalent and the R6 would allow a 3.9 residential FAR and up to 4.8 with community facility use and certain sites that are larger than 20,000 square feet could achieve a height of 125 feet. Next slide please.

The rezoning area is separated from lower density residential districts. It's located on a wide street and it's transit oriented with access to subway and bus lines. These bus and subway lines include the MR, approximately 0.5 miles to the north. The Grand Avenue Newtown Station, approximately 1.5 miles to the east, the Jackson Heights Roosevelt Avenue Station serving the EFMNR lines, approximately just under a mile away and bus

lines include the Q60, Q58, Q59, and express Q53 bus lines. The proposed development site, uhm, shaded here includes 3 tax lots that would be developed as a single zoning lot and then as I noted, includes non-applicant owned properties both on the same block as the development site and on the adjacent block front between Barnwell and Cornish. Next slide please.

Just to note that Community District 4, as the Council Member noted, has a clear need for new housing and affordable housing. This rezoning presents an opportunity to meet that need. There's a critical need for housing in Community District 4 where 54 percent of residents are rent burdened. Community District 4 has the 6th highest rent burdened population in New York City and the second highest in Queens. Higher than Queens overall at 46.8 percent and New York City overall at 44.5 percent. Also note that the housing stock is aging, just shy of 86 percent was built before 1980. Next slide please.

So, we're here proposing two land use actions. The Zoning Map Amendment that would change the M1-1 to R7X C2-4 and the Zoning Text Amendment to

establish a mandatory inclusionary housing area.

Next slide please. That zoning map change is represented on this map. The left hand side of the screen represents the existing zoning. Again, M11 adjacent to R6 and C4-2 zoning districts and would establish that R7X C2-4 with uhm, excuse me I said C2-4 twice. I should have C2-3 zoning district on those two block fronts, including the development site block between Albion and Barnwell and the adjacent block between Barnwell and Cornish. Next slide please.

These proposed actions would facilitate the redevelopment of the development site with a new 13 story mixed use building; it would be about 266,000 total square feet of total floor area. That's a 6.0 FAR, about 239,000 square feet of residential floor area, about 18,000 of which would be reserved for community facility use on the 1st and 2nd floors, about 9,000 square feet for a commercial use. The building would have 314 total apartments under MIH. 79 would be reserved as permanently affordable MIH units and I'll show you that breakdown in a moment. There would be a 159 space parking garage. That parking garage would have EB

charging stations. I'll note that the building would be an electric building. It would also include green roofs, efficient systems and materials and then a large open landscape space. At the rear of the building, approximately 56,000 square feet, which you can see on the inset on the lower right hand side of the screen.

I will note that the parking in the outer transit zone, where the rezoning area is located, there's a 15 percent requirement for standard or market rate units and no requirement for MIH units. The 15 percent requirement would require 35 parking spaces. However, this building would provide 159. So, about 125 more spaces than are required. Next slide please.

Here I have a luster of MIH breakdown, showing Option 1 mapped at the site. MIH Option 1 requires a 25 percent of the residential floor area at a weighted average of 60 percent AMI or Area Median Income with 10 percent at 40 percent AMI. The breakdown is shown here, 32 units at 42 percent AMI, 15 at 60 percent AMI, and 32 at 80 percent AMI resulting in an average of 60 percent AMI but providing a range of affordability across unit

sizes. And again, there's a breakdown showing not only with the AMI's but with the corresponding unit distribution.

That is our last slide. Myself and the representative from the applicant are here to answer questions. I will just note that I did mention the R7X that had been mapped extensively along Queens Boulevard to the west of the site. Really the goal for this rezoning and for those prior rezonings is to facilitate housing production on a wide corridor near transit that can support housing at higher densities, which is what we're proposing here. This allows MIH to be created through cross subsidies with standard or market rate housing. Again, ensuring that there's not only new housing created, but affordable housing created as well. Thank you and we're happy to answer any questions.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you Frank. I just have a few questions then I'm going to turn it over to Council Member Krishnan. You answered my first question, which is the proposed for centers of family sized units and you guys are open to possibly having more two bedrooms, three bedrooms?

FRANK ST JACQUES: Yes, we're open. We're happy to hear suggestions with respect to that. These are illustrative plans but we're proposing approximately 30 percent two bedrooms and 5 percent three bedrooms.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. In addition to the development site, there are six properties including in the rezoning area that are not owned by the applicant. What was your rationale for including these additional properties in this application?

FRANK ST JACQUES: So, the rationale for including the nonapplicant owned sites, uhm, it's twofold. The block front that includes the development site has a parcel that's non applicant owned at the corner of Barnwell and Queens Boulevard. It didn't make sense to exclude that portion of the block front from the area we're rezoning. Obviously it has the same land use rationale as the development site being on a wide street near transit. So, we included that site and then as well, the additional block front between Barnwell and Cornish, to link up the proposed R7X with the existing R6-C23 map to the east along

Queens Boulevard and better link it up to the C42 map to the south of Queens Boulevard.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: I understand these are soft sites. Has there been any communication with the owners of these properties? Is there any information known regarding future development plans for these sites?

FRANK ST JACQUES: So, into your second question first, we don't know of any development plans. As part of a conservative environmental analysis, we identified two development sites on the same block that out parcel Lot 1 as a projected development site and lots 7 and 10 on the adjacent block 1538, which would be another projected development site. Really the goal is to ensure that you know where this rezoning to be approved, we would look at potential environmental impacts that could happen from the redevelopment of not only those nonapplicant owned sites but the applicant owned sites. I will note that e-designations have been placed on the applicant owned site as well as the two projected development sites for Hazmat, air quality, and noise to ensure that, and as well as

MIH is being mapped over the entirety of the rezoning area.

So, where these projects to be developed, they would also require MIH and be subject to e-designations for those areas.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Has there been any communication with the property owners?

FRANK ST JACQUES: There has not.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Do you guys plan on doing communication with the property owners?

FRANK ST JACQUES: I can turn it over to Andrew, I believe at the outset, we attempted to be in touch with the property owners on the adjacent block front. My understanding is there's very long term leases of the commercial businesses on that block front and they weren't interested in pursuing the rezoning in conjunction with our applicant team.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. The proposed development site is located on Queens Boulevard, a busy thoroughfare and is adjacent to auto related industry and commercial uses, warehouses and parking facilities. How will you ensure sidewalk conditions are safe and suitable for pedestrians?

FRANK ST JACQUES: So, as part of the proposed development, it will likely - it will require builders pavement plan. Wherein the central to the sidewalk will need to be rebuilt along the sidewalk that's continuous with the development site. You know we believe that the development site is separate from those more industrial uses that are to the west and north of the site, separated by Albion Avenue and then the property line to the north of the site.

So, you know we think that new sidewalks will be created, excuse me, will be built. But then also, there's sufficient separating from the development site and those existing industrial uses.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you Frank. Thank you Andrew. Council Member Krishnan.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Yes, thank you so much Chair Riley. I just have a few questions and I appreciate the presentation. I just wanted to learn a bit more about the project and your thinking around the two. So, just to follow up on Chair Riley's questions and to make clear there are six other sites that are not owned by you all and is it fair to say that you all do not have any

relationship with the other property owners? And as Chair Riley asked, no conversations about this rezoning with the other property owners?

FRANK ST JACQUES: That is correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: So, you have no sense at all how they would feel about a rezoning of their properties from manufacturing to a commercial to residential. Do you have no knowledge, is it fair to say no knowledge of how they would feel about it if they'd prefer this or not?

FRANK ST JACQUES: That's correct. I can only -

ANDREW ESPOSITO: Yeah, I'll just add just something from my own - you know from having been involved in this -

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Ah the mic.

ANDREW ESPOSITO: Oh, excuse me. From having been involved from you know day one, which is now going on two or three years from precertification activities, we attempted to make some outreach through public record and you know trying to identify ownership, complete zero by way of any contact whatsoever Council Member. We have no intention of pursuing any of those sites should

they be rezoned. Our core focus is on the property that we do own.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: And nor do we know - I think sounds like you all know either what these individuals would do with the residential rezoning for their properties either, is that correct?

ANDREW ESPOSITO: I know Frank alluded to some long term leases. There's a Devita Clinic that we found some public record that I think they have 10 or 15 years left on a lease.

Some of the properties are also owner occupied, I believe. Meaning that the you know businesses that occupy are the same as the ownership of the real estate, which would lend us to speculate that they would not be you know interested in a residential development. That's the current condition as far as we know it now.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Understood and so, can you give more context about uhm, kind of how come your application included all of these sites? What was the rationale for it being such a big rezoning?

