

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

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January 4, 2017
Start: 10:11 a.m.
Recess: 10:42 a.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: JULISSA FERRERAS-COPELAND
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Ydanis A. Rodriguez
James G. Van Bramer
Vanessa L. Gibson
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Laurie A. Cumbo
Corey D. Johnson
Mark Levine
I. Daneek Miller
Helen K. Rosenthal
Steven Matteo

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

Michael Blaise-Backer, Deputy Commissioner
Neighborhood Development
Department of Small Business Services

Jennifer Kitson, Program Director
Business Improvement Districts
Department of Small Business Services

Norman Lindsay, Senior Program Manager
Business Improvement District
Department of Small Business Services

2 [sound check, pause]

3 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Good

4 morning and welcome to today's Finance hearing. I am
5 Council Member Julissa Ferreras-Copeland. I'm the
6 Chair of the committee. I would like to work-welcome
7 everybody back, and I hope you and your families had
8 a wonderful holiday season. Welcome to 2017. Who's-
9 [pause]. Today's-today for the committee's first
10 meeting of 2017, we have two items on the agenda.
11 The Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Extender, and the BIDs.
12 Let's start with the Budget Extender. The
13 legislation set deadlines for the following
14 submissions and hearings concerning Fiscal Year 18's
15 budget. The draft Ten-Year Capital Plan by the OMB
16 Director and City Planning Director, the City
17 Planning Commission's Report on the Ten-Year Capital
18 Plan, the Mayor's submission of the Preliminary
19 Certificate regarding debt and reserves and
20 appropriations and expenditures for capital projects,
21 the Mayor's Preliminary Budget, community board
22 statements and recommendations with respect to the
23 Preliminary Budget, City Council approval and
24 submission of the Council's budget, and the Council's

2 hearing on the response to the Mayor's Preliminary
3 Budget.

4 The second item is Intro 1314 relating to
5 the Queens Plaza/Court Square BID located in Council
6 Member Van Bramer's District. The BID is requesting
7 the following three changes: An extension of its
8 boundaries to add a new south subdistrict to the
9 existing boundaries that will become the north
10 subdistrict, and to rename the entire BID the Long
11 Island City BID. Change to the method by which
12 assessments are calculated to be based on a formula
13 that factors in the assessed value of property and
14 the linear footage—frontage of commercial property,
15 and a \$350,000 increase in its annual assessment from
16 \$450,000 to \$800,000.

17 On November 16, 2016, the committee held
18 a hearing to consider the local law that would
19 effectuate the changes of the BID as required by law.
20 That hearing was closed without a vote, and a 30-day
21 objection period began so the property owners
22 affected by the expansion of the BID could formally
23 object. According to the City Clerk with whom the
24 objections would be filed, no property owners filed a
25 valid objection to the expansion of the Queens

2 Plaza/Court Square BID during a 30-day period.

3 Accordingly, the committee will now vote in favor of
4 Intro 1314 (banging) if we can answer the following
5 four questions in the affirmative:

6 Were all notices of the hearing for all
7 hearings required to be held published and mailed as
8 required by law and otherwise sufficient?

9 Does all the real property within the
10 district boundaries benefit from the expansion of the
11 district except as exempt as otherwise provided by
12 law?

13 Is all real property benefitted by the
14 extension of the district included within the
15 proposed extension?

16 Is the extension of the district in the
17 best interest of the public?

18 In addition, the committee and the full
19 Council must determine that it is within the public's
20 interest to authorize an increase in the maximum
21 annual expenditure amount that the relevant tax and
22 debt limits will not be exceeded. And thus the
23 notice of increased proposed expenditures amount was
24 properly published. Majority Leader Van Bramer
25 supports the proposed extension and other changes to

2 the BID. Representatives from the Department of
3 Small Business Services are here to testify regarding
4 the BID following their testimony. Unless any
5 members of the committee have questions, I will ask
6 Billy Martin, Committee Clerk to call the roll, and
7 prior to SBS, we will hear from our Majority Leader.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you
9 very much, Madam Chair. I'll be very brief, but I
10 want to say we're thrilled to be joined by Liz
11 Lusskin, the Executive Director of the Long Island
12 City Partnership who's been a terrific leader of the
13 organization for the past few years, and we're all
14 very excited about this long awaited, much
15 anticipated expansion of our BID. A few communities
16 have grown in the city of New York at the pace as
17 have we seen in Long Island City. So it is very,
18 very much consistent with the growth of the community
19 that the BID, which has been so valuable to our
20 community in Long Island City, that it should grow as
21 well, 21st Street, Jackson Avenue, Vernon Boulevard,
22 44th Drive, all of these corridors have grown
23 exponentially, and will continue to grow. So this is
24 a good thing for the people of Long Island City, and
25 I am thrilled to support it, and look forward to us

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2 voting today to pass it, and the Mayor to sign it.

