

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND
INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS

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March 22, 2011
Start: 10:38 am
Recess: 10:54 am

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
JAMES G. VAN BRAMER
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Council Member Leroy G. Comrie Jr.
Council Member Elizabeth S. Crowley
Council Member Inez E. Dickens
Council Member Daniel Dromm
Council Member Jessica S. Lappin
Council Member Domenic M. Recchia
Jr.

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

James G. Van Bramer
Opening Statement
Chairperson
Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and
International Intergroup Relations

Written testimony:
Kirsten Gillibrand
In support of Resolution
U.S. Senator from New York

Written testimony:
NYC & Co.
In support of Resolution

Susan Marenoff-Zausner
President
Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum

Jennifer M. Hensley
Executive Director
Association for a Better New York

Gregory Banhazl
Director
Business Development
New York Institute of Technology

Kevin Pinn
Committee Clerk
Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and
International Intergroup Relations

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2 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: All right.

3 Good morning everyone.

4 [Gavel banging]

5 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: This
6 meeting of the Committee on Cultural Affairs,
7 Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations
8 is now in order. My name is Jimmy Van Bramer and
9 I'm chair of the Committee. Joining me today from
10 the Committee is the one and only Inez Dickens
11 from the Village of Harlem and my neighboring City
12 Council Member Danny Dromm from the wonderful
13 Jackson Heights, Queens. And we have other
14 members who will be joining us as well.

15 Today we are taking up a very
16 important Resolution on a very exciting prospect
17 of having one of the three retired space shuttles
18 coming to the Intrepid Museum which as we all know
19 is in the Speaker's District. And I was just at a
20 meeting with her and Domenic Recchia and I believe
21 she's very excited about this prospect.

22 So we have a few speakers and then
23 we're going to vote. And so I'd like to call up
24 the first panel, Susan Marenoff-Zausner, President
25 of the Intrepid. Jen Hensley, Executive Director-

2 -yep, feel free to move over, of the Association
3 for a Better New York, and Greg Banhazl, Director
4 of Business Development at the New York Institute
5 of Technology. Before you begin your testimony
6 I'd like to recognize that Senator Kirsten
7 Gillibrand has sent us testimony to her support
8 for this initiative. And also NYC & Co. has also
9 sent us a letter speaking to their support for
10 this Resolution as well. I won't read them both
11 into the record but they are duly recognized for
12 supporting this initiative.

13 So why don't you begin your
14 testimony, Susan, and we'll move from there.

15 MS. SUSAN MARENOFF-ZAUSNER: [Off
16 mic] I thank you very much for having me here and
17 for allowing me to state me--the Intrepid feels
18 that New York City and the Intrepid Museum will be
19 the absolute--

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [Interposing]
21 You have to turn on the mic.

22 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: It's
23 actually in the rear, yeah. Yes.

24 MS. MARENOFF-ZAUSNER: Okay is that
25 better?

2 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Yep.

3 MS. MARENOFF-ZAUSNER: So can I
4 repeat my thank you? For having me here and,
5 again, for being able to tell you why we think New
6 York City, New York State, New York City and the
7 Intrepid Museum are really the best--is the best
8 place to host a space shuttle, one of the three
9 retired space shuttles. As you know several
10 museums from around the country are vying to be
11 the permanent home to one of the three shuttles,
12 the Discovery, the Endeavor or the Atlantis. And
13 in its Request for Information from interested
14 institutions, NASA has publicly stated that it
15 wants these icons of space exploration to be
16 displayed where the most people would have the
17 greatest opportunity to see and to learn from
18 them.

19 And so of course it begs the
20 question, what place is better than New York to
21 actually have one of the retired space shuttles.
22 And we feel there are several reasons which I'll
23 go through, some of those, today. But clearly
24 more than 45 million tourists visit our City. We
25 have more than 15 million people who live and work

2 within one hour of Manhattan, probably upwards
3 actually of about 18 million. And almost 1
4 million people visited Intrepid last year alone.

5 We are the epicenter of American
6 tourist. And as you'll read in the letter
7 provided by NYC & Co. that you mentioned, New
8 York's Tourist and Visitors Bureau, we are the
9 nations most visited city hosting Americans and
10 people from around the globe. Where better to
11 tell that NASA story to the world than right here
12 in New York. We want to be able to perpetuate the
13 legacy. We have the capability to do it.