FRANK ST JACQUES: Absolutely, I can elaborate on that and I'll start by saying you know when you know we first started working on this rezoning with

the Department of City Planning, our sole interest is you know redeveloping this single site. City Planning looks at things more comprehensively. They want to ensure that an applicant - it does not run into any issues as it relates to spot zoning or just rezoning in a single site for the sole benefit of a property owner.

So, you know we look at a larger zoning district boundary. As I noted during our presentation, we included the nonapplicant owned property on our block front, as well as the adjacent block to create a linkage between the proposed new R7X zoning district and the existing residential and residential equivalent districts. So, it's not to have a gap between the newly created residential district and the existing residential district. So, they're you know not to have essentially an M-district in between those two residential districts.

These land use rationale for our site also applies to the adjacent block fronts. You're correct in noting that it's the full block front, so it's all those properties but based on uhm, an analysis of the reasonable worse case development

scenario, only one assemblage was identified as a projected development site. You're correct though that the entirety of the block front could be redeveloped.

I will note that uhm, where to be any existing industrial uses and that block front adjacent to the development site block front where rezoned, those manufacturing uses could continue as legal nonconforming uses and the C2 overlay would also allow commercial business escalate to higher FAR. So, going from a 2 or excuse me, from a 1 in an M11 to a 2 FAR in M12.

So, it certainly doesn't have any adverse impact on either existing businesses or potential commercial growth where they choose to redevelop without residential use.

But to answer your question, it was really a sort of a lengthy discussion with City Planning and creating and trying to strengthen the land use rationale for not only rezoning this site, but other sites that had a - the same or comparable land use rationale.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Got it. Thank you and as I mentioned before in my opening statement too,

1 you know that raises a lot of concerns for me
2 because I have not heard from those owners of those
3 sites. It makes for a much larger and massive
4 rezoning and confers - benefits I suppose of
5 residential; although for some of the existing
6 businesses there, they may not see it as a benefit
7 but it really enlarges the scope of this entire
8 proposal without the input and understanding or
9 knowledge and awareness of how that would affect
10 the existing businesses that are there and what
11 their desires are one way or another.

12 Let's move now to another topic that's come to
13 my attention too, which is I have heard concerns
14 from constituents about the environmental concerns
15 they have with this site. I've heard some concerns
16 that it's a brown field site. I know there's this
17 - you mentioned before too, something about an e-
18 designation as well. Can you just walk us through
19 - is this site a brown field? What are - what does
20 the e-designation mean? What are the environmental
21 issues raised with your site in particular and
22 whose raised those issues from a government agency
23 standpoint?
24

FRANK ST JACQUES: Sure, uhm, so the first question is a very simple answer. This is not a brown field site. That is a term of art and this site is not and has not been a brown field site. Nor is it a super fund site. There is concerns that we initially addressed in a letter to Community Board 4 and you know as part of this rezoning, I mentioned that in an environmental assessment statement, it was prepared and reviewed by the Department of City Planning and sister agencies, including the New York City Department of Environmental Protection and e-designation or environmental designation will if this rezoning were approved, would be against this site, essentially creating a requirement that any development on the site before Department of Buildings permits are issued, has to go through a hazardous materials rehabilitation or remediation process overseen by the Office of Environmental Remediation, a New York City agency.

The reason that this Hazmat e-designation was mapped against the site is that a phase one; this is like an initial review of a site and site conditions and you know a search for any potential

1 issues relating to hazardous materials. It
2 concluded that there's no recognized environmental
3 conditions, known as REC's, on the site; however,
4 there is a historic environmental condition
5 identified. Essentially there is a spill that was
6 identified at the site that was cleaned up pursuant
7 to the New York City, New York State Department of
8 Environmental Conservation objectives.

10 So, I can provide - that gets a little
11 technical, but I can provide you know further
12 explanation of that in writing. It's certainly in
13 our environmental assessment statement, as well as
14 in the negative declaration, that was ultimately
15 issued by the Department of City Planning
16 indicating that this project would have no
17 significant adverse impacts relating to hazardous
18 materials or other issue areas if the rezoning were
19 approved.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Thank you and Chair, I
21 have a few more questions, if that's okay with you?

22 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, go ahead Council
23 Member.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Thank you. On that
25 point in particular too. So, given that it's not a

1 brown field, it was a negative declaration, the e-
2 designation or the survey that was done that
3 concluded that, was that something that you all put
4 forward as an additional responsibility or was that
5 something that was imposed on you all? I'm just
6 seeing a bit more of where the additional
7 environmental remediation came from.

9 FRANK ST JACQUES: Sure, uhm, I'm not sure how
10 to characterize it in terms of an imposition. I
11 mean it certainly is an imposition. The city is
12 mandating that any development pursuant to the e-
13 designation undergo remediation to the satisfaction
14 of the Office of Environmental Remediation. It's
15 something that was required to be disclosed during
16 the environmental assessment statement process.
17 There's a whole chapter relating to hazardous
18 materials, wherein the applicant team prepared a
19 phase one. It was reviewed by the Department of
20 City Planning and the Department of Environmental
21 Protection. They determined that although there is
22 on again, recognized environmental conditions,
23 there was this historical clean up at the site that
24 necessitated the e-designation.

ANDREW ESPOSITO: I can just add one piece of context to that. Uhm, so today the site does not have an e-designation. There could be three, air, noise or hazmat. There is none today. So, if we were to choose to redevelop under an as of right scenario or commercial use, etc., we would not have to go through the Office of Environmental Remediation, which is more stringent than the typical Department of Environmental Protection, which is the typical city agency that we work with in development activities for environmental.

So, it is very much a belt and suspenders kind of proposition at Department of City Planning asked us to include which of course we were amenable to and we work with OER quite a bit. That process will include quite a bit of additional remediation work including things like the soil, characterization, facilities, where that soil goes to, our specific versus a more traditional DEP type remediation. So, under an as of right scenario, we could still develop the site, not what we're here talking about today but we could develop the site to do something else as of right and not have to do

any of this, just to be you know crystal clear for the record.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Thank you. My next - two more topics I wanted to address quickly. One was the project I believe currently is MIH Option 1, which is 25 percent at 60. Is that what it is?

FRANK ST JACQUES: At an average of 60.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: At an average of 60.

FRANK ST JACQUES: With 10 percent at 40, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Okay, you are aware that the Area Median Income of Elmhurst is 50 percent of AMI, right?

FRANK ST JACQUES: We were made aware, well I was at least at CB4 and you know we did hear that that was a major concern, which you know therefore does become a concern of ours, in so much that we of course want to you know work with CB4 and your office to the extent possible.

My challenge, which I expressed at CB4 and I understand it's a different challenge than theirs and that yours may be, is that projects like these meaning MIH projects don't come with or entail any subsidy dollars. So, they're completely privately financed.

So, there is this median that has to be met so that the project can actually be built because there has to be a construction lender, which will typically be a private bank. So, there has to be enough rent to support a mortgage on construction. That's just an economic reality that we face and because you can't get subsidy for the MIH.

So, you know having said that, that's just a little bit of the rationale behind why we're stuck somewhat between a rock and a hard place but to the extent there's something that can be you know done to show some additional good faith, I think we'd be amenable to that.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Understood and that was my next question was just you know knowing that the project currently as it stands is you know not affordable to Elmhurst given the average AMI and where the MIH is.

What is your willingness and flexibility to explore increasing the - deepening the affordability to ensure it comes closer to meeting the needs of how much residents?

FRANK ST JACQUES: So, the applicant is amenable to having those conversations, to deepening the

1 affordability. I do want to push back a little bit
2 about the project not being affordable to Elmhurst
3 residents. We are providing you know this is an
4 average. It's an Area Median Income. We
5 understand that it's lower than the weighted
6 average of 60 percent AMI but 32 units at 40
7 percent AMI, 15 units at 60 percent AMI, 32 units
8 at 80 percent AMI, really spreads the comparable
9 average to what is provided or with MIH.
10

11 So, you know we're working with MIH Option 1.
12 That's one of the tools in the toolbox at this
13 point but I will reiterate that we're happy to
14 deepen that affordability.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: I appreciate that and
16 will take you up on that as well because I do think
17 one of my biggest concerns is the affordability
18 levels of this project and where it comes out to be
19 relative to the needs in my district, so I will be
20 following up on that and appreciate your openness
21 to those conversations. The next two questions I
22 have just to conclude are one, is the - right now
23 there is some square footage, I believe about
24 18,000 or so square feet for community facility.
25 Is that correct? And what are your considerations

or thoughts as to what the community facility would be and what is your openness to having discussions with my office on what that looks like because I'm not clear myself.

FRANK ST JACQUES: Sure, so I'll start with the second part first. We are very much open to conversations about a tenant for that community space. In terms of zoning square footage, it's about 18,000 square feet. That's illustrative in terms of growth square footage, it's close to 20,000 square feet. We've designed it in the building as the 1st and 2nd floor. We believe that a local nonprofit operator would be a really great community asset for this project and we're happy to have a conversation about who that may be. We've certainly had internal conversations and have identified a potential partner but you know we're happy to continue a conversation with you and your team to make sure that it's someone that is acceptable to you and ultimately benefit for the community.

ANDREW ESPOSITO: Yeah, just to put it, I mean to be completely transparent because I think we talked about it a little bit at CB4. We've had

1 preliminary conversations with an organization
2 called Common Point, previously Common Point
3 Queens. They have a facility right down the block
4 that they call the HUB and they do quite a bit of
5 community you know youth programming. You know
6 they do food pantries and you know job
7 certifications etc..

9 So, the thought preliminarily was uhm, some
10 program space for uses like that potentially with
11 an organization like Common Point, just to add some
12 context.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Thank you. I do
14 appreciate further conversation. You know I will
15 say currently the programs and things like that you
16 know, we've got to do a lot more because our
17 community as I mentioned before, we are in great
18 need of community spaces to support the amount of
19 housing development that comes into and I think
20 that you know projects that are proposed in my
21 district, that's a very important consideration for
22 me. So, I look forward to having further
23 conversations because I think much more is required
24 here.

1 My final questions to conclude is, can you talk
2 a bit about mentioned before, there's a great need
3 for green and open space in my district. We have
4 the least amount of it in the city. I believe
5 there is some open space being proposed here. I'd
6 like to know where - the reason for that. Where
7 it's coming from? If it's being triggered by the
8 number of sites that are being included. Is that
9 something that you all are open to sticking with,
10 even if all these sites are not included in the
11 proposal or is this being done because of mandate
12 being imposed on you and what your vision is for
13 that space.
14

15 FRANK ST JACQUES: Yeah so there's approximately
16 uhm just shy of 5,700 square feet of privately
17 owned publicly accessible open space.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Sorry, 5,700, is that
19 what you said?

20 FRANK ST JACQUES: Yes, I'm sorry. So, just shy
21 of 5,700 square feet of publicly, sorry privately
22 owned, publicly accessible open space sort of at
23 the western edge of the project. If you recall
24 from the rendering, it may be hard to imagine the
25 building is essentially a U or V shaped building

and the open portion of the building on the western edge, uhm accessible from Barnwell would be open to the public and would include both active and passive uses. Oh, thanks for putting that back up.

So, in the bottom right hand side of the screen, you can see where that space would be accessible from Barnwell. This space was incorporated into the project and is now a requirement of the project. The Department of City Planning has a restrictive declaration that would be recorded against the property, requiring that if the development were to go forward pursuant to the rezoning, that this space be provided and ultimately that a site plan be reviewed and essentially blessed by the Department of Parks.

So, as part of the Environmental Assessment Statement, we had to look at open space. We understand and as you noted that this community district has a lack of publicly accessible open space. So, one of the requirements under seeker for the Environmental Assessment Statement was to make a commitment to provide publicly accessible open space for this site to accommodate the potential new residents that would be brought into

the community or sorry - not brought into it but residing in the building such that the open space ration isn't adversely effected.

ANDREW ESPOSITO: But I would clarify to your point that in candor this was a requirement that was created by virtue of the larger footprint of the rezoning. So, you know what we're talking about now is new to me in that potential shrinking of the scale, which likely would obviate our requirement I think and we'll have to look into this to provide this. I think that's your direct question. I just want to be direct back. I do believe that will be the case.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Got it and that was my direct question. Thank you and I would just say, you know a green space and open space is important to me. Whether or not it's a requirement coming from this side to the rezoning or not but it's part of what I think is important, responsible, and thoughtful development and I would expect further conversations on what would happen with that green space where not a requirement but I will just you know flag right now to that that is not something that I would want to see changed or see simply

coming from a requirement being opposed by the city.

FRANK ST JACQUES: And we'll look into that further with respect to how a potentially smaller rezoning district boundary would effect that. My recollection is that it would not. That the publicly accessible open space would be a requirement for to serve this site alone but we can confirm pretty quickly with your office.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Thank you. Thank you Chair. No further questions.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you Council Member. There being no further questions for this applicant panel, you are now excused. Thank you so much.

FRANK ST JACQUES: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: We will now transition to public testimony. I would like to call; I can't read the last name but first name is Brianna. Yes, come Brianna. I believe we only have one in person testimony. If there is someone else in person that wants to testify, please see one of the Sergeant at Arms to submit a speakers card.

After this testimony, we will transition to online testimony. Brianna, just please reinstate your name for the record and you may begin.

BRIANNA CEA : Great, well thank you so much City Council members for having me. My name is Brianna Cea. I'm a member of Community Board 4 ULURP Committee, past President at OCA New York and the National Vice President at Public Affairs OCA National. An AAPI civil rights organization and I'm here to urge the City Council to listen to the residents of Elmhurst and Corona and reject the mega rezoning of 7801 Queens Boulevard that will drive up the rent in our neighborhood.

Our board overwhelmingly disapproves this egregious project and over a dozen local nonprofits and community leaders have come out against this rezoning and I've provided a copy of a letter for your use. Because it will fundamentally change the character of Elmhurst generations, eliminate one of our only manufacturing districts and set a dangerous precedent for developments along Queens Boulevard by flooding this market with 75 percent market rate housing with this one site alone. Let alone these developers just admitted not being in

contact with the other property owners and having no idea what may happen with the broader rezoning.

This 13 story high rise will tower over neighboring homes, local temples and small businesses by potentially adding 2,000 new residents within just a two block radius. It will overwhelm our local infrastructure, schools and increase traffic, all while claiming to provide bare minimum community benefits.

My mom was born in Elmhurst Hospital. My grandmother had won the high businesses in the district and was a founding member of the Ti Temple that is just near blocks from this application and I want to believe that I have a future of raising a family here, so I can show them our growing and beautiful little Thailand community that our City Council Member has helped champion.

As routine in other China Towns and other ethnic enclaves across the city, just one high rise development like this, with majority market units, will pave the way for more luxury housing and high end stores. In turn, these developments will jack up rent prices for our Asian American small

businesses and elderly residents that rely on these cultural corridors.

I don't know about you all but the future of me raising my family here isn't looking too bright. For the past two years, I've been looking to move within the district and I can tell you for a fact, based on even those AMI levels alone, I will not be able to stay in this neighborhood.

The developer claims they want to rent to people like me, but with guarantee and with what sacrifices to our communities and our working class families and elders.

Again, I urge you to reject this application and to refer to the letter to see the other nonprofits that signed against this application as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you for your testimony. Council Member Krishnan has a question.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Good morning Brianna. Good to see you. Thank you for your testimony and I appreciate all your feedback at the Community Board meeting and here as well. I just have one question, which you know just stepping back for a second, given the fact as I'm sure you'd agree, we

are in a major housing crisis in the city and the need for housing is great. Within the context of the current proposal, knowing that there are problem, obviously a number of sites included as well, that raise significant concerns.

Currently the property is a commercial space, the bank. It is the private site at the end of the day too. So, in light of the housing crisis we face, in light of the fact that this is currently no housing at all but a bank, and in light of the fact that it is ultimately a private land at the end of the day too, is there any alternative vision or ways that this proposal could be improved that would help address the fundamental housing crisis that we all agree that we face in the city?

I'm just curious if you have any thoughts about how this project could be better or are there ways, given the context of what we're operating in in terms of what it is now and the ownership of it, are there ideas you have or any recommendations on ways to make it something that actually meets the housing crisis we face in the city?

BRIANNA CEA: Yeah, City Council and Member Krishnan and again, really appreciate all the work

1 that you've done to champion like our little
2 Thailand community and our families in the
3 district. And so, to your question, we actually
4 raised this after you came to our Community Board
5 meeting. We really appreciated you being able to
6 speak directly with the members of the Community
7 Board and the public regarding this project. We
8 ask this question amongst ourselves. A few of the
9 community leaders that signed this letter, as well
10 some of the community board members and I think
11 after really sitting again with this application,
12 we today have - I think I have the same position
13 that we had when we met with you as community
14 leaders and at the board that we do not believe
15 that this application as it stands, has uhm, has
16 room to be able to actually address the needs of
17 our neighborhood.

19 I think where we kind of come to is that we
20 still believe that we need truly affordable
21 housing. We do need more housing but that housing
22 has to be within that 50 percent AMI or lower. We
23 do also want to name that with the housing crisis;
24 there is a pattern that we see within our district
25 of speculative rezonings in a sense that these

1 areas are rezoned and then these developers don't
2 build anything on these plots. And we also have
3 like a half a dozen, if not almost a dozen zombie
4 buildings within Elmhurst and Corona alone that can
5 potentially lay a foundation for working with local
6 nonprofits, community land trusts, to actually
7 develop 100 percent affordable housing or even bare
8 minimum of 50 percent AMI, based on these MIH you
9 know level 3 Option.

11 So, I think where we stand is that just based on
12 this application, we do not feel comfortable based
13 on whether the developer has even today of the lack
14 of conversation of local businesses in that area
15 let alone potentially one nonprofit that they may
16 be able to work with on community benefits. I
17 would argue it is not sufficient and does not
18 address the concerns that we had earlier and we
19 still urge to reject this application with no
20 recommendations to move it forward. And that's the
21 community board vote as well. The community board
22 voted 30 no, one abstention, two in favor of this
23 application.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Thank you. Thanks
25 Chair.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. You're excused. Thank you so much. We're going to transition to online testimony. The first panel is going to consist of Alton Smith, Jennifer Ocha and Mary Geimpino. We'll begin first with Alton Smith. Alton, if you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin. Alton Smith? Yes, go ahead, we can hear you.

ALTON SMITH: Okay, great. Good afternoon, good morning, thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of Community Board 4. I'm the ULURP Chairperson. I've been the ULURP Chairperson since 2015. I'm going to say that the concerns that Community Board - and the reason why we did not support this development is affordability. Currently the Median Income for the area for the district is \$70,000, 30 percent of that is \$1,700 a month and that's the reason why I'm saying 50 percent of the AMI. Again, \$1,700 is what the average person can pay for housing in the area.

Another reason is that it's massive. What we have experienced here in Community Board 4 is a great deal of building, so our problem is that we have too much density. We have overcrowding.

1 So, the fact that the building will be bringing
2 in 2,000 residents to a district that's already
3 overcrowded and have a great deal of density.
4 Density started with Lefrak City at the time in
5 which emergency housing protection came into effect
6 in the 60's. And since that time, we have had
7 record numbers of multiple dwellings throughout
8 Community Board 4. Currently, the building
9 department have record numbers of pending
10 constructions. So, it's not a matter of not having
11 enough buildings. It's a matter of the rents not
12 being affordable. If you look at the rent
13 stabilized buildings in the area, two bedrooms are
14 going for no less than \$3,000. If you pull up
15 especially the large development, you see on your
16 sites that two bedrooms are going for \$3,000.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time is expired. Thank
18 you.

19 ALTON SMITH: Okay.

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next, we'll hear
21 from Jennifer. Jennifer, if you can hear me,
22 please unmute.
23

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.
25

JENNIFER OCHA: Yes, well, good afternoon everyone. Uhm, I agree with what my colleagues Brianna and Alton have stated and I can further say that yes, it's true. There is no housing crisis. The crisis is affordable housing. We have many areas like they stated before that have started construction and have been abandoned. We have ghost apartments which the greedy owners do not want to rent out because they want more for rent.

We have - please I invite you to come here and I'll give you to a person who will give you a tour with my history group here in Elmhurst of all the areas, which are under construction and haven't completed or just abandoned.

So, we have housing. We have areas but they're not affordable to our people. When you say - another thing that I do want to implore for you to please, invest in the community. Like in a YMCA, a Boys and Girls Club. From the time that I started working actively with the community, not as a student and not as a child but as an adult, the only politician that worked hand in hand with us, with the community, with the students, with the children, was State Senator José Peralta and we

were working towards getting a Boys and Girls Club. Unfortunately, that did not happen. I remember him fondly and I hope that one day we can achieve what we once had. We had arcades, we had bowling allies, we had three movie theaters, we had a four star hotel. Everything was torn down. For what? For all these apartments, luxury apartments that we cannot afford. Our own people cannot live here. I work with people with different needs, with disabilities. Where are they going to live? They can't afford to live here anymore. I can't afford to live here. I live with my family.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time is expired. Thank you.

JENNIFER OCHA: So, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you and the last person on this panel is Mary - Maria Lina. Maria Lina, if you can hear me, please unmute.

MARY MARIA GEIMPINO: Yes, thank you. I'm Chairperson of Queens Community Board 4 and also on the Board of four local nonprofits based in Elmhurst. I just want to reiterate what everyone is saying, which is true. The community does not want this. This rezoning is for luxury

development. The high density rezoning of R7X does not meet the current character of Queens Boulevard and Elmhurst, which is R6.

They keep showing a map of Woodside which is not Elmhurst, so that's also faulty information. Also, I want to say that these sites are highly contaminated. It's not just the development site; it's the other sites included in this proposal and those sites need to be looked at carefully. They claim there's a soft review of environmental, that is not enough. These sites have historically been contaminated and we do have high levels of cancer in that area.

Uhm, with the projected City of Yes, we're going to have more housing anyway but the housing issue is not a problem. Elmhurst is the affordable housing issue that's the problem. So, please be careful about that. With this rezoning, we're going to be stripping away parts of our manufacturing district. The only part left in our community board of manufacturing, which is very important. Other communities are expanding on their manufacturing, putting cultural places, recreation, youth centers, art centers, other

businesses you know things that we need. We're going to be taking that away, which is not good.

I also want to say that it will threaten our independent small business and immigrant owned businesses by increasing the affordability. And also, this seems like a land grab because these properties were bought for less because they're in a manufacturing zone and now they want to basically make full profit, market rate or higher by doing this rezoning.

And I also want to say that uhm there's 16 groups that sign on against this and this all needs to be looked at carefully because it doesn't just include the one proposal. It's going to include future developments.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time has expired. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Council Member Krishnan has a question for this panel.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Thank you so much Chair Riley and appreciate all of your testimony. Good to hear from you all. It is noted as Jennifer mentioned as part of the panel too, the lack of community space and community institutions to

support our neighborhood and help bring them together in Elmhurst. So, that is a top priority of mine and I take that concern very seriously.

I would ask either Chair Geimpino (SP?), Community Board Chair Geimpino or Land Use Chair Alton, thank you both for your testimony. This is a question for either.

As I asked before too, given the housing and affordable housing crisis that we face in this city, given the fact that currently on this site, it is commercial and it's a bank and the need generally for more affordable housing throughout our city, especially on transit oriented corridors, whether it's Northern Boulevard or Queens Boulevard, uhm and uh given the fact that again, under realistic considerations being - uh looking at the proposal, that it is a privately owned site. Are there any recommendations or vision you all have for this site that could help address our affordable housing and housing crisis that we face? Are there things that you could think - are there ways that you think this project proposal could be improved to help address it?

MARY GEIMPINO: I guess I'll go first.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Sure.

MARY GEIMPINO: Yeah no, this rezoning proposal is also a little bit I would say vague, because like I said it includes other properties that we have no idea what's going to be built there. So, that's something long term, which is very vague and we don't know what it's going to be promising for the community to have those other sites rezoned. So, that's something that's a major concern. So, as this proposal is, I would say no, there is no way that we could say yeah, this is going to help the community because it's just so vague with those other properties and we don't know if it's going to be affordable. We don't know how - what the MIH is going to be. We don't know if it's going to be built, we don't know if they're going to be a community center. We don't know what it's actually going to give to our community. So, I would say this proposal, there's nothing. There's no room to talk unless we know what else is going to be going on there.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: No, thank you Chair and Land Use Chair Alton. Alton, are you there?

ALTON SMITH: Yes, I'm here. Thank you Councilman. I did after you spoke with us, I did put it out on the floor for Community Board numbers to speak about it and they basically stood firm that they voted against it. The question was, what was the developer offering? And I think it was a misunderstanding that the developer was offering an open space to park. But basically, that after you spoke with us for almost an hour, I believe they Community Board stood basically stood next to what they said. That they do not support this proposal. And going back to what the Chair said, is that we don't know who these other owners are and according to the application, the application said that these properties, not represented by the applicant, is going to be developed into affordable housing. A total of 500 developments but yet no one has been in contact with the developers and we didn't have the opportunity to speak with them. So, that's another concern.

COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Thank you Alton. Appreciate all your testimony. Good to hear from you all. Thank you Chair.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you Council Member.
This panel is excused. The last panel we'll hear from regarding this proposal will consist of Clara Maria Solas and Theodore Perez. We'll begin first with Clara. Clara, if you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin. Clara Maria Solas, if you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin. Clara, are you there?

CLARA MARIA SOLAS: Yes, I'm here but I can't unmute.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we hear you, go ahead.

CLARA MARIA SOLAS: Yes, well, I like the project, like the opportunities, but the other speakers have pointed out, we cannot afford it. We can only afford land that can service that pay according to their income and right now the income that's placed in Manhattan and parts of Brooklyn have. We need housing for people that are middle income. They're now living in a building where it a two bedroom is \$3,500. Horrible. I can't eat with that kind of rent. So, what I can say is that we have to look this thing over, work away so we can have income according to what the people are making in the city and right now, when I moved into

my building, the rent was \$800. Today I pay \$1,600 and next year we pay \$1,700. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you Clara. Next, we'll hear from Theodore Perez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

THEODORE PEREZ: Good afternoon to Chair Riley, member Krishnan and to all the other Committee members. My name is Theo Perez; I'm here today representing SCIU Local 32 BJ. 32 BJ is the largest union of property service workers in the country, representing over 175,000 members across 13 states including tens of thousands of commercial property service workers, security officers and residential building staff in New York City. Our union is here today in support of the proposed rezoning and development at 7801 Queens Boulevard.

I am happy to report that the developers behind this proposal have made a credible commitment to creating prevailing wage jobs for the workers who will permanently staff the future development at 7801 Queens Boulevard. Good jobs like these mean prevailing wages, family sustaining benefits, and a pathway to the middle class, often for local community members who tend to fill such positions.

In addition to the important job creation that will come from this project, as rents reach historic highs and housing availability reaches a historic low, 32 BJ recognizes the need for more housing to be built in every neighborhood of New York City.

This project will introduce 314 new units of housing to Queens Community Board 4, District 4, 79 of which will be income restricted and available to low and middle income residents. As the cost of living rises and working New Yorkers struggle to stay in their homes, it is more important now than ever to create affordable housing and good jobs which uphold the industry standard in the city. For all of these reasons, 32BJ supports the 7801 Queens Boulevard rezoning proposal. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. There being no questions for this panel, this panel is excused. Is there anyone here that has to testify on LU's relating to the 78-01 Queens Boulevard rezoning?

There being no other members of the public who wish to testify on the Preconsidered LU's for ULURP number C 250044 ZMQ and N 250045 ZRQ relating to

the 78-01 Queens Boulevard rezoning. The public hearing is now closed and the item is laid over.

I will now open the public hearing on Preconsidered LU item under ULURP number C 250090 ZMK for the 535 Morgan Avenue rezoning. An application by a private applicant to rezone an existing M1-1 District to a C7-1 District. To facilitate the redevelopment of a new supermarket in the existing retail development along the western edge of the development site.

The zoning change will allow a portion of the existing building to be re-tenanted by a grocery store use of a greater than 10,000 square feet, which is not permitted as of right under the existing zoning. This project is located in Brooklyn in Council Member Gutiérrez district.

I will now call the applicant panel for this proposal, which consists of Adam Rothkrug and I see you have a few other people with you. They could just state their name for the record. Counsel, can you please administer the affirmation?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Applicants, would you please raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in

your testimony before this Subcommittee and in answer to all Council Member questions?

PANEL: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And please state your name for the record.

CHRIS PEZA: Sure, for the record, Chris Peza, I do.

LAUREN SANDERS: Lauren Sanders with ownership, I do.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. For the viewing public, if you need an accessible version of this presentation, please send an email request to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov and now the applicant team may begin.

Please just reinstate your name and organization for the record before you begin.

ADAM ROTHKRUG: Thank you. I'm Adam Rothkrug from Rothkrug and Spector. I'm here today on behalf of Hammer 2 LLC and Me and Morgan LLC and we can just go to the second slide please.

Those companies are affiliates of Midwood Investment and Development, a third generation New York based family owned real estate company and we're here in connection with the rezoning of the

property at 535 Morgan Avenue, which consists of the entire block bounded by Meeker Avenue, Morgan Avenue, Kingsland Avenue, and Lombardy Street. And the regularly shaped parcel of just over 100,000 square feet in area. It's currently developed in two sections, the westly section is a McDonald's fast food restaurant that you may recognize from when you get onto the Kosciuszko Bridge, right on the service road, south service road there and adjacent to that is the shopping center with a one-story retail building, about 40,000 feet in area that has an Auto Zone and Dollar Tree stores. There was formerly a Staples store that recently became vacant and that's where we're proposing to put the new Aldi Supermarket. There's also off street parking for 110 cars and as noted, we're in Community District number 1 in Council person Gutiérrez's district. Next slide.

We're proposing to rezone the site from M1-1 to C7-1 to facilitate a no new construction, just the use of the former Staples store, which is just over 20,000 square feet in area to a new Aldi Supermarket. The current M1 zoning regulations limit the size and the size to 10,000 square feet

and that will be alleviated by the C7 zoning, which will permit the proposed supermarket and eliminate restriction on some other permitted commercial uses in the event any of the other spaces become vacant, even though the other stores have existing leases that run for several years.

While increasing the permitted commercial FAR from one to two, the C7-1 actually decreases the overall permitted FAR from 2.4 to 2.0. As noted, no new construction is proposed or anticipated and the proposed Aldi will be located completely within the space formerly occupied by Staples. Next slide.

This is just the comparison of the district. The C7 again reduces the total permitted floor area. It does increase the commercial floor area but again no new construction is proposed. Next slide.

The site and surrounding area east of Kingsland Avenue have been zoned M1-1 since the adoption of the 1961 zoning resolution and the properties just northwest of the north Brooklyn industrial business zone, which consists of 164 blocks. I think it's the second largest IBZ in the city.

The BQE separates the site from residential Greenpoint to the north and Kingsland Avenue separates it from residential East Williamsburg to the west. These communities are badly in need of a large supermarket.

These neighborhoods are mostly improved with three and four story row houses, some taller apartment buildings. Next slide.

Site has good access to public transportation including subways, approximately a half mile away. The G-train and the L-train at Grand Avenue and Metropolitan Avenue as well as the B24 which runs directly in front of the property in the B48. Plus, it runs just to the north. Next slide.

The proposed C7-1 is a relatively new zoning district created by City Planning Commission as part of the City of Yes zoning changes. It may be the first C7-1 coming before the Council. This would eliminate the restrictions on some stores over 10,000 square feet which are currently in the M1, limited to toy, hardware, drug, book, and office supply stores. And again, we'll most notably permit the supermarket. Review of the area indicates the need for additional supermarkets. In

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES 64
2 this area, there's a MET food market, which is
3 7,500 square feet and the city fresh market, which
4 is 5,600 square feet, so this neighborhood rally
5 doesn't have a full service market. We received
6 very strong unanimous support from Community Board
7 1 that are looking forward to the store as well as
8 from the Borough Presidents Office. Aldi is known
9 throughout as a low priced supermarket. They have
10 2,200 stores in 38 states. They're number one on
11 one of the indexes for low price index. They also
12 are - they donate 30 million pounds of food each
13 year in the US to feeding America and they have a
14 very liberal return and guarantee policy. So, as I
15 said the community is really looking forward to
16 have a full size, full service supermarket at this
17 location. And this is Chris Sanders from Midwood
18 Development. Yup.

19 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you Adam. Before I go
20 into questioning, we have a few speaker cards here
21 where the speakers did not indicate what specific
22 item or number they signed up to testify on. So,
23 in person and your name was not called, please come
24 forward to identify yourself so we could take your
25 testimony. So, if you signed up and didn't

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES 65
2 indicate which project you wanted to testify on,
3 please see one of the Sergeant at Arms to indicate
4 that.

5 Okay, what other zoning districts or uses were
6 contemplated here and how did you choose a C7-1
7 district?

8 ADAM ROTHKRUG: So, the C 71 was chosen when we
9 started the - actually when we started the
10 application process, the C 71 didn't exist and City
11 Planning, when they passed the City of Yes, they
12 said, this is perfect for you. Again, the M1 as it
13 pertains to supermarkets is very strictive limiting
14 it to 10,000 square feet. There is a zoning
15 special permit that's available for supermarkets
16 over 10,000 in an M1 but the other issue is that
17 supermarkets have an extremely high parking
18 requirement, so the special permit would not have
19 applied here because we would not have been able to
20 provide the proposed parking. So, there are no
21 other uses proposed. The Dollar Tree and Auto Zone
22 both have existing leases. The McDonald's has a
23 long term lease and again, this is really geared
24 toward getting the supermarket there in the easiest
25 way possible.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Well, I think you kind of answered my second question, which is how will this new C7-1 district change the allowable use and buildings from the remainder of the lot? But you just answered that. So, I guess my last question is what will happen to the site if Aldi's Groceries decides to back out?

ADAM ROTHKRUG: Yeah so that's one of the other considerations for the C 71 because as I said, the M1 limits stores over 10,000 square feet and in this challenging retail market that's changed, if Aldi were to go out which they're just coming in, so we don't anticipate that. But we'll have the flexibility of going just beyond those four or five stores that are permitted there and it would permit other you know larger retail uses that are limited at the current time but again, we need the parking for the uses, so it's not new construction, it's really just being able to tenant your space.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. I have no more questions. You guys are excused. Thank you so much for your testimony.

ADAM ROTHKRUG: Great, thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Do I have any members in this room that wanted to testify on this item? Please raise your hand.

Okay. There being no members of the public who wish to testify on the Preconsidered LU for the ULURP number C 250090 ZMK relating to the 535 Morgan Avenue rezoning, the public hearing is now closed and the item is laid over.

I will now open our final hearing for today, which is Preconsidered LU item under ULURP number C 250064 ZMK relating to the 74 Bogart Street rezoning. An application by a private applicant for a zoning map amendment to change from an M1-2 zoning district to an M1-4A zoning.

To facilitate the development of a seven story building, approximately 118 feet tall, for use on its western portion as an art storage, this project is located in Brooklyn in Council Member Gutiérrez district as well.

For anyone wishing to testify regarding these proposals, please see one of the Sergeant at Arms to submit a speakers card and to anyone who wants to testify online, please sign up and register to council.nyc.gov/landuse. If you prefer to submit

written testimony, you can always do so by emailing it to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. I will now call the applicant panel for this proposal, which consist of Ethan Goodman, John Clifford, Paul Carr, Caroline Page Katz, Cyril Piet Valasa(SP?). I'm sorry if I mispronounced your name and Andrew Inhinger(SP?). Counsel, can you please administer the affirmation?

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Applicants, would you please raise your right hand and answer the following. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this Subcommittee and in answer to all Council Member questions? Ethan Goodman?

ETHAN GOODMAN: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Paul Carr?

PAUL CARR: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Caroline Page Katz?

CAROLINE PAGE KATZ: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And I'm sorry, I don't have a card for you.

CYRIL PIET VALASA: Cyril Piet Valasa.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, please, before you leave, be sure to fill out a speaker card.

CYRIL PIET VALASA: No problem.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. For the viewing public, if you need an accessible version of this presentation, please send an email request to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. I will now ask the applicant team, you may begin, please just reinstate your name and organization for the record. You may begin.

ETHAN GOODMAN: Good morning Council Member Riley and any other Council Members that may be doing this now or later. My name is Ethan Goodman. I'm with Fox Rothchild. We are land use counsel to the applicant and I'm joined by Caroline Page Katz who is the President and CEO of UOVO and she'll be talking just briefly about who UOVO is and Paul Carr will be talking about the building that we're proposing to build. Caroline?

CAROLINE PAGE KATZ: We can go to the next slide. As mentioned, we are a nation art storage and fashion logistics company serving artists, museums, galleries, foundations and institutions across 26 locations in the United States. At our heart though and at our core, we're a New York City headquartered business. We have 280,000 square

feet in Long Island City. 150,000 square foot building in Brooklyn and we employ 65 New York residents. 41 of whom live in Brooklyn. With this new project at Bogart, we're expected to create up to 30 jobs and continue to participate in the local and New York City arts community. You can go to the next slide.

I think sometimes when you talk about art storage, it can feel a little bit bland but what really UOVO is the hub for the arts community. We have a professional community that uses our spaces, not only our employees but a radiant community of registers, archivists, art handlers, curators, collections managers, creators, framers, you name it.

In addition to storage, we have active spaces for viewing rooms that we do conservation, installations, inventory cataloging, we have a client café. Our building serve as places that people come to work, both our employees and our clients and they have many visitors who come from across the world, in New York. They stay in Brooklyn in our locations. They have lunch. They

reside, it really kind of radiates down to the community.

We also have staff art shows and conference and work rooms. We included some photos here so you could see how the community engages with our properties. The next slide please.

In addition, we also support the local artist community. We have the UOVO prize, which just awarded its 5th annual prize in June for emerging artists you have to be a Brooklyn resident, \$2,500 grant with a public installation at Evergreen and then an exhibit, a sole exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum. In addition to that, we often do in kind service. We've worked with the New York AIDS memorial. We've worked with Creative Time and we've also helped install a sculpture in Times Square.

ETHAN GOODMAN: Next slide please.

CAROLINE PAGE KATZ: And you can see here that these are the various supporting institutions that we've worked with, many whom are not for profits that help to keep the arts community in New York City.

ETHAN GOODMAN: Next slide please. Thank you Caroline. Again, Ethan Goodman with Fox Rothchild. Just to orient use to where the site is and what we're proposing for this project, the site occupies the full block immediately adjacent to the Morgan Avenue Subway exit. It's between Morgan - excuse me, Morgan Avenue and Bogart Street and Harrison Street. Currently on the eastern half of the site, there's a south storage facility and that facility essentially occupies, takes up all of the 2 FAR that's currently permitted on the site. And so, if you look on the next slide, the guiding principle as far as what we're proposing here, was guided by Department of City Planning's North Brooklyn Industry and Innovation Plan. They established a number of districts for this larger industrial area, a number of sub areas. One of which was at the southern edge of the site of this slide, you'll see this pink area which was identified as a growth district. We are right smack dab in the middle of this growth district.

The recommendations for this district were to increase density for commercial and industrial uses. To create loft like building envelopes, and

to develop new M-Districts or land use tools that allow for densities between 2 and 5 FAR.

So, what we are proposing for this application is it meets actually all of those goals. If you'll see on the next slide, we're proposing to rezone the entire block from its current M1-2 to an M1-4A, which actually sort of very similar to the last presentation for you on Morgan Avenue, we may be the first M1-4A that's come before you. This is a new district that was passed pursuant to City of Yes. And again, like the previous application, when we first started this process, that district didn't exist, right? So, but what this district does allow us to do is it does not change any of the uses permitted here. This is largely a commercial industrial manufacturing area, it stays that way with this, it just increases the density that's permitted in this block from 2 FAR to 5 FAR.

The M1-4A also allows for somewhat more loft like building envelopes than some other districts that might permit the similar M15-FAR. The site is immediately approximate to transit. The B60 bus runs along the eastern side of Morgan. The subway exist is on the western side on Bogart, and so,

it's really easy to get to. It's an ideal candidate for an increase in density. And so, what this will allow us to do is allow for the additional density to rebuild what is currently a FedEx truck parking lot. It has been that for years and build the UOVO Art logistics and storage facility and I'll let Paul Carr just talk a little bit about what building we're proposing and you can go to the next slide for that.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Just press the button.

Thank you.

PAUL CARR: Just a slide here to give a sense of what we looked at in coming up with our illustrative design proposal. Basically, the historic character of the East Williamsburg as well as its evolving character of these days. Next slide please.

An overall view of the site, you can see the FedEx parking lot and floor ground with the proposed general volume of building and on the left inside the existing self-storage building, which the project shares the block with. Next slide please. A view from the southwest corner of this site, as you would come out of the subway, the L-

1 Train. We feel this is an important corner of the
2 project. Again, on the floor ground, you see the
3 FedEx parking lot and in the background, the
4 existing self-storage building. Next slide please.
5

6 And the proposed building, a collage of various
7 materials to break down the scale. Again, somewhat
8 of a loft building in conformance with the general
9 intent to the district. As I mentioned, we see
10 this corner as important and we've located the
11 building entrance, the pedestrian entrance as you
12 see in the foreground with canopy and there's a
13 very street activation going up Bogart to the left.

14 And next slide. And this slide, we include just
15 to point out the importance of the street
16 activation. Again, the entrance to the building on
17 the right, as one moves to the left, there is front
18 office uses that would activate the sidewalk and
19 then to the very left, there's a notion to include
20 show windows which could display a revolving
21 program art work.

22 And next slide. That's a view from the west
23 from the park on McKibbin; you can see the park to
24 the right and next slide please. And a view from
25 the northwest, this actually in the floor grand

showcase is the display window as I mentioned previously.

And the next slide please.

ETHAN GOODMAN: Sure, thank you Paul. Uhm, so in closing, I just want to go over some of the recommendations we've heard in the ULURP process. We are very proud that we are able to confidently commit to essentially all the recommendations that came through this process, both the Community Board, the City Planning Commission and the Borough Presidents Office, and just briefly uhm some of those recommendations included to work with local schools to promote art education. This is something that UOVO has already done in the past with schools. They at PS 274, they did an artist and residency program to basically bring art education to more students that don't have it as part of their natural curriculums. We're working on doing that for local schools in this site. We're committed to that. Contributing to maintenance and capital improvements to Gilbert Ramirez Park. So, right behind the subway is Gilbert Ramirez Park and I think it's generous to say that park could use a fair amount in the way of

1 maintenance and improvements. We are currently
2 coordinating with the North Brooklyn Parks Alliance
3 and the Parks Department towards this end to do
4 that use local artist for outside work and bring
5 some visual interest to the ground floor. Totally
6 in line with that so as you saw from what Paul
7 showed, we're doing transparency on the ground
8 floor. That's a great opportunity to bring local
9 art into that ground floor to liven it up. There
10 may be some overpriced high ends as Caroline
11 mentioned. The current prize puts a large mural on
12 their Evergreen Avenue site. We can also do some
13 tie ins with local artists there. UOVO thinks it's
14 incredibly important to support the local artist
15 community, especially this area of East
16 Williamsburg Bushwick where that's such a part of
17 life there.

18
19 Exploring the possibility of 100 percent
20 electric sources. Yeah, we're currently conducting
21 a feasibility assessment to do just that. We're
22 also evaluating the potential to rooftop solar to
23 further make this project sustainable. And then
24 the last comment that came in, I believe this was
25 from the Borough President, actually had to do with

the adjacent site at Cube Smart. A lot of storage presents a blank wall and a blank face to the community and local streets. The power company that owns that site has worked really hard to bring retail and active uses in there. They've got 16,000 square feet of non-self-storage on the ground floor there, right on Morgan Avenue. It's been tough going because it's a tough retail environment there but they successfully leased half of that up. A large portion is going to be taken up by a place called Chama Mama, which is a Georgian Restaurant. It's got a great reputation in its couple of other sites. It opens in Brooklyn and so, that's part of the entire effort here for UOVO and the company to enliven this entire block, convert what is now really inactive parking lot to a real benefit to the community.

And with that, I will close if you have any questions.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much. Wonderful presentation, thank you. I just have a few questions. You're introducing a storage facility in a transition area that borders residential uses and is directly near a subway

station. Why is storage an appropriate use for this location and how will your storage facility activate the streetscape?

ETHAN GOODMAN: Yeah, first I think it's important to say while the headline here has been art storage, there's really a lot more than just like - like inactive storage that goes on here, right? There's a lot of active uses. There's sort of art curation, there's workshops, there's art conserving. There's actually public events here that occur. The public is invited in. There's a lot of training of art handlers, right? So, you know it's not fair to really just characterize this as storage, which people consider to be some like inactive dead use, right? This is really a lively use and so the first thing we want to do is further enliven the ground floor and we're investigating ways to do that.

And the second thing, it's important to note you don't see a lot of rezonings that come before you that take something like an M1-2 and seek to increase density for an M use in an M area, right? There are a few residential uses here right that are not necessarily conforming to the underlying

1 zoning but predominantly, this is like a
2 manufacturing and industrial area, right? And you
3 know, here in our society, we don't make a lot of
4 things and produce a lot of things domestically,
5 but there's a lot of support for manufacturing and
6 we put ourselves into that category.

7 And so, we think it's really important to
8 support that overall M type of character here and
9 bring a use in that like supports the sort of
10 industrial uses that occur around it.

11 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. A storage
12 facility is inherently an inward facing use. How
13 does your facility plan to add value to the
14 surrounding neighborhood?

15 ETHAN GOODMAN: Yeah, so first of all, I don't
16 want to underestimate the fact that - so right now
17 and for years it's been a parking lot, right for
18 FedEx vehicles? So, when people come out of the
19 subway they see a parking lot, right it's got a
20 fence, it's got trucks, they go in and out and I
21 don't think many people think that's a real great
22 benefit to the community.

23 What we're doing is actually bringing an active
24 use in here with and attempting as best we can to
25

enliven that ground floor and bring light into it, bring local artist work, bring transparency into it and activate this with active uses. The employees that will be employed here, 30 or more, this is not just sort of employees that are like sitting at desks or something right? These are employees that start out, they may start out as like doing just sort of moving art around but it's really a uhm, it's a launching point for a career here in art handling and art storage and logistics. These are employees that go throughout the city working into museums. And so, it's really I think by employing Brooklynites, employing New York City people. We can bring a big benefit to this area. I know Caroline you uh -

CAROLINE PAGE KATZ: Yeah, I would also just add that while inward facing, we do have a lot of clients who bring people to the building, right? They do - we have a foundation in our Evergreen location and they have museums and other cultural institutions coming from around the world to work in their space, to work with them in their space. Like I mentioned before, they stay locally in hotels, they go out to dinner, they buy their

lunch, they work in those spaces and so it not only is within our building but radiates to the rest of the community and I think enlivens the street.

People go out to lunch. Our team members go out to lunch. They work in that building every day and it creates a lot of long term employment opportunities.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Beautiful. Uhm, just one last question. You guys coming to the Bronx any time soon?

CAROLINE PAGE KATZ: Maybe.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: This is a really beautiful building, really beautiful for the area. Hoping that we pass it. I would love to come out and check it out once it's built.

CAROLINE PAGE KATZ: We love to have visitors, so anytime. We love to show people what we do.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much. I have no more questions for this panel. You're excused.

ETHAN GOODMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: I'm going to transition to in-person testimony. First, I'm going to call up Travis Bouer, Breanna; I can't pronounce or see

your last name Brennan, Lovely? Lowery, excuse me.
Ho Jae Kim, and Jake Hellar.

Is Jake here? Is Jake here? Jake? Okay,
alright we'll begin first with Breanna.

BREANNA LOWERY: Am I on?

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes.

BRENNAN LOWERY: Thank you so much. It's good
to be here. My name is Brennan Lowery. I've been
an employee of UOVO; that's okay, it's probably my
handwriting. I've been an employee of UOVO for
three years. I've been a leader of the
organization and have been a resident of Brooklyn
for 11 years after living in Manhattan for a number
of years. I have spent the majority of my career
working for companies with offices in Manhattan and
going back and forth and was thrilled to be able to
move to UOVO a few years ago and be able to live
and work in the same borough.

I'm based as I mentioned in Brooklyn and work
out of our Bushwick facility on Evergreen Avenue.
Similar to what my colleague shared earlier, we
really enjoy hosting clients in our spaces on a
daily basis and it is friends of clients and others
who come also. And uh we host a multi - they then

go out to the lunch, they stay in the area and it's a great community experience.

As mentioned, we love Brooklyn. We love supporting the community and the arts in Brooklyn and I am certainly in full support of this project on Bogart Avenue and the expansion.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next, we'll hear from Travis.

TRAVIS BOUER: Hey, how's it going? I'm Travis Bouer. I am a working artist. I've been in the area since 2004 and I'm here to support this - our logistic center. I think it will significantly enhance the sidewalk and you know the area that you see when you exit the subway, also permitting work and maintenance, cleanliness, public safety, and also trees. In addition to you know speaking on behalf of the artist community and the LH Hipster community, I am also a licensed New York City Tree Pruner and it's a neighborhood that could definitely use more trees.

Also, yeah, I think the project would take underutilized property and turn it into you know additional space for arts. I think a lot of the cool, sort of light and extra light industry that

occurs in that area, things like photo studios, you know uh vintage clothes, exotic food, frame shops, things like what I do you know are really like an important part of the economic life of that area. And yeah, I am thrilled to support this project and this rezoning.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Ho Jae?

HO JAE KIM: Hello. So, thank you for having me and my name is Ho Jae Kim. I'm an Internationally Exhibiting Artist and also a Founder and CEO of a local arts nonprofit, Civil Art. Personally, I have in addition to making art works, personally I have been working with local and elementary schools, youth camps and also higher education like NYU. And also, through my nonprofit, I have been fund raising and also creating programs to support the local emerging artists, young writers and also young art administratives. And in my professional experience, I have been working with a lot of different organizations, institutions, and also corporations and I am personally and professionally excited that UOVO will be opening up a space in Brooklyn. I personally know many artists whose lives have for the better changed drastically

1 through UOVO's support and I also know many
2 individuals who are working in the company who are
3 very at the core integrated with the local and
4 international arts world and industry. So, knowing
5 that and personally I have also been in that area
6 for a very long time and knowing that right now
7 there is a fenced up parking lot that's
8 inaccessible but knowing that eventually, it will
9 become a space that actually becomes a foundation
10 for a local art community. I think that's a very
11 exciting and a such a prospect to look forward to.
12 Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you for your
15 testimony. You're excused. Thank you so much.
16 The next panel we'll call will consist of Louise
17 Villacci, Yesiyu Zhaa, Sierra Maronta, Tireal(SP?).
18 I'm sorry we're going to transition to iPads. It's
19 a little hard reading some signatures, sorry about
20 that if I mispronounced your name.

21 We'll start first from the left. Just please
22 reinstate your name for the record and you may
23 begin.

24 SIERRA MARONTA: Hi, my name is Sierra Maronta.
25 I was born and raised in Bushwick on the L line

1 from Bushwick Aberdeen all the way up to Grand
2 Street. I went to elementary, middle, and high
3 school there and I have a lot of memories that make
4 this neighborhood in particular very special to me,
5 which is why I came to speak today.

6 I'm in Bushwick pretty often and I have seen a
7 change a lot since I was a kid. I'll always have a
8 genuine interest in seeing the neighborhood
9 continue to grow beyond what it already has in the
10 last decade. Right now, the site at 74 Bogart is
11 just a parking lot next to the storage facility and
12 honestly, it doesn't really do much for the block.
13 I think that turning it into something useful and
14 nice looking would brighten up the area and make it
15 more inviting.

16 It would bring in jobs and more people during
17 the day, which is great for the local restaurants
18 and businesses in the area, and it embraces the
19 culture of the community where there are a lot of
20 local creatives and artists who could benefit from
21 having access to this space.

22 I appreciate that this isn't just another big
23 residential project that drives up housing cost.
24 From my personal experience, this is what
25

ultimately forced me and my family, as well as many that I know out of the neighborhood. Buildings are sold and the tenants who are Native to the neighborhood are no longer able to afford to live there. Where this facility is something that actually adds to the community and instead of taking things away, which is important to me.

From what I know about UOVO, they really care about the community, which means a lot. From painting murals in the hallways of local schools to brighten children spaces and holding break events locally to support local businesses. To me, this demonstrates that UOVO also understands the importance of community and giving back.

So, I really hope that they are able to move forward with their plans because it won't only do great things for the neighborhood. I'm in support of this project.

YESIYU ZHAA: Hi, my name is Yesiyu Zhaa(SP?). I'm a working artist whose working like just half a block away from the site. So, every day I will pass by this parking lot. I usually work pretty late; however, uhm I will feel like if this building to be built on this site, it will be more

safe for me in the area with their promise to provide better lighting to the streets and then clean up the sidewalks.

And also, uhm, I have been to many of their events where they celebrate artists whose also working the area. I think uhm, it's a more meaningful thing for like emerging artists to be having something like this who cherish the community as a whole. Thereby, I support this project. Thank you.

LOUISE VILLACCI: Good morning, my name is Louise Villacci and I'm here with my partner Latima King and we are the cofounders of LIFT, which stands for Leading Individuals from Trauma. We are a food pantry that effectively combats hunger and food insecurity and we are a community based organization that offers a range of wrap around services and connects individuals with partner agencies for additional support.

We've been in business almost five years serving the tristate area and Suffolk County communities. One thing we have been passionate about since the pandemic is helping underserved individuals. It brings us great joy to know that my partners and I

have been able to support these people in need.

During the pandemic, we fed approximately 350 people a month. Now those numbers, due to a serious food insecurity in the Bushwick neighborhood surrounding 74 Bogart Street, has risen to approximately 4,836 people a month.

UOVO is our neighbor and over the past several months, we've had the chance to get to know them through their recent outreach and concern for the neighborhood. This is currently growing into meaningful partnership. UOVO recently supported our 4th annual back to school event and we look forward to continuing to work together since both of our organizations are here for long term in this community.

We've spoken with UOVO about their proposed project and think it will be a great addition to the neighborhood. It will create good paying local jobs and we've already started conversations about how we can collaborate on their hiring efforts. Our program works hand and hand with HRA and our Workforce Development Initiative has been helping the community for years. We want to make sure that the residents of Brooklyn and this neighborhood in

particular have access to the opportunities. They're known for their strong training programs and we discuss partnering with them for many things. We believe that UOVO's application is good and we approve it. Thank you.

TYRON ARMSTRONG: Hello. My name is Tyron Armstrong. I am the Associate Director of Operations for UOVO. I manage in our Bushwick facility on 105 Evergreen. I'm also a local resident. I live right in Greenpoint and am very kind of tied to this neighborhood in that location in particular. I actually met my wife, she lived right on Harrison Place when we first started dating, so I'm very familiar with that neighborhood and what it has transitioned to over the years. Historically, it's kind of been a bit run down, very sketchy, dirty streets, rat infested, etc., but with this proposal, I believe that the space will turn over. This is a very strong arts community with a lot of artists and studios. I know my team in particular and all of UOVO staff are like everybody has mentioned before, it is a very community and client facing activated space. We often participate with things in our

neighborhood. We go to - we do team building activities outside of work at the local restaurants and bars and we do contribute to the overall economy and feel of the neighborhood. We get to know our neighbors and we do a lot to make sure that we are the best tenants that we can possibly be, and we support and give back to the community.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you all for your testimony. You all are excused. Thank you so much.

I just one more time, is Jake Hellar in the room? Okay. We'll transition to online testimony. First, we'll hear from Shawn Driscoll followed by Daniel Morris. Shawn Driscoll, if you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin. Shawn Driscoll, if you can hear me, please unmute.

SHAWN DRISCOLL: Hi, Shawn Driscoll here. Can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.

SHAWN DRISCOLL: Okay great. Uhm, yeah so thank you everyone for the presentation. I was actually in attendance to the last one as well and would like to give my support for the project. I don't have a lot of unique thoughts here. I'll echo what

1 a lot of people have said, especially being that in
2 its current use as a parking lot, there is not a
3 whole lot of benefit for the community. Brooklyn
4 has always been a center for the arts and I've been
5 a resident of nearby Williamsburg for many years.
6 I've seen the neighborhood change a bit and would
7 love to see more art being added back to the
8 neighborhood.
9

10 So, I see UOVO's projects as a good opportunity
11 to do so. The other is that being directly across
12 from the subway station, currently it's very dark.
13 It's covered in litter. There's often you know a
14 lingering cent of smoke and it generally feels a
15 bit unsafe, especially when the sun goes down and I
16 see this project as an opportunity to make the
17 neighborhood and especially the area immediately
18 surrounding that subway stop a bit more safe and
19 comforting to you know not only people that live
20 there but visitors coming to you know enjoy the
21 neighborhood.

22 So, in that said I would like to provide my
23 support for the project.

24 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Next, we'll hear
25 from Daniel Morris.

DANIEL MORRIS: Hey, my name is Daniel Morris. I similarly live in Williamsburg near Greenpoint and not too far from the proposed 74 Bogart Street setting. I've been in New York for over ten years and been a resident of Brooklyn for a big portion of that time.

I spend a lot of time Bushwick to myself and it's one of the few neighborhoods in the city that continues to feel like it has a real creative pulse and that's in large part why I'm here to like many others today, lend my support to UOVO's proposed project. I don't want to belabor the point but just as Shawn has mentioned, you know the fact that we're just moving to or rather, they're just moving to take over what's currently a parking lot. That doesn't add much to the area. It seems to just make perfect sense to me and it's something clean, well designed, and what appears to be getting supportive of the arts makes good sense. What's clear is that UOVO should have the city's confidence. They're already in the Brooklyn neighborhood, invested here, clearing supporting neighborhood charities, and the community and it's something that I think Bushwick would benefit from.

It continues to look like that the area will benefit from this investment and strengthen the neighborhoods character and I hope that it receives the Council's support. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. There being no other testimony online, this panel is excused. We'll transition back to in-person testimony. I will call Paul up to give his testimony.

PAUL SAMULSKI: Hello, Paul Samulski, I'm the President of the North Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce. We're a hyperlocal nonprofit business organization that represents Bushwick, Greenpoint, and Williamsburg. Being quite familiar with the neighborhood, which by the way is an arts and industrial community, I want to emphasize the fact that this is not your typical self-storage facility but is instead a specialized business that will cater to galleries, museums and artists. And we anticipate that many of our local artists will apply to fill the numerous skilled positions needed to operate this facility. Hopefully some of them will use this as a starting off point for careers.

The structure itself as it's been presented to us is not only a definite upgrade from this truck

1 parking lot but is also a thoughtfully designed
2 building that fits the aesthetic and the character
3 of the neighborhood. I walked those streets again
4 this weekend and couldn't help but imagine how much
5 better off it would be with a business like this
6 that would offer safer frontage and consistent foot
7 traffic, not forgetting to mention the opportunity
8 to incorporate public art in the exterior plan and
9 also host various community events.
10

11 We strongly support this project and firmly
12 believe that we're talking about a company here
13 that will truly become a good neighbor and a good
14 partner with regard to local priorities.

15 Also related in a two for one, I'm also a board
16 member of the North Brooklyn Angels, which is a
17 food insecurity nonprofit and we appreciate the
18 work that UOVO's commitment to the community has
19 been and we also support this project. So, thank
20 you for the time and the opportunity.

21 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you for your testimony
22 Paul. You are now excused. Is there anyone else
23 in the room that wants to testify on this project?
24 Okay, there being no other members of the public
25 who wish to testify on Preconsidered LU for the

2 ULURP Number C 250064 ZMK relating to the 74 Bogart
3 Street Rezoning, the public hearing is now closed
4 and the item is laid over.

5 That concludes today's business. I would like
6 to thank the members of the public, my colleagues,
7 Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use and other Council
8 staff and the Sergeant at Arms for participating in
9 today's meeting. This meeting is hereby adjourned.
10 Thank 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 October 15, 2025