3 Congratulations to Liz and to her team, and to all of

4 the amazing community leaders who have fought to make

5 this a reality today. Thank you very much, Madam

6 Chair.

7 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: We will

8 hear now from SBS. Thank you.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BLAISE-BACKER: Do

10 you need to do—to testify? Sorry, I'm used to it

11 now. [laughter]

12 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]

13 I'm trying a few things that are new.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BLAISE-BACKER: Okay.

15 LEGAL COUNSEL: Do you affirm to tell the

16 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in

17 your testimony before the committee today, and to

18 respond honestly to Council Member questions?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BLAISE-BACKER: Yes,

20 I do. Happy New Year everyone. Good morning Chair

21 Ferreras-Copeland and members of the Finance

22 Committee. I'm Michael Blaise-Backer, Deputy

23 Commissioner for Neighborhood Development at the

24 Department of Small Business Services. I'm joined by

25 Jennifer Kitson, our BID Program Director, and Norman

2 Lindsay our Development—our BID Development Senior
3 Program Manager. As required by law, the Long Island
4 City BID Expansion Steering Committee mailed a
5 summary of the City Council Resolution to the
6 following parties: To each owner of real property
7 within the existing district and proposed expansion
8 at the address shown on the latest City Assessment
9 Roll, to such other persons that are registered with
10 the city to receive tax bills concerning real
11 property within the existing district, and proposed
12 expansion, and to tenants of each building within the
13 existing district and the proposed expansion area.
14 Additionally, the Long Island City BID published a
15 notice of the public hearing at least once in a local
16 newspaper having general circulation in the districts
17 specifying the time when and the place where the
18 hearing will be held, and stating the increased
19 proposed maximum amount to be expended annually.
20 Furthermore, SBS arranged for the publication of a
21 copy of the summary of the resolution at least once
22 in the city record. We would like to report on the
23 result of the objections filed with the City Clerk
24 against the proposed expansion of the Long Island
25 City BID. At the conclusion of the objection period

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2 at 5:00 p.m. on December 15, 2016, and taking into
3 consideration any objections postmarked by that date,
4 on invalid objection representing less than 0.1% of
5 the total assessed value was filed with the City
6 Clerk for all property within the expansion area that
7 was submitted without the documentation required for
8 verification. This level of objection is within our
9 acceptable threshold needed to advance the bill for
10 favorable consideration by the full City Council.
11 The Department of Small Business Services supports
12 the expansion of the Long Island City BID, and in our
13 judgment, the BID will improve quality of life and
14 business conditions in the Long Island City District.
15 Thank you and I'm happy to take any questions.

16 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: [off mic]
17 Seeing one-[on mic] Seeing none, we'll ask Billy
18 Martin to call the roll.

19 CLERK: Good morning. Happy New Year.
20 William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call vote
21 Committee on Finance, Chair Ferreras-Copeland.

22 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: Good.
23 Thank you. I vote aye.

24 CLERK: Van Brmer.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: I proudly
3 vote aye.

4 CLERK: Johnson.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Aye.

6 CLERK: Levine.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Aye.

8 CLERK: Miller.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Aye.

10 CLERK: Matteo.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Aye.

12 CLERK: By a vote of 6 in the
13 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,
14 both items have been adopted by the committee.

15 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: And we
16 will keep the vote open for an additional 20 minutes.
17 The staff please inform your Council Members the roll
18 will be open for an additional 20 minutes. [pause]

19 CLERK: Continuation of roll call, the
20 Committee on Finance. Council Member Cornegy.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Aye.

22 CLERK: Council Member Cumbo.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I vote aye.

24 CLERK: The vote now currently stands at
25 8 in the affirmative. [pause] Continuation of roll

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2 call the Committee on Finance. Council Member
3 Rodriguez.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

5 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: The vote
6 now stands at 9 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative
7 and no abstentions. [pause] Final vote, Committee
8 on Finance stands at 9 in the affirmative, 0 in the
9 negative and no abstentions. Thank you.

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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 January 5, 2017