14 And also let's not forget as we
15 know that New York is the media capital of the
16 world. There is no better media support than in
17 New York to highlight the shuttle and all the
18 activity that will take place each and every day
19 at the Intrepid Museum, inspiring and educating
20 all generations about this American marvel. The
21 Intrepid alone, in one year, received over 1.2
22 billion media impressions. So again it offers
23 significant exposure to all of our incredible
24 artifacts.

25 Intrepid also has an intimate

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2 connection with the NASA Space Program. In the
3 1960's we served as a primary recovery vehicle for
4 Mercury 7 and Gemini 3 missions. We recovered
5 astronaut Scott Carpenter, John Young and Gus
6 Grissom and their space capsules when we plucked
7 them from the ocean by Intrepid, our own
8 helicopters and her crew. These brave space
9 explorers walked on Intrepid's decks and they
10 stood along her rails. What better location, once
11 again, to house a retired space shuttle than in
12 the same place where some of America's first
13 astronauts found solid footing under them after
14 returning from their own missions.

15 And as we can all appreciate the
16 story of space exploration is probably best
17 understood through the eyes of children. There
18 are more than 100,000 students that come to
19 Intrepid every year to learn, literally hands on,
20 about science and history and to have fun. And
21 every one of them leaves inspired.

22 Our world class institution and our
23 world class education team creates experiences
24 that already incorporate space exploration into
25 its curriculum allowing young minds to understand

2 the science and technology behind flight and
3 exposing them to a Speakers Program that inspires
4 them with life lessons about leadership and
5 heroism. Education lessons and programs about the
6 shuttle would be seamlessly integrated into this
7 programming.

8 A shuttle would also enhance
9 Intrepid's STEM Education Program, Science,
10 Technology, Engineering and Math, which we all
11 know is so critical for the youth of our country
12 today by giving our educators an exciting platform
13 to make technical subjects more applicable for
14 young minds exploring new concepts. More than 1
15 million New York City public school children and
16 hundreds of thousands from all around the area,
17 from all around the world, college students, will
18 all benefit from having a space shuttle right here
19 at their fingertips.

20 A space shuttle in New York would
21 add to the significant resources amongst the
22 network of cultural and historic institutions
23 based in and around our area as well as allow them
24 to incorporate the shuttle into their extended
25 offerings, expanding the shuttle's reach far

2 beyond Intrepid's pier. We are looking to invite
3 and host as many cultural institutions as possible
4 to truly come and utilize this icon for hands on
5 learning.

6 And additionally and this is very
7 important, the economic benefits to bringing a
8 shuttle to New York City are huge. In the first
9 year alone the estimates project \$106 million in
10 new economic activity. And that's about \$70
11 million in direct spend, \$30 million in indirect
12 spent and about \$7 million in new tax revenue: one
13 year alone. Designing and constructing the
14 facility in which to display the shuttle will
15 create temporary construction jobs and several
16 more permanent employees will be hired to curate
17 and manage the exhibit.

18 Of course it's one thing to say
19 that we want a shuttle and it's another thing to
20 have the significant financial means to bring it
21 here and display it. From what we know today,
22 NASA will require that we pay for the
23 decontamination and transportation process and
24 require we construct a proper environment for
25 preservation and display of the shuttle: in all a

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2 \$40 million commitment or more.

3 We all know that New York can raise
4 the funds necessary. New York is a center of
5 giving and philanthropy. It's a sophisticated
6 market where the seemingly impossible becomes the
7 new standards for tomorrow's challenges. The
8 Intrepid Museum has a long history of tapping into
9 our generous philanthropic network and we fully
10 expect the people of New York to support our
11 effort.

12 And our track record is strong. We
13 successfully raised more than \$100 million for
14 Intrepid's recent 2-year refurbishment for which
15 we owe much thanks in part to Speaker Quinn, the
16 City Council and the Department of Cultural
17 Affairs. And I have no doubt we can accomplish
18 this task again as well.

19 Support for our effort has already
20 been monumental. We've had more than 150,000
21 people who have signed our petition both online
22 and on the site, and followed us online at
23 ShuttleToNYC.com. We've had the backing of all of
24 our elected leaders, championed by Senator Schumer
25 and Gillibrand who have rallied support from

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2 Albany to Washington D.C. and across the country.

3 We have been told that our
4 application, once thought to be a long shot, is
5 now a serious contender and that we are in the top
6 running. But it still not over. NASA has said
7 its plans to announce the winners of the shuttle
8 race, as you know, will be on April 12th. We have
9 serious competition from other cities including
10 Dayton, Ohio, including Seattle, which bring equal
11 determination and resources to challenge us. And
12 by no means are we assured of anything.

13 This is why your support, of
14 course, is so critical. And you lend and
15 extraordinarily powerful voice in the growing
16 chorus of New Yorkers sending a message to NASA
17 that New York wants and is worthy of one of these
18 proud space vehicles. With our widespread
19 continued support and with the backing of this
20 Council, I am even more hopeful that we will all
21 succeed. And I think you so much for your time
22 today.

23 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Thank you
24 Susan. And before Ms. Hensley goes, I just want
25 to recognize that the primary sponsor of this

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2 Resolution is Council Member Vinnie Ignizio from
3 Staten Island who I know is very excited about
4 this. And I also want to let you know that we've
5 been joined by Council Member Jessica Lappin and
6 Council Member Elizabeth Crowley, also from
7 Queens. And just a reminder that after the
8 testimony is completed we will be voting on this
9 Resolution.

10 Ms. Hensley?

11 MS. JENNIFER M. HENSLEY: Good
12 morning and thanks very much for the opportunity
13 to testify. I'm Jennifer Hensley, Executive
14 Director of the Association for a Better New York.
15 ABNY promotes and facilitates the effective
16 cooperation of the public, private and nonprofit
17 sectors in New York City to improve the quality of
18 life for those who live and work here and for the
19 millions of tourists who visit each year.

20 ABNY strongly supports the efforts
21 to bring a NASA space shuttle to New York City for
22 permanent residence at the Intrepid Air and Space
23 Museum and we encourage the City Council to
24 support these efforts as well. The Intrepid is
25 already a leader in educational programming and

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2 preservation, offering thoughtful events and
3 activities and well designed exhibits that educate
4 visitors on US history and the great traditions of
5 science and service in this country. The NASA
6 shuttles are a critical part of our nation's
7 story. And there is no more fitting place for a
8 shuttle than at the Intrepid.

9 New York City offers unparalleled
10 exposure for a NASA shuttle. And the Intrepid
11 with its nearly 1 million annual visitors and
12 capacity to handle many more, its central location
13 in Midtown Manhattan and its expertise in
14 maintaining historical vessels is perfectly
15 situated to host the shuttle.

16 The NASA shuttle would be a
17 tremendous benefit to New York City. It would
18 attract even more visitors and encourage tourism
19 spending, resulting in an estimate \$106 million in
20 new economic activity in just the first year of
21 shuttle display. This is economic activity that
22 New York City can't afford to pass up. As our
23 City continues the long, slow recovery from the
24 recent recession, we must look for every
25 opportunity to expand our City's economy, to

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2 attract even more visitors, and to position our
3 City as a cultural and educational destination for
4 many years to come.

5 Adding a NASA shuttle to the
6 display at the Intrepid would help us achieve
7 these goals and would be a tremendous benefit to
8 the fabric of New York City. We fully support the
9 Intrepid's efforts to host a NASA shuttle and are
10 confident in their ability to support the
11 initiative logistically and financially.

12 We hope that this Committee and the
13 Council will recognize the tremendous positive
14 impact that the shuttle will have on New York and
15 vote to support the Intrepid in their request to
16 NASA. Thank you for the opportunity to testify
17 today and of course let me know if I could answer
18 any questions.

19 MR. GREGORY BANHAZL: Let me just
20 make sure this is on? On? Good morning and thank
21 you for the opportunity to speak to you today
22 about the location of the space shuttle on the
23 Intrepid. My name is Greg Banhazl; I'm the
24 Director of Business Development at New York
25 Institute of Technology. And the New York

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2 Institute of Technology has campuses located in
3 Manhattan, Long Island and 6 additional sites
4 worldwide and with over 15,000 students including
5 undergraduate and graduate and over 90,000 alumni.

6 NYIT has a strong program in
7 engineering and computing science. The mission
8 statement of the college is focused on hands on
9 career oriented education. This past fall the
10 Intrepid and NYIT partnered on a unique program
11 where 11 teams of architects and engineers with 65
12 students competed in creating a conceptual design
13 for an aircraft restoration pavilion on the flight
14 deck of the Intrepid. And this unique design is
15 green, sustainable and will be used to demonstrate
16 and educate visitors to the Intrepid on how
17 aircraft are maintained and restored.

18 This real life experience
19 demonstrated attention to requirements of the
20 Intrepid and attention to the design on the green,
21 sustainable and educational structure. The
22 winning team is enhancing its design this spring
23 with the intention of constructing the structure
24 within the next year or two. This partnership
25 demonstrates the Intrepid's commitment to

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2 furthering educational opportunity and inspiring
3 creativity in science and technology.

4 NYIT is very committed to STEM,
5 Science and Technology and Engineering and
6 Management, not only in preparing its own students
7 for future careers but in attracting promising
8 high school students to its engineering and
9 computing science programs. By locating the
10 shuttle here, the Intrepid will continue to
11 provide a major exposure to STEM-related
12 education, not only to millions of visitors but to
13 all the school students, public school students
14 and private as well here in New York City. This
15 is the next generation of scientists, inventors
16 and visionaries. On a personal note, my daughter
17 teaches fifth grade in Brooklyn and has taken her
18 classes many times to the Intrepid for a wonderful
19 experience and the children are always inspired by
20 this magnificent venue.

21 NYIT is proud to endorse the
22 location of the space shuttle on the Intrepid. It
23 would continue the rich legacy of our innovation,
24 history and education in science for our next
25 generation. Thank you. We strongly support the

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2 location of this space shuttle on the Intrepid.

3 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Thank you
4 very much for your testimony. I'd like to
5 acknowledge that we've been joined by Council
6 Member Leroy Comrie. And before we proceed to a
7 vote, does anyone on the Committee have any
8 questions? Seeing no questions, let me just ask
9 that my name be added to this Resolution before we
10 vote and if any other members would like to have
11 their name added, now is the time to do that. I
12 see Council Member Dickens and Council Member
13 Dromm also would like to be prime sponsors and
14 Council Member Crowley.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: I'm on
16 there already.

17 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Council
18 Member Comrie is already on there. He gets extra
19 points for already being on. And--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Well what
21 about Jessica Lappin--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN:
23 [Interposing] Wait.

24 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Jessica
25 Lappin.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: What about
3 Jessica Lappin--

4 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER:
5 [Interposing] Her name appears before Council
6 Member Comrie. So that's like a gold star.
7 That's a gold star. Needless to say the Intrepid
8 is very, very important and a world renowned
9 institution. And to have one of the retired space
10 shuttle come to New York City would be an absolute
11 dream and an incredible boom to our City. So with
12 that I will thank the three panelists. You are
13 free to take a seat in the audience.

14 And we will proceed with the vote
15 on Preconsidered Resolution calling upon the
16 National Aeronautics and Space Administration
17 Administrator, Charles F. Bolden, to retire at
18 least one space shuttle to New York City for
19 permanent residence at the Intrepid Sea, Air and
20 Space Museum. And I encourage all of the members
21 of the Committee to join me in voting aye on this
22 Resolution. Proceed to the vote.

23 MR. KEVIN PINN: Kevin Pinn
24 [phonetic], Community Clerk, roll call on the
25 Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and

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2 International Intergroup Relations. Council
3 Member Van Bramer.

4 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Aye.

5 MR. PINN: Comrie.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Aye.

7 MR. PINN: Dickens.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Aye.

9 MR. PINN: Lappin.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Aye.

11 MR. PINN: Crowley.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Aye.

13 MR. PINN: Dromm.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Aye.

15 MR. PINN: By a vote of 6 in the
16 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,
17 the item has been adopted. Members please sign
18 the Committee report.

19 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: And we're
20 going to keep the vote open for another two
21 minutes 'cause I believe Council Member Recchia is
22 walking across the hall right now to vote on this
23 initiative. Thank you very much.

24 [Pause]

25 [Council Members signing Committee

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2 report]

3 [Background conversation]

4 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Do we have
5 the tape back on? Yes we do. So continuing with
6 the roll call vote on our Preconsidered
7 Resolution.

8 MR. PINN: Recchia.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Aye. And
10 I'd like to add my name to be a sponsor of this
11 Resolution.

12 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: You
13 already are Council Member.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Oh. Okay.

15 MR. PINN: The final--

16 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER:
17 [Interposing] But you could be on it twice.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: Okay.

19 MR. PINN: Final vote in the
20 Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and
21 International Intergroup Relations, 7 in the
22 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions.

23 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: Great.

24 [Background conversation]

25 CHAIRPERSON VAN BRAMER: And with

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2 that, this hearing is adjourned.

3 [Gavel banging]

C E R T I F I C A T E

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura L. Springate". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Signature Laura L. Springate

Date March 29, 2011