

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES

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June 29, 2012
Start: 09:45 am
Recess: 06:20 pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
MARK WEPRIN
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Albert Vann
Vincent Ignizio
Joel Rivera
Leroy G. Comrie, Jr.
Margaret Chin
Daniel R. Garodnick
Robert Jackson
Jessica S. Lappin
Diana Reyna
Stephen Levin
Rosie Mendez
Gale A. Brewer

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

Lynne Brown
Senior Vice President
New York University

John Sexton
President
New York University

Alicia Hurley
Vice President
New York University

Mary Schmidt Campbell
Dean, Tisch School of the Arts
New York University

Gabriel Starr
Dean, College of Arts and Science
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Tobi Bergman
Community Board 2

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Community Board 2

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SCIU 32 BJ

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General Contractors' Association

Tommy Waters
NYS NAACP

Paul Fernandes
Chief of Staff
Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater
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Jim Fouratt
Seniors Take Action

Edy Selman
Co-Chair
Washington Place Block Association

Gloria McDarra

Sara Jones
Chair
LaGuardia Corner Gardens

Tony Juliano
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Greenwich Village-Chelsea Chamber of Commerce

Jennifer Hensley
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Association for a Better New York

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Jennifer Falk
Executive Director
Union Square Partnership

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Michael Slattery
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Patrick Deer
Associate Professor

Jan Blustein
Professor

Jeff Goodwin
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Ann Pellegrini

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Executive Director
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Maria Mizhquiri

Annette Davis
Parent Coordinator
PS/IS 295, Queens Village

Dr. Carol Shoshkes Reiss
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Andrew Berman
Executive Director
Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation

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Drew Durniak
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Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation

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Lauren Benton
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Mitchell Moss

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Former Director
New York State Department of Health

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Student

Phoebe Kingsak
Student

Natasha Stanislaus
Student

Annie Nelson
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Glen Milstein

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Founding Member
Public School Parent Advocacy Committee

Peter Lang

Judy Magida

Maureen Remacle

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: We're good to
3 go, all right. Morning everyone.

4 VOICES: Good morning.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Very good. My
6 name is Mark Weprin, I'm the Chair of the Zoning
7 and Franchises Subcommittee of the New York City
8 Council. I want to welcome everybody here today
9 to City Hall on this very hot day, at least the
10 air conditioning is working.

11 I am joined today by the following
12 members of the Committee: Council Member Al Vann,
13 Council Member Vincent Ignizio, Council Member
14 Joel Rivera, Council Member Leroy Comrie, Council
15 Member Margaret Chin, that represents the area in
16 question, and Council Member Dan Garodnick.

17 So let me just do a couple of
18 ground rules before we get started on how this is
19 going to work. First, I know the Sergeant-at-Arms
20 has already warned people about outbursts, they're
21 going to be very strict about that. I got a
22 reputation of being a softy on this stuff, I can't
23 be today, all right? So we need you to try to
24 behave yourselves, everybody, both sides, try not
25 to scream, not cheer and yell. I understand that

1
2 this is a very emotional issue for a lot of
3 people, so, believe me, I understand that, but we
4 need to keep some form of decorum in order to get
5 this moving along.

6 This is a going to be a long day,
7 as you can tell. What the plan is NYU is going to
8 go first and they're going to testify about the
9 plan, it's going to take a while because there'll
10 be questions from members of the panel. They're
11 the ones who have a lot of the answers we're going
12 to want to get and to hear about what's happening,
13 so that's going to take a while. Once they're
14 done, we're going to move to--we're going to let--
15 I'm going to let the elected officials go quickly
16 from the community--that's what you get for having
17 elected officials--my former colleagues here and
18 I'm very happy to have them. But after they go,
19 we're going to go alternate from people for and
20 against in panel forum where they all sit up
21 there. Unfortunately, each of the people on those
22 panels will be limited to two minutes each. I
23 know that's very little for some people. If
24 you're a group of people going together as a
25 panel, you might want to coordinate what each one

1
2 of you says along the way.

3 And periodically throughout the
4 day, I'm going to make the following announcement,
5 which is that if you feel like your point has been
6 made and you want us to read your name into the
7 record out loud that this person was here in favor
8 and where you're from, I'm always happy to do that
9 if you don't--and then you can not necessarily
10 feel the urge to testify. So just later on, it'll
11 become more apparent that, you know, we don't--we
12 understand people are here, we don't need to hear
13 the same argument over and over again. Obviously,
14 if you want to testify, you're welcome to do it,
15 but if you feel like you want to leave, we
16 wouldn't be that upset if we could limit the
17 speeches 'cause otherwise, we may be here all
18 weekend long.

19 So with that in mind, we good? All
20 right, so we're going to get started, I'm going to
21 call up the panel for NYU. It is going to be
22 Alicia Hurley, Lynne Brown, President John Sexton,
23 Mary Schmidt Campbell, Gabi Starr.

24 [Pause]

25 LYNNE BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Chair,

1
2 my name is Lynne Brown and I'm senior vice
3 president at NYU, and want to thank you for--and
4 all the Members of the Committee, as well as our
5 own Councilwoman, Margaret Chin, for having us in
6 today. I know it was a very busy and long day
7 yesterday, as well.

8 I wanted to introduce you to the
9 members of the panel and propose how we plan to go
10 through this presentation to see if it meets with
11 your approval, and then turn to John Sexton to
12 begin the presentation. In addition to John and
13 me, we are joined by two of our deans, will be,
14 Mary Schmidt Campbell, Dean of the Tisch School of
15 the Arts, and Gabriel Starr, Dean of the College
16 of Arts and Science. And also here at the table
17 is Vice President Alicia Hurley, and we have
18 available our design team, architects, landscape
19 architects, zoning and land use experts who helped
20 shape our plan through these years.

21 So we propose opening remarks from
22 John, followed by Alicia and me discussing the
23 highlights of the plan itself. We have a model in
24 front of us which can help orient the members of
25 the Committee, as well as boards. And then we

1
2 will turn to our two deans for very brief comments
3 from the perspective of their own schools and the
4 very concrete space needs they have and how that
5 helps them serve their students and faculty.

6 So with that, I will turn to John
7 Sexton.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Just for the
9 record, whenever you speak, please say your name
10 before you speak so when the record is transcribed
11 we can distinguish who's speaking.

12 JOHN SEXTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
13 My name is John Sexton, I'm a lifelong New Yorker,
14 as you can tell from the accent. I love this city
15 and I love NYU and, as president of NYU, I'm
16 privileged to be here before the Council to speak
17 about a proposal that I hope you'll become
18 convinced is good for both the city and NYU. It's
19 about our proposal to meet what are pressing space
20 needs.

21 NYU has changed dramatically in the
22 30 years that I've been at it, and over the last
23 four decades, the essence of that change has been
24 a set of strategic moves. When I became president
25 12 years ago, I viewed my key duty as continuing

1
2 the momentum of success and the development of NYU
3 as a magnet of talent for the city. I began by
4 commissioning transition reports in 2001-2002.
5 One of those four reports was on space and una
6 voce, when one voice--our faculty, our staff,
7 everyone screamed we were in desperate need of
8 space. And space translates in a university like
9 NYU into talent. When we built our first gym, it
10 changed the quality of the students that we
11 attracted.

12 If you think about a genomicist, we
13 just finished building a building for genomics,
14 when we're trying to attract an outstanding
15 genomicist, other universities are offering that
16 genomicist lab space, office space, space for post
17 docs. So this is not a development project, it's
18 an academic project. And the transition report
19 that we first commissioned in 2001-2002 made that
20 clear, but then we went back in 2007 to plan the
21 next 25 years for our university because our
22 community, the Village and the internal community
23 had asked us to do that. Again, in framework
24 2031, what came back was we were still deeply
25 compressed in space. We have half the space per

1
2 capita of most of our peer schools and that, as I
3 say, translates into recruiting.

4 So we committed ourselves to the
5 process that comes to you today. It is a process
6 that recognizes that we live in a wonderful
7 neighborhood--Greenwich Village--and I've lived
8 there for 30 years, and we want to do what we do
9 in meeting our space needs sensitive to that. So
10 nearly half of the space that we need, we're doing
11 outside of the Village; and the space that we are
12 doing, we're doing on space that we own, that
13 doesn't require eminent domain, that won't require
14 relocating people out of buildings or anything
15 like that, and that we think--and now with the
16 City Planning Commission proposal before this
17 group, we think balances appropriately the various
18 interests that are involved.

19 Some space has to be in the core.
20 When students move between classes, when faculty
21 move from offices or labs to classes, when
22 students or faculty, in order to stay healthy,
23 have to get to the gym between classes, some space
24 has to be close in the core. So what we've done
25 is we've created a strategic plan that looks out

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2 over 25 years, half the square footage we'll
3 develop is outside of the Village, we've proposed
4 four buildings on sites where there are already
5 low-rise buildings on property that we own where
6 there are five large buildings in what are called
7 the super blocks already. We've offered a pathway
8 to get that done and we've tried to balance it
9 with certain goods for the community as well.

10 This emerges from the academic
11 plans that our deans and our faculties have given
12 to us, it emerges from these wide scale
13 conversations inside our community, it enjoys the
14 unanimous support of the university
15 administration, the deans, the trustees, and
16 widespread support in our community. Everyone in
17 our community, even my colleagues who would prefer
18 that the space not be built next to where they
19 live, everyone recognizes the need for more space,
20 and we hope that you will as well.

21 With that, I'll turn things back to
22 Lynne.

23 LYNNE BROWN: Thank you. As John
24 said, we began this planning process five years
25 ago, both for our own needs and to grapple with

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2 our strategic space needs, but also because we
3 have been hearing from the community that we never
4 had a plan, that we had a, up to then, very ad hoc
5 approach to how we would look for real estate
6 opportunities in the neighborhood, and usually
7 develop as those needs emerged as-of-right. They
8 asked for a blueprint, a plan so they could have a
9 measure of predictability about what we were
10 planning, and they asked to be careful and
11 minimize our impact as we spread into surrounding
12 neighborhoods.

13 So let me begin by trying to answer
14 this fundamental question of why do we need space.
15 From the point of view of an academic institution,
16 what is the objective. John gave the larger view.
17 For NYU, it is not the case that we need the space
18 because we are planning on growing our student
19 body. We are not, not appreciably. But here is
20 an issue for us: We have grown the student body.
21 Between the 1980s and 1990s, we grew our student
22 body by about 25%, and so what we're facing is a
23 severe crowding problem in our classroom and study
24 space. So decompression is one reason why we feel
25 we need space.

1
2 We have also, over the years, added
3 new programs and disciplines, some which did not
4 even exist a decade ago. John mentioned genomics,
5 this was not a discipline ten years ago, now it is
6 one of the cutting edge fields in science. Other
7 areas of global public health, of big data. These
8 are added programs, we know we have them, and we
9 know we will continue to have them in the decades
10 ahead.

11 So a second impetus is to have our
12 facilities be able to keep pace with new knowledge
13 and keep us competitive with other major research
14 institutions. As this chart behind me shows, NYU
15 per student has about less than half the square
16 footage per student of our peer institutions.
17 That is not a place that we will ever seek to
18 catch up with, but we want to make sure we don't
19 hit a ceiling of not having the proper facilities.

20 From the point of view of planning-
21 -let's switch--how do we meet those needs we say
22 we have. We had the following names in mind as we
23 set out to make this plan, and here if you look
24 behind me, the aerial photograph of the two blocks
25 we're talking about, this is the so-called super

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2 blocks. They were originally six city blocks
3 fused as part of urban renewal in the late 1950s
4 and 1960s into two, what are now called, super
5 blocks. What were our aims? One, to maximize use
6 of our own property--these super blocks are owned
7 by NYU--second, to keep the project within the
8 existing Zoning's FAR; third, to avoid any
9 displacement of residents from the super blocks;
10 four, to create new publicly accessible open
11 space; and five, to incorporate sustainable
12 design. In the plan before you, we have been able
13 to achieve each of those aims.

14 As John also said, there is an
15 importance to the core. I'm going to ask one of
16 my associates to just move this forward. So you
17 understand we'll talk a lot about super blocks,
18 those are the super blocks just going away. This
19 is the NYU Core, we call it the Core because it's
20 the concentration of our existing facilities we
21 currently have in and around Washington Square
22 Park. Any building in violet is an NYU building,
23 those are our main academic and residential
24 buildings in and around Washington Square Park.
25 The area in the dotted line, the super blocks, is

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2 what's before you today in the ULURP application.

3 Why is it important to grow
4 facilities in the Core? Even as John said, we are
5 locating as much as half the square footage we
6 need outside the Core. You need some space in the
7 Core to be able to deliver the curriculum. This
8 area, the Core, is where the majority of our
9 classrooms, library space, labs, and teaching
10 facilities already exist to deliver required
11 courses for our undergraduates. So if we need to
12 grow, we often need to grow where the
13 undergraduates can move within 10 to 15 minute
14 increments to get to classes.

15 A second reason of having some
16 space in the Core is being able to create a
17 community of faculty and students in proximity to
18 each other. Studies will show that it is needed
19 to have a critical mass of students and faculty to
20 have a vibrant intellectual community, to allow
21 the exchange of ideas, and to allow co-
22 collaboration on either research or teaching.

23 And the final reason is it creates
24 efficiencies. It avoids having to duplicate all
25 those facilities for teaching libraries and labs

1
2 in multiple dispersed locations.

3 The plan before you focuses on the
4 two super blocks--we can put the super block photo
5 back--created 40 to 50 years ago by urban renewal.
6 To give you a sense of their size, as I said, they
7 are the equivalent of six city blocks, the two
8 blocks currently have on them eight structures,
9 about 1.8 million of zoning floor area, and 1,600
10 units of housing, predominately, but not all, NYU
11 faculty and all the housing is to be retained in
12 this plan. The current zoning allows a 6.5 FAR
13 for community facilities and no additional FAR is
14 being requested. The plan calls for in total four
15 new buildings, which you'll see from my associate,
16 three of which are to be built on existing
17 footprints of lower scale structures, and one
18 proposed site to be left for the city to build a
19 school, a public school. The plan calls for
20 significant space below grade. It calls for added
21 open space that is publicly accessible. The new
22 space will allow for programs--and you'll hear
23 from our deans--for Performing Arts for the Tisch
24 school, for education in STEM, for our School of
25 Education, classrooms, training and research

1 facilities, student and faculty housing. All
2 buildings will be built at LEED silver at a
3 minimum. The total additional square foot in the
4 zoning floor area is about a million square feet,
5 and if you net out the buildings to be removed as
6 part of the project, the increase on the super
7 blocks of zoning floor area is just under one
8 million.

10 We do recognize that not all the
11 space we need can be put in the Village and can be
12 met in Greenwich Village and as a result,
13 expansion is already underway in two academic hubs
14 NYU has identified. One is our 1st Avenue medical
15 corridor, up from the 20s to 30s in Manhattan,
16 where we have an existing medical center and
17 dental college, and our School of Nursing is
18 moving up there, as well as a research facility
19 for bioengineering.

20 The second area we are already at
21 work, where expansion is taking place is downtown
22 Brooklyn, the Metro Tech area where Polytech
23 Institute is located and with which NYU has an
24 affiliation, now catalyzed by our being granted by
25 New York City as part of the Applied Science

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2 Initiative, an Urban Science Center at 370 Jay
3 Street.

4 I will end there, be glad to take
5 any questions along the way, and Alicia will take
6 you through the actual buildings and the square
7 footage as well, and then we'll be joined by the
8 deans. Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
10 Alicia, please give your name.

11 ALICIA HURLEY: Alicia Hurley, vice
12 president at New York University. Mr. Chairman,
13 Chairman Comrie as well, thank you for having us
14 today, and Councilwoman Chin and other
15 distinguished members.

16 Over a five-year period, the
17 university and a team of architects from Grimshaw,
18 Toshiko Mori, and Michael Valkenburgh, a landscape
19 architect, have come up with dozens of iterations
20 and ideas for how best to integrate new, vital
21 academic space for the university, provide better
22 access to open space on this large and complex
23 site, and generally preserve the aspects of the
24 blocks, such as the housing, that work well, while
25 adding new academic space.

1
2 You'll see here from the existing
3 site plan, again, as Lynne mentioned, these were
4 two large blocks that used to be six city blocks.
5 You can see what used to be the city streets
6 running through the site, and the green and beige
7 areas around the perimeter of the blocks are
8 public land as a result of what were supposed to
9 be widened streets over 40 years ago. There are
10 eight structures totaling over 1.8 million square
11 feet on the blocks, the larger housing structures
12 are to remain, the lower structures, including
13 Coles gym, a grocery market, and a retail strip,
14 are to be replaced with academic facilities,
15 university housing, and some ground floor retail.

16 The proposed site plan, if I can go
17 to that. As you can see here, what we're asking
18 for is to input three new structures where there
19 were former footprints. You could see buildings
20 labeled 1, 2, and 3 on the left site plan, and
21 then the fourth structure on the east side of what
22 we call the north block. On the block to the
23 north, the space between the existing and new
24 structures is at least 60 feet, the size of a city
25 street. So just to give you some perspective of

1
2 the size of those blocks, we're able to insert new
3 buildings with a full 60 feet at least between the
4 distance between the existing buildings and what
5 would be added.

6 In addition, we plan to fully
7 utilize the below grade space, including the
8 installation of a major classroom and study
9 complex in the area below the surface on the north
10 block between the Washington Square Village
11 buildings.

12 So if I can go to the proposed
13 conditions. Again, you'll see the Washington
14 Square Village towers and Silver Towers and 505
15 LaGuardia, all buildings which will remain, those
16 are all housing, it's primarily for faculty, we
17 have a lot of non-affiliates of the university as
18 well who live on the blocks. And then the plans
19 for the new academic facilities are the Zipper
20 building on the south block--named actually for
21 its design, we don't have a funder named Mr.
22 Zipper, just to be clear. The building is 650,000
23 zoning square feet, 10 to 25 stories, you can see
24 it varies in height, the maximum height though is
25 275 feet, which matches the existing university

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2 Village buildings. The uses are to include a new
3 Performing Arts Institute for Tisch School of the
4 Arts; teaching and research space for Steinhardt,
5 our education school; a replacement athletic
6 facility for everything from competitive team
7 sports to fitness. And you can see these uses
8 require customized space: Tisch needs large
9 column-free performance training facilities,
10 Steinhardt needs laboratories that can be used to
11 teach future teachers; the large footprint of the
12 Zipper can accommodate these needs, as well as
13 replacement of the Coles facility. Above the
14 academic space, we plan for student and faculty
15 housing, and the ground floor will include a
16 replacement grocery store. There is a grocery
17 store currently on the site.

18 The Bleecker building on the south
19 block is designated to begun the site for a new
20 public school to be built by the SCA, with some
21 below grade space preserved for NYU. The building
22 is 96,000 square feet, seven stories, and 108 feet
23 tall.

24 On the north block, the below grade
25 academic space is about 585,000 gross square feet

1
2 and will allow the university to place new
3 auditoriums, a critical mass of classrooms, and
4 performance rehearsal spaces, as well as a large
5 study annex. Below grade space is actually well-
6 suited to meet these types of academic functions,
7 and locating the space below grade minimizes the
8 bulk of the above grade buildings.

9 The two buildings on the north
10 block are important programmatically, but they
11 also are important because of the way they operate
12 in a way that provides necessary emergency egress,
13 access, and ventilation for the below grade space.
14 The two proposed buildings on the north block will
15 be the same height as or lower than the Washington
16 Square Village apartment buildings. And, again,
17 there's distance of at least 60 feet between the
18 existing and the new buildings.

19 The LaGuardia building is eight
20 stories and 128 feet tall. It will include spaces
21 for classrooms and relocation of, for instance,
22 Wagner, our School of Public Service, which is in
23 leased space which needs to be relocated. The
24 Mercer building is 176,000 square feet, 11
25 stories, matches the height of Washington Square

1
2 Village. It will have classrooms at the bottom
3 and then research institutes in the above grade
4 for faculty offices.

5 I'll now turn to open space. Now
6 as I mentioned, there was an intense focus during
7 the planning about landscaping and how to make the
8 open space work for our neighbors, as well as the
9 university community. As you can see from the
10 existing site plans, the blocks are broken up into
11 a range of small parcels that act, for the most
12 part, independent of one another. The areas in
13 blue are private, non-accessible to the public,
14 including the large section in the middle of
15 Washington Square Village, which is a raised
16 garden sitting on top of a parking garage. Parts
17 of the site are lovely, to be sure, but the area
18 was built over 40 years ago to function as a
19 private garden for the residents. The new plan
20 calls for a much more usable space for the entire
21 neighborhood.

22 The application calls for
23 converting NYU private land into publicly
24 accessible open space, replacing and improving the
25 existing uses on the blocks, including

1
2 playgrounds, seating areas, adjoining walking
3 paths, dog run, and mapping as parkland two of the
4 city-owned street strips. In addition, there is a
5 requirement to involve the community in future
6 designs and oversight of the open space.

7 So all said, the plans that we are
8 here to discuss today will add vital capacity for
9 the university to add state-of-the-art and
10 sustainable academic facilities on our existing
11 footprint on these blocks--blocks which were built
12 over 40 years ago and in a very different time for
13 the city. As leaders of the university, it is our
14 responsibility to look ahead to the next 40 and
15 even 140 years of the life of the university in
16 our city. I'd now like to turn to Dean Mary
17 Schmidt Campbell of the Tisch School of the Arts
18 to talk about some of the critical needs of what
19 we plan to put inside of these buildings.

20 MARY SCHMIDT CAMPBELL: Good
21 morning, Chair Weprin, esteemed Members of the
22 City Council, my name is Mary Schmidt Campbell,
23 I'm dean of the Tisch School of the Arts at New
24 York University. My testimony describes the Tisch
25 School of the Arts' plans for a performing arts

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2 training center as part of New York University's
3 2031 plan.

4 I've had the pleasure of serving as
5 dean of Tisch for almost 21 years. Before that,
6 as New York City's Cultural Affairs Commissioner
7 and currently vice chair of the President's
8 Committee on the Arts and Humanities.

9 Greenwich village has been one of
10 New York City's great havens for individual
11 artists, musicians, and performers. The Tisch
12 school, born in the Village over 45 years ago, is
13 an indelible part of its creative DNA. Tisch
14 develops programs in collaboration with downtown
15 cultural institutions, hires individual artists
16 who live and work in the village, the local
17 neighborhood is the audience for much of our low-
18 cost or no-cost high quality theatrical
19 productions. The creative energy of Tisch
20 graduates fuels the entire city, film and
21 television production, the vitality of Broadway
22 and off-Broadway, and is responsible for some of
23 the city's most innovative technology startups
24 like Foursquare and the Knot. We've achieved at
25 the highest level, in spite of the fact that

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2 Tisch's Institute for Performing Arts has for
3 years struggled with inadequate, obsolete, cramped
4 facilities. One example, in 1982, we had 500
5 performing arts students; today 2,000, and no
6 material increase in performing art space.

7 Existing facilities are at a crisis
8 point. We need space with high ceilings, column-
9 free space, space to accommodate a fly loft
10 theatre, production shop studios, and easy ground
11 floor access to our theatrical productions.

12 Without facilities like these, we cease being
13 competitive with other performing arts training
14 centers around the country. After a five-year
15 search, we have come to believe that the Zipper
16 building, the first phase of the NYU 2031 plan,
17 serves our purpose best. To date, we have raised
18 over \$40 million, an indication of the belief and
19 faith in our mission and the value of our project
20 to New York City and NYU.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

23 GABRIEL STARR: Gabriel Starr.

24 Chair Weprin, Honorable City Council Members,
25 thank you very much for the opportunity to come to

1
2 testify to you about our pressing space needs in
3 Washington Square, and I'm going to speak
4 primarily as the acting dean of the College of
5 Arts and Science and a professor in the Department
6 of English about our undergraduate students'
7 needs.

8 We're in dire need of space,
9 classroom space and laboratory instruction space
10 for those undergraduates, and I would like to
11 offer two e-mails as evidence that I recently
12 received, and these speak directly to this point.
13 And the first I received from a student, he said,
14 I'm a biochemistry major, the class of 2014. As a
15 soon-to-be junior who is also on the premed track,
16 I'm required to take general physics one and two
17 this coming year if I want to graduate on time.
18 As it turns out, registration for journal physics
19 one is closed due to the capacity of lab seats
20 already being met. I'm writing this e-mail to ask
21 that you please allocate funding for the physics
22 department at NYU to open more labs so that
23 students who are in a similar position as myself
24 can be accommodated to graduate on time.

25 Now the problem for physics and for

1
2 all of our bench sciences is, in fact, that we
3 simply do not have the space to teach the students
4 we have. There are hard limits on the number of
5 students which we can accommodate in laboratories
6 because we have to ensure their safety. And
7 things have gotten so bad that I worry we'll reach
8 a point, and very soon, in which I will be in the
9 position of speaking to our admissions office and
10 asking them to turn away qualified students who
11 are seeking careers in STEM fields because we do
12 not have the space to educate them.

13 Now, this is not because we seek to
14 increase the size of our freshman class, which we
15 do not, we would like to keep it at the same,
16 we're allowing only for margin of error growth,
17 but the problem is that we have a growing
18 proportion of students who are interested in
19 pursuing STEM fields, and these are the fields
20 that are the future of our country, they're the
21 future of our city. And I do not want to be in a
22 position where I turn away the students who can
23 find those discoveries, who can do those things
24 that we need to do simply because we do not have
25 the space to educate them. If we're to keep up

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2 with the needs of our students and with the need
3 for a workforce educated in science and
4 technology, we have to have the space to educate
5 them.

6 Now the problem from the
7 perspective of students is certainly painful, but
8 from the perspective of faculty, it is equally
9 problematic. I received an e-mail from a director
10 of undergraduate studies in the Humanities that
11 said, I have a number of courses without rooms,
12 they were either necessary late-adds or simply
13 changes. In one case, we had to expand and add
14 recitations to a course to accommodate students.
15 Any suggestions on how to proceed? Any secrets up
16 your sleeve about spaces? I don't have any
17 secrets up my sleeve, but we have a plan to build
18 the space we need.

19 The college is at the right size
20 and we have no plans to increase in the coming
21 years, we're simply looking to have classrooms
22 that are suitable for teaching, for good
23 laboratory space, for the sciences, for lecture
24 halls, for seminar rooms, and room to educate our
25 students. Having the space in the heart of our

1
2 school means that we'll be able to continue the
3 tradition of excellence that distinguishes an NYU
4 education. I believe the 2031 plan provides this,
5 and I urge you to work with us to get that plan
6 approved and help us to secure the future of our
7 university. And I'm welcome--happy to entertain
8 any questions. Thank you.

9 LYNNE BROWN: Thank you. Lynne
10 Brown returning to the microphone. So in
11 conclusion, and we are concluding, this plan for
12 us is about modernizing one of the top academic
13 institutions in New York City. NYU has always
14 been, from our founding, in and of the city. We
15 bear the name of the city in our name, and we've
16 always been an institution that has striven,
17 strived just like this city to get better and
18 better and this plan helps us do it. This plan
19 also provides economic benefits in terms of jobs,
20 and you'll hear from some other testifiers later
21 about the construction jobs and long-term
22 employment opportunities that a plan of this size
23 will produce. But most importantly, it will help
24 deans like Dean Starr and Dean Campbell continue
25 the work they do to educate the qualified students

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2 who want to come to NYU, and the overwhelming
3 number of whom stay in the city.

4 Thank you for your attention, that
5 concludes the formal presentation and we're all
6 available for questions.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Well thank you
8 all very much, you know, we appreciate you being
9 here today. And one thing I just want to say,
10 President Sexton, members of the opposition, and
11 everybody else I meant to--spoke to think that
12 you've done a great job with the institution and
13 you deserve credit for the reputation. Whether
14 you're a good neighbor or not, that'll be another
15 story, but we'll talk about that. But you do
16 deserve a lot of credit for how great the
17 institution has done.

18 What I'm going to do now is I'm
19 going to ask Council Member Margaret Chin, she
20 wanted to make a statement, and then we have a
21 number of members who have questions. So Council
22 Member Chin.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you,
24 Chair Weprin. Good morning and welcome to the
25 City Council public hearing on New York

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2 University's 2031 expansion proposal. I want to
3 take a moment to thank the Chair of this
4 Committee, Council Member Weprin, for organizing
5 this hearing and for the Committee staff of the
6 Land Use department and my own staff for the hard
7 work over the past few months.

8 Today, we will hear testimony
9 regarding NYU's 2031 expansion proposal. Over the
10 course of the day we will hear from elected
11 official, Community Board 2, NYU faculties, and
12 hundreds of Greenwich Village residents, and New
13 York University. This is an opportunity for my
14 colleagues on the City Council to hear your
15 thoughts, feelings, and concerns firsthand. It is
16 also an opportunity for my colleagues to ask
17 questions and explore the details of this
18 proposal.

19 That said, I strongly believe that
20 this plan is unacceptable in its current form.

21 The amount of--please--

22 [Applause]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: The amount of
24 density--

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]

1 Please try to keep that to a minimum.

2
3 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --that NYU
4 has proposed is out of scale with the surrounding
5 community. The concern that people have raised
6 that NYU is trying to shoehorn this project into
7 too small of a place--space is justified. NYU
8 tell us their immediate need is for more
9 classroom, lecture halls, study space, student
10 housing. Anything outside of these needs must
11 take a back seat in this proposal.

12 However, I also want to acknowledge
13 that NYU is an important institution and this
14 proposal will bring thousands of jobs and new
15 opportunity to our city. It is important for our
16 city and for the Village that NYU remains
17 competitive and has the space to grow.

18 Throughout this process I have
19 tried to keep an open mind and I have maintained
20 that it is possible to strike a balance that
21 upholds the integrity of the Greenwich Village and
22 meets NYU's immediate academic needs. My priority
23 is to modify NYU's current proposal and reduce
24 density on the north and south super block. NYU's
25 academic and housing need should be prioritized in

1
2 this plan, but not at the expense of residents'
3 quality of life.

4 I will also seek to preserve open
5 public space in this plan. The Department of
6 Transportation's own strips along Mercer Street
7 and LaGuardia Place serve as an important role as
8 a buffer between current residents and the new
9 buildings NYU is seeking to build. These strips
10 must be preserved in the final plan. This
11 application presents an opportunity for NYU and
12 the Greenwich Village community to finally reach a
13 consensus on what has been a hotly contested issue
14 for decades--the issue of open space. The City
15 Planning Commission has already put forth a
16 framework that will require community input and
17 oversight of open space on the super block sites,
18 and in the coming weeks I will work to fully
19 articulate this plan.

20 NYU does not have the best track
21 record when it comes to upkeep and maintain of
22 green space. There is already a widespread
23 feeling in the community that NYU will renege on
24 its commitment to create more and better quality
25 open space, but strong oversight will ensure that

1
2 the community's voices continue to be heard in the
3 design of these open space while holding NYU to
4 its maintenance responsibility.

5 Lastly, we must maintain affordable
6 housing in Greenwich Village. There are many
7 long-time residents who live in and around the
8 super block and is certain that if this plans move
9 forward, their lives will be affected by
10 construction for years on end. While I will do
11 everything in my power to mitigate potential
12 construction impacts on the surrounding community,
13 I will also fight to ensure that affordable
14 housing remain affordable. New York University
15 would not be where it is today without the
16 pioneers who built Greenwich Village. It is my
17 duty as an elected official to protect affordable
18 housing in our community, and this is a
19 responsibility that I will take seriously.

20 Over the last two years I have
21 received thousands of e-mails, letter, petitions,
22 and phone calls about NYU's plan to develop on the
23 super block and in the Washington Square area. I
24 have had numerous meetings with members of
25 Community Board 2 and their NYU working group,

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2 Community Action Alliance on NYU 2031, Greenwich
3 Village Society for Historic Preservation, Friends
4 of LaGuardia Place, and NYU faculties, as well as
5 residents from Washington Square Village, 505
6 LaGuardia, Bleecker Street, Mercer Street, and the
7 community east of Washington Square Park. Over
8 the last six months, I have been impressed by the
9 dedication and commitment demonstrated by so many
10 residents of Greenwich Village. I am continually
11 impressed with your knowledge, your conviction,
12 and passion in preserving the quality of life and
13 the character of the Village. I want you to know
14 that the feedback I have received has provided
15 invaluable insight and perspective when reviewing
16 this application.

17 Finally, I wanted to thank everyone
18 who have joined us here today. I know that you
19 have taken significant time out of your busy
20 schedule in order to voice your opinion on this
21 matter, but I do urge everyone to remain
22 courteous, respectful of one another's opinion
23 because this is an open public forum and discourse
24 here today will inform the City Council of
25 discussion on the plan moving forward. And I

1
2 encourage my colleagues to ask the questions that
3 you have heard about from the community, and I
4 encourage NYU to answer our questions as honestly
5 and comprehensively as possible so that we can
6 help find a balance so that the community will not
7 be heavily burdened and that we will give you an
8 opportunity to grow and be competitive.

9 Thank you.

10 [Applause]

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,
12 Margaret. So what I'd like to ask, we all love
13 Margaret Chin, but what I'd like to ask, maybe we
14 could do jazz hands or something because, I'm
15 telling you, they're going to start throwing
16 people out if we make too much noise, if you start
17 doing the outbursts. I understand it's hard to
18 control sometimes, but okay? Everyone want to
19 practice? No.

20 A lot of the members of the panel
21 have questions, so and I possibly will come back
22 to anyone, Margaret Chin afterwards if she has
23 questions as well. I'd like to start with the
24 Chair of the Land Use Committee, Council Member--

25 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Margaret,

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should be--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yeah, she wants to wait on the questions, right? Council Member Leroy Comrie.

Oh, also we've been joined by Council Members Robert Jackson, Council Member Jessica Lappin, and Council Member Diana Reyna.

[Pause]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: And Steve Levin is visiting.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Margarita [off mic].

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: And Margarita Lopez is watching over--Rosie Mendez.

[Pause]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I've been so talking about NYU and got caught up in my history, sorry, Rosie Mendez. Although Margarita Lopez is watching over as well.

[Pause]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Council Member Comrie.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay. Good morning. I want to thank you for coming today and

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2 I hope that we can utilize this meeting as a start
3 of a template to come to some final discussions
4 about how we do what's necessary to continue to
5 make sure that the vision of the city is
6 maintained and engaged with cooperation by all of
7 the residents of the city. So can you give us a
8 breakdown of the percentages of what the site will
9 be dedicated for? How much will be dedicated for
10 academics; how much for student housing; how much
11 for commercial use, can you give us the specifics
12 on that, please?

13 LYNNE BROWN: Yes, thank you,
14 Chairman Comrie. The breakdown of uses, I have
15 the overview if we need to get more granular, I'll
16 defer to Alicia Hurley. The breakdown of uses is
17 approximately 65% for academic purposes, academic
18 meaning classrooms, faculty space, department
19 space, labs, and student housing, which is counted
20 as academic space.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: How much of
22 that 65 is student housing?

23 LYNNE BROWN: About 300,000 square
24 feet so--

25 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay. And

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so now--

LYNNE BROWN: --in percentage terms, yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --what is that in percentage terms if we're going to stay within those terms?

LYNNE BROWN: About 20%.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay.

LYNNE BROWN: Ten percent for faculty housing, which is a small amount; 17% for mechanical systems and replacement parking; 4% for the public school; and 3% for retail.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Three percent for retail?

LYNNE BROWN: Mm-hmm, very small amount.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And what is the percentage for the amount of public space or play space that would be--that's on the original super block, and what is the percent proposed for public space or play space in the 2031 plan?

ALICIA HURLEY: It's a complicated analysis, but what we're--the analysis shows that-

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COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:

[Interposing] Yes, I'm sorry, please just--you said your name was, but you have to say your name each time you speak--

ALICIA HURLEY: Every time, I'm sorry.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --for the record. Thank you.

ALICIA HURLEY: Alicia Hurley. And the open space, what we are bringing on is a net new of over three acres of public open space, and to do that, what we're doing is taking NYU private space and opening up to the public, that was shown on the boards. So it's a net addition of three new acres of public open space, and that includes playgrounds, green and planted areas--

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet, please.

ALICIA HURLEY: --as well as seating areas for the community to use.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay. And also what percent of the site will be open to the--is that a public space be open 24/7, what is the percentage of that?

ALICIA HURLEY: The public open

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2 space right now, this will be a part of what this
3 organization will be deciding right now. It
4 follows the rules that govern the Parks department
5 spaces, so it opens at 6 a.m. and closes at
6 midnight.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And right
8 now, does the public have an opportunity to
9 utilize any space at NYU for community meetings,
10 community activities--

11 ALICIA HURLEY: [Interposing]
12 Absolutely, sir, we host the Community Board and a
13 range of neighborhood organizations every month in
14 our academic facilities for their annual meetings,
15 their monthly meetings, for whatever they need, we
16 host hundreds of organizations a year.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And is that
18 going to increase in availability under this plan?

19 ALICIA HURLEY: It is certainly the
20 case that more space that we have means more space
21 we can provide.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And what
23 about the opportunity for the public to use the
24 gymnasium, or do other activities within the site?

25 ALICIA HURLEY: The gymnasium right

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2 now, we do have community membership and the plans
3 would call for continued public membership in the
4 future.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay. And
6 what other space does NYU own outside of the super
7 blocks that could be developed within the
8 footprint and--actually, let me go to a more
9 philosophical question, and New York is a commuter
10 city, the NYU is a commuter school to a lot of
11 people, why the need to only develop within the
12 super block area, and is there a plan within 2031
13 to develop the other properties within the NYU
14 footprint, and can you explain why the focus is on
15 just developing the super block area?

16 LYNNE BROWN: John--

17 [Crosstalk]

18 JOHN SEXTON: John Sexton. First,
19 let me take the issue of alternative space within
20 the Core. Alternative space within the Core
21 certainly is available, and what we've tried to do
22 here is make an honest assessment of our needs
23 over a 25 year period. It's as good a job as we
24 could do, taking the academic plans of the school
25 and our history. And that has brought us to the

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2 aggregate numbers that we bring before you. We've
3 then done as honest and accurate a job of
4 assessing--going to Councilwoman Chin's point--
5 what needs to be in the Core in terms of making a
6 community work.

7 And New York University, as you
8 say, Councilman, is a special kind of university.
9 We don't have gates, we don't have contiguous
10 areas where that we occupy everything. We were
11 founded to be in and of the city, we've tried to
12 live that, although our center certainly is this
13 Greenwich Village area. What that does is it
14 presses as an important academic and social matter
15 as we try to attract faculty and students, the
16 needs of building community. So that's where this
17 principle of aggregation becomes very, very
18 important because if we come to disperse then the
19 fact that we don't have a campus, the fact that we
20 don't do big-time athletics, we don't have a
21 football stadium in which we gather, would disable
22 us from attracting students who have as options
23 going elsewhere where they get those elements.

24 So that led us to the number that
25 has to be in the Core, and only about half of this

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2 plan is in the Core. That then gets to your
3 point. We could do some off of the super block
4 and, to the extent our assessment is accurate and
5 there's any diminution in the amount we do in the
6 super block, we'll be forced in the Core to go out
7 as--and there are buildings in the Core we own and
8 have developed--the new genomics building is an
9 example of where we went and we've developed and
10 we're doing that. This is what's needed in
11 addition to the properties we already own and plan
12 to develop, we've consumed as much as we can in
13 that.

14 If the amount we do on the super
15 blocks is diminished, then that would force us out
16 to do other development as properties became
17 available in the Core. That would have two
18 disadvantages. The first is that it would cost
19 more for the university to do that and it would
20 press upon the assets of the university more,
21 because we own the land, we'd have to be paying
22 for the land and these new properties. And the
23 second is we would be taking buildings out of the
24 community. This was designed to be as little
25 intrusive in the community as possible.

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[Laughter]

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Quiet,
please. Quiet, please.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: You raised
an issue of cost and I wanted to talk about
financing, but before I talked about cost, you
also raised the issue of NYU having a football
team or, you know, a soccer team, or some sports.
And I understand the need of sports-generating
revenue, that's never going to happen at NYU, but
that's--but you also indicated earlier that your
student ratio and student numbers have been going
up, so there are other things that are bringing
students to NYU, so--and NYU will never be a sport
school, but that, you know, focused on the fact
that you have had a rise in tuition, my personal
observation from going to NYU and the Kimmel
Center and some of the other places is that people
are happy to be there because of the ambience of
the Village and the ambience of--

[Applause]

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Quiet,
please, quiet. I'm not looking for clapping, not

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2 looking for cheering, I just want to air all sides
3 so that we can have a full discussion on all sides
4 of the issue, so I'm going to ask a lot of
5 questions to everyone here to try to make sure
6 that all of the issues--and everybody's going to
7 be unhappy with me in some aspect by the end of
8 the day, which means that I will be trying to be
9 fair to both sides. But I want to make sure that
10 all the issues are aired at this meeting and that
11 all the discussion can be done in public as much
12 as possible.

13 So, you know, knowing that the
14 ambience of the Village is sacred to a lot of
15 people in the city and attracting to the city any-
16 -the creation of that ambience and the maintenance
17 of that ambience is a clear concern. That's why
18 we're here and not across the street, because
19 there are a lot of people that want to talk about
20 that. And how do we make sure that that is
21 maintained so that the NYU can still be a college
22 that attracts people that want to wander and
23 experience New York City in the state that it's in
24 today?

25 JOHN SEXTON: I think that's a

1
2 wonderful point that you make, and it's one that
3 we embrace completely. We understand that our
4 locational endowment, Greenwich Village and New
5 York City, is an important part of what attracts
6 faculty, students, staff of the kind that we get
7 to NYU. That leads to the obvious conclusion that
8 NYU has a deep interest in maintaining that
9 ambience that you talk about, and we do. And
10 people can disagree over the details of this plan,
11 but one thing that your point makes, I hope,
12 resoundingly clear is that, you know, you have
13 folks here in the administration that I lead and
14 in me who care deeply about the Village.

15 I've lived in the Village for 30
16 years, I was attracted back to NYU, in particular,
17 when it came time for me to choose an academic
18 home for precisely the reasons you say. And I'd
19 like, therefore, this to respond a bit to what
20 Councilwoman Chin said--

21 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:

22 [Interposing] Well she's going to talk about her
23 own questions, so just--

24 JOHN SEXTON: [Interposing] Well
25 but we've tried during my time over things that

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2 I've had responsibility to do to recognize that
3 balance. So, for example, in the most recent
4 building we've just completed, we didn't do what
5 NYU traditionally has done and build everything
6 as-of-right, we could have built in the site to
7 the west of Kimmel a 14-story building. That's
8 what the cardinal was going to have a developer
9 build. We held back, and I committed that we
10 would build a building that, when you came down
11 Fifth Avenue, by the time you got to 12th Street,
12 you could see blue sky behind the arch. We left
13 seven stories of development as-of-right on the
14 table precisely because we care about these
15 issues, and this plan is designed to do that.

16 And if our assessments are right,
17 and I want to emphasize to you I commissioned the
18 deans and the provost to develop the academic plan
19 first, and out of that academic plan came needed
20 academic space, and out of that came what was
21 necessary in the Core, and it may be 5 to 10% in
22 either direction over a 25-year period. But as we
23 meet those academic needs, to the extent that the
24 super blocks are not used to provide that space in
25 the Core, we will have to be doing it in other

1 buildings in the Core, exactly as you say.

2
3 And in our judgment, although it
4 does incur inconvenience, for example, some of my
5 faculty colleagues who live in those apartments,
6 this is the most enlightened way to do it.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: What's the
8 cost to develop this project? Have you estimated
9 what the cost would be to develop the project in
10 the light of the difficulty in financing projects
11 right now? Do you have a plan to do the financing
12 over the course of the next 30 years or 20 years
13 to do that? In light of--and how are you going to
14 be able to make the project happen within a
15 certain timeframe? And what's the first piece to
16 be developed?

17 JOHN SEXTON: Okay. There are
18 several questions there and I'll try to remember
19 all of them, if I--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:
21 [Interposing] Right, I'll--

22 [Crosstalk]

23 JOHN SEXTON: --please correct me
24 or bring me back.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Right.

1
2 JOHN SEXTON: So the proposal is
3 that the Zipper building would be the first to be
4 developed. One thing it's important to note is
5 that, given the findings of the transition
6 committee reports in 2001-2002, that we were in
7 desperate need of space, we've been embarked over
8 the last ten years on trying to address some of
9 the decompression. What you have before you today
10 is our assessment of what's necessary to finish
11 that and bring us into a competitive space with
12 our peer schools as we compete for talent.

13 We have averaged over the last ten
14 years about a 300,000 square feet per year. So if
15 one were to take that and look forward 20 years,
16 which is the amount of time between now and 2031,
17 300,000 square feet a year for 20 years would--
18 exactly what we've been doing, in other words, and
19 been affording in a kind of revolving borrowing,
20 payoff, like a mortgage move on, it would be what
21 we're doing going forward. So financially it's a
22 straight line.

23 And of course, our administration
24 prides itself on working hard. One of the things
25 I've tried to do, I'm the 15th president, is ask

1
2 my folks always to think about the 18th, 19th, and
3 20th president, but one of the things universities
4 do is work over generations and try to think of
5 the future. This plan is an example of that.
6 We're, with this plan, setting up our successes.

7 The trustees of NYU and the
8 administration have looked carefully at our
9 ability to afford it. The university has never
10 been in better financial position, we find that
11 from the quality of students we're attracting, the
12 quality of faculty, which is the heart of it, from
13 the rating agencies, there's never been a better
14 time to borrow than right now to build. So in a
15 way, it's the initial phases of this are more
16 easily financed than what we've done with less
17 impact on the wheel of the university. But our
18 trustees, who are experts in this, some of the
19 leading real estate and business people in our
20 city, feel very comfortable, and as recently as
21 last Tuesday, unanimously supported this. And
22 we've gone through all kinds of stress tests to
23 make sure that we can, and our successes, can
24 afford the project here.

25 The overall cost is, you can only

1
2 put it in ranges, Councilman, because the cost of
3 borrowing becomes affected, cost of construction
4 at any given time. If one were to do--and I
5 assume you're asking for the overall cost for the
6 entire 6 million square foot project or just that--
7 -well you just a ratio in proportion, the overall
8 cost for the entire 6 million square feet would be
9 somewhere between 3 and \$4 billion. Of course,
10 this property is particularly attractive to us
11 because you take about 20% of the cost out because
12 we already own the land here. So we would not--
13 whereas, now out in Brooklyn, for example, where
14 370 Jay Street is being given to us by the City,
15 that 20% could be taken out as well. But other
16 places, if we were forced to go other places in
17 the Village, right away, you're increasing by that
18 amount the cost of the project, which is one
19 serious disadvantage from the university.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay. and
21 so you feel that your trustees are confident that
22 you can finance it within the 300,000 square foot
23 envelope per year for the next--so the Zipper
24 building is about 300,000 square feet or is it
25 larger than that? I thought it was like 1.2.

1
2 JOHN SEXTON: Yes, no, the Zipper
3 building is about 800,000 square feet--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Right.

5 JOHN SEXTON: --800,000 to a
6 million square feet, and, of course, it would not
7 be built in one year, so the average of 300,000
8 square feet a year, that would be the first
9 project that we would do and it would probably be
10 a four or five-year project, so it comes in in
11 those numbers.

12 It's not that we're confident that
13 we could do it, we're supremely confident because
14 we've been doing it, and we're not anticipating in
15 this program doing any more than we've done over
16 the last ten years. So on average, the entire
17 project--and I emphasize, that's the entire 6
18 million, not just the 2 million we're talking
19 about in the super block--comes within the
20 envelope of what the university has been doing.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay. And
22 you said that your trustees are in fully support
23 and voted for the project, did they help design a
24 project, who designed the property? Was that all
25 within NYU also or was that done outside of the

1
2 university's expertise?

3 JOHN SEXTON: I'll just answer at
4 the top level and turn it to my colleagues. My
5 trustees are an active group of trustees,
6 especially when you get into an area like this, so
7 they have been actively involved. This has been
8 discussed in our community at the strategic level,
9 beginning with the transition report and framework
10 2031, which was a 2007 communitywide conversation--
11 --when I say community, I mean NYU communitywide
12 conversation--and then at the tactical level,
13 which brings us to this project, we began in all
14 our constituencies in 2007 a conversation. The
15 trustees, I would say, have probably had two or
16 three meetings a year just on this project through
17 that whole period, in the last year, that's
18 probably been about a dozen meetings to get into
19 the kind of granulation that you'll talk about.
20 But my colleagues will speak to the experts we
21 brought in and the community involvement and so
22 forth.

23 LYNNE BROWN: The trustees set a
24 macro strategic level and also--Lynne Brown,
25 sorry--and help us understand the financial

1
2 parameters and others. But as to the actual
3 design, that was left to NYU and to run a
4 competition and solicit what we think were some of
5 the finest architects and planners, so we're using
6 Grimshaw Architects, Toshiko Mori, and because so
7 much of the plan involves landscaping and the open
8 space, we use Matt Urbanski from Van Valkenburgh,
9 one of the leading landscape architects in New
10 York City. So that's the core design team,
11 supplemented by internal NYU talent, but those are
12 the groups brought in to take us through these
13 last few years on the design and planning.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And you
15 also talked about how you engage--or can you go
16 deeper into how you engaged the local community,
17 since Community Board 2 seems to be adamantly
18 against the plan? So let me understand what
19 happened from your engagement to total Community
20 Board opposition.

21 LYNNE BROWN: A long road. Lynne
22 Brown. A long road. As John said, there's many
23 ways to approach these planning exercises,
24 sometimes an institution or a developer will go
25 behind the scenes, think through their own needs

1
2 and plans, and then present a proposal for people
3 to react to. For a number of reasons, mainly
4 wanting to engage our community and be in real
5 time, NYU actually did its own planning rather out
6 in the open and transparently as it was thinking
7 through what it needed to do, and this process, as
8 we've all said, started about 2007, so it's been
9 five years. We began with a series of open
10 houses, had various plans put on the table,
11 meshing with our needs, what do people think about
12 them, talked about our remote sites. Then Borough
13 President Scott Stringer put together a special
14 task force to look at NYU's development, we met
15 with them over two years probably 50 to 60
16 meetings with the borough president's task force,
17 and engagement throughout with the Community Board
18 and the internal and external communities.

19 As we all know--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:

21 [Interposing] All right, just a--

22 [Crosstalk]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --question-

24 -

25 LYNNE BROWN: Sure.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --the open
3 houses were notified how?

4 LYNNE BROWN: Through mass
5 notifications, e-mails, invitations to come--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:
7 [Interposing] Were they open to the public,
8 anyone--

9 LYNNE BROWN: All open to the--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --inside or
11 outside of the university could attend?

12 LYNNE BROWN: Yes, all open to the
13 public.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And the
15 borough president's task force, were those done
16 the same?

17 LYNNE BROWN: They were by his
18 invitation, but they did include the elected
19 representatives at every level--federal, state,
20 and city, and Community Board representatives--as
21 well as block associations, preservation
22 community. So he cast a rather wide net of those
23 who could participate.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: So in your
25 opinion, there was no one that should not have

1
2 known about either an open house at some point,
3 whether internal to the school or external that
4 could have participated.

5 LYNNE BROWN: Mm-hmm, no, I think
6 we certainly tried our best and made no attempt in
7 terms of the information we made available, what
8 we put up on our website, and what we made as
9 topics of the open houses and others. We
10 certainly made every effort to engage as many
11 people who wanted to be engaged.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: I have
13 other questions, but I know some of my colleagues
14 have questions so I'd like to sum up at the end,
15 Chair Weprin, and thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Fine, no
17 problem. I'd like to call on Council Member Dan
18 Garodnick.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Thank
20 you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you,
21 President Sexton, for your testimony, as well as
22 Ms. Brown and Ms. Hurley. I have the privilege of
23 representing the NYU Medical Center in my district
24 and I'm well aware of the plans that you have over
25 there. I also just want to recognize the work of

1
2 Council Member Chin in helping this panel to
3 understand the issues that are present in the
4 community and thank her for her advocacy.

5 We understand that the desire to
6 build on the footprint was a deliberate act and
7 that perhaps if you had not made that decision, we
8 would see community opposition of a different
9 variety, we understand that. But there is still a
10 lot of concern about the size and the impact on
11 open space and the scale and certainly the level
12 of community and even faculty opposition that
13 exists out there. I just want to ask a few
14 specific questions. The first one relates to the
15 open space because, as I understand it, it's NYU's
16 position that this will expand open space, is that
17 correct?

18 ALICIA HURLEY: Alicia Hurley. So
19 I would like to, if you don't mind, walk you
20 through the boards that help describe the
21 perception of what people will experience if they
22 are visiting those blocks, live on those blocks,
23 live in the nearby neighborhood.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Good,
25 and if you don't mind, put up the existing

1
2 situation as well, along with the proposed.

3 ALICIA HURLEY: Right, so they're
4 both of them are--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Oh,
6 there you go, okay.

7 ALICIA HURLEY: --in smaller scale,
8 if you can see them. So to the left--and I'll be
9 assisted by a pointer--you can see on the northern
10 block the two Washington Square Village buildings
11 and you can see there the blue spaces are NYU
12 private property, the middle section, the
13 Washington Square Village that's going to be
14 called--that is called the Sasaki Garden, you'll
15 hear a lot about that today, it's a raised garden
16 that is the roof of a parking garage. The whole
17 site, other than that, you can see the gray area,
18 which is pavement, those are essentially emergency
19 access areas into the site, and then the other big
20 blue space, right there, is a private playground
21 for NYU, and some community members are given keys
22 to that, it's a keyed playground.

23 And then the green areas are
24 publicly accessible open space. And then what you
25 see in, kind of, the beige areas, those are

1
2 planted areas but they're gated off so it could be
3 rows of ivy, trees. So it's lovely, but it's not
4 anywhere you can sit, it's essentially just
5 sidewalks and tree areas where you're walking
6 around the site.

7 So the plan for the future, and you
8 see mostly it's on the north block, is to take all
9 of that NYU private space and open it up to the
10 public. We will be required to treat it in a way
11 that it's open to the public, maintain it in a way
12 that it's open to the public, the design will
13 include the community. And you can see what we're
14 trying to do is level the whole block so that a
15 person who wants to walk from the corner of West
16 Third Street and LaGuardia can actually get into
17 SoHo without having to go around those two big
18 blocks. Right now, if you tried to walk through
19 them, if you're not familiar with the area, you
20 will feel like you're trespassing on NYU property.

21 So this plan very much tries--and I
22 think you'll hear people don't mind that in some
23 regard, but what we're trying to do is really
24 solve an issue that was from 40 years ago, it was
25 intended to be a private area then, how do we look

1
2 toward the next 20, 40 years and make it a
3 publicly accessible open space.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Okay.

5 So if I understand you correctly, it is that there
6 are private spaces that will become public, but
7 the overall amount of green space that exists on
8 the site or unbuilt space on the site, obviously,
9 will be reduced considerably in this plan, is that
10 right?

11 ALICIA HURLEY: No, the existing
12 conditions, the building footprints are 33% of the
13 site right now, in the future that increases
14 slightly to 38.9%, that's building footprint, goes
15 from 33 to 38.9.

16 The publicly accessible open space
17 goes from right now 5.2% to 29.5%.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Right, I
19 understand. So the building footprints go up,
20 which means that the overall unbuilt space goes
21 down, but what you're saying is the publicly
22 accessible space goes up considerably, okay. So I
23 think we agree on the facts, which are that this
24 would expand publicly accessible space, but it
25 would reduce the overall amount of unbuilt space

1
2 on the lot, is that correct?

3 ALICIA HURLEY: That's fair, yes.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Okay.

5 On the need for space, now it's very difficult
6 when you sit on this panel, President Sexton, to
7 be able to debate the question of NYU's specific
8 space needs and I defer to your expertise on what
9 exactly NYU needs to accommodate its growing
10 student body. But one question that I have for
11 you is whether it is accurate that there are no
12 classes on Fridays because we have heard that, in
13 the absence of classes on Fridays so is that--well
14 first of all, is that correct? It's not correct,
15 okay, so there are classes on Fridays.

16 JOHN SEXTON: Yes, there are, and
17 on Saturdays and Sundays too.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Okay.
19 Because it sounded almost too good to be true.

20 JOHN SEXTON: Believe me, this is
21 one of the wonderful kind of conventional stories
22 that's out there about higher education generally,
23 and especially if you're in a place like NYU, you
24 understand the importance of every minute of every
25 space and we're constantly trying to engineer

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towards maximum utilization of space.

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Okay.

I'm sure we will hear from faculty members on that subject and you will--

JOHN SEXTON: [Interposing] Well the data, just so you have it, Councilman, is that--

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Please.

JOHN SEXTON: --on the typical Friday, we have 10,000 students taking classes.

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Okay. Let's talk about the students for one moment because you were very clear in your response to Council Member Comrie about the cost of the plan, between 3 to \$4 billion, and that it is 20% less because you're doing it on your own site, not on somebody else's property. There is a concern about the potential that this may impact students at the end of the day through increased tuition or increased indebtedness or absence of student aid. Can you help us understand how NYU will avoid that and what it is about the plan that should make us feel confident that the situation would not get worse for NYU students where they already have a

1
2 rather high tuition?

3 JOHN SEXTON: First, I welcome this
4 question, and I have to say--I'll be a bit
5 immodest here, at least I consider this being
6 immodest--I think I'm the only university
7 president in the world that teaches a full faculty
8 schedule. So I teach four courses every academic
9 year, I teach undergraduates, I have weekly
10 dinners, I have weekly lunches with students, I
11 have town halls with students, and I think you
12 might find very significant the testimony before
13 the City Planning Commission of our student
14 leaders who strongly favor this plan because it's
15 our students, really, I think, that in a way are
16 among the loudest voices inside of NYU saying
17 we're compressed. The numbers, for example, on
18 our library, which have not been mentioned, just
19 the seats in our library, student body our sites
20 should probably have about 9,000 seats for
21 students to study, we have about 3,000. That's
22 the kind of situation our students live with day
23 in and day out when we talk about decompression.

24 And just before I get to the
25 specific issue on financing, I'd just like to

1
2 correct something that I may have stated
3 inartfully. This is not about increasing the size
4 of the student body at NYU, the City's general
5 plan for student growth in New York City is 2.5%
6 over the same period, the Mayor and his people
7 have been planning to it to 2030. Our plan has
8 only a .5% growth in our student body per year,
9 that's an annual .5% growth, and that's
10 principally to accommodate areas that we just
11 don't know exists, like the genomics area or a
12 study of cities with CUSP.

13 Now to the issue of financing and
14 how it works out, I am very--NYU is extremely well
15 regarded in terms of our financial status, it's
16 been improving over the last decade, we've had one
17 of the five most successful fundraising decades of
18 any university. But the fact is that, even though
19 we've managed in the last decade to almost triple
20 the per capita endowment of NYU, we tripled it to
21 about \$70,000 per student. Our peer schools--I
22 mean, Harvard, Yale, and Princeton--have about 1.5
23 million to 2 million per student. The poorest of
24 our peer universities probably has ten times per
25 student what we do. And that becomes relevant to

1
2 your question because we're not able--we don't
3 have the endowed financial aid for students that
4 our peer schools do. And we put about \$190
5 million a year, which is more than any other
6 university, I believe, into student financial aid.
7 But the fact of the matter is that 85% of NYU
8 undergraduates work a job while going to school.
9 Now that's probably not a bad thing, I think if
10 Bill Gates' child went to NYU, he or she would
11 probably work a job 'cause it's an internship.
12 But half of my undergraduates work two jobs--that
13 begins to get to your issue--and I have 500
14 undergraduates that works three jobs while they're
15 going to school.

16 Now what are those kids telling us
17 by doing that? First of all, they're telling us
18 they're industrious as well as smart. And it's
19 significant that over 20% of our undergraduates
20 are Pell Grant eligible students--over 20%, that's
21 double most of our peers as a percentage. But
22 they're also telling us they really like the
23 quality of an NYU education because of our
24 locational endowment, as was mentioned earlier,
25 because of the quality we're providing, they

1
2 really want to be at NYU 'cause if they went to a
3 less good school, they could probably get a merit
4 scholarship, and we care about that every day.

5 Now the fact of the matter is that
6 this building program will give them more value
7 for what they're putting in. It might surprise
8 you that, although you see extreme cases in the
9 newspaper about the indebtedness of NYU students,
10 because of their industry, because of what I've
11 talked about, because of New York City being able
12 to provide them with productive work experiences
13 while they're in school, the median student that
14 graduates from NYU graduates with only \$7,000 in
15 debt after four years of education--7,000 after
16 four years of education, that's the median
17 student, the median student. Amongst students
18 that receive financial aid, the median
19 indebtedness is \$28,000 after four years of
20 education. So as high as our tuition is, our
21 students manage to do it because they want the
22 quality.

23 And keep in mind what I said, we're
24 not going to be taxing the university budget
25 anymore in this plan than what we've done over the

1
2 last ten years. Indeed, because we propose this
3 to be on land we own and in a climate where at
4 least the first project couldn't have better
5 situation in terms of our credit rating, the
6 borrowing capacity of the university, and the cost
7 of borrowing, and the cost of construction at this
8 point, you couldn't possibly, viewed through the
9 lens that you're providing, do this at a better
10 time or in a better way.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: But is
12 there any way to actually protect these students,
13 I guess is the question. What is it that is
14 within the plan that you have for the development
15 over this period of time that will limit further
16 need of your students to take on two, three--as
17 industrious and impressive as that is, to limit
18 their need to do that? You know, I understand
19 that the endowment is not as large as other peer
20 institutions and that New York is an expensive
21 place, but what is it that should give us some
22 calm that this would not ultimately be their
23 obligation?

24 JOHN SEXTON: So the first is, I'd
25 ask you to understand that the issue you raise,

1
2 which is enabling every talented student that
3 should be at NYU to be at NYU, is one to which I
4 dedicate my life, it's my number one fundraising
5 priority. We did probably our major fundraising
6 initiative for the last ten years was something
7 called the Partners Plan by which we expanded the
8 size of the faculty of arts and sciences by 40% to
9 bring down the student teacher ratio--a good thing
10 for students. We are about to announce--this is
11 kind of a headline here, it hasn't yet been
12 announced at NYU--that those partners, the people
13 that--the donors that funded that huge plan for
14 growing the faculty have now accepted my
15 invitation that they would fund a huge initiative
16 in financial aid. So we're about to bring on a--
17 online a huge initiative in financial aid.

18 It's also true that, as long as I
19 have been president, we have committed to
20 increasing the percentage to a larger percentage
21 increase in financial aid each year, and that's
22 been true for every year that I have been
23 president, than the increase in tuition. So this
24 is a priority, it will continue to be a priority,
25 our trustees are consciously talking about this

1
2 with us, and more importantly, they're now
3 stepping up and giving us the money for financial.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Okay.
5 Thank you, President Sexton, and, obviously,
6 congratulations on that new initiative, that
7 sounds like it will be very promising for
8 students. And I do not want to take more than my
9 allotted time, so thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the
10 opportunity.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
12 Council Member Jessica Lappin.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Thank you,
14 Mr. Chair. Nice to see you all here today.

15 I want to start by just supporting
16 and echoing my colleague, Councilwoman Margaret
17 Chin, in saying that looking at the proposal and
18 hearing your presentation today, to me, it just
19 seems too dense, too big, too tall, too much for
20 what the site plan is that you have proposed
21 today, and I do hope that we'll be able to work
22 together to make it seem more contextual for the
23 neighborhood.

24 But I wanted to take sort of a step
25 back and ask, kind of, in the big picture about,

1
2 sort of, the foundation for this, which is, you
3 know, there were lots of statements today that
4 you're turning away qualified students, that
5 you're going to cease to become competitive, and
6 that you're really at a disadvantage compared to
7 your peers, and yet, in your presentation, over
8 the past couple of decades, you say you've grown
9 your population by 25% and you sort of have been
10 growing like gangbusters and increasing your
11 endowment and doing great things. So it's
12 somewhat contradictory that you haven't been able
13 to grow both in prestige and in terms of your
14 student body with what you currently have. But I
15 guess what I was really, sort of, interested by
16 was the peers that you list, my alma mater,
17 Georgetown, has, you know, 6,000 undergrads,
18 Columbia has 8,000 undergrads, Brown has 6,300,
19 MIT has 4,300, Princeton has 5,100, you have
20 21,000, that's a lot. Relative to the groups that
21 you list here as your peers, you're sort of closer
22 to a University of Michigan or Wisconsin or
23 Pittsburgh, really, which are much, much larger
24 institutions, and not in, you know, places like
25 Greenwich Village, you know, Ann Arbor, Michigan,

1
2 Madison, Wisconsin are very different places.

3 So I guess my question is, you have
4 made a choice to expand to have a very large
5 undergraduate population and, I guess, my question
6 is, why. And not to challenge you, you run the
7 institution, but I'm just sort of curious why you,
8 you know, you have chosen to grow to such a large
9 number of undergraduates.

10 JOHN SEXTON: First, it's an honor
11 to talk to someone that went to Georgetown, I was
12 recruited to Fordham by Father Timothy Healy, who-
13 -

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: He was at--
15 yes, he's a very respected--

16 JOHN SEXTON: Yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: --and
18 Father Leo Donovan is now living in the city.

19 JOHN SEXTON: Right. NYU, of
20 course, has a history that goes back almost 200
21 years, that's where the 2031 comes from. There's
22 a way in which it's different from each of the
23 private universities that you mentioned. You're
24 right to note that we're more--we have the largest
25 private university in the country and we come

1
2 there by history. I like to tell people that NYU
3 is the only university in the history of the world
4 that in the same year had a faculty member win a
5 Pulitzer prize, a Nobel, and a Tony, and that
6 illustrates partly the answer to your question
7 'cause it's the Tony that most folks--most of the
8 universities, in fact, I think all the
9 universities you mentioned, don't have a Tisch
10 School of the Arts so they can't get the Tony. We
11 have an undergraduate business school, an
12 undergraduate school of nursing, an undergraduate
13 school of education. We have in our undergraduate
14 population, the gamut of human activity and that's
15 part of NYU growing up as, not only as a research
16 university, which was the model that created all
17 of those, or a comprehensive teaching university,
18 like a Georgetown or a Fordham, where I went, but
19 also founded by Gallatin to reflect all of the
20 activity of a city and, therefore, the--we have 12
21 undergraduate schools so if you were to compare
22 just our college to those schools, you would find
23 a similar size. But when you add all of the other
24 schools like the Stern School of Business, the
25 Tisch School of the Arts, the Steinhardt School of

1
2 Education, and so forth, that's when you get that
3 decision. Now the fact of the matter is that that
4 decision was made and it was a reversible--and it
5 was made almost inductively, it was made out of
6 the city, up until 1981 when John Brademas
7 arrived, more or less out of the activities of the
8 city. And then what began happening in 1981 was a
9 change which fundamentally reflected a decision to
10 create a residential university, as well as a
11 community university. And today we are primarily
12 a residential university.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: No, I
14 understand, and it's wonderful that you have all
15 of these programs and they do enrich the students
16 and the city, but there's always the balance to
17 strike. And I've heard multiple times today that
18 you have said or your colleagues have said that
19 you're not going to grow the undergraduate number,
20 I hope that's true, only in that you always have
21 to strike a balance and it is a residential
22 neighborhood and you are a part of it, and I think
23 there's a sense that you're overwhelming it, which
24 is something that we have an obligation to
25 address.

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2 And I wanted to ask about the
3 faculty 'cause you mentioned the faculty and
4 something my phone has been ringing off the hook
5 the last couple of weeks from residents, but from
6 faculty members at NYU, opposing the plan. And
7 they tell me that 30 some odd departments have
8 formally voted against the plan, and so, you know,
9 that striking to me because they're people who are
10 part of the institution, and I'd like to hear your
11 response to that.

12 JOHN SEXTON: Well the first and
13 most important thing is that even my colleagues
14 who oppose the plan concede a need for space or, I
15 should say, in some cases conceded a need for
16 space because many of the departments that so
17 voted are in space that has been taken care of
18 during the construction of the last ten years.
19 Look, I'm a faculty member, okay, I just, as I
20 say, I teach, I just finished a book, you know, I
21 think it's important that those at LEED
22 universities try to figure out what the faculty
23 member would do if fully informed with all of the
24 matrix information and with the time to devote
25 himself or herself completely to thinking out

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2 what's the stuff that has to be done to make the
3 university continue inter-generationally to grow,
4 to do what this plan does, to think over time,
5 something Americans aren't doing enough of,
6 something we don't do instinctively as people.
7 You know, what about the NYU, the future, 'cause
8 that's the single most important thing we have to
9 preserve for NYU.

10 Now the individual faculty person,
11 you don't want him or her spending time [off mic],
12 and that's why you create deans, that's why you
13 create a university administration, you want them--
14 -I mean, we're very proud, one of our economists
15 won a Nobel prize this year, okay? You don't want
16 Tom Sargent spending his time thinking about plan
17 2031.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: I guess
19 that's why it's sort of striking to me that they
20 are and that they are taking the time to be active
21 and to call their--I mean, I'm not their elected
22 official, but to call me, and I assume the other
23 people who are members of this Committee, because
24 they feel that strongly and so they're not their
25 writing their books or doing their research.

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2 JOHN SEXTON: Well we understood,
3 we understood when we decided to do this building,
4 where it is proposed to be done that that was
5 going to cause inconvenience for our NYU community
6 because we're building where our faculty live, and
7 they're New Yorkers like everybody else. It's
8 very interesting that in the survey that was done,
9 about 30% of the faculty answered the survey that
10 the Faculty Centers Council did, and there was
11 about two-thirds opposition to the building out,
12 but 70% said we'd like this project if it was
13 someplace else, and that's human, I accept that.
14 And the significant thing, I think, is that this
15 emerges from the plans that the faculty have given
16 us.

17 I would invite you, if you have any
18 doubt about this to go--on my website is the
19 transition report on space from 2001 where the
20 faculty widely consulted, came forward with the we
21 need space, framework 2031, not the space plan,
22 but a strategic plan done in 2007, which is on my
23 website, where, again, that was right in the
24 foreground. And then, as should be the case,
25 people who care about the enterprise and care

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2 about the Village, like the people that are here,
3 have spent the last five years trying to get the
4 balance right and doing not an inch more than is
5 necessary. I mean, we've given you an honest
6 assessment of what our needs are and what our
7 needs are in the Core.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Okay.

9 JOHN SEXTON: Now the deans who
10 spend their time doing this are unanimous on this,
11 the trustees are unanimous on this, the university
12 administration is unanimous, and we're the people
13 that are asked to be the fiduciaries for the long-
14 term of the university.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Thank you,
16 Mr. Chair.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Ms.
18 Lappin, I want you to make sure you realize that
19 you were interrupted five times by applause, I
20 just want to make sure--I want to encourage that
21 behavior, so it was at least five times that you
22 were interrupted by applause.

23 I'd like to call on Council Member
24 Jackson.

25 [Pause]

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Well thank
3 you, Mr. Chair, and good morning everyone here.
4 We've been through this so many different times on
5 so many different projects so it's part of the
6 process. And as my colleague, Margaret Chin,
7 whose district it's in had indicated, that we all
8 need to make sure that we respect one another and
9 communicate effectively in order to make sure that
10 all of the needs of our communities and our city
11 goes forward. And so when it's all said and done,
12 we all have to come together and live together,
13 and that's very, very important.

14 But I have a couple of simple
15 questions. Obviously, it's not my district, so I
16 don't know all of the particular details, I have
17 not been involved in the hundreds of meetings that
18 have occurred throughout the communities in order
19 to raise hundreds of issues and concerns that
20 people have. But, obviously, as you know and
21 everyone here knows, it's in front of the Zoning
22 and Franchise Committee and I'm a member of that
23 Committee. Also on Land Use, and I will be voting
24 on this particular matter one way or the other
25 down the road. And like my colleague, Jessica

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2 Lappin, indicated, and Margaret, we've been
3 receiving phone calls and e-mails and things like
4 that. But I have a couple of questions, one, my
5 colleague read her statement and talked about what
6 some of the things that she felt needed to be
7 done. And I ask you, President, is there room to
8 negotiate in order to reach a consensus on this
9 particular project?

10 JOHN SEXTON: I don't think I'm
11 perfect, I don't think we're perfect, I
12 understand, as Councilwoman Chin pointed out, that
13 NYU's record in this, the main principle because
14 we never said what our needs were and never said
15 what the plan was, has been poor over time, I've
16 tried to change that in the last 12 years. We're
17 in conversation with Councilwoman Chin and I think
18 she understands we've made an honest assessment of
19 needs that will have to be met; if they can't be
20 met on this site, they'll have to be met elsewhere
21 in the Core. We think there are disadvantages to
22 that, but she's a very wise and fair woman and
23 we'll be talking to her and we'll talk to members
24 of the Committee. We're open, but we want you to
25 understand that this is not a project where we

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2 came to a number and then sought a rationale.
3 We've tried to give you the honest assessment that
4 rises from the academic projections as best we can
5 do it of what we need to be the university this
6 city wants us to be, for the good of the city and
7 for the good of NYU.

8 So of course we're open, but we're
9 open to try to achieve a balance that protects us.
10 I said I've lived in the village for 30 years
11 okay, I walk the Village, and NYU sees the Village
12 as its locational endowment in a way that is
13 different from the way Columbia sees its
14 surrounding neighborhood. We are literally in and
15 of our community and understand its magnet. So we
16 want to achieve it and we don't think we're
17 perfect, so that's part of what this process is
18 about. But what I do want you to know is that we
19 did not come into this process by inflating a
20 number so it could be reduced and so forth, that's
21 not what we've done here, we've tried to be honest
22 in the process.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: And that's
24 what I was going--my next question was going to be
25 about transparency and honesty in communication to

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2 all of the constituents and officials that are
3 involved in this project. I know that in previous
4 projects throughout the city we hear about, oh,
5 they've lied, they're not telling the truth,
6 they're not transparent. And so I'm asking you
7 about honesty and integrity, and, clearly, let me
8 just say to you, and I've communicated with you
9 and your staff very little, not on this particular
10 matter, but overall, but I deal with my colleague
11 Margaret Chin all the time and she is one of the
12 most honest and sincere and person with integrity
13 that I know. And I have known her for several
14 years, many years before she became in the City
15 Council, not personally, we haven't had dinner
16 together, our families don't go on picnics
17 together, but in the interactions that I've had,
18 she is one of the most honest and sincere
19 individuals. Do you believe that the university
20 in this particular matter, as far as being
21 transparent and putting forward everything that
22 you have on the table so that all of the players
23 involved--meaning the thousands and thousands of
24 residents and many other individuals--can assess
25 truly what the needs of the university are or is

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there something else that you need to share?

JOHN SEXTON: Councilman Jackson, we've tried to be as open and as honest as possible and to deal as transparently as possible throughout all of this. I certainly share your judgment, we're very lucky to have the Councilwoman as our representative and I share your assessment of that.

Since you bring up the fact that you're from out of the district, can I just make one point that seems to be shaping the conversation and I think is important, the Councilwoman, of course, knows this. Remember that we're talking about doing these buildings on the super block space where there already are five buildings on that space that are as tall as any of the buildings we're proposing to build, and that all of the buildings we're proposing to build are on footprints that already exist. So it's not as if we're going to be building things that will-- and that there'll be at least 60 feet of space, more than a city block, between any of these. So when you look at the aerial of this, I don't want you to think that there's a whole bunch of new

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2 stuff. This is not the Greenwich Village that we
3 think of when we think of the north side of
4 Washington Square Park. It's not as if we're
5 putting a big building in the north side of
6 Washington Square Park.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down,
8 please, keep it down.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Now--

10 JOHN SEXTON: That's the fact.

11 LYNNE BROWN: This is Lynne Brown--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: --now
13 okay, and see, you've just heard--you have
14 communicated what you believe to be a fact, and
15 you just heard some rumblings, but you clearly
16 said to me, in articulating some of the details,
17 that the buildings are not going to be any higher
18 than the current buildings that exists and that
19 it's not going to be built beyond the footprint
20 that already exists, but you already heard--so
21 either there is either misinformation or the lack
22 of understanding or the fact that they just don't
23 accept it, even if it, in fact, is going to be the
24 same. Just like my colleague asked a question
25 about whether or not classes are held on Friday

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2 and you had clearly indicated, yes, classes are
3 held on Friday, because there may have been a
4 rumor out there that classes are not being held on
5 Friday. So we need to dispel all of these rumors
6 by clearly showing and being transparent in the
7 process.

8 LYNNE BROWN: This is Lynne Brown,
9 Councilman. Without--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON:
11 [Interposing] Just pull the mic a little closer to
12 you, please.

13 LYNNE BROWN: --without
14 characterizing or using adjectives, but perhaps if
15 we did look to the model just for a minute, just--

16 [Crosstalk]

17 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON:
18 [Interposing] Sure, go ahead.

19 LYNNE BROWN: --there. So any of
20 the buildings in dark brown are existing NYU
21 buildings owned either for academic or
22 residential. As we--

23 FEMALE VOICE: Orient is north-
24 south.

25 LYNNE BROWN: Okay. The north is

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2 Empire, right--north this way, SoHo toward you,
3 sir. So Columbia is off the charts here on this
4 one.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: I know
6 very well.

7 LYNNE BROWN: I can't get there
8 from here. I can't get there from here. The
9 super blocks are this area closest to you, as we
10 say, the dark brown buildings were the existing
11 buildings, the white buildings are the proposed
12 buildings. And so they are larger, they're on
13 footprints of existing buildings, three out of the
14 four are on footprints of existing buildings, but
15 certainly larger buildings than are on the current
16 footprint. One building is to be used for a
17 public school, and no building on the site
18 proposed is taller than an existing building on
19 the site. So I'll leave it there.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Thank you.
21 Now I understand, President, you had indicated
22 that, I believe, the City--in Brooklyn, downtown
23 Brooklyn, is that 370 Jay Street? Was that given
24 to you by the City or was it sold to you, what's
25 the agreement there?

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2 JOHN SEXTON: It was part of the
3 applied sciences competition--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Okay.

5 JOHN SEXTON: --and under the
6 arrangement, it'll be occupied by us for, I think
7 it's 99 years, it may be 49 years, but whatever
8 the legally permissible period of time is on a
9 dollar a year lease. We're responsible for doing
10 the construction in the building. What that
11 means, in effect, is that we're assuming
12 responsibility for somewhere between 40 and \$60
13 million of construction costs that otherwise would
14 have had to have been assumed by the MTA or the
15 police department because of switches that exist
16 in that building. So we're taking an unused asset
17 of the City and we're essentially leasing it and
18 capitalizing it.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Now with
20 respects to even outside of this land use process
21 altogether, when we--years ago, we formed a West
22 Harlem local development corp up in Northern
23 Manhattan in order to negotiate with Columbia
24 University community benefits agreement that will
25 benefit the community, that's out of the land use

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2 process altogether, but are you involved--when I
3 say you, the university--in trying to reach to--in
4 consensus in order to make sure that there are the
5 type of benefits that this community needs for
6 decades to come, are you involved in that? And if
7 so, who are you involved with, if at all? I know,
8 this is not part of the land use, but I'm curious
9 to know.

10 LYNNE BROWN: I'm sorry. All
11 right. So in answer to your question--I'm sorry,
12 this is Lynne Brown--we are also producing for you
13 outreach maps that show all the ways in which NYU
14 is operating in and on our own district, as well
15 as districts that may surprise you, very far
16 afield from our Greenwich Village home. As to the
17 balance that we all keep talking about about NYU's
18 needs and what are the amenities for the
19 community, those are the conversations we're
20 beginning to have with Councilwoman Chin as she
21 helps guide us on what the community would find
22 beneficial, and we try to align that with what we
23 feel still is on our educational mission, but can
24 be provided.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Now it's

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2 my understanding that--I'm sorry, I don't know all
3 the particular details, I have all of the
4 documents and I will be reviewing those so I can
5 be come up to speed as possible. My understanding
6 that is there a need--or is there in your plan for
7 a faculty residence somewhere in here? And if so,
8 you know, faculty can travel, live anywhere in the
9 city and travel to work. Why is there a necessity
10 of having a faculty residence or a house right
11 within NYU footprint?

12 JOHN SEXTON: There is a modest
13 amount, 90 units of faculty housing in the total
14 plan, in the Core. We do try to develop faculty
15 housing literally around the city, so we own
16 units, for example, on Roosevelt Island and out in
17 Brooklyn, and so on. So we don't have a
18 philosophy of doing all of our faculty housing in
19 the Core, but let me give you an example which I
20 think is probably the clearest of it, it's not all
21 this, but, again, going back to the issue of how
22 we build community and how we use the things that
23 happen outside of the classroom to enhance the
24 education we give the students, we started ten
25 years ago, a faculty in residence program where we

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2 began to build faculty units in student dorms, and
3 we now have dozens of faculty who are living in
4 our dorms. And a good portion of these 90 units,
5 for example, will be faculty units of housing that
6 will be in the residence hall with the freshmen.
7 It's only the freshmen we see that we have a
8 priority to have them at the Core. We now have
9 some freshmen that live outside of the Core. It
10 makes the initial life of students who come from
11 around the world and around the country in New
12 York City harder for us to create.

13 The idea of building faculty units
14 in there is one thing. A second is, sometimes, in
15 certain disciplines particularly, especially lab
16 disciplines, it's important to have--be able to
17 say to a recruit, this is all a recruiting matter,
18 you'll be able to go home, have dinner with your
19 children, be back in your lab, you know, you're
20 going to be right--so sometimes proximity has a
21 deep importance inside a research university that
22 it doesn't have, for example, in what's simply a
23 teaching university and it becomes the dispositive
24 factor to whether or not you get that genomicist,
25 whether he or she can feel comfortable.

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2 Frankly, I'll say this is an issue
3 that frequently comes up with women scientists--a
4 great need for our society. They want to be able
5 to go to their labs and, when they get on a roll,
6 they want to be able to stay there 'til two or
7 three in the morning and the idea of taking a
8 subway to Roosevelt Island just doesn't work.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Yeah, so
10 in essence, you're saying that the faculty
11 residence or housing will be incorporated right in
12 the students' housing so it's not going to be
13 separate and apart.

14 JOHN SEXTON: Both end.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Both end,
16 okay.

17 JOHN SEXTON: The first part being
18 the faculty residence, the second being the
19 genomicist example I gave.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: Clearly, I
21 understand about the proximity to your lab work,
22 in fact, my daughter, when she graduated, not from
23 NYU, but SUNY-New Paltz, she graduated--was a cell
24 biology major and went to work at Columbia in a
25 research lab with MDs, and we live close by and

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2 she used to come home and back and forth in order
3 to attend to the rats and other things that they
4 were working on. She's now an M.D. down in D.C.
5 area, so I do understand the proximity of your lab
6 work.

7 But I thank you for answering my
8 simple questions in this first round, and I'm sure
9 I'll have many more questions, not only of you,
10 but the other people that are here to testify
11 today.

12 Mr. Chair, thank you very much.

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.
14 Jackson. I'd like to call on Council Member Gale
15 Brewer.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you
17 very much. I'm not a Member of this Committee,
18 but don't feel you have to call me, just so you
19 know.

20 My question is specifically, I know
21 there are a lot of geological features in the
22 area, certainly, I think we know that there are
23 streams under the Village when you go to 2 5th
24 Avenue you see that wonderful stream coming out of
25 the building and it's very special to the

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2 neighborhood. So I'm just wondering, if any
3 aspect of this goes forward, can you talk about
4 the construction issues that you would have to
5 contemplate?

6 ALICIA HURLEY: The Minetta Stream,
7 I believe, is the one that is the most well known,
8 that does not run under the site. We have done
9 extensive work on understanding the construction
10 that will be required and taking a series of
11 measures of mitigation, including work site rules,
12 doing--auguring the piles, as opposed to pile
13 driving, dust and noise mitigation, spraying down
14 the site so the dust is controlled. So everything
15 that we can do on the work site. For the
16 buildings in the area, we will be providing double
17 pane, soundproofing windows if they don't have
18 them already, and doing covers for their air
19 conditioning units or replacing air conditioning
20 units. So we've got a pretty full set of things
21 that we're trying to do to really try to make sure
22 that the construction is at least tolerable for
23 the people who will be experiencing it.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.
25 Second question, if this does not happen, do you

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have Plan B?

JOHN SEXTON: Well we've now done our assessment of our needs and we think it's an honest assessment. So to the extent that this diminution here and we're correct in our assessment and, you know, it's the best we can do over a 20-year period, actually it was 25 when we started.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Well Fordham said 25, Columbia's talking 25, we've all--it still starts somewhere and so--

JOHN SEXTON: [Interposing] And we initially were starting--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: --and 25 goes fast when you're as old as I am.

JOHN SEXTON: And I'm even older, Councilwoman.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: You may not be.

JOHN SEXTON: But my point is we started this process in 2007 and we've been doing 300,000 square feet a year, so we're into the process already. If this site is diminished, then we would be back to where we were, but at least

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2 the community, the general community would be on
3 notice that this is the space we think we need and
4 as buildings became available, we would be where
5 we were before it.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. My
7 final question is--and we all support Margaret
8 Chin, we all echo--I want to echo my colleagues,
9 and you're very fortunate to be working with her,
10 we all are. My question is, if some aspect of
11 this goes forward, and I'm not saying that it
12 will, would you then say that that's it for NYU
13 building in the Village?

14 JOHN SEXTON: Just the opposite.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So you'd
16 build more in the Village.

17 JOHN SEXTON: Well if it's not on
18 this site, what I've been saying is, if our
19 assessment is needs is correct, well this is not a
20 developer coming and saying I want to develop X.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: No, I know,
22 but when you see--I mean, we have staff, we know
23 how great NYU is, it's just a challenge this
24 community/university challenge that goes on
25 everywhere. It's not so much that you have, in my

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2 opinion, and I know the area well, the new
3 buildings, it's just when you look at all the
4 brown buildings, there's a lot of them. And so,
5 you know, it's like that's the problem. So my
6 question would be literally that, if some aspect
7 goes forward, we will work with Council Member
8 Chin and this Committee, then would you say that's
9 it for us in this community?

10 JOHN SEXTON: I can say it this
11 way: If this proposal goes forward, it would not
12 be my expectation that we would have other needs
13 in the Core. That's exactly the point we're
14 trying to make is that we've done the assessment
15 and we've proposed a way to do what we think we
16 will need and we think we've--and by the way, if
17 it turns out that my successors decide that
18 something that we projected we'd need isn't
19 needed, it wouldn't be done. We don't build for
20 the sake of building.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I know, I
22 understand. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair, I know
23 you're anxious. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Am I that
25 obvious? Thank you very much, Ms. Brewer. I just

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2 wanted to ask two quick questions and then I know
3 Council Member Comrie has a quick question, and
4 then we'll move on to members of the public, I
5 apologize for taking so long.

6 Ms. Hurley, just I got a question,
7 you keep talking about building on the footprint
8 and I was looking at the chart that was over
9 there, the future site plan--

10 ALICIA HURLEY: Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --or the old
12 site plan behind you, it's on the floor behind
13 that. But you talked about the footprint, but I
14 look at the Coles gymnasium and there, there's a
15 lot more green space on the right currently and
16 then the new plan seems to have a very skinny
17 strip of trees, why is that?

18 ALICIA HURLEY: Alicia Hurley.
19 Thank you. So the plan calls for keeping the
20 Coles' footprint the same size, but shifting it
21 toward the street wall. That is a large sidewalk
22 right now, there are play areas and dog runs, and
23 what you can see is we've taken the play areas and
24 dog runs and moved it to--right behind John--the
25 other side of the building. So the play areas

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2 that will go on to the site will be to the west of
3 this new Zipper building and the dog run will be
4 replaced there.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Why did you
6 have to do that?

7 ALICIA HURLEY: So some of it is
8 compliance with how close the building is to the
9 Washington Square Village--the Silver Towers
10 existing buildings, and also to create a much more
11 viable pathway so that people, not just NYU, but
12 so that pedestrians can actually move from the
13 north to the south or south to north on that
14 sidewalk. Right now, it's a very tight 5 foot
15 sidewalk behind Coles gymnasium, which really
16 feels like a private sidewalk that the community
17 can't feel like they can access to.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Right, but
19 the--shh.

20 ALICIA HURLEY: I'm sorry, and it's
21 a 25-foot--25 to 28-foot pathway, pedestrian.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: But it would
23 seem that the way it is currently is very
24 accessible to the public just because it's right
25 there on the street, and this is sort of inside

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2 the complex. I mean, you talked about how it
3 would be uninviting 'cause it feels like it's a
4 NYU property, there, it's much more of a public
5 space, it seems to me.

6 ALICIA HURLEY: So for us, this was
7 a way to balance this. The building itself now is
8 quite a lot larger, so the Coles gymnasium is a
9 brick façade, it's a 20-foot structure, brick
10 façade, so you can have uses such as a dog run
11 sitting up against it, that will not be the case
12 in the future. So then what we decided to do is
13 take those important uses, put them on the other
14 side of the building and on one side we'll have a
15 15-foot sidewalk, that'll be on Mercer, and create
16 a pedestrian walkway on the other side of the
17 building at 28 feet so that people can move
18 through both sides and we can also have entryways
19 for the dorms, for the academic uses on both sides
20 of the buildings. The Mercer side will also have
21 loading docks so we didn't want to have the large
22 extended sidewalk. So it really couldn't stay as
23 green space in any case.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right, I
25 don't want to drag on too long here. I'm going to

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2 have Council Member Comrie ask a question and then
3 I'm going to ask if you will be sticking around,
4 people will be sticking around, we may have, you
5 know, to consult with you as we hear other
6 testimony later on in the day. Council Member
7 Comrie.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thank you.
9 Who are you looking to build the project? Well
10 what's your construction plan, what's your plan
11 for M/WBE, and who has done your M/WBE compliance
12 over the last five years?

13 LYNNE BROWN: Lynne Brown, and I'll
14 be glad to take that question as well. We
15 haven't--because we're still in the approval
16 process, Councilman Comrie, we haven't yet bid out
17 the work or know what our construction schedule--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay.

19 LYNNE BROWN: --would be. We
20 recognize--

21 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:
22 [Interposing] Your last three projects, then what
23 has been your M/WBE percentage in your last three
24 projects?

25 LYNNE BROWN: Right, I can get

1
2 those exact statistics for you, I don't have them
3 with me. We do recognize that this project we
4 think would be a separate, even standalone, for
5 which we would design an effective M/WLB program
6 around it. We're going to issue an RFP to help
7 select a consultant to assist with the creation of
8 an M/WBE program for us with a specific focus on
9 all of these projects.

10 For our Brooklyn project--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:

12 [Interposing] Well can you--

13 LYNNE BROWN: --which we spoke
14 about--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --do you
16 have an M/WBE for the Brooklyn project in place?

17 LYNNE BROWN: Yes, and as the--I
18 mean, we worked with the City, and at the City's
19 request--and I can get you the details of that for
20 our urban science program at 370 Jay, we do have
21 an M/WBE commitment and program.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Well if you
23 can get the Committee the M/WBE for what you've
24 done over the past five years, that would be
25 appreciated. I was just looking at your

1
2 demographics on your employee, I appreciate, but I
3 just realized your demographics on students are a
4 little low in some categories as well, if you
5 could get us some information on how you plan to
6 improve that.

7 And then just my--did you do light
8 and shadow on the existing buildings and how those
9 two new towers would affect the light and shadow
10 of the other buildings within the garden area,
11 northern end of the super block?

12 ALICIA HURLEY: Yes, sir. Alicia
13 Hurley. A thorough shadow analysis was completed
14 as part of the EIS, and we can make sure that the
15 Committee has all of that information detailed.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay. Well
17 can get that to assume, so if we can get those
18 information, especially the existing M/WBE, I'm a
19 little disappointed that you didn't have that for
20 us today. But in deference to time, I won't ask
21 my 20 other questions today, but I would like to
22 have an opportunity to e-mail them to you so that
23 we could get them and share them with Council
24 Member Chin as she makes her deliberations.

25 Oh, the school, I have to ask the

1
2 school site, can you commit to keeping that a
3 public space even if the City does not deem to
4 make that a school for whatever that public space
5 need, may need to be in the future?

6 ALICIA HURLEY: The project plan
7 right now is that the SCA has until 2025--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:
9 [Interposing] Yeah, I got that part, I'm saying
10 even if the SCA says no, can you commit to keeping
11 that a public space?

12 ALICIA HURLEY: We'll be happy to
13 work with the Councilwoman on that site.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: All right.

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right,
16 shh.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: I was
18 trying to give her one less thing to have to argue
19 with we can deal with now, but I think that that
20 would be a large asset to community, whatever that
21 public space need may be in the future. Thank
22 you.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,
24 Council Member Comrie. Okay. What we're going to
25 do, we're going to thank you, please don't go too

1
2 far 'cause we'll be talking a lot as we go through
3 the day. I want to thank everyone for being so
4 cooperative and, you know, not making too much of
5 a ruckus.

6 And I'd like to now call on
7 Assembly Member Deborah Glick to make a statement.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yes.

9 [Applause]

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Shh, keep it.
11 The panel, you can sit at the table, yeah, give me
12 that. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could take this
13 from me and distribute it. Assembly Member Glick,
14 I'll try not to call you Bill Passannante, as I
15 have a habit of calling people by their
16 predecessor's names today. But it's great to see
17 you. Shh, we have quiet, please.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: Can hardly
19 be seen over the buildings.

20 [Laughter]

21 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet, please,
22 quiet.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: I just gave
24 them to Mark.

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: It was funny,

1
2 so I didn't stop you too quickly, but, you know,
3 the irony. Thank you.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: I have
5 given you written testimony, I will try to
6 consolidate, there are a lot of issues and a lot
7 of time has been taken. I understand you'll give
8 me just a little bit of leeway, so I'm going to
9 try to speak as quickly as the Federal Express
10 commercial, so forgive me. But I think that there
11 are many areas that are vitally important and this
12 is my only shots.

13 So thank you very much, I want to
14 thank the Committee for giving me the opportunity
15 to be here today and to discuss the plan presented
16 by NYU. Obviously, there are a lot of concerns
17 about the super block and I just want to say up
18 front, what doesn't fit neatly into our technical
19 discussion of the deficiencies of the proposal is
20 NYU's complete disregard for, and betrayal of, the
21 community benefits it alleged it was providing
22 when NYU first received permission for the super
23 blocks. The open space created by that agreement
24 is now what NYU is counting on as building sites.
25 NYU has already been responsible for significant

1
2 changes to our neighborhood and these additions
3 will unalterably damage our community and the
4 quality of life.

5 Now on to the technical pieces,
6 bulk and density. This is--their proposal is to
7 create a blanket rezoning from R7-2 to C1-7, which
8 would add around 2 million gross square feet
9 within the two super blocks wedged in the heart
10 of, not just a residential area, but a historic
11 area. It's excessive and unnecessary, and if it's
12 only a small amount of commercial, I'm not sure
13 why the rezoning to a commercial district is
14 required. It would also double the density on
15 those blocks in question and would cut the open
16 space ratio requirement in half, that, I believe,
17 is why they want the rezoning. Additionally, it
18 opens up the area for increased unwanted
19 establishments which are bound in the community.

20 I will jump onto the north block.
21 The Boomerang buildings, which are wedged between
22 the two existing Washington Square Village
23 buildings, would create a wall of tall buildings,
24 effectively cutting off air and light to those
25 blocks and the surrounding blocks, and create a

1
2 private area--again, something that they are
3 determined to get. The street wall waivers and
4 the shape of the building are necessary for access
5 to the below grade space, but this will only
6 further create a feeling of uninviting feeling for
7 the private use of the university. I believe the
8 construction of these two buildings must be
9 completely withdrawn from the plan.

10 The south block. The tower-in-the-
11 park concept that Silver Towers replicates is
12 effective because it places tall buildings on
13 large plots of land far from a property line and
14 surrounds them with a lot of open space. The
15 proposal by the applicant totally destroys that
16 tower-in-the-park concept. The Zipper building
17 would cast shadows and destroy light and air for
18 buildings on Mercer Street and, additionally, it
19 would destroy the dog run and the LMNO(P)
20 playground, both of which were created through
21 funds privately raised by residents and heavily
22 used by the community.

23 The Bleecker Street building.

24 While it's been somewhat shortened, it will have
25 an impact on the light and shadows in the

1
2 surrounding areas, and, of course, cast shadows
3 and, undoubtedly, do great damage to the community
4 gardens, which have not been discussed at all.

5 Open space. There's a lot of
6 discussion about open space and percentages. Let
7 me just say that the allegation that there is an
8 increase in open space is based purely on a flawed
9 measuring formula in CECRA [phonetic], and I will
10 give you an example: Green space without a bench
11 is not considered open space. A paved lot with a
12 bench is considered open space. Therefore, you
13 can see how they can manage to take away open
14 green space and say they're increasing the space
15 by providing paved plazas with a couple of
16 benches. So the proposal that will bring on
17 pedestrian plazas, more walkways will destroy much
18 of the green open space that is currently in the
19 area.

20 And the open space on the north
21 block, and they've mentioned the Sasaki Garden, is
22 amazing to me that this space of tranquility
23 between the two buildings that people have used
24 since the buildings have been created will now,
25 because NYU deems it or labels it uninviting, will

1
2 now be replaced by an area that actually will be
3 uninviting. The lack of greenery and tranquility
4 of the garden--this is coming out of my time,
5 folks, give me a chance, I'm talking as fast as I
6 can--that is a lose-lose for the community. The
7 recommendation by City Planning for an open space
8 oversight organization is lovely, but I am
9 concerned that this committee, unless it had some
10 actual legislatively granted legitimate power will
11 just be another vehicle for listening, perhaps,
12 you know, politely, but ultimately not providing
13 any real input.

14 The public school. There is
15 absolutely no commitment by SCA or DOE that they
16 need a school at this site. The current capital
17 plan doesn't account for building on this site,
18 and this isn't the first time that NYU has offered
19 a public school. So to me it's ice in winter--a
20 questionable offer--and the unwillingness to say
21 that if a public school isn't built, that it will
22 remain open public space is very concerning.

23 Affordable housing. As has there
24 been more development in the area, the pressure on
25 existing residents continues. Washington Square

1
2 Village Silver Towers were originally created with
3 significant affordable housing units and it's
4 imperative that no development go forward without
5 some additional commitment to affordable housing.
6 The lease at 505 LaGuardia Place is up for renewal
7 in 2014, that is around the corner--it is a long-
8 term Mitchell-Lama, status of 505 could be at risk
9 if the project goes forward as planned. We
10 haven't seen any designs, we're very concerned
11 what those might be. The trend for all, and fad,
12 for all glass buildings which are totally out of
13 character with the community and it was very
14 concerning. In addition, glass buildings are
15 incredibly dangerous to birds and we are in the
16 North Atlantic fly land--flyway.

17 Let me conclude by saying that,
18 while there's been a slight modification to the
19 plans since the DEIS was certified, far too few
20 have actually been made to address the concerns of
21 the community. Community Board 2 reviewed the
22 application, 23 public hearings, testimony from
23 over 1,000 people, and there is still no
24 significant change to the plan. And I would urge-
25 -and I want to thank my colleague, Margaret Chin,

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2 for her strong statement. I am grateful to her
3 and pleased that her thorough review has resulted
4 in her recommendation that, without significant
5 changes, that the plan not go forward. Thank you
6 very much.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

8 [Applause]

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: I'd be
10 happy to take--

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Please, no
12 applause, that's it.

13 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Shh, no
15 applause, jazz hands, come on. She's looking now,
16 come on.

17 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet, please.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
19 much--

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: I'd be
21 happy to take any questions.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yes, I know
23 Council Member Lappin would like to ask a
24 question. Do you have a mic that way? Okay.

25 We are also going to be joined by

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2 Senator Tom Duane momentarily before Deborah even
3 leaves, so he'll be making an entrance, as he
4 usually does.

5 [Laughter]

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: Hard not to
7 laugh at that, Mark.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Thank you,
9 Mr. Chair. Thank you for coming and testifying
10 today. I have three questions, well one
11 statement, two questions. First, I agree with you
12 100% when it comes to the school. If this is
13 something that's being given back to the
14 community, it needs to be given back to the
15 community, and if it's not going to be a school,
16 then the community needs to be involved in the
17 discussion as to what goes there.

18 But I wanted to ask first about the
19 dog run and the LMNO(P) playground. Is there
20 anything comparable that is included in NYU's
21 plan?

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: Well I
23 wouldn't characterize it as comparable. You know,
24 there's an old saying that on average you're
25 comfortable, but if your head is in the freezer

1
2 and your feet are in the oven, on average, you may
3 be comfortable, but it does not address your
4 immediate concerns.

5 So I would suggest to you that
6 where the dog run is, where the playground is, is
7 open to the street, it's very available to the
8 community, it gets at this point a great deal of
9 air and light because of that. When it is put on
10 the other side of a very tall building with a 15-
11 foot high wall so that it doesn't disturb anybody
12 in the building, it changes dramatically. I'm not
13 sure what the air and light will be at that point,
14 I don't know what--but I can clearly say that it
15 will not be a comparable situation.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: And
17 certainly not something that the community--

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: Well the--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: --came
20 together to create.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: --the
22 community raised the money to build these sites,
23 that is actually on City property, it is not NYU
24 property, that is City property, and they will be
25 moving--they are asking to move their street wall

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2 much further out from where the Coles building is
3 now, which is why it would destroy those two
4 public areas.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Okay. And
6 my last question relates to affordable housing.
7 You know, you raised a very interesting issue that
8 sort of the first time it came to my attention,
9 this 505 LaGuardia Place, and so can you just
10 explain how this project might impact their
11 Mitchell-Lama status in a little more--

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK:

13 [Interposing] Well I think the issue is that the
14 lease is up in 2014 and the plan in the proposal
15 doesn't necessarily speak to how that will be
16 addressed going forward. So I think that the
17 people who live there, in what is an affordable
18 housing situation, are very concerned that in this
19 process there is no obligation to renew that
20 lease, and that is a pretty big problem. And the
21 affordable housing that has existed over time, I
22 know there are people who are trying to look into
23 what the obligations were to maintain stabilized
24 units within the Washington Square Village that
25 have not been maintained and have gone over to

1
2 other uses. So there are--I rushed through that,
3 but the affordable housing piece is a very, very
4 important one.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: How many
6 people are we talking about here who would be
7 impacted at 505, roughly?

8 [Off mic]

9 FEMALE VOICE: Hundred seventy-
10 five.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: Hundred
12 seventy-four apartments, so you do the math--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Okay.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: --that's,
15 you know, that's a pretty sizable--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Okay.

17 Thank you, thank you very much.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
19 much. A couple of other people have questions,
20 but I wanted to let Senator Duane go first.
21 Senator, thank you for being here, first of all.
22 I would ask, and then you got the hint, if you
23 could please sum up your testimony and--

24 SENATOR THOMAS DUANE: Yes.

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --keep your

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remarks as brief--

SENATOR THOMAS DUANE: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --as possible, and I know a couple of panel members have a couple of questions for the two electeds. Deborah, if you'll please stick around.

SENATOR THOMAS DUANE: And I only have a few more months to walk in from there to here so I'm taking advantage but--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing] Well we're happy to have you back here.

SENATOR THOMAS DUANE: --soon I'll be here.

Let me just say a couple of things just to start off with. You know, I have worked with and fought with NYU. I fought with them bitterly on past development issues, on labor issues, in particular with the UAW--on this, I was on the side of UAW--and even things as mundane as a supermarket on 2nd Avenue, which I worked very closely with Council Member Mendez, and it was months and months and months. So we've had good times and we've had bad times and we fought, and this is the Village. And what a great lesson this

1
2 could be for their students: How to stick to your
3 guns; how to fight as hard as you can; and
4 understand the other side, okay?

5 And my greatest criticism of NYU,
6 is it felt like they walked away from the process.
7 I have represented the Village in various ways for
8 21 years, it is a tough community, but tough, you
9 got to keep working with them, and it does feel
10 like they walked away from the process and I am
11 sorry that that happened, 'cause we never have.

12 All right, thank you, and I will be
13 brief. It's too big, out of scale, precious
14 space, precious open space we lose it. Everything
15 from looking at the sky to breathing in the air,
16 not just for neighborhood people, but for their
17 students as well and everyone that wants to come
18 to the Village and visit. I mean, that's what
19 makes it special: You can see the sunlight.

20 We were in a process, they dropped
21 out of the process. We were looking at purple
22 sections and pink sections and blue sections, and
23 it all went away, it all dissipated.

24 And anyway, there's very little
25 affordability left in the Village, we need to keep

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2 it, and we need to keep it visible and I just wish
3 they would go back to the community. It's tough,
4 but just to go back and keep working on it. I
5 know we're further along than that, but, please,
6 you have to keep the community involved in the
7 process, and we'll be there, we're tough, but
8 we're fair.

9 Even with modifications gained by
10 the CPC, it's too big, too out of scale. I have a
11 really long one, but I'm not--going to pass it
12 out. We worked with the borough president, again,
13 another process that they walked away from.

14 The school, I don't know, who
15 believes it? That's the problem, you know? I
16 mean, I'm serious because there's been--there's
17 mistrust. And who knows what the DOE is going to
18 do? Who knew what they were going to do up to
19 now? Which we might have to turn back the clock
20 on.

21 Five-oh-five, just give the land to
22 those people. You know, I'm lucky enough to live
23 in a Mitchell redevelopment and I'm paying a
24 surcharge now and I am happy, happy to do it.
25 Let's make it so that middle income people can

1
2 stay in our neighborhoods, and they should give
3 the land over, and that that Mitchell-Lama
4 development stay affordable.

5 Listen, what they're talking about
6 is 20 years, potentially, of development
7 construction, even the minor open space that
8 they're letting us keep, they get to use that for
9 20 years for a project that we think is too big
10 and is going to make us all suffer.

11 Look, I like NYU, I have fought
12 bitterly with them, I like them, we've worked well
13 with them. They have to come back and work with
14 us. Please make sure that we are at the table.
15 I'm not saying voices will never be raised, we're
16 going to have reasonable disagreements because, at
17 the end of the day, we are all going to have to
18 live together, we just don't want to have to live
19 with all of it. Okay?

20 And if you have any detailed
21 questions, I'd be happy to answer, and I have a
22 feeling everybody--you've asked NYU, I'm sure
23 you've talked to the Assembly Member about them, I
24 mean, the details of this plan, I could go block
25 by block, building by building, but I don't think

1
2 you want to hear that from me right now, but
3 suffice to say--

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
5 Yeah, I can guarantee I don't, yes.

6 SENATOR THOMAS DUANE: Yes, thank--
7 [Laughter]

8 SENATOR THOMAS DUANE: I remember
9 what that was like. But don't put us in the
10 position of disliking a place that we have co-
11 existed with during good times and bad times,
12 don't let them make it so that it is only a battle
13 from this point forward. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,
15 Senator.

16 [Applause]

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Don't clap,
18 just notice your jazz hands. I thought you were
19 speaking in haiku at the beginning, it was--

20 SENATOR THOMAS DUANE:
21 [Interposing] Well you said be brief--

22 [Crosstalk]

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
24 It was good, I know. Council Member Brewer would
25 like to ask a question of the panel.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I have a
3 question about the commercial, 'cause I know we
4 have the same problem with Fordham and with any
5 large institution. I find that even any large
6 institution going on an avenue or a street in our
7 very congested communities, and you know how I
8 feel about commercial issues in yesterday's vote
9 and I appreciate the vote of my colleagues, but in
10 general, I want to have the same feeling that you
11 have in the Village and that we have in our
12 neighborhood where you have a diversity of
13 experiences as you walk down the street, that's
14 what's phenomenal about the Village. So my
15 question is whether it's this project or a smaller
16 project or no project, how in the world do you
17 think any large institution should bring the
18 commercial to the street? In other words, a super
19 block is very challenging for our neighborhoods,
20 just in terms of the experience that one has. So
21 I'm just wondering if you think there is any way
22 to have a small project with commercial, and is
23 there something different that we should be
24 looking at in general for large projects like
25 this? I mean, I'm not supporting or against it,

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2 I'm just stating that the lack of commercial, as
3 you have suggested, is a huge problem.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: Let me
5 just--Assembly Member Glick--let me just respond
6 in that, right now, between the two large
7 Washington Square Village buildings on LaGuardia
8 Place, there is a commercial strip, but it is low-
9 rise, and it is a restaurant, there's an NYU
10 mailroom facility. That is something that has a
11 lot of open space in front of it, the Fiorello
12 LaGuardia statue, and that is--that commercial
13 strip is going to go so that we can be given some
14 other. But my big concern is not that we have
15 some small commercial spaces, I'm all in favor of
16 small retail, small business, but what the concern
17 is is that the rezoning rezones the whole area for
18 commercial and it's not at all clear if, ten years
19 down the road with the new zoning and a change in
20 NYU's plans, that a lot of that becomes
21 commercialized places and not academic use and not
22 institutional use. It is an enormously large
23 private university with a enormously large student
24 body and so the demands in the area for
25 restaurants, bars, has grown tremendously, which

1
2 is not always a happiness, especially on Friday
3 and Saturday night.

4 So this rezoning, that piece of it
5 is very concerning because it opens the door for a
6 very different development if the plan is changed.
7 At some point, the zoning, you're not going to
8 rezone it back. We know that once that door is
9 opened, it's not clear what marches through it.

10 SENATOR THOMAS DUANE: And let me
11 just answer quickly. And I'm going to bring it
12 home to the part of the district that we share a
13 different example of how things--I'm not going to
14 relive Fordham, but you can explain it to your
15 colleagues, but let's talk about Damrosch Park for
16 a moment in the middle of Lincoln Center. So
17 Bryant Park wanted Fashion Week out of there,
18 right? So it went to Damrosch Park, as only I
19 would have, I created a subcommittee, private use
20 of public space, and that's what that is. There's
21 going to be a private use of public space in NYU's
22 construction and we don't know what public space
23 really we're going to end up with. Twenty years
24 from now, who knows what it'll be, right?

25 Look, notwithstanding, this is a

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2 sample sale, don't use me as example of fashion,
3 however, we want to keep fashion, the industry
4 here, we want them a place to have their shows, we
5 want them to have tents, however, that's public
6 space, we're trying to work that out, right?
7 These things can be worked out, and you just got
8 to stick to it, you got to just stick to the
9 process, and that's what we want NYU to do because
10 it feels like they walked away when they shouldn't
11 have.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Well I
13 appreciate that. I know that it was brought up in
14 Deborah Glick's testimony and I thought it was
15 good, so I just want to get it clarified. I think
16 it needs more clarification, but I really
17 appreciate this issue.

18 SENATOR THOMAS DUANE: And you have
19 experience with innovative ideas. I talked about
20 a small supermarket, which is going to be
21 preserved under what you just did on the Upper
22 West Side.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

25 Council Member Comrie, and we'll try to wrap this

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2 up.

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COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Can you explain--you said a few times, Senator, walk away, well what--my understanding from their testimony is that they've had open houses since 2001, there was a borough president's task force. So how does that jive with what you're saying, walked away? I mean, can you clear--fill in the blanks for me?

SENATOR THOMAS DUANE: Yeah, and, you know, unfortunately, this is going on the record, but you know what, they got to suck it up. There've been processes and process including--you know, open houses are not--I mean, it's nice, but the process doesn't actually happen there. The borough president started a process but it never got finished, and even what was decided there is not what we're looking at here.

I mean, we process with NYU all the time, this is just a big, huge development. It's more difficult, of course it will be more contentious, but there was even a moment when they said they weren't going to send anyone to a Community Board committee meeting. And, you know, Brad Hoylman, who's chair, and Joe Hamilton

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2 before, have never screamed or yelled at NYU, and,
3 yeah, it's a tough neighborhood, they've screamed
4 at me, they never scream at Deborah, they always
5 scream at me, but that's fine, Deborah. You know
6 what? Suck it up. But keeping us there, we'll
7 keep it as civil as we can, it does not mean that
8 voices won't be raised and passions won't be put
9 on the table, but they walked away from that and
10 we had to--and that's not right. It's a tough
11 city, and the Village is the toughest of all,
12 trust me.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: If I could-

14 -

15 SENATOR THOMAS DUANE: And they
16 walked away.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: --if I
18 could just interject, this is--

19 SENATOR TOM DUANE: [Interposing]
20 Maybe they--

21 [Crosstalk]

22 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:
23 [Interposing] What do you mean exactly by walked
24 away? Was there a point in a discussion that it
25 wasn't moving forward or there was a time clock

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2 that they had? I mean, how do we get to that?

3 'Cause we're talking about a 30-year plan, we're
4 talking about, you know, discussions from 2001,
5 according to them. I mean, what created the sense
6 that they walked away?

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: I think
8 that a note--somewhere there's a sign where
9 somebody said, you know, public hearings, public
10 meetings, lots of input, lots of polite listening,
11 and then, you know, a presentation of a plan that
12 is non-responsive to any of that. And so I think
13 the sense that there have been some--the borough
14 president did try to have a task force, there have
15 been a number of situations in which in smaller
16 developments that NYU has done--'cause this isn't
17 the first part of the history, this is, you know,
18 chapter ten--that there have been circumstances
19 where, as unhappy as the community has been about
20 certain actions taken, when they had assembled air
21 rights without people knowing it on East 12th
22 Street from the post office, and they were going
23 to essentially take what had been a, I guess, a
24 decommissioned church space, the community went,
25 you know, like was very upset and agitated. The

1
2 resolution was that the façade of the church was
3 retained and behind it, the dormitory building
4 that went up, again, I think too large for a side
5 street, but nonetheless, it's there. But that
6 resulted in at least retaining that historic
7 feature.

8 So I think the sense here was that
9 we had a lot of show and a lot of listening, but
10 not a lot of hearing and not a lot of response to
11 that hearing. So, you know, that is I think what
12 the sense is, that they, at a certain point, said,
13 well, you know, that's--we've just done the amount
14 of time that we allocated for this process and now
15 we're over.

16 SENATOR THOMAS DUANE: And
17 sometimes the end result of what you do in land
18 use, which is really, I mean, I don't want to fawn
19 all over you, but it's a tough job, where there's
20 plenty for people to be happy with on both sides
21 and plenty for people to be unhappy with, but
22 right now, it's weighted towards we are unhappy
23 only. And I'm not going to speak for Margaret and
24 Rosie, I can only speak for me, we were frustrated
25 in our attempts and, yes, it happened sometimes

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2 where someone will say asked and answered, asked
3 and answered, asked and answered. Those of you
4 who are attorneys, you know that, but in a land
5 use issue, asked and answered means I don't like
6 the answer so you have to stay at the table. And
7 that's what we missed out on.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: And just on
9 a question on the two affordable projects, the
10 LaGuardia and Mercer, what kind of--have you had
11 any substantial conversations with them about what
12 their long-term plans are for those two projects?

13 SENATOR THOMAS DUANE: No
14 guarantees.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: No, have no
16 idea.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thank you.
18 Thank you, Chairman.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Well
20 thank you both very much, it was--

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER GLICK: Thank you
22 very much.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --good to see
24 you. And your audience is applauding but quietly,
25 right? Okay. So now what we're going to do now

1
2 is we're going to start calling up panels for and
3 against, actually against and for. Remember, the
4 testimony is going to have to be limited two
5 minutes each, we've got over 200 people testifying
6 so it's going to be a two-minute time limit. So
7 what I'd like to call up now are members of
8 Community Board 2, Terri Cude, Tobi Bergman, and
9 David Gruber, come up to the panel. NYU, our
10 friends, could you put the two charts up with the
11 proposed 2031 site and the current site, just in
12 the two easels? Just in case people use them
13 along the way.

14 Okay. So whenever you're ready,
15 make sure, again, you saw the drill about saying
16 your name when you speak, and there may be some
17 questions afterwards. So whenever you're ready,
18 you guys decide who goes first. Shh, could we
19 have quiet, please?

20 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You got more
21 than one?

22 DAVID GRUBER: Let me just make
23 sure I'm not giving.. I am David Gruber, I am
24 Chair of Community Board 2, and I want to thank
25 you, Chair Weprin and Council Member Chin and the

1
2 rest of the Committee, for having us and having
3 this wonderful public hearing.

4 That was quite a narrative that we
5 heard from NYU, and some of it was actually quite
6 compelling, they had a big run up in students,
7 they looked at some peer institutions, they found
8 that it was lacking, NYU was lacking in its space
9 academically, and they wanted to become equal to
10 that. It was important to have a world-class
11 institution in New York City and so they needed to
12 build this new plan, and that was the basis for
13 it. And they wanted to have it in the Core
14 because there was a need to have the sort of
15 interwoven academic intensity in the Core that you
16 don't get by dispersing it, and, you know, you
17 listen and you could buy into some of it.

18 But now if you look at it, and this
19 is what I want the Committee to understand, in the
20 first ten years of NYU's plan, only 18% is devoted
21 to academic uses and 82% are not looked at for ten
22 years, that's in the north super block, it's not
23 looked at. So you have to wonder if the plan and
24 this whole development that NYU wants was so
25 important to get that academic balance that

1
2 they've lost, why are they waiting for ten years?
3 And because it's just not that important,
4 otherwise, they would have attacked it in the
5 first ten years.

6 So it's an interesting question,
7 and it's not just a question of the Village
8 crazies coming out and they don't want anything,
9 or we just don't want anything in the Village.

10 Here, 34 departments of NYU have--
11 the people who will actually benefit from this
12 plan--have voted against it. So not only is it
13 from the community, but also from the university--
14 not 34 professors, 34 departments. And so we
15 really have to question the validity of this plan,
16 we have to question why this community has to give
17 them a blank check for 20 years down the line when
18 they themselves are not looking at the north super
19 block for ten years. I say that the world is
20 changing, you know--I'm sorry, I'm going to wrap
21 up, two minutes goes fast--the world is changing,
22 you know, in ten years we're going to be fueling
23 our cars differently, we're going to be getting
24 energy differently, and frankly, as the New York
25 Times article said, this academic industry is also

1
2 going to be changing. This north super block
3 should not be part of this ULURP, let's look at it
4 in ten years.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.
6 Gruber. Terri, Ms. Cude, who wants to go next?

7 TOBI BERGMAN: Okay.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Just make sure
9 to state your name.

10 TOBI BERGMAN: Yes, I'm Tobi
11 Bergman, I'm going to speed read a statement.
12 Before I start, I just want to say that I've spent
13 a good part of my professional life and also many,
14 many hours in the community as a parks person and
15 I would like to put this in the context that I
16 think is an important one for many, if not most,
17 of the people of the city of New York, which is
18 that we love our neighborhoods, but we're starved
19 for parks and public open space.

20 On December 5th, 2010, five local
21 elected officials representing the development
22 area for this project stood in front of the
23 LaGuardia statue and committed themselves to
24 protecting seven City-owned strips on public space
25 on the New York super blocks. Our Council Member,

1
2 Margaret Chin, said the elimination of these green
3 strips would change the nature of this community
4 for the worse; it would turn large portions of
5 these blocks from open space to dense building and
6 reduce what little green the neighborhood enjoys.

7 These properties are public open
8 space and are protected by the doctrine of public
9 trust. Private acquisition requires state
10 enabling legislation and a trade off for new
11 publicly owned open space. The commitment made by
12 our elected officials should be honored by the
13 Council.

14 While NYU has dropped plans to
15 acquire the two larger strips on the north super
16 block, their plan would largely convert these two
17 important park areas into campus access areas.
18 NYU proposes its massive Zipper building to occupy
19 the full area of the equivalent of a New York City
20 block. The proposed footprint includes the City-
21 owned strip on Mercer Street between Houston
22 Street and Bleecker Street. This land does not
23 belong to NYU. The strip in its current design
24 includes a playground, a sitting area, and a dog
25 run. CB 2 opposes the construction of the Zipper

1
2 building, but if it is approved, it must not be
3 allowed to extend over the public open space.

4 NYU falsely contends that their
5 proposed project will increase and improve
6 publicly accessible open space. This fails the
7 laugh test. They plan to build two huge buildings
8 what are now publicly accessible open space--
9 that's it? That was two minutes?

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yeah, just--
11 no, just give the 25 seconds we used when you were
12 talking about the park.

13 TOBI BERGMAN: I'm sorry. They
14 plan to build--the calculations for the EIS were
15 overly technical and flawed. For example, they do
16 not include the Key Park in the calculation of the
17 existing open space that will be lost. This is
18 one of the most popular children's spaces in the
19 Village and they exclude it because its use is
20 restricted to families living in a very large
21 neighborhood catchment area. The substitute
22 playground is inappropriately sited with access
23 only through the campus area in a location that
24 will be entirely shaded by existing new towers.

25 I'm going to skip a bunch because

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Deborah Glick included it--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]

Please, Tobi, just get to it.

TOBI BERGMAN: --and go on to say but they do include in their new open space calculations the inward facing campus sitting area that will be crowded with students from the huge new campus buildings it serves. The north block towers are specifically designed to embrace and own this space. An outdoor campus center where students can congregate is not a bad thing, but it is pure obfuscation to call this an improvement to public open space.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]

Thank you, Mr. Bergman--

TOBI BERGMAN: I'm sorry.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I'm going to--

TOBI BERGMAN: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --have to move on, I'm sorry.

TOBI BERGMAN: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Ms. Cude?

TERRI CUDE: Hi, I'm Terri Cude, co-chair of the NYU Working Group of Community

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2 Board 2. Thank you for the opportunity to address
3 you.

4 The world-famous character of
5 Greenwich Village is a major asset for New York
6 City. Residents and visitors are drawn to its
7 unique mix of charm, history, and diversity. This
8 super blocks, with their dramatic scale and
9 integral open space, function as a central
10 counterpoint to the dominant low-scale structures
11 typical of the area. The existing zoning on the
12 super blocks is R7-2, the highest in Greenwich
13 Village other than avenues or retail
14 thoroughfares. Up-zoning to C1-7 and R8
15 equivalent would have the minimum open space
16 required. This means a drastic loss of open space
17 in an area desperate for land open to the sky. As
18 the plan stands now, NYU would be allowed to
19 acquire, build upon, modify, or destroy city-owned
20 street side open space, whether via staging sheds
21 or shadowing or putting a building on or modifying
22 them into access plazas, this conversion of public
23 land contravenes NYU's statement that they are
24 using only their own land.

25 In addition, the super blocks were

1
2 designed in the Corbusian tower-in-the-park
3 paradigm, where increased height was provided in
4 exchange for greater open space. Adding buildings
5 on that open space eradicates the payment made for
6 height granted.

7 CB 2 is also troubled that deed
8 restrictions in effect 'til 2021 can be swept
9 away. What good are long-term restrictions if
10 they can simply be removed when convenient?

11 Last, with horizons in education
12 such as online course delivery, an eventual
13 decline in space need is likely. These new NYU
14 buildings might be sold for a less beneficial use
15 if NYU were to need funds.

16 CB 2 appreciates NYU's contribution
17 to the city, but a delicate balance would be
18 decimated by the addition of 2 million square feet
19 in a long-established residential community.
20 Other areas nearby welcome and need the type of
21 construction that NYU seeks, they are closer than
22 what many New York City middle school children now
23 travel to and from. There are win-win options
24 that would not destroy the historic neighborhood
25 that NYU speaks so highly of in their brochures.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very much, Terri, we appreciate that. I want to call on, first, Council Member Lappin for a quick comment.

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: I just wanted to thank you all, I want to thank Brad Hoylman in absentia because he spent a lot of time and effort on this.

TOBI BERGMAN: [Interposing] He certainly did, and we owe him a great debt of appreciation for that.

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: And I felt it was important to recognize him, but all three of you, I know who spent unending hours on this, thank you.

TOBI BERGMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Council Member Lappin. Council Member Chin. And don't forget to identify yourselves if you're answering the question.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. I also wanted to thank, you know, the Community Board member for your countless hours, all the

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2 public hearings that you've conducted, and all the
3 meeting in the Village. I wanted you to maybe,
4 Tobi, you can really talk about because your
5 experience with the Parks department about the
6 open space that we have now there and how they can
7 be used better by the community. Because a lot of
8 them right now, as we heard from NYU, is not
9 accessible, people don't know that they're a
10 public space that they could use, like the Sasaki
11 Garden. I mean, great, Council--I mean, Committee
12 Chair Weprin, you went in there, right, and you
13 were able to walk in there, I was able to walk in
14 there and it's beautiful space. So maybe you
15 could talk about what we have now and how it can
16 be used better now in terms of the strips that we
17 have, the garden. Can you elaborate a little bit
18 more on that?

19 TOBI BERGMAN: Sure. Tobi Bergman.
20 I think one thing just to note is that some of the
21 open spaces, such as the Key Park, are extremely
22 well utilized. There are some portions of the
23 public open space which, admittedly, are not well
24 utilized, some of them because they have been--the
25 obligation of NYU to maintain them has been lost

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2 early on. The open space next to Coles center
3 could be used except that, at some point, it sunk
4 into the ground and it's completely--has not been
5 repaired and can't be used. So that's a fairly
6 simple one.

7 Some of the other open spaces, you
8 know, the EIS calculation, if there's no bench, as
9 Deborah Glick said, it's not open space, well you
10 could consider putting benches in some of these
11 open spaces and bring people in. I think that if
12 you're a New Yorker and you know that if you put
13 comfortable places for people to sit and eat their
14 lunch and come and relax, they will come.

15 Sasaki Garden, it used to be more
16 open than it is now. It got cut off from
17 LaGuardia Place, it could be reopened to LaGuardia
18 Place. Simple things could be done to make it
19 feel much more open, and you could announce to
20 people it's there, you could have an occasional
21 event there that would bring people there--string
22 quartets, something nice and quiet and not
23 disturbing, bring people there for lunch.

24 With parks, use in parks brings
25 use, all you have to do is start getting people

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2 there, the word gets out and people come. Lack of
3 use discourages use. So it's not brain surgery,
4 but if you start to bring people there, if you're
5 committed to having it used, it will be used.

6 As opposed to the problem with
7 their plan, on the other hand, is it will create
8 space that can never be used by the public, you
9 cannot change it because it will be so central to
10 the entrances of major campus uses that, very
11 similar to other areas currently in, like,
12 Schwartz Plaza, so many students come there that
13 the rest of us just don't go there. We understand
14 what it is, it's not for us, not a bad thing, but
15 not for us.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Council Member
17 Comrie.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: I wanted to
19 ask you the same question about the walking away
20 statement that Senator Duane and Assembly Member
21 Glick raised about the process and how did the
22 Community Board come to a unanimous no vote on the
23 project.

24 DAVID GRUBER: David Gruber
25 speaking. Yes, NYU at some point stopped engaging

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2 both the Community Board and the community. You
3 know, it's okay to have a town hall, it's not okay
4 not to respond to the suggestions of that town
5 hall. We had so many, but nothing has changed.
6 You know, even for us, questions took six, seven
7 months to get questions answered from NYU, it had
8 to be reviewed, they said, by their legal counsel,
9 even the most basic questions.

10 We came to it because we were
11 frustrated with NYU, there was no give-and-take on
12 their part--this was the plan, nothing had changed
13 from the first time they introduced it. In the
14 plan that we wrote we gave a roadmap of the
15 priorities, even though we turned it down, we gave
16 a roadmap of what priorities there were that were
17 identified by the community in some of the 20 plus
18 public hearings that we heard. And thousands of
19 people who came, not just--people who have never
20 testified before--faculty, housewives, doctors,
21 lawyers, not activists, you know, shaking in front
22 of us as they testified--but NYU did not testify
23 to anything, nothing was changed.

24 And so when we have questions that
25 can't be answered, town halls with no results,

1
2 year after year, they walked away.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Did the
4 Community Board come up with an alternate plan to
5 give NYU an opportunity to do an expansion or what
6 is the Community Board's general thought of NYU's
7 expansion needs?

8 DAVID GRUBER: I just want to say
9 that we're not against NYU, NYU is our neighbor
10 and has been for many years, but this plan at this
11 time and this location is not right, and there was
12 no movement by NYU at all. Instead of an
13 alternate plan, we gave a roadmap, as I just said,
14 we gave a roadmap of priorities that NYU could
15 have actually engaged us on and said--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:
17 [Interposing] Can we get a copy of that roadmap?

18 DAVID GRUBER: Of course, we'll
19 have it to you immediately.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Mr. Gruber,
21 can you tell us like three things, if you--
22 reasonable changes you would see if you could just
23 make quick three changes on these plan besides
24 getting rid of the whole thing, what would they
25 be?

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2 DAVID GRUBER: Well I'm going to
3 let some of my colleagues chip in on that as well,
4 but we, of course, feel very strongly about these--
5 -these strips are not just little ribbons, you
6 know, they are used, they're wide, they're parks,
7 we call them strips because that's the name they
8 seem to have taken. NYU wants to take--you know,
9 what are we, 46th of 52 Community Boards in open
10 space? Think about it, there's so little open
11 space in Greenwich Village, and now NYU wants to
12 take it. That was a big problem for us.

13 And five of our--every elected
14 official from Congressman Nadler to Borough
15 President Scott Stringer to Councilwoman Chin to
16 Deborah Glick to Tom Duane, all came to a press
17 conference--not their representatives, all of our
18 elected officials--and said these strips are
19 sacred and cannot be taken. NYU essentially gave
20 up two of them, but, really, the meat and potato
21 ones were still there.

22 So when you ask us, what could we
23 do, the north super block should not be in this
24 program. It's a blank check for NYU, something
25 that they're not even looking at for ten years.

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2 Why should we give them an open checkbook in ten
3 years when the whole situation might be changed?
4 And so these are some of the items that were in
5 our roadmap.

6 Do you want to say if a few--

7 [Off mic]

8 TOBI BERGMAN: Tobi Bergman. I
9 just want to say quickly that I think it's hard
10 to--we have a position of Community Board 2, it's
11 hard to answer briefly without saying things that
12 are not--that are kind of confusing in terms of
13 what that position is, but the position that we
14 took was not one that just said, no, no good, get
15 away; it is a position that, when read, I think
16 makes it very clear what we find most
17 objectionable and what we find objectionable to
18 the plan as a whole. So that, really, by looking
19 at that plan, one can read what is most harmful to
20 the community in the whole as with regard to the
21 whole plan. I think it's difficult here to tell
22 you we could take this, we could not add this,
23 this is not for us in the negotiating session.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:

25 [Interposing] Okay. But did the Community Board

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2 come up with an alternate plan? Because there was
3 also, my understanding, an agreement that more
4 space is needed for NYU than for--from the faculty
5 and from the request and from your initial needs
6 assessment in 2001, was the Community Board part
7 of that needs assessment and did the Community
8 Board at any time agree that more space was needed
9 for NYU?

10 TOBI BERGMAN: Tobi Bergman again.
11 I don't think that answering that question, what
12 was put before us, what was put before us was a
13 particular plan. I know that Community Boards all
14 through the city act differently, putting forward
15 plans and, you know, it's not something that we
16 really have the expertise or the professional
17 staff on hand to come up with models and put
18 forward plans as to what NYU needs. I think we
19 made very clear to them what our objections were
20 and we never heard back from them, even on small
21 things so that, for example, in my area, open
22 space, a playground moved from an ideal location
23 where it's in the sun with beautiful trees, it was
24 moved to an area directly next to a tall building
25 to its south, and we pointed out to them that

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2 playgrounds do not go in places where there is no
3 sun, the Parks department--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Okay. I--

5 TOBI BERGMAN: --would never put
6 one there and yet we never got a response to that.

7 [Crosstalk]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: I'm sorry,
9 I'm trying to drill down--

10 TOBI BERGMAN: Yeah, I'm sorry.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --to a
12 specific answer and you moved to another topic.
13 So can you answer the question, ma'am?

14 TERRI CUDE: It's Terri Cude
15 speaking. Something that needs to be understood,
16 and it's been mentioned a bit, is that this
17 community has been working with NYU for years and
18 we have created compromise solutions and we can
19 work with this, and we've tried to do the best we
20 can. What happened was, over decades, we have
21 compromised and then half of that is a compromise
22 and then a compromise, there's really, at this
23 point, the balance is shifting where we helped
24 seek other locations. I walked here today and I'm
25 all of 5 feet tall and it's a quick pleasant walk,

2 the financial districts is an alternative, we have
3 already lost the po--

4 [END TAPE 1]

5 [START TAPE 2]

6 TERRI CUDE: --house, Provincetown
7 Playhouse, some to as-of-right, some to changes.
8 This is a massive zoning change--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:

10 [Interposing] Your alternative is to not build at
11 all in that area.

12 TERRI CUDE: I didn't say not at
13 all, but that--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:

15 [Interposing] But that's what you're saying 'cause
16 you mentioned the financial district, I'm just--

17 TERRI CUDE: What I'm saying is--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: We have a
19 long meeting, so I'm trying to get to specific
20 answers and you're dancing me around the--or
21 you're dancing me down to--

22 TERRI CUDE: [Interposing] But
23 you're a wonderful dancer.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --the
25 financial district. I mean, I'm not trying to be-

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2 -but I'm so--the Community Board's alternative is
3 to move it to another Community Board, that's what
4 you're saying.

5 TOBI BERGMAN: No.

6 TERRI CUDE: The Community Board's-
7 -please, Tobi.

8 TOBI BERGMAN: I'm sorry. Yeah,
9 Tobi Bergman again. I don't think that's really
10 fair to us. We did not--to answer your question
11 yes or no, we did not produce an alternate plan.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thank you.

13 TOBI BERGMAN: To answer--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thank you.

15 TOBI BERGMAN: --your question, to
16 answer your question with respect to the welcoming
17 of this community to NYU, that answer does not
18 reflect our attitude towards NYU.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thank you.

20 TOBI BERGMAN: Our attitude towards
21 NYU is not one of turning them away, and I don't
22 believe it ever has been.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thank you.

24 DAVID GRUBER: And I think we were
25 clear in our plan to say that, but, no, we did not

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2 have the resources to come up with this, this is
3 what NYU did. There were alternates that we
4 looked at outside the Core, but they insisted that
5 it be in this location and so we reacted to what
6 they insisted upon, and that's where we are, but
7 we didn't construct an alternative plan.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thank you,
9 thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
11 much. Also the Provincetown Playhouse was the
12 place that had vampire lesbians--

13 [Crosstalk]

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --of Sodom
15 that I asked you about--

16 TERRI CUDE: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --and I
18 couldn't remember the name, so that was it. Well
19 thank you very much this panel--sorry, we had our
20 own little discussion--and we want to thank this
21 panel, obviously, you'll probably be sticking
22 around, but we'll be talking more, believe me, in
23 the next couple of weeks as we move forward with
24 this plan, so thank you all very much.

25 TOBI BERGMAN: Thank you very much.

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I'm now going
3 to call up six people for a panel in favor, the
4 following people, would they please come up:
5 Nelson Marrero, Felice Faber, Thomasetta Waters,
6 Paul Fernandes, Robert Bartels, Jr., and Bill
7 Lebo. I know it's a big group, there's two mics
8 to fight over. I just want to remind you all that
9 we have a two-minute time limit for everybody.
10 We've got to try to stick to it, I know it always
11 seems rude cutting people off, but if I don't
12 stick to it, it'll add another couple of days on
13 to our week in here at City Hall.

14 I also want to acknowledge--I
15 apologize, I wasn't able to have her speak, but
16 Katie Smith is here from Congressman Nadler's
17 office and I know he's been a big part of this
18 process, and we thank her for being here today.

19 Whenever you're ready, decide who
20 wants to go first, make sure to state your name
21 when you speak, thank you.

22 NELSON MARRERO: My name's Nelson
23 Marrero, good afternoon to the Committee, ladies
24 and gentlemen, also our fellow union members that
25 are here to represent us.

1
2 I'm a building mechanic at NYU
3 medical, I've been a member of the labor union,
4 SCIU 32 BJ for about 18 years. On behalf of the
5 70,032 BJ members who live and work in the New
6 York area, I'm here to testify in support of NYU's
7 expansion plan.

8 For the last year I've worked at
9 NYU Langone Medical. Before that, I was out of
10 work for about six months in a bad economy and my
11 wife was sick with cancer. In this tough economy,
12 I applied to many places to work, but NYU picked
13 me up right away. NYU treats its workers with
14 dignity and respect, and they pay good wages and
15 benefits. With these wages and benefits I was
16 able to continue supporting my family and get my
17 wife the necessary medical treatment. And in this
18 bad economy, NYU should be embraced for providing
19 good jobs and it's growing economy.

20 For this reason, I urge the City
21 Council to approve this project. Thank you.
22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

24 FELICE FARBER: Thank you, Council
25 Member Weprin and Members of the Committee, I'm

1
2 Felice Farber, I'm director of external affairs
3 for the General Contractors Association. I am
4 testifying today in favor of the expansion plans
5 of NYU, and I'm pleased to testify, both in my
6 role at the General Contractors Association and as
7 an undergraduate and graduate alumni of NYU.

8 The GCA is the association
9 representing the contractors that build and
10 maintain New York's infrastructure. Since its
11 inception more than 100 years ago, the GCA has
12 been advocating for smart investments in New York.
13 While our members are the contractors that build
14 New York's infrastructure, we are also the
15 employers and workers that do business and live in
16 New York. Our mission is to make smart decisions
17 that positively affect the quality of life,
18 livability, and economic vitality of our city.

19 New York is the center of academic
20 excellence, with some of the colleges and
21 universities in the country situated across the
22 state. In New York City, our premier academic
23 institutions attract the top teaching talents,
24 students, and researchers. The economic
25 contribution of these institutions is

1
2 immeasurable. NYU in particular is invaluable to
3 New York City, generating more than 50 million in
4 state and local income taxes annually, spending
5 over 170 million annually in the purchase of goods
6 and services in New York City, and paying millions
7 more in property taxes. Equally important are the
8 jobs created and the student talent pool that then
9 goes on to work, start businesses, hire employees,
10 and generate even greater economic activity in our
11 city.

12 We support NYU's expansion plan and
13 encourage the City Council to approve the measures
14 before it today. The expansion plan is essential
15 for New York in generating economic activity,
16 enabling NYU to expand its research, bioscience
17 center, performing arts school, and other core
18 academic facilities. Beyond all this, the
19 expansion plan solidifies NYU's ability to attract
20 the top talent pool of today and tomorrow for our
21 great city.

22 We also support the expansion plans
23 for the economic activity the construction will
24 generate, supporting thousands of professional and
25 trades jobs over the course of construction. As

1
2 New York steadily loses manufacturing jobs, the
3 unionized construction industry is a stabilizing
4 force in New York's economy, providing the blue
5 collar workers with family-sustaining wages.

6 These are the types of jobs we need as a city to
7 provide a diverse and stable workforce.

8 Thank you for the opportunity to
9 appear before you today.

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: That was
11 impressive.

12 FELICE FARBER: I got it right in
13 in two minutes.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Impressive
15 timing, I got to say. Please, Ms. Waters.

16 TOMMY WATERS: Good morning, my
17 name is Tommy Waters, and I am from the NAACP New
18 York State conference and I'm here to present the
19 testimony of Hazel N. Dukes, who regrets not being
20 able to be here today.

21 Of all the issues that are
22 important to the NAACP, none is more important
23 than creating greater economic opportunity for
24 people who have been left behind. In that regard,
25 there are two major ways to create economic

1
2 opportunity and upward mobility: The first is
3 education and the second is attracting private
4 investment. I am writing to support NYU's 2031
5 plan, which does both.

6 Since its founding, NYU has thrived
7 as a great intellectual center, a magnet that
8 continues to attract the best and brightest
9 students, faculty, and researchers to New York
10 City. The university has been nothing but a great
11 asset to the City, providing a boost to our
12 economy, jobs for New Yorkers from all walks of
13 life, and educational opportunities for our
14 children. At the same time, the university also
15 recognizes the importance of the city to its
16 success, and, in return, has invested
17 extraordinary amounts of capital in creation of
18 new facilities throughout the five boroughs--in
19 its Greenwich Village core, downtown Brooklyn, and
20 the 1st Avenue health corridor just to name a few.

21 NYU also recognizes the importance
22 of serving the underserved communities of New York
23 and devotes significant resources to provide
24 health care throughout the boroughs via a mobile
25 health van.

1
2 In order to sustain itself as a
3 great global university while keeping pace with
4 its academic aims, NYU must grow its facilities.
5 The additional space that NYU 2031 will create for
6 teaching, learning, and research will help
7 solidify the university's role as a vital part of
8 our city's economic future. In the process, NYU
9 2031 will also create work for thousands and
10 thousands of people at every economic level.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
12 Ms. Waters, if you could please finish up, our
13 clock is having some technical difficulties.

14 TOMMY WATERS: Okay. And generate
15 more than 490 million in economic output, and
16 nearly 27 million annually in city taxes over 20
17 years.

18 NYU 2031 is too much of an
19 opportunity to pass up. I'm a strong believer
20 that all voices should be heard throughout this
21 process and hope that the opponents of this plan
22 will not stop the great benefit NYU's proposal
23 will bring to Greenwich Village and the rest of
24 the city. Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very

1
2 much. Next, please. Anyone from Local 3 here
3 maybe we could help put the clock? No.

4 ROBERT BARTELS JR: Only air
5 conditioning.

6 PAUL FERNANDES: Good afternoon,
7 Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, you
8 have the full text of my remarks in print, I'll
9 abbreviate those for the purposes of time.

10 My name is Paul Fernandes, I'm the
11 chief of staff of the Building and Construction
12 Trades Council of Greater New York, an
13 organization consisting of local affiliates of 15
14 national and international unions, representing
15 100,000 union members in the five boroughs of New
16 York City. I'm pleased on behalf of our
17 organization and our affiliated unions to testify
18 in support of the New York University Core project
19 and the land use applications necessary to advance
20 it.

21 What members of our unions need
22 more now than ever is job creation. NYU 2031 will
23 create 18,200 full-year construction jobs over the
24 next two decades in an industry that desperately
25 needs them. New York City's building and

1
2 construction industry is suffering through a
3 prolonged recession that shows little, if any,
4 signs of improvement in the near term. Monthly
5 employment figures for May 2012 indicated that
6 26,000 industry jobs in the city have been lost
7 since the peak of employment in 2008, which is the
8 lowest employment level in the industry in 13
9 years.

10 We encourage members of the
11 Subcommittee and the Council to think about what
12 these statistics mean for your constituents
13 because union members of the Building and
14 Construction Trades and the industry at large are
15 predominantly residents of the communities you
16 represent throughout the five boroughs. Not only
17 do three out of four of every member of the
18 industry live in New York City--contrary to what
19 many people think--but these individuals
20 increasingly represent the diversity of local
21 communities, with African Americans, Hispanics,
22 Asians, and other minorities now comprising the
23 majority of the construction industry's work force
24 in New York City.

25 The newest members of our industry

1 particularly reflect this progress. Of the more
2 than 7,400 union apprentices in the building and
3 construction trades, 88% are residents of New York
4 City and 63% of these local residents are African
5 American, Hispanic, Asian, and other minorities.
6 NYU 2031 will put thousands of these members of
7 our industry, these residents of your Council
8 districts in New York City, to work. This
9 strategic plan is essential to their economic
10 future. We're proud to support it and we urge
11 members of the Subcommittee and the Council to
12 support the land use applications before you that
13 will allow its vision to be fully realized.

14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.
16 Fernandes.

17 ROBERT BARTELS JR: Good afternoon,
18 Chairman Weprin and Members of the Subcommittee on
19 Zoning and Franchises, my name is Robert Bartels
20 Jr., I am the business agent of Steamfitters Local
21 638, representing Midtown Manhattan, unionized
22 steamfitters in New York City and Long Island. I
23 want to thank you for allowing me this opportunity
24 to speak out in support of New York University's
25

1
2 planned expansion, better known as NYU 2031.

3 While carrying a date as distant as
4 2031 in its name might conjure images of some
5 futuristic pie-in-the-sky concept, NYU 2031 will
6 create thousands of new jobs almost immediately.
7 The first phase of the NYU 2031 calls for the
8 construction of the Zipper building, an 800,000
9 square foot mixed use space at Bleecker Street and
10 LaGuardia place, to begin as early as next year--
11 that's right, 2031 will begin creating jobs in
12 2013. And the Zipper building is just the
13 beginning. NYU 2031 will continue to create
14 thousands of jobs in Manhattan, downtown Brooklyn,
15 and even Governor's Island over the course of the
16 next 20 years. That means immediate job creation
17 and a much needed economic stimulus which will
18 spread from Greenwich Village and throughout the
19 metropolitan area for decades to come.

20 More importantly, NYU has committed
21 to build using union labor, providing union wages
22 and benefits. This commitment will provide the
23 basis for building and maintaining a strong middle
24 class environment. These are the wages and
25 benefits which are crucial to building strong and

1
2 stable neighborhoods and communities. And NYU
3 2031 will continue to create thousands of jobs in
4 Manhattan, downtown Brooklyn, and even Governor's
5 Island over the course of the next 20 years, which
6 means immediate job creation followed by ongoing
7 and much needed economic stimulus which spread
8 from Greenwich Village throughout the metropolitan
9 area.

10 We all know for the city to survive
11 it must expand to create new jobs, new
12 opportunities, and be a magnet for the best and
13 the brightest students for NYU. This investment
14 of more than \$6.2 billion by NYU will revitalize
15 the neighborhoods in and around Greenwich Village,
16 provide for new growth and change in a revitalized
17 downtown Brooklyn, and add new life to Governor's
18 Island. This expansion will not only serve as
19 NYU'S magnet for the best and brightest, it will
20 provide opportunities for the thousands of skilled
21 union tradesmen and women to get back to work,
22 support their families, and build a city of
23 tomorrow--city of New York tomorrow, excuse me.

24 Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very

1
2 much. Anyone on the panel have a question or
3 comment? Okay. Well thank you all very much, we
4 appreciate you coming down for your testimony.

5 So wait a minute, are these ones?
6 That's who's next. Okay. All right, I'd like to
7 call up Stefanie Batten Bland, Gloria McDarrah,
8 Edy Selman--I apologize if I mispronounce a name
9 here--Jim Fouratt, Sara Jones, and Ashley Shedd.
10 Let's see how many do we have. I will read every
11 name of every person that's submitted to speak,
12 even if they had to leave, I know people do have
13 other lives and other obligations, and we
14 apologize for the delay. Okay. Five, we'll take
15 five.

16 Okay. You decide who goes first.
17 See some of my friends. Again, we're going to
18 have to keep you to two minutes, I apologize.
19 Whenever you're ready, please state your name.

20 EDY SELMAN: You go first.

21 ASHLEY SHEDD: My name is Ashley
22 Shedd and I'm with the Historic--

23 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Now you're on.

24 ASHLEY SHEDD: Okay. Good
25 afternoon, my name is Ashley Shedd, preservation

1
2 associate with the Historic Districts Council
3 giving statement against the NYU expansion plan on
4 behalf of the organization. Thank you for this
5 opportunity.

6 The Historic Districts Council is
7 the advocate for New York City's historic
8 neighborhoods. HDC stands with the Greenwich
9 Village community leaders, residents,
10 preservationists, and others in opposing New York
11 University's plans to expand in the designed open
12 space and low-rise areas around Washington Square
13 Village and University Village.

14 The plan would lift lifelong,
15 lifelong-standing neighborhood zoning protections,
16 open-space preservation requirements, and urban
17 renewal deed restrictions in order to allow the
18 university to build over 2 million square feet of
19 space. This would tip the balance of this part of
20 the Village from a low-rise, diverse neighborhood
21 into a towering mass owned and run by a single
22 entity. While the ownership issues are beyond the
23 Council's oversight, the owner is now requesting
24 permission to expand exponentially, and in doing
25 so, invites scrutiny into this plan's broader

1 effects on the life of the neighborhood and city.
2 This effect will be monumental in every negative
3 sense of the word.
4

5 The proposed new development will
6 blot out open space and hem in the already large
7 towers of Washington Square Village and University
8 Village. One of the few things that ameliorates
9 the effect of the existing towers are the one-
10 story structures and ample open space around them,
11 which creates a precarious livable balance. While
12 it may be argued that the tower-in-the-park model
13 is out of context in Greenwich Village, removing
14 the park for more towers certainly does not make
15 the situation better. Rather, this plan will
16 destroy this area's character, burying it under
17 bulk. These new buildings will serve as monuments
18 to the university's hubris and markers to a soon-
19 to-be vanished neighborhood, transformed from a
20 living part of the city into an all but gated
21 private compound. This is not a sustainable
22 choice for the long term health of the area and it
23 is not what the historic neighborhood should be
24 become.

25 The protections and guidelines

1 governing the development of the area were put
2 into place for a reason. They have barely
3 succeeded in retaining the urban character of the
4 area in the face of the university's voracious
5 real estate development appetite. This proposal
6 seeks to dismantle these guidelines and lend brick
7 to the university's development fantasies. If the
8 university must expand to prosper, then it must
9 look to areas where there's room to expand. This
10 plan will not build up this section of the
11 Village, it will break it. Please don't let this
12 happen.
13

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

15 JIM FOURATT: I'll be quick. Hi,
16 Councilpeople, Councilwoman Chin is not here, but
17 I hope she will listen to this statement.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: She'll be
19 right back.

20 JIM FOURATT: I'm sure she will be,
21 that was not a criticism, we all have human needs.
22 Take that out of my time.

23 Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah,
24 I've lived in Greenwich Village since 1961, I've
25 worked in--my name is Jim Fouratt--I've worked in

1
2 the culture industry all my life, as well as being
3 a community organizer. I am speaking directly to
4 Councilwoman Chin, I ask you to vote no on this
5 project for the following reasons.

6 One, environmental. The impact on
7 air quality because of dust and debris on the
8 immune systems of the very young, we had a baby
9 boom among all residents of all sexual
10 orientations in the Village, and I see a
11 continuing baby boom. As a senior, in 2031, I
12 will be 91 years old, if I'm still here and I know
13 well how seniors' bodies change as we age and our
14 immune systems weaken.

15 The Village is a densely populated
16 area, the noise of daily construction over 20
17 years will impact on cognitive development of
18 children, as well as the stress level of adults.

19 Two, I direct this to my fellow
20 union members--I belong to two unions--and to the
21 union-sensitive members of the Committee. I am
22 very sensitive to the need for creating jobs, I
23 support the NYU expansion to meet its academic
24 space needs, but not in the Village. I strongly
25 urge that you move downtown where space is

1
2 available and Community Board 1 has extended a
3 welcoming invitation. Listen up, union members,
4 job creation will be preserved no matter where NYU
5 builds.

6 Taxes. Taxes are the social
7 lubricant of a quality and civic life--schools,
8 libraries, fire stations, municipal access to
9 telecommunications technology, et cetera. Other
10 than the 3% from retail, NYU will not pay its fair
11 share of property taxes. That is what is
12 destroying the social services of this city is
13 that corporations like NYU do not pay their fair
14 share of taxes. As author Sarah Schulman has
15 written in Gentrification of the Mind, literally
16 thousands of regulated apartments went to fair
17 market rents because of the AIDS pandemic, and
18 NYU's voracious appetite for acquisition of real
19 estate property has gobbled up hundreds of
20 regulated apartments that have impacted on both
21 the diversity of the resident population and made
22 it almost impossible for low-income artists and
23 creative people that made the Village what it was
24 to continue to live or move here.

25 The influx of students whose

1
2 parents are willing to pay those extraordinary
3 high rents has impacted on non-NYU buildings, I
4 have these--

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
6 I'm going to need you to wrap up--

7 [Crosstalk]

8 JIM FOURATT: I am wrapping up. I
9 have these students living in my sixth floor
10 elevator-less building on Waverly Place, while the
11 question of taxing private, non-religious
12 education institutions is not directly related to
13 the development of NYU, NYU dangled a public
14 school previously and pulled it back. The public
15 school is needed, but it should not be bait for
16 destructing Greenwich Village where I live. It is
17 the elephant in the room.

18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
20 much. Thank you. Please try to stay in the two
21 minutes.

22 EDY SELMAN: My name--is this on?

23 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

24 EDY SELMAN: Hi, my name is Edy
25 Selman, I'm the co-cshair of the Washington Place

1
2 Block Association. I don't want to tell you how
3 old I am, but I live in this--I lived here longer
4 than President Sexton, plus many of the other
5 people I would say, let's say 1960, but it's
6 earlier than that. I was acquainted with
7 President Hester, I knew President Sawhill,
8 President Brademas, Oliva, President Olivas, and I
9 haven't really gotten to know President Sexton,
10 but I've been in the room with him often and he's
11 quite charming.

12 There are brilliant minds at NYU.
13 They are creative, they can do whatever they want,
14 they can come up with answers. This plan from the
15 beginning was ill-conceived and misguided because,
16 even if you have property and it's as-of-right,
17 there are constraints. You don't say let's just
18 do this plan and to hell with it, we'll get the
19 zoning changed, we'll change it to commercial,
20 we'll get it--all the things they have to get--the
21 waivers, the permits for the parks. That's not
22 the way to come up with a plan for a neighborhood
23 that you love that you're living in. They love
24 the Village so much that they're eating it up,
25 it's like a mother that's smothering the child.

1
2 There's no more room. Look at this desk, it can
3 only take X amount of people, you have nine
4 Members, plus your Chair and Rosie up there. New
5 York City is finite. There's just so much space
6 in the Village. It's an island and we need a fair
7 share of space for affordable housing, for
8 education, for the jobs.

9 We're not at odds with NYU, I got
10 my masters there, my kids got their degrees there,
11 my husband's got--and they've got our money, but
12 we don't want you to take our lives. We need to
13 share this space properly. This is the wrong
14 plan. Please stop being deaf and blind to what we
15 say. It's a done deal, but it's not a done deal.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

17 EDY SELMAN: We need to say no to
18 this plan.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,
20 we'll try to get a coffee set up with you and
21 President Sexton too so you can keep up the line.

22 Next, please.

23 GLORIA MCDARRAH: Hi, my name is
24 Gloria McDarrah, I live at 505 LaGuardia Place. I
25 have no quarrel with NYU as an educational

1
2 institution, in fact, like my neighbor here, I too
3 have a masters from the school. However, in the
4 last 20 to 30 years, Greenwich Village, my home,
5 has suffered what the AIA Guide to New York City
6 has called, and I quote, NYU's avaricious land
7 grabbing in the Village, unquote. I cite the
8 historic--the destruction of the historic
9 Provincetown Playhouse, when NYU mistakenly
10 knocked it down--happens. But today--

11 [Laughter]

12 GLORIA MCDARRAH: --to get to the
13 point, I'm asking the City Council Members to
14 uphold our City's legal and moral commitment, a
15 commitment made by NYU in the 1960s with the City
16 to the zoning and green space laws that were put
17 in place when the City gave NYU the land of the
18 south super block in exchange for NYU building
19 their two Silver Towers and my home, 505 LaGuardia
20 Place.

21 This space is very visibly open to
22 residents of the city, we see out of towners all
23 the time stopping to have a snack, admire the
24 Picasso in the plaza. NYU says they need space.
25 They don't. My living room faces the two Silver

Towers 30 story apartments--

EDY SELMAN: That's plenty of space.

GLORIA MCDARRAH: I hereby invite any Council Member who wants to come up, I'm on the tenth floor, to see how many vacant apartments there are in NYU's Silver Towers.

[background noise]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down, please, keep it down.

EDY SELMAN: Warehousing, warehousing.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. I need you to wrap up quickly and--

GLORIA MCDARRAH: Okay. If NYU wants to expand, there are neighborhoods seeking revitalization, as we've just heard. They'd be doing a real service. Don't let their specious arguments prevail, and don't break the City and NYU's legal and moral promise to uphold the zoning and the green space.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very much.

EDY SELMAN: And no demapping of

streets.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Oh, okay.

GLORIA MCDARRAH: Thank you.

SARA JONES: Thank you for this opportunity. My name is Sara Jones and I am the chair of LaGuardia Corner Gardens, which is one of the green spaces that is on the DOT strips.

I'd like to say that zoning exists for reasons that still exist: light, air, and space. We oppose the rezoning of the super blocks. We are in a community that is underserved by the open space and we believe that public lands should remain public lands and not given to the university.

LaGuardia Corner Gardens has repeatedly been approved by the Community Board for transfer to Parks for the last 20 years. It's time that the City respect the community needs and transfer all Department of Transportation strips to Parks. All public land should remain public along LaGuardia Place, including the Community Garden and Time Landscape, which is not in this plan, and all DOT strips along Mercer Street.

The community has a long list of

1
2 broken promises from NYU and we believe that the
3 promise of a school on the Bleecker Street site is
4 another farce. If NYU wants to give back to the
5 community, there should be no time restrictions
6 and no use restrictions.

7 Our Community Board has heard the
8 residents and voted against this plan. It's just
9 too big and will forever change the landscape of
10 Greenwich Village. The NYU faculty is against the
11 plan, opposing the scale, the affordability and
12 the turmoil that 20 years of construction will
13 bring. We're hoping the City Council will not
14 approve NYU 2031.

15 I'd like to point out that if you
16 see the hunter report on open space, the
17 professors do need more math classes because the
18 open space is reduced, and those who support
19 community gardens and open space should read that.
20 The Sasaki Garden would be open if NYU would open
21 its locked gates, take off the locked gates, and
22 it would be open. So I will confine myself to
23 just the open space issue, thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: No problem.
25 The Sasaki Garden, that has a locked gate?

1
2 SARA JONES: Oh yeah. Oh, there
3 are many passageways into the Sasaki Garden that--
4 from LaGuardia Place, there are locked gates. You
5 have to go through different ways, you have to
6 know how to get in it.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Oh, I see what
8 you're saying, to get into the whole like, the
9 whole square--

10 FEMALE VOICE: You have to get--

11 [Crosstalk]

12 SARA JONES: [Interposing] There
13 are pathways there, but there are locked gates--

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

15 SARA JONES: --to--in some
16 pathways. From the street, you can get in, but
17 they have--

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
19 I understand now--

20 SARA JONES: Yeah.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --okay.
22 Anybody have a question on the panel? Rosie? You
23 going to ever forgive me, Rosie? No, okay. All
24 right, I guess not.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you--

[Crosstalk]

SARA JONES: Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: So thank you all very much, we appreciate your coming down. I thank you for your patience, I got a lot other people I'd have to thank though, but it's going to be a lot of people I'm going to have to thank for their patience.

I'd like to now call on the next panel in favor: Richard Anderson for the New York Building Congress; Michael Slattery from the Real Estate Board; Jennifer Terry of Union Square Partnership; Tony Juliano and Jennifer Hensley, Association for a Better New York. If they're all here. Murmur, murmur, murmur. Okay. Again, I'm going to have to be limited to two minutes each. And try to stick to that, please. And you can decide who wants to go first. Please state your name for the record.

TONY JULIANO: I'll go first.

JENNIFER HENSLEY: Go for it.

MICHAEL SLATTERY: You want to go?

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Whenever you're ready.

RICHARD ANDERSON: Ladies first.

TONY JULIANO: I'm going first.

Thank you. My name is Tony Juliano, I am the President of the Greenwich Village-Chelsea Chamber of Commerce. Our chamber represents hundreds of member businesses, and it's on their behalf that I voice our support for NYU's Core plan.

I don't think anybody here today could imagine the Village without NYU, especially the small business community. From the chamber's point of view, NYU's 16,000 employees, 40,000 students, and tens of thousands of visitors provide the economic lifeblood for our neighborhood. It is estimated that NYU's Washington Square campus directly and indirectly accounts for more than \$2.25 billion in economic activity every year and nearly 25,000 jobs, ensuring that our neighborhood is a place where small businesses can thrive. The chamber believes that NYU Core is vital to the economic future of Greenwich Village. It is unimaginable to think what this area would be like without NYU.

We recently surveyed 110 Village businesses and found that 95% percent of them

1
2 reported receiving business from NYU and almost
3 70% indicated that NYU is important or extremely
4 important to their business.

5 Aside from the impact NYU has on
6 the 110 businesses we surveyed and the roughly
7 1,200 people they employ, the NYU 2031 plan is an
8 essential part of securing the financial future of
9 small businesses in Greenwich Village. The plan
10 would generate an additional 2,400 construction
11 jobs every year for the next 20 years, more than
12 \$490 million in economic output, and nearly \$27
13 million annually in city taxes over the next 20
14 years. In addition, the university contributes
15 greatly to the diverse community population
16 itself. A 2011 Appleseed study showed that
17 because of the presence of NYU and other
18 institutions like the New School, Greenwich
19 Village has an unusually high level of education
20 among its residents. Many of these residents
21 remain in the Village upon graduation and become
22 successful members of the community. This, more
23 than anything, contributes to the unique and
24 enduring character of Greenwich Village.

25 NYU 2031 will help the businesses

1
2 in Greenwich Village and the surrounding area
3 thrive in the coming years, and in order for the
4 university to continue its strong presence, it
5 must grow. We hope you will take our comments
6 into consideration and vote yes on the plan for
7 its Core campus.

8 Thank you.

9 JENNIFER HENSLEY: Hi, I'm Jen
10 Hensley, executive director of the Association for
11 a Better New York, which is among the city's
12 longest standing civic organizations advocating
13 for the policies, programs, and projects that make
14 New York a better place to live, work, and visit.
15 We represent the broad fabric of New York's
16 economy, and our membership includes New York's
17 most influential businesses, non profits, arts and
18 culture organizations, educational institutions,
19 labor unions, and entrepreneurs.

20 At ABNY, we know that educational
21 institutions are huge drivers of the economic
22 development of our city, not just the people that
23 they employ and the facilities they occupy, but
24 also in the businesses they spin off and the
25 students they bring from all over the world who

1
2 become New Yorkers and stay here after school to
3 live, work, and start their families.

4 Over the past several years, NYU
5 has been working hard to balance the needs of the
6 Greenwich Village community with the growing
7 demand for space at the university. The plan that
8 appears before you today represents a true
9 compromise that will strengthen the capacity of
10 NYU while retaining the character of the
11 surrounding community. NYU is proposing to build
12 on its own property without further extending into
13 Greenwich Village, while creating enhanced and
14 more usable open space, and donating land for a
15 future public school. NYU has been responsive and
16 accommodating to the concerns of the community and
17 also dedicated to their need for expanded and
18 updated facilities.

19 NYU's expansion represents an
20 exciting opportunity for New York City. More
21 students from around the world want to come to
22 college in New York than ever before. The city
23 needs to be prepared for that, and we need to
24 ensure that our educational institutions have the
25 capacity, the state-of-the-art facilities, the

1 cutting edge programs, and the connection with the
2 city's other communities, to attract and retain
3 these students here. They will become the
4 workforce of tomorrow, and as we invest in
5 projects like the applied sciences campus with
6 Cornell and NYU Poly, as we prepare our youth in
7 schools like the DOE'S new Software and
8 Engineering Academy, and as we watch the World
9 Trade Center site and Hudson Yards fill up with
10 new and growing businesses, we must be sure that
11 NYU can continue to meet the demand for education
12 that is fueling our city's growth.

13
14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
16 much.

17 JENNIFER TERRY: Good afternoon.

18 My name is Jennifer Terry, I'm here on behalf of
19 Union Square Partnership Executive Director
20 Jennifer Falk to read the organization's testimony
21 in support of the NYU 2030 plan. As many of you
22 know, Union Square Partnership is a community-
23 based, non-profit organization that works to
24 foster the best possible quality of life for
25 residents, businesses, and visitors to Union

1
2 Square, 14th Street district, and I thank you for
3 this opportunity to testify today as the hearing.

4 Union Square Partnership members
5 include the district's employees and businesses,
6 medical, cultural, and educational institutions.
7 Our large institutions, including New York
8 University, the New School, Con Edison, Beth
9 Israel Medical Center, and all major economic
10 drivers in the area and there is no doubt that
11 their presence adds to the great strength and
12 vitality of the Union Square.

13 Over the past three decades, the
14 Union Square district has undergone an incredible
15 transformation and investments made by NYU in the
16 past decade or so has been a large part of our
17 neighborhood's continued success. NYU serves as
18 active community member offering space for
19 community gatherings and hosting events that are
20 free and open to the public. NYU's students and
21 employees, and the institution itself spends
22 significant amounts with our local merchants. And
23 NYU and the New School are leading sources of
24 private, new private investments in the area. The
25 contributions of our large academic institutions

1
2 cannot be taken for granted, especially when times
3 are tough, as they have been in the past few
4 years, and we must continue to make critical
5 investments like this plan to put forth today, to
6 safeguard our city's future and growth within its
7 economy.

8 As you listen today, we urge you to
9 think beyond the impact of just one neighborhood
10 and understand the importance of NYU to the whole
11 of Lower Manhattan and the City. We believe that
12 NYU's plan will provide another important boost to
13 the Union Square district and the benefits this
14 plan will bring will be great.

15 Thank you again for this
16 opportunity to share our views with you today.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
18 much. Mr. Anderson, you're next.

19 RICHARD ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman,
20 Members of the Council, I am Richard Anderson,
21 president of the New York Building Congress. The
22 Building Congress is a membership organization
23 comprised of the design, construction, and real
24 estate industry in the city, and our members are
25 the ones who will be designing and building the

1 facilities under this plan.

2 We find the NYU plan, the case for
3 it to be undeniable. You've been hearing that
4 over and over in testimony this morning. This is
5 a plan that will help a university, help the City,
6 help the community. It's a very ambitious and
7 important expansion plan for the City of New York.

8 We've also been hearing how much
9 NYU is in need of additional space, we find that
10 case to be equally undeniable. But also, to
11 remain competitive with the nation's leading
12 universities, NYU must provide facilities that
13 attract the best and brightest minds and
14 facilitate learning. We're hearing that again and
15 again today.

16 In a larger context, the NYU's
17 proposed expansion is a critical response to
18 changes in the city's economy and the world's
19 economy. State and local government and civic
20 leaders have led important efforts to move the
21 City away from a reliance on the financial sector
22 to more diverse, knowledge-based industries such
23 as medicine, technology, higher education, and the
24 arts. We feel that New York City's leaders must
25

1
2 take the next steps by ensuring the city remains
3 an inviting home to the investors and
4 professionals who will drive the industries of the
5 future.

6 And I'd like to make three
7 concluding points, Mr. Chairman. One is I can
8 assure the Council that the design and
9 construction firms involved with the projects that
10 NYU will build will get this plan built and get it
11 built expeditiously and well. Secondly, NYU is
12 participating with Construction for a Livable
13 City, which is a program we established to improve
14 construction sites, make them more attractive and
15 less intrusive on the community. And finally, we
16 have confidence that NYU will do what it says.
17 This great university has progressed enormously in
18 recent decades and this plan will continue that
19 impressive performance.

20 We urge the Council to approve
21 NYU's planned expansion as proposed by the City
22 Planning Commission. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.
24 Anderson. Next?

25 MICHAEL SLATTERY: Hi, my name's

1
2 Mike Slattery, I'm reading a statement on behalf
3 of the Real Estate Board of New York, which is a
4 broadly-based trade association of over 12,000
5 owners, developers, brokers, and real estate
6 professionals active throughout New York City.

7 We support the NYU Core development
8 plan. REBNY believes that New York University's
9 growth strategy is important for the future of New
10 York City and for Greenwich Village.

11 There is no doubt that higher
12 education is a major driver of economic growth for
13 our city and New York University is a major
14 contributor to that growth, with more than 40,000
15 full and part-time students. The yearly direct
16 and indirect impact of NYU's Washington Square
17 campus, including university and student spending,
18 accounts for more than \$2.25 billion in economic
19 output in the city and nearly 25,000 jobs. The
20 NYU Core plan will add to this positive impact,
21 creating an estimated 18,200 construction jobs, as
22 well as 2,600 long-term employment opportunities.

23 A study issued last year by the
24 Appleaseed analysis firm showed that Greenwich
25 Village's economy is fueled by its academic

1
2 institutions and, of course, NYU is the biggest
3 school in this important neighborhood. Appleseed
4 found that because of the presence of NYU and
5 other institutions like the New School, Greenwich
6 Village has an unusually high level of education
7 among its residents, that higher education
8 promotes new private investment in the Village,
9 and that the thousands of students generate
10 commerce and trade for local businesses.

11 That is why NYU's expansion plan is
12 so vital to the future of our city and this
13 neighborhood. This proposal will help NYU meet
14 the needs of its faculty and students, as well as
15 its research and academic programs, while taking
16 into account the unique features of the Greenwich
17 Village community.

18 As you know, NYU is also investing
19 in other parts of our city such as on Manhattan's
20 East Side and in downtown Brooklyn. Nonetheless,
21 it makes sense for the university to utilize
22 property it already owns in close proximity to its
23 main campus. NYU has been working with the
24 community and elected officials to design a
25 comprehensive phased expansion plan and we urge

1
2 the Council to approve their application.

3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
5 much, Mr. Slattery. I'd like to call on the
6 unforgettable Rosie Mendez to please ask a
7 question.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you,
9 David--oh, I mean, thank you, Mark.

10 [Laughter]

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Touche.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: And I want
13 to put it in context for everyone, I think the
14 reason that Mark called me Margarita is because he
15 remembers before she got elected that she was
16 arrested protesting NYU. When I was a student at
17 NYU and I thank NYU for that 'cause that's where I
18 met Margarita Lopez, Lisa Kaplan, Feladior Selly
19 [phonetic], and all the people who were protesting
20 the construction of dorms in what's my district
21 now.

22 I have a question for Jennifer
23 Terry. So you're just speaking on behalf of the
24 partnership, correct?

25 JENNIFER TERRY: Yes, correct.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay.

3 Because I get complaints from residents about NYU,
4 the New School, and all the schools that are
5 there. So you're not suggesting that there's more
6 room in Union Square Park here for some NYU
7 activities, is that--you're not suggesting that,
8 are you?

9 JENNIFER TERRY: Any questions that
10 you have for the Union Square Partnership, I'd be
11 more than happy to take back to my executive
12 director and have her answer those questions for
13 you.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. So
15 but then the Union Square is suggesting that there
16 is room at the two super blocks?

17 JENNIFER TERRY: I cannot answer
18 that question for you here today--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay.

20 JENNIFER TERRY: --but I'd be more
21 than happy to get that question to my executive
22 director.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay.

24 Could you clarify for me the Union Square BID's
25 position on the public school on 15th Street that

1
2 was going to go over zoning and was the Union
3 Square BID in favor of that or not in favor of
4 that? You don't recall? I'll answer that
5 question, the Union Square BID was against adding
6 extra floors to that public school site. Just so
7 you could know.

8 Okay. I don't have any more
9 questions, thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,
11 Council Member Mendez. Anybody else have a
12 comment or question for this panel? Seeing none,
13 thank you all very much.

14 I'd now like to call on this panel
15 who are in opposition to the plan: Mark Crispin
16 Miller, Ann Pellegrini, Patrick Deer, Jan Blustein
17 or stine, Meg--is it Rooney? I'm not sure I got
18 that--and Jeff Goodwin, and Jeff Goodwin. How
19 many we got out of that?

20 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This for the
21 record?

22 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Again. Okay.
24 Someone's coming from upstairs?

25 MARK CRISPIN MILLER: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right,
take your time--

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: If you have any
copies--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --we can get
started without you.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: --please have
them ready, we'll take them now.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right,
whenever you're settled in, you could start and
then the last panelist will join us as she makes
her way down or...

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down,
please. Sir, you can--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
Thank you for being so cooperative everybody, I do
really appreciate it.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Somebody please
start, just [off mic] the microphone, there you
are.

MARK CRISPIN MILLER: Start? Okay.
I'm Mark Crispin Miller, an NYU professor and a

1
2 Villager and I'm here to urge the City Council to
3 vote down the expansion plan called NYU 2031.

4 It's a misleading name because the
5 plan does not have the support of NYU, if NYU
6 includes its faculty. Thirty-four departments and
7 divisions have now voted overwhelmingly against
8 the plan. These include economics, history,
9 anthropology, mathematics, French, psychology, art
10 history, and music, all unanimous in opposition;
11 with near unanimous votes from English, sociology,
12 linguistics, classics, chemistry, East Asian
13 studies, and the School of Social Work, among
14 others, including the Stern business school, which
15 voted 52 to 3 against the plan.

16 Why are we opposed? Many of us
17 share the personal concerns of the community at
18 risk, since 40% of NYU's faculty live in the area
19 targeted for 20 years, at least, of demolition and
20 construction, but there are larger fears shared by
21 all faculty opposing 2031 wherever we may live.
22 As you'll be hearing from my colleagues here, we
23 see this project as a mortal threat, not only to
24 NYU's neighborhood, but to NYU itself.

25 First, the project is a huge

1
2 financial gamble for a school already spending
3 millions in debt service every year and cutting
4 costs by freezing salaries, slashing benefits,
5 union busting, and now even limiting infirmary
6 care for graduate students. How we can afford
7 this costly venture is a mystery, especially since
8 NYU's administration won't reveal its business
9 plan.

10 With its small endowment, NYU, as
11 usual, must use tuition revenues to pay for 2031,
12 which means financing it with still more student
13 debt--a strategy both risky and immoral. And
14 while this plan could bankrupt NYU, it certainly
15 will sink us academically. Twenty thirty-one
16 would ravage an academic reputation that has taken
17 years to build by driving off top faculty and
18 forcing us to lower admission standards.

19 Just I'll conclude with a few
20 sentences. Why has NYU's administration hatched
21 this plan in secret and then imposed it on the
22 faculty, although we understand our school's needs
23 better than anyone?

24 We urge the City Council in the
25 strongest possible terms to vote this project down

1
2 so that President Sexton's team can go back to the
3 drawing board and plan NY's future with us, not
4 despite us, not against us. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

6 Next, please?

7 PATRICK DEER: My name is Patrick
8 Deer and I am an associate professor in the
9 English department at NYU, and, as Mark mentioned,
10 I'm also a member of a 400 plus faculty group that
11 exposes the expansion plan. I'd like to thank the
12 City Council and the Committee for hearing our
13 testimony today.

14 Like my colleagues, I'm here
15 because, as a loyal employee of NYU for ten years,
16 I love and care about the university and I believe
17 that as faculty members, we are with our students,
18 the heart of the university and we have a
19 responsibility to speak up. The NYU 2031 plan
20 does not represent NYU.

21 As a professor, I understand NYU's
22 need for space, but as faculty and also as the
23 parent of two small children who lives in
24 Washington Square Village on the super blocks,
25 along with 40% of the faculty and their families,

1
2 I'm disturbed, not only that my children will grow
3 up on a construction site, but also that the vast
4 scale of the plan threatens to ruin the precious
5 livable spaces of our neighborhood. This is the
6 wrong way to solve our space needs.

7 What will the university gain in
8 terms of academic space, which as we've been told
9 is the main determinant for the administration of
10 academic excellence? Only 17 to 18% of academic
11 space in the first ten years, only 40 classrooms
12 in a building with 1,000 dorm beds. The Zipper
13 building includes 90 faculty apartments, yet a
14 recent count of vacant apartments in the super
15 blocks--Washington Square Village and Silver
16 Towers--reveals 69 and 30 apartments empty,
17 respectively. Why then do we need the other 83%
18 of these high-rise towers forced into wholly
19 residential blocks in a historic low-rise
20 neighborhood with the second lowest open space in
21 the city? It's a plan that doubles the density.

22 I'm just going to close by
23 addressing a question that Mr. Garodnick raised,
24 which was referred to as a rumor. I'd just like
25 to say that the university could certainly be

1
2 using our existing academic space in a more
3 rational and efficient way. I did a quick check
4 while I was waiting on my own department, the
5 English department. Only 10% of our classes--
6 we're one of the largest departments in the
7 College of Arts and Sciences--only 10% of our
8 classes are offered on Friday, only 150 seats out
9 of 1,680 seats offered. So we really could be
10 using our space--

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]

12 Thank you very much--

13 PATRICK DEER: --more--

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --we got--

15 PATRICK DEER: --efficiently.

16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

18 Yes, ma'am?

19 JAN BLUSTEIN: Yeah, good morning,
20 my name is Jan Blustein, I'm a professor of health
21 policy and medicine at NYU, and I want to begin by
22 saying that I'm not here to oppose NYU or to speak
23 against the university. On the contrary, I love
24 NYU and it's the expansion plan that I don't like.

25 I understand that these hearings

1 typically don't cover issues of financing.

2 Nevertheless, I want to say that I think that the
3 nature of the applicant and the clime in which the
4 applicant's operate and make it important for you
5 to consider finances in this case. And Mr.
6 Sexton, in his characteristically lengthy remarks,
7 made financing sound like a piece of cake, thanks
8 to the industriousness, he said, of his students
9 who take one or two jobs while they're going
10 through school. If financing a plan like this
11 were a piece of cake, Harvard would not have had a
12 problem with it recently.

13
14 In 2003, Harvard University
15 undertook a massive expansion plan that looks a
16 lot actually like NYU 2031 and the idea was to
17 finance it with what they got from their
18 endowment, and everybody knew that the real estate
19 market was going to last forever and it was no
20 problem. And they broke ground on the building,
21 fast forward, the market crashes, there is no
22 money to continue, and that foundation is a hole
23 in the ground the size of something like ten super
24 blocks. Already been excavated and to keep it
25 from caving in, they've paved it over. There it

1
2 sits, a big mess. This is our fear.

3 Back to NYU 2031 and the very
4 cursory response that the president gave to the
5 question of financing, this cannot be financed
6 from endowment income because we all know that NYU
7 has a small endowment so how is it going to be
8 financed? The answer is we don't know, we've
9 asked. We're apparently not going to grow the
10 number of students. How will--will tuition
11 continue to go up? Tuition next year at NYU will
12 go up 3.8% in one year. That's vastly in excess
13 of the CPI. It's a disgrace that young people
14 have to live in a world where college is
15 unaffordable.

16 This is unacceptable. We accept
17 federal funds, we're supported by the federal
18 government. We need to contribute to the public
19 good.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

21 JEFF GOODWIN: Hello, my name is
22 Jeff Goodwin, I'm a professor of sociology at New
23 York University. The vote in my own department
24 was 22 to 1 against the expansion plan.

25 Just a couple quick points. You've

1
2 heard a lot about attracting talent to NYU, it's
3 very difficult to attract talent to a 20-year
4 construction site. In fact, I think this long,
5 long process is going to drive a lot of people, a
6 lot of very good faculty out of the university,
7 even as it makes it difficult to replace them with
8 quality faculty.

9 I'm also, quite frankly, you know,
10 I've taught at NYU for 21 years, I've lived on the
11 south super block for nearly 18 years, and over
12 these years I've come to really doubt NYU's
13 capacity to fulfill the many promises that it
14 makes. It was just a few years ago as I recall,
15 some of you may remember, we were fighting a
16 development on the south block, NYU wanted to
17 build a so-called fourth tower which, fortunately,
18 IM Pei decided it was not a very good idea. What
19 was this building? Was it really a academic
20 facility? Well no, it was a hotel with, I think,
21 some dorm rooms thrown in. And just a few weeks
22 ago, NYU was still clinging to an idea of a hotel
23 in that tallest structure there. It's really a
24 fairy tale that this is all about academic space.
25 That's been kind of an afterthought, now it's a

1
2 big deal. Will it be a big deal tomorrow? I
3 really don't know, I really don't trust NYU to do
4 the right thing with this space if it acquires it.
5 I hope it won't acquire this space, like others,
6 it's too big, it doesn't fit the need, there are
7 other ways to address our space needs than this
8 project.

9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

11 MEG ROONEY: My name is Meg Rooney,
12 unlike many we'll hear from today, I don't live in
13 the Village, but I did go to NYU. I'm testifying
14 today, not only out of concern for this
15 neighborhood, but also out of concern for my
16 future--or for my university and a deep concern
17 for my fellow students.

18 I came to NYU for an excellent
19 education, I didn't come for space, I don't know
20 anyone who comes to NYU, or New York for that
21 matter, for space. I do know, however, dozens and
22 dozens of students, myself included, who struggle
23 to pay for their education. We struggle to work
24 two and three jobs for the promise of learning,
25 not the promise of luxury. The crushing financial

1
2 burden is far more important to us than feeling a
3 little squeezed. I'm delighted to hear that NYU
4 has never been in a better financial situation;
5 I'm puzzled, however, because tuition has never
6 been higher, graduate student benefits are being
7 cut, their union's busted, and student to faculty
8 ratio is going up, it's 32 to 1 now.

9 I'm puzzled because NYU has \$6
10 billion to put skyscrapers in the Village, but
11 can't seem to support their existing students.
12 NYU is currently number six in the nation in
13 student debt, topping among their peer
14 institutions, the average student graduates with
15 \$35,000 of debt, myself with much more than that.
16 The national average is 23. Next year, freshmen
17 will pay the tuition--with tuition and housing
18 58,000 a year. This is unacceptable, this is
19 unacceptable student hardship in the midst of a \$6
20 billion expansion. If NYU wants to grow, why not
21 grow in accessibility? Why not grow with the
22 futures of their students in mind? This expansion
23 will be paid for by student debt.

24 When the New School and Cooper
25 Union built their new buildings, the cost was

1 transitioned onto students and used to justify
2 skyrocketing tuition. Considering their history,
3 we have no reason to believe NYU will be any
4 different.
5

6 This expansion is not about better
7 education, it's about growth for growth's sake.
8 It will damage the Village and perpetuate
9 nationwide student debt crisis. NYU used to call
10 itself a private university and the public
11 service, to which I ask what public. This plan is
12 not in service of its students and not in service
13 of its neighbors.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
15 much.

16 [Applause]

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Shh, what
18 happened? Okay. Pellegrini.

19 ANN PELLEGRINI: I'm Ann
20 Pellegrini, I'm a faculty member at NYU, where
21 I've taught for eight very exciting and happy
22 years.

23 Like 40% of my colleagues, I live
24 in the super blocks, I'll be directly affected by
25 this expansion plan. We're very concerned about

1
2 the future of our university and of the beloved
3 village that we call home. But our concerns are
4 far larger than the hour after hour, day after
5 day, and year after year immiserating impact this
6 massive building plan will have on those of us
7 living in the bull's-eye of the bulldozer.

8 Faculty across the university, whether they live
9 in the super blocks or not, are deeply worried
10 about the destructive impact of this construction
11 plan on the academic quality of NYU.

12 The NYU administration would have
13 you believe that NYU must grow to maintain its
14 excellence. In fact, if approved and implemented,
15 the faculty believes this gargantuan expansion
16 will have the opposite effect.

17 NYU is currently number 33 in the
18 US News and World Report's rankings of national
19 universities. Unlike the institutions to which
20 the NYU administration is fond of comparing
21 itself--Harvard, Princeton, Columbia, and all
22 those institutions rank in the top four--NYU does
23 not have a big endowment. We pay as we go via the
24 large tuition fees paid by our students--and Meg
25 just cited those costs for next year will be

1
2 \$58,000. Now to pay for the billions this
3 expansion will cost, myself, I'm a bit mystified
4 about the math, but it seems to me that NYU will
5 have to admit even more paying undergraduates. We
6 currently have more than 21,000 undergrads and we
7 admit one out of three of our applicants. Compare
8 that to the Harvards, Princetons, Columbias, all
9 of whom have fewer than 6,500 undergraduates and
10 admit only 10%. What makes NYU think that bigger
11 is always better?

12 Now, it's apples and oranges. Why
13 compare us to the Ivys anyway? We've got the Big
14 Apple. And my own bench line for excellence is
15 not the Ivy League, my bench line for academic
16 excellence is the vibrancy and dynamism of my
17 students and colleagues, the out-of-the-box
18 imagination and talents on view in my classrooms
19 at Tisch, at the College of Arts and Sciences
20 every day, amongst students eager and able to
21 explore new ideas and try on different points of
22 view.

23 As a loyal and proud number of NYU
24 faculty, I urge you to say yes to NYU's future by
25 saying no to this plan.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very much. A couple of people have questions, I wanted to just ask one, I guess, Mr. Deer, is it Deer? How old are your children?

PATRICK DEER: They are two years, eight months.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Two years and eight months? Oh, that may be a little young. I'm just curious, do any of you have children who live in the quad there or the complex? So how many, I'm just curious about children using the play areas, the Key Park, does your 2-year old use the Key Park?

PATRICK DEER: Yeah, we have 2-year old twin daughters, they go in the Key Park every day--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing] Oh, two years, eight months, okay.

PATRICK DEER: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right.

PATRICK DEER: They also go in the Sasaki Garden every day. Often, we have to talk them into going into the playground rather than the garden. Like many other residents, they, you

1
2 know, they love that space, so it's tremendously
3 well utilized by the families in the complex. So
4 they're 2 1/2, you know, they're going to be 22
5 1/2 if the two decades of construction go
6 according to plan.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: These strips
8 on the sides, you know, the strips, there's play
9 area there and some garden, do you ever use that,
10 do your kids use that? Any of you want to just
11 quickly volunteer on that?

12 MARK CRISPIN MILLER: Yeah, my son
13 is 11 and he grew up using the Key Park and also
14 we, you know, toss the baseball around on the
15 strips on the side, so they're well used. There's
16 a lot of skateboarding on the Mercer Street strip.
17 I could say it's fair to say, they're packed with
18 active children playing.

19 PATRICK DEER: [Interposing] Yeah,
20 there are also fountains in the summer in the
21 Mercer Street strip, I just went to a children's
22 birthday party there. So I mean, it's a great
23 place, it's well shaded by the beautiful trees we
24 have in the Key Park. So it's a great place for
25 letting the kids work off steam and cool off in

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the summer.

MARK CRISPIN MILLER: [Interposing]

It's worth noting, I think, as a point of information that in no sense is the courtyard of Washington Square Village an inaccessible space that the public can't use, that's just a misrepresentation, that's not true.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Thank you. Council Member Brewer had a question.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I did. I want to thank the faculty members 'cause I know, even though a lot of you have voted the way you did, I'm sure it's not an easy vote because there's always a lot of pressure. So I thank you and it's incredibly articulate. The students are very fortunate.

My question is, with your knowledge of your community at NYU and your appreciation and admiration for the university, do you think that there are needs that need to be met, but not the ones that would involve the building? In other words, I'm trying to say that, obviously, you have concerns in terms of tuition and in terms of the number of students, and I'm trying to think maybe

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2 there's no need for all of this building, and you
3 think perhaps that the situation of attracting
4 faculty is already available and that the
5 university is able to go forward in its excellent
6 way without this kind of building. So I'm just
7 wondering, are there other needs that need to be
8 met, other than the tuition and challenges and
9 maybe other kinds of class sizes? I'm just trying
10 to understand from your on-the-ground experience,
11 are there needs that need to be met and perhaps
12 other ways of meeting them?

13 JAN BLUSTEIN: I think that we're
14 all looking at each other somewhat puzzled, and I
15 think part of the problem is that higher education
16 is in a state of flux at the moment. I mean, we
17 really don't know where we're going, and if we
18 pretended that we did, we'd be pretending, right?
19 So how is the expansion of NYU to the global sites
20 affect the need of space in town? Completely
21 unclear to me. How does what's clearly going to
22 be a change towards online learning? And we just
23 don't know what that's going to be. How does that
24 affect the need for brick-and-mortar? Spots.

25 So everybody in New York dreams of

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2 more space, okay, 'cause I'd love to have more
3 space myself, and there are periodic space needs
4 that come up at NYU, and I'm sure the
5 administration spends a lot of time trying to
6 negotiate space and I know they do. There was
7 never a consulted effort to get from faculty a
8 sense of what our needs are. I can say that with
9 certainty.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: That was my
11 question.

12 MARK CRISPIN MILLER: Yeah, there
13 never was. One eloquent fact is that the
14 Department of Chemistry, okay, which definitely
15 has a need for more lab space, has voted 18 to 2
16 against the plan. Our colleagues in the Sciences
17 are, you know, candid with us in talking about
18 their space needs, we appreciate their space
19 needs, you know, but we all feel that these
20 reasonable needs are being used as a pretext for
21 this, you know, multi-billion dollar boondoggle,
22 whose, you know, relation to our academic needs is
23 slight at best.

24 And I want to add one other thing
25 inspired by your opening remark about the

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2 difficulty of coming forward as faculty to talk
3 about this. It's been a real education for us to
4 see how much fear there is at our institution
5 among the faculty. It's dispiriting and kind of
6 shameful that there's so much fear that, while we
7 have 117 public members and NYU faculty against
8 the Sexton plan, there are over twice as many who
9 are private members who are afraid to be public,
10 and they're not all untenured professors, and
11 there are many, many more who agree with us and
12 oppose the plan who are too frightened even to
13 join our organization.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: And Mr.
16 Garodnick.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Thank
18 you. Just two points of clarification. The
19 existence of so many faculty departments that are
20 willing to take a stand in opposition to this
21 plan, should we conclude from that that there is a
22 fundamental disagreement about the need for NYU to
23 grow in the location where it is, or should we
24 conclude that the preference of the faculty is
25 that it grow slower and perhaps to a lesser degree

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2 than is proposed here?

3 MARK CRISPIN MILLER: Well first of
4 all, let me make clear that you can all read the
5 resolutions themselves, they're up at our website,
6 NYUFASP.com, the resolutions are quite detailed
7 and they have to do with the points we've raised
8 here as witnesses today. There is tremendous--
9 basically, what they want the administration to do
10 is go back to the drawing board and come up with a
11 different plan. They're afraid that this one will
12 degrade the university academically, that it poses
13 a serious financial threat to our solvency, they
14 object strongly to the fact that we have never
15 been consulted in any kind of conversation about
16 this, you see. So I think it's safe to say that
17 it's the former one of your choices that's the
18 issue here.

19 ANN PELLEGRINI: I just also want
20 to add that, you know, the faculty--and again, 34
21 departments or programs have passed resolutions,
22 the entire Stern business school passed a
23 resolution 52 to 3 opposing this plan, the
24 economics department, 29 to 0, with three Nobel
25 Prize laureates, passed a resolution opposing this

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2 plan. These are people that know something about
3 math.

4 The faculty would love to sit down
5 with the administration in a actually meaningful
6 process of consultation about planning the smart
7 growth of our university. Smart growth is not
8 growth as the only value. We're trying to grow
9 other things besides buildings, besides money,
10 we're actually trying to produce a space in which
11 people can learn and think critically--

12 [Applause]

13 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down,
14 please.

15 ANN PELLEGRINI: --and we think
16 that's vital to the City of New York. We
17 actually, I guess, we're somewhat, I don't know,
18 utopian, we think it's actually vital to the
19 project of democracy.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. I
21 just want to see if any of the Professors also
22 would want to comment on President Sexton's
23 comments about students with--and actually maybe
24 even former students as well--on the subject of
25 two or three jobs that students have as a regular

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2 course being a sign of a positive thing for NYU as
3 to how eager people are to be students at NYU as
4 opposed to, perhaps, the other conclusion, which
5 is that maybe students are overly saddled with
6 debt and tuition obligations.

7 JAN BLUSTEIN: Yeah, I teach the
8 Wagner school, which is a graduate school, and
9 actually a lot of your guys--the people who work
10 with you guys come through our program. And we
11 really encourage our students to work, but that
12 work is for their education and their development.
13 Working in the kinds of jobs that many of my
14 students work in--and I teach in the evenings and
15 I see students just exhausted, they work so many
16 jobs--the kinds of jobs they're working often are
17 not that kind of work. My students, I sense in
18 them in the last year real desperation about their
19 prospects, and my response to that is, first of
20 all, sympathy, and second of all, a feeling that
21 we in the education business really owe it to them
22 to pay attention to the world that they live in.

23 So I do not advocate students
24 working three jobs, and I can't imagine any
25 situation in which that is a positive thing, it's

1
2 really tough for them. And I admire them for what
3 they do. This is not good.

4 MEG ROONEY: I'd like to comment on
5 that. I guess I would say that's it's a little
6 bit of an, I see--

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
8 Just state your name again.

9 MEG ROONEY: Oh, sorry, Meg Rooney.
10 I see it as an unfair relationship that's
11 happening. Students are taught, especially
12 undergraduate students, go to the best university
13 you can, go to NYU, look how fancy it is, look
14 what a good school it is. They're 18 years old.
15 You get here and don't even understand what money
16 means, get here and then it's the university has
17 the power to raise tuition whenever they want,
18 however they want, you know, and it seems
19 arbitrary to me that students don't know what that
20 means until they're already here. I was a
21 graduate student at NYU, even me, even coming from
22 the working world, you don't, you know, you don't
23 really know how that power dynamic works. And I
24 guess in this case, NYU building and saying let's
25 add value, it's like they're saying, tuition's

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2 high, let's make this a better value. Why not
3 make it more affordable instead? Why not bring
4 the price down and make what we have work well
5 rather than adding a lot of fancy things to a
6 really high price tag.

7 PATRICK DEER: I'd just add one
8 more piece to the burden that our students work
9 under--and they are extraordinary human beings, I
10 mean, it's an absolute pleasure to teach them,
11 it's why we do what we do--but in addition to
12 working two or three jobs, which I agree with Jen
13 is, this is not a good thing because they're also
14 taking a full course load of four courses trying
15 to get value for money. There's also tremendous
16 pressure in the current job market for them to do
17 unpaid internships at the same time as holding
18 those, you know, two part-time jobs, they're often
19 used as replacement labor in the workplace. And
20 they have to pay to take those internship courses
21 for credit.

22 So they're up against it. We
23 admire them tremendously, but they should not be
24 put in this position.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Lastly--

1
2 and thank you, Mr. Chairman--normally this panel
3 would not be so interested in the specific course
4 schedule of the students of NYU in a land use
5 matter, but just help us understand with some
6 certainty here, President Sexton indicated there
7 are 10,000 students who take classes on Fridays,
8 it sounds like, at least in one department, that
9 only 10% of the classes are offered on Friday. We
10 bring this up in connection with the need for
11 space and what might be available, just help us
12 understand that. And that's all I've got, thank
13 you.

14 MARK CRISPIN MILLER: Yeah, thank
15 you. That's a very important question, I was
16 going to, you know, be bold enough to answer
17 without a question, okay? There are not Friday
18 classes at NYU, there are some recitations, okay,
19 and it's possible that in some of the programs
20 like the School of Continuing and Professional
21 Studies there might be Friday classes, but I can
22 tell you with perfect assurance that the English
23 department is not eccentric in this regard.
24 Throughout Arts and Sciences in the Steinhardt
25 School where I teach, I believe, at Tisch as well,

1
2 there are no Friday classes, okay? If you wanted
3 to schedule a Friday class, right, as a makeup,
4 for example, you would have the easiest time in
5 the world, because there are so many empty
6 classrooms throughout the campus. It would make a
7 tremendous difference in the classroom crunch if
8 NYU were to start having classes on Friday.

9 And let me add one other thing, we
10 were told that there's no intention of increasing
11 the student body, we just found out a week or so
12 ago that there has been a historic over yield of
13 15% more freshmen admitted than NYU intended to
14 admit. This was represented to us as an error,
15 and it may be, but it's worth noting in light of
16 the claim that there's been no intention of
17 increasing the student body that this has
18 happened.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. My
20 colleagues on the panel just encouraged me to ask
21 you a follow up on that about Friday, which is why
22 is that that there are no classes--

23 MARK CRISPIN MILLER: [Interposing]
24 Friday classes?

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --on Friday.

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2 I mean, that sounds, as a student, that sounds
3 like it would be pleasant, unless of course,
4 you're working two or three jobs, in which case
5 you probably have some place to go.

6 MARK CRISPIN MILLER: Well it has
7 everything to do with NYU's history as a commuter
8 school and as a school with a whole lot of Jewish
9 students, so it's a survival from that era, you
10 know, that it's archaic now, I mean, we could do
11 away with it, but that's where it comes from. I'm
12 pretty sure that's true.

13 PATRICK DEER: The classes that do
14 meet, Mark referred to them as recitations, so
15 those are taught generally by graduate students,
16 they're discussion sections of about 15 or 18 in
17 big lecture courses, and they're scheduled on
18 Fridays because the graduate student instructors
19 are lowest on the totem pole. But I think I could
20 speak for a lot of my colleagues, if not all of
21 them, to say that of the great majority of the
22 faculty that I know who are strongly opposed to
23 the expansion plan, hey, if we had to bite the
24 bullet and work--teach on a Friday, work like
25 everyone else does, then that's absolutely doable,

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2 we should do that in order to make better use of
3 existing space needs.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. It
5 also has something to do with those great Thursday
6 night specials at the Bitter End, but that's
7 neither here nor there. I think that's it for the
8 questions for this panel. Thank you. All right,
9 thank you very much.

10 I'd now like to call--what I'd like
11 to do now, when I call your name, if you could
12 just give me like a little here or present or--as
13 I know you're here 'cause I know we lost a few
14 people, I'm sorry, I know it's a long day. So
15 Rick Bell, first victim. There we go. Maria
16 Mizhquiri, you got that? She here? Let me get a
17 here, I didn't hear a here. Annette Davis, Ellen
18 Horan.

19 ELLEN HORAN: Here.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
21 Carol Reiss.

22 CAROL REISS: Here.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Excellent.
24 You guys learn quickly.

25 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: If you have any

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copies of statements, I'll be--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right,
this is a panel in favor of the project.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Ladies and
gentlemen, please--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Oh, you're in
the wrong one, we tucked them in--

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down,
please.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --what's your
name?

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down,
please.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Oh, can I have
you wait to the next one? All right.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Any
conversations outside.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Sorry, we lost
Ellen 'cause she checked the wrong box, but she's
coming back. How many we got? All right. All
right, let's go with the four. By the time they
come up, it'll waste more time. All right,
whenever you're ready. Again, state your name for

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the record.

RICK BELL: Good afternoon, my name is Rick Bell, I'm executive director of the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter and I found that discussion fascinating, but I'd like to try to bring the conversation back to the plan at hand and the neighborhood.

The New York Chapter of the AIA lives across the street, we've been at 536 LaGuardia Place for--since 2003, we opened our Center for Architecture there and NYU has been a good neighbor.

We recognize its need to expand to accommodate additional students, faculty, and academic facilities so as to remain competitive with other institutions. Since the proposal involves adding considerable program area to the neighborhood in which we live and work, it is critical to design individual buildings so that they have both their own identities, but also are carefully knit into the existing urban fabric-- that gets to David Gruber's point previously about comprehensive planning, being able to plan for the distant future as well as the next few years.

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2 The proposal for the LaGuardia
3 building and the Mercer building, both are
4 positive additions we think because their
5 placement will open up the ground plane allowing
6 greater access. New amenities, including the play
7 gardens for Washington Square Village and at the
8 LaGuardia play garden, public lawn, tricycle
9 gardens, add to the enjoyment of the space. We
10 think that the enhanced community access and the
11 management of open space has been addressed pretty
12 well by the discussions at the City Planning
13 Commission and that the planted strips on
14 LaGuardia Place, the parks, will remain in use as
15 park space. Therefore, the modifications
16 identified by City Planning are consistent with
17 our prior statement that the bulk and height of
18 the Mercer building requires study.

19 The addition of street wall retail
20 at the Zipper building which has been discussed,
21 will certainly activate and enliven Mercer Street.
22 For too long this has been an area that's been
23 rather isolated and disconnected, creating a
24 relative lack of pedestrian life and street
25 activity.

1
2 I could go on about the particular
3 attributes of the plan, and if there are
4 questions, I'd be happy to answer them, both as an
5 architect and as a neighbor, but I'd like to thank
6 you for the opportunity to provide comments on
7 this important project and end on time.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
9 much. Who wants to go next? Just pass the mic.

10 MARIA MIZHQIRI: Good afternoon,
11 my name is Maria Mizhquiri. I am an immigrant
12 from Ecuador and a mother of four children. It is
13 a pleasure to be here today to testify on behalf
14 of the services provided by NYU Dental Mobile
15 Clinic, Smile Faces, Going Places. I was
16 fortunate to have enrolled three of my children
17 with NYU Dental Mobile Clinic. They have obtained
18 preventive oral care at the NYU Mobile Dental
19 Clinic and then referred to the clinic in
20 Manhattan for other services like braces. Because
21 of the Mobile Dental Clinic, now my children have
22 regular dental care at the clinic in Manhattan. I
23 and my children are very happy with the NYU dental
24 service. Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very

1
2 much.

3 ANNETTE DAVIS: Okay.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Please.

5 ANNETTE DAVIS: Good afternoon,
6 Chairman Weprin and fellow Council Members, my
7 name is Annette Davis and I am a parent
8 coordinator at PS/IS 295 in Queens Village and I'm
9 also a former parent coordinator of PS 118 in
10 Hollis, Queens.

11 Since 2003, I have worked closely
12 with the NYUCD Smiling Faces, Going Places Mobile
13 Dental Care Program to bring vital, preventive
14 dental care to children of Queens. In nine years,
15 many children from our community have benefited
16 from their invaluable services. In certain cases,
17 the mobile dental van program is the only way that
18 some children receive any dental care and become
19 educated about the importance of oral health care.
20 This program is vital to our communities in
21 Queens, as well as across the city.

22 I look forward to continuing to
23 partner with the NYU mobile dental van program in
24 the future. I hope that NYU is not only able to
25 continue to provide the beneficial services to

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2 children and communities, but that they are able
3 to expand their programs and services that benefit
4 the people across the city.

5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
7 much. We all know NYU is doing a great job, we
8 all stipulate to that for a lot of the great
9 programs they provide. Yes?

10 DR. CAROL SHOSHKES REISS: Good
11 afternoon, my name is Carol Shoshkes Reiss and I
12 am a professor in the biology department, and I'm
13 here to talk about the space needs for academic
14 reasons for the biology department.

15 Unlike my colleagues in the English
16 department and the other departments who just
17 spoke, we have a real crunch. Now the interests
18 of students have changed over the years and in the
19 last few years, the number of students who want to
20 become doctors, veterinarians, dentists, or some
21 other science related profession have doubled from
22 about 400 to more than 800. That has put an
23 incredible strain on our ability to offer the
24 courses that they need and also to offer the
25 laboratories which are required for those courses.

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2 For our laboratories, for instance,
3 they're offered from eight in the morning until
4 very recently 11 o'clock at night. Now if you're
5 a parent, do you want your student--your child to
6 be in the laboratory that lasts as long as 11
7 o'clock at night because of limited facilities?

8 So those are some of the academic
9 concerns.

10 We also have problems having
11 meetings, whether they're simple departmental
12 conferences or professional meetings where we draw
13 a few people together. For instance, in the fall
14 of this last year I was part of a committee that
15 was involved in the STEM project, which is called
16 CUSP, which will now be located on Jay Street in
17 Brooklyn. To get a group together for a day and a
18 half, we couldn't meet on campus because there was
19 no space available, we had to meet in midtown.
20 And there just aren't spaces.

21 This City is losing tax money and
22 income from hotels, as well as restaurants because
23 we hold conferences in other cities because we
24 can't hold them here.

25 So NYU, at least the science

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department, desperately needs space.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Ms. Reiss, right?

DR. CAROL SHOSHKES REISS: Dr. Reiss.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Dr. Reiss, you live further uptown, right?

DR. CAROL SHOSHKES REISS: For 19 years I lived in faculty housing. For the last two years, I've lived in a co-op that I bought in Murray Hill.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Your friends, you must have many friends who live down in faculty housing right near here.

DR. CAROL SHOSHKES REISS: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: And do they agree with you about this construction and the need for it?

DR. CAROL SHOSHKES REISS: Almost every department I know of has requested space, has requested additional faculty lines and additional facilities, they just don't want it in their backyard. They don't want to live in a place where there is building ongoing, but in

1
2 every neighborhood of this city, in every borough
3 there is construction ongoing.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Nice.
5 Thank you. Anybody have any questions? Nope,
6 seeing none, people chewing, so thank you very
7 much, we appreciate it.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: We love the
9 dental van.

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yes, we love
11 the dental van and Queens Village, by the way.

12 All right, I'd like to now call on
13 Andrew Berman, Drew--boy, Andrew's got a fan club--
14 -Drew Durniak, I don't know, I messed that one up,
15 but it's--Mr. Lloyd or Mrs. Lloyd, Lloyd is the
16 last name, Amanda Davis, Dana Schulz, and Sheryl
17 Woodruff, you all know who you are, even though I
18 butchered some names there. I blame it on your
19 handwriting.

20 I'm going to have to push you off
21 one more because that was too big a panel, they
22 were all here, is that okay? I'm sorry, that's
23 the punishment for checking the wrong box, you
24 see. I wanted to try to get you on this one but
25 it was too big a panel, I apologize. So sorry

1
2 about that. I'll try not to get snarky.

3 [Long pause]

4 ANDREW BERMAN: Good afternoon, my
5 name is Andrew Berman and I'm the executive
6 director of the Greenwich Village Society for
7 Historic Preservation. GVSHP is the largest
8 membership organization in Greenwich Village, the
9 East Village, and NoHo, and we urge the Council in
10 the strongest of terms to reject NYU's
11 application.

12 The plan is simply wrong for the
13 Village, wrong for New York City, and wrong for
14 NYU. NYU claims that they have met with and
15 listened to their neighbors; in reality, they have
16 ignored our input. NYU claims that they are
17 looking at the entire city for their growth;
18 really, they are seeking to dramatically expand
19 their Village presence, with developments at other
20 locations doing nothing to relieve that pressure.

21 Nothing NYU wishes to build is
22 currently allowed, and with good reason. This is
23 all currently or formerly publicly owned land.
24 Precious parks and playgrounds should not be given
25 to NYU. The formerly public land from which

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2 hundreds of New Yorkers were removed from their
3 homes or businesses a generation ago was given to
4 NYU with clear stipulations about how it could be
5 used. NYU's plans violate those sacred trusts.

6 NYU's proposal would allow the
7 university to increasingly dominate and overwhelm
8 our neighborhood. The Village has always been
9 about the convergence of a diversity of people,
10 activities, and cultures. To approve this plan is
11 to doom the Village to become a company town.

12 If NYU can open new campuses in Abu
13 Dhabi and Shanghai, why can't they locate some of
14 their new facilities a few subway stops away in
15 the financial district? NYU currently uses almost
16 none of its classroom facilities on Fridays; add
17 Friday classes, and NYU could immediately expand
18 its classroom capacity by 25% without adding a
19 single building.

20 Instead, NYU's plans would turn a
21 residential neighborhood into a 20-year
22 construction zone, while only satisfying their
23 stated growth needs until 2031. What happens
24 then? Approve this plan, and NYU will be back to
25 ask for more open space, to tear down more low-

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2 rise buildings, violate more zoning and urban
3 renewal agreements, and further over-saturate this
4 neighborhood. The 2031 plan is not sustainable
5 for the Village or for NYU. NYU should be working
6 with the city to find locations that can absorb
7 its growth, not just for the next 19 years, but
8 the next 100. The Village cannot do that.

9 In wrapping up, I just want to say
10 we are submitting a petition with nearly 3,000
11 signatures to you urging you to reject the plan,
12 and my colleagues will speak regarding several
13 studies that we have conducted that have been
14 submitted to the Council.

15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,
17 thank you, Mr. Berman.

18 [Applause]

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Easy on the
20 bravos.

21 SHERYL WOODRUFF: My name is Sheryl
22 Woodruff and I am testifying on behalf of the
23 Greenwich Village Society for Historic
24 Preservation in opposition to the NYU 2031 plan.
25 GVSHP has submitted a study we commissioned

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2 conducted by Gambit Consulting, analyzing the
3 relative economic, environmental, and quality of
4 life impacts of the proposed NYU Village expansion
5 plan, and comparing it to the impacts if the
6 university were to instead choose one of several
7 alternative locations such as the financial
8 district, downtown Brooklyn, or Long Island City.
9 These alternatives were studied because all are
10 areas the City has identified as priorities for
11 large-scale growth and new development, including
12 the type of facilities NYU would provide. All
13 have ample mass transit to connect it to NYU's
14 other campuses and other parts of the city and all
15 contain resources making them particularly suited
16 to NYU's academic mission. The financial district
17 is a global business center, downtown Brooklyn is
18 part of a burgeoning tech triangle, and Long
19 Island City is home to a number of cultural
20 institutions and film-related facilities.

21 The Gambit study found that the
22 Village would derive relatively little benefit
23 from NYU expansion and would suffer considerable
24 negative impacts. By contrast, the study found
25 other locations would derive significantly greater

1
2 benefits from the proposed expansion and would
3 likely suffer fewer, if any, negative impacts.

4 The Gambit study pointed out that
5 NYU's proposed project would expand an already
6 dominant presence, rather than introduce a wholly
7 new use, in the Village. Many of the students,
8 faculty, and service workers who would live,
9 study, and work in the project's buildings would
10 be present as economic actors in the neighborhood,
11 whether or not the project is developed. On the
12 other hand, developing the same amount of academic
13 space and housing at a satellite campus in another
14 neighborhood where such a population would
15 introduce a new local dynamic would have a greater
16 economic impact than incremental expansion in the
17 Village. For instance, the study found that the
18 maximum projected increase in local retail
19 spending in the Village associated with the
20 development would be just 2.5%, since retail sales
21 within just a quarter-mile of the site are 854
22 million per year, and the additional 23 million
23 per year in projected retail spending from the
24 development would represent only a roughly 2.5
25 increase in the size of the local retail market.

1
2 And I'm wrapping up. By contrast,
3 the development would lead to a 10% increase in
4 retail spending in downtown Brooklyn.

5 For these and other many--and many
6 other reasons, we urge you to vote no on the plan.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

8 DREW DURNIAK: My name is Drew
9 Durniak and I am testifying on behalf of the
10 Greenwich Village Society for Historic
11 Preservation in opposition to the NYU 2031 plan.
12 GVSHP's study by Gambit Consulting analyzing the
13 impact of the proposed NYU Village expansion plan
14 found it would be particularly harmful in its
15 impact upon the environment. For instance, it
16 found that NYU's proposed developments would
17 produce a greater carbon footprint per square foot
18 than the eight-decade old Empire State Building.
19 By contrast, the study found that if NYU moved
20 some of its proposed development to existing
21 buildings in another area of the city, the
22 embodied energy of the existing buildings would be
23 preserved, resulting in less construction waste
24 and fewer construction materials being used. The
25 large amount of proposed underground development

1
2 in the Village is particularly resource intensive
3 and would result in a permanently higher operation
4 costs for that space. If the project were
5 developed elsewhere, it would potentially be
6 greater opportunity to include natural light,
7 green space, and other elements typically
8 encouraged for a LEED development.

9 Additionally, the study warned of
10 the grave potential negative impacts on the
11 Village if the expansion plan has to be halted
12 mid-stream due to financial shortfalls, or for any
13 other reason. NYU has one of the smallest
14 financial endowments of any comparable educational
15 institution in the country, and in the last
16 economic downturn, considerably wealthier
17 institutions, including Harvard, had to halt
18 similar plans. Given the project site location
19 directly beneath residential buildings housing
20 thousands of people, including hundreds of NYU
21 faculty, any construction interruptions would be
22 especially impactful upon the quality of life of
23 the neighborhood and would substantially reduce
24 economic benefits. On a less complex site,
25 without existing uses, potential impacts would be

1
2 less problematic.

3 The study also identified a marked
4 loss in open space resulting from NYU's plan--from
5 6.23 acres currently to 3.71 acres, a net loss of
6 2.52 acres, in a community district with the
7 second lowest ratio of open space per resident in
8 the city. NYU's claim that it would increase the
9 amount of public space is based upon an overly
10 restrictive and technical definition of open space
11 which would exclude much of Riverside, Central
12 Parks, including the Great Lawn. NYU's
13 calculations leave out much of the true open space
14 currently on these sites, while ignoring that the
15 little remaining open space would be frequently
16 encased in shadows from NYU's massive new
17 buildings.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
19 much. Thank you. Okay. Make sure to state your
20 name.

21 ANDITO LLOYD: My name is Andito
22 Lloyd and I am testifying on behalf of the
23 Greenwich Village Society for Historic
24 Preservation in opposition to the NYU 2031 plan.

25 New York University is asking the

1
2 City Council to overturn longstanding neighborhood
3 zoning protections, gut open space preservation
4 requirements, lift urban renewal deed
5 restrictions, introduce commercial zoning in a
6 residential area, and take over publicly owned
7 park space, claiming this is all necessary for it
8 to grow. However, other universities and other
9 cities across the country have successfully
10 balanced university growth and neighborhood
11 preservation needs in a different way.

12 Instead of shoehorning more and
13 more facilities into an area with limited capacity
14 to handle that growth, they have partnered to find
15 nearby locations which can absorb large-scale
16 growth and where the expansion of a university
17 would be maximally beneficial to the city and
18 leave room for continued growth of the university.

19 To this point, we have submitted to
20 the Council GVSHIP's study called Too Big to Fit,
21 which looks at Brown University in Providence,
22 Rhode Island; Emerson College in Boston; Georgia
23 Tech in Atlanta; Suffolk University in Boston; and
24 Harvard University in Cambridge, among others.
25 Partnering with local elected leaders, the

1
2 business community, and residents, each of these
3 institutions are building satellite campuses or
4 new campuses in areas of their cities identified
5 as targets for redevelopment. This is in stark
6 contrast to NYU's proposed approach of continuing
7 to chip away at and overwhelm an existing, vital,
8 and historic residential neighborhood.

9 These case studies illustrate that
10 there are successful alternative approaches.
11 Satellite campuses could help areas of the city
12 which would greatly benefit from this kind of
13 development. Leaders of Community Boards 1 and 4
14 in Manhattan and 2 in Brooklyn have spoken out
15 about the positive benefit the development by a
16 university like NYU could have in their community,
17 as has Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz. This
18 approach would ultimately help NYU. The
19 university is pursuing a uniquely difficult and
20 expensive route for expansion that will leave them
21 with few, if any, options in less than 20 years
22 when they need to grow further. University and
23 city leaders in so many other cases have seen the
24 benefit of this more far-sighted approach, we hope
25 you will as well, and reject the NYU 2031 plan.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

AMANDA DAVIS: Okay. My name is Amanda Davis and I am testifying on behalf of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation in opposition to the NYU 2031 plan.

In advocating for their controversial 20-year Village expansion plan, NYU's administration frequently makes a claim that considering alternative locations like the financial district are impractical because they must locate their facilities within a 10 to 15 minute walk of each other around Washington Square. But this belies the experience of universities across the country, which spread their facilities over considerably greater distances than a 10 to 15 minute walk.

To illustrate this, GVSHP has submitted to the Council a study called The Myth of the 10-Minute Walk From Washington Square, which looks at the geographic distribution of the facilities of a variety of colleges across the country. Overlaying maps of other universities' facilities over NYU's, what we found is that most schools maintain campuses and facilities over

1
2 distances considerably greater than the 10 to 15
3 minute walk NYU claims it needs. In fact, most
4 schools seem to have facilities spread out over
5 distances the equivalent of those between
6 Washington Square and the financial district, and
7 in many cases considerably greater distances.
8 Further, few, if any, of these campuses have the
9 wealth of mass transit options that allow travel
10 between Washington Square and a location like the
11 financial district to take as little as 5 to 10
12 minutes.

13 While the study compares NYU's
14 geographic distribution of facilities to a broad
15 range of schools, I have with me today a
16 representative cross sample: University of
17 Wisconsin-Madison, a public institution with about
18 as many undergrads as NYU; Stanford University, a
19 private institution which NYU considers a peer
20 with less than half the number of undergrads as
21 NYU; and Middlebury College in Vermont, a small
22 liberal arts college with 2,500 undergrads, or
23 just about 1/20th the population of NYU. As you
24 can see, each of these schools, regardless of
25 these various features, spreads their facilities

1
2 out over considerably greater distances than NYU,
3 or roughly the equivalent of the distance from
4 Washington Square to the financial district.
5 Apparently these schools have not heard that a
6 college's facilities must all be within a 10 to 15
7 minute walk of one another, as the NYU
8 administration claims.

9 Upon even routine examination, the
10 very foundation of NYU's claim for the need for
11 approval of their massive Village expansion plan
12 is faulty.

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
14 Yeah, I'm going to come--I'm going to ask you a
15 question, after she goes, I'm going to ask you a
16 question about this so you can explain it a little
17 better, okay?

18 AMANDA DAVIS: Okay. And just--

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: So--

20 AMANDA DAVIS: --finishing up.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --finish up,
22 but I'll come back to you--

23 AMANDA DAVIS Okay.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --'cause I
25 have a question, I'll let you explain it better

1
2 'cause rushing through that made it--you had the
3 nice charts and everything, I want to ask about
4 it.

5 Who else is going now?

6 AMANDA DAVIS: Okay.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

8 DANA SCHULZ: Hi, my name is Dana
9 Schulz and I am testifying on behalf of the
10 Greenwich Village Society for Historic
11 Preservation in opposition to the NYU 2031 plan.

12 GVSHP has submitted to the Council
13 a study called, Disappearing Before our Eyes,
14 which documents how NYU has over the years
15 consciously and consistently reduced the number of
16 units of faculty housing in Washington Square
17 Village. This is noteworthy because NYU is asking
18 you to overturn zoning rules in order to allow
19 them to build more faculty housing on these exact
20 sites, claiming a shortage of such facilities.
21 What they don't tell you is that they themselves
22 have contributed significantly to this shortage,
23 which they are now asking their neighbors and the
24 public to bear the burden for correcting.

25 According to Department of Building

1 records, from 1960 to 2010, NYU eliminated 175
2 units of faculty housing from the Washington
3 Square Village complex. This has been done
4 through a continuing series of apartment
5 combinations, turning studio, one, and two-bedroom
6 units into increasingly larger super apartments,
7 some of which are made of three or four of the
8 original units. The pace has accelerated in
9 recent years, as more than 112 of the units were
10 subsumed to combinations just since 1992.

12 Beyond this, NYU is warehousing, or
13 leaving unoccupied for long periods of time,
14 numerous faculty housing units in Washington
15 Square Village. Residents have reported nearly 65
16 units in the complex that are empty and have
17 remained empty for protracted periods of time.
18 The combined warehoused apartments and those lost
19 to combinations account for about 240 units, or
20 nearly 20% of the units once found in the complex,
21 NYU's primary source of faculty housing. The
22 change is so dramatic that in the 2010 census, the
23 tract containing Washington Square Village had the
24 largest drop in population of any in the Village
25 or East Village, the largest drop in the number of

1
2 housing units, and the largest increase in the
3 number of unoccupied units.

4 There are many reasons why the
5 Commission should not approve NYU's plan, but NYU
6 is asking city leaders to undo longstanding
7 agreements with the public, and asking its
8 neighbors to deal with 20 years of construction
9 and a devastating loss of open space and light and
10 air so the university can build something it has
11 itself unnecessarily taken away.

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. So
13 could you briefly just explain the charts, the
14 comparisons of the three campuses without going on
15 too long 'cause I'll get yelled at by my
16 colleagues.

17 ANDREW BERMAN: Sure, and the
18 report has--

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
20 Andrew, say your name again?

21 ANDREW BERMAN: Andrew Berman. And
22 the report has many other examples, but basically
23 the sort of light orange is an overlay of what
24 each of these other university's campuses looks
25 like in terms of how far spread out the facilities

1
2 are. So, for instance, if you look at Stanford,
3 if Stanford were in the middle of Manhattan, you
4 would have facilities as far north as Midtown and
5 other facilities as far south as the Battery.
6 Now, of course, NYU is claiming they need to
7 concentrate these facilities within a 10 or 15
8 minute walk of one another and, clearly, if you
9 look at middle sized schools, small schools, and
10 large schools, you don't see that happening
11 anywhere else.

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Good
13 description, thank you. Thank you. Anybody have
14 a question on the panel? All right, well thank
15 you very much, I apologize to keep you waiting.

16 I want to just give a little--the
17 following people could not stay, but they
18 submitted testimony that's going to be entered
19 into the record. Now I don't want to say I'm
20 encouraging this behavior, but if you do have to
21 leave, we could do submit it to the record. And
22 I'm going to read their names now, these people
23 were in opposition: Valerie White, Zarco
24 Svatovic, Shelly Warwick, Georgia Seamans,
25 Jonathan Geballe, Katherine Wessling, the Rev. Pat

1
2 O'Hara, Constance Dondore. They were all in
3 opposition, they submitted testimony which will be
4 entered to the record.

5 We also have the testimony of
6 Michael Simas from the Partnership for New York,
7 who left testimony in favor of the project, and we
8 will add that to the record as well.

9 So if anyone does has to leave,
10 which we would understand it because other people
11 have other obligations, we will make sure it gets
12 added to the record.

13 And with that in mind, we're now
14 going to call up the following panel in favor.
15 Ms. Horan, next panel, you'll be on. I'd like to
16 call Phyllis Barasch from NYU, here? Okay.
17 Connie Turner, here? Was that a here? Okay.
18 James Yolles--

19 JAMES YOLLES: Here.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --New Yorkers
21 for Park, thank you, James. David Bomke.

22 DAVID BOMKE: Here.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Excellent.

24 And Muzzy Rosenblat.

25 MALE VOICE: Had to leave.

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Had to leave?

3 Ah. Okay. Then we have one more here we're going
4 to add now that they're not... Is this Morna?
5 Webb, Morna Webb? I mean, I'm mispronouncing the
6 first name--

7 MALINA WEBB: Malina.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --but Malina?
9 Is it Malina? Okay. Sorry about that. It's a
10 combination of my eyes and the hour. Okay. This
11 one added. Okay. So again, state your names,
12 decide who wants to go first, and give your
13 testimony.

14 JAMES YOLLES: I will. I'm James
15 Yolles from New Yorkers for Parks, director of
16 communications. Chair Weprin, Members of the
17 Committee, thanks for having us here today.

18 New Yorkers for Parks is the
19 independent research-based organization advocating
20 for quality parks and open spaces for all New
21 Yorkers in all neighborhoods. We offer the
22 following comments on NYU's 2131--excuse me, 2031
23 plan based on our guiding principles that public
24 open spaces should serve the greatest number of
25 constituencies, and be preserved and well

1
2 maintained in perpetuity.

3 New Yorkers for Parks supports
4 NYU's goals of increasing public open space within
5 this two-block area and making the new open spaces
6 more publicly accessible and welcoming than the
7 current configuration. We commend NYU and the
8 City on making changes thus far to improve the
9 public space components of the plan. However, we
10 do ask several additional critical commitments be
11 made to the project. First, preserve LaGuardia
12 Community Garden. NYU and the City must enter a
13 Memorandum of Understanding to protect this
14 essential community open space by committing to
15 not encroach on the garden during any construction
16 that occurs in its proximity. This includes not
17 staging construction on or near the garden, and
18 not shedding the garden during construction.
19 There is precedent at Liz Christy Community Garden
20 where an agreement was reached among the City,
21 gardeners, and developer of a building directly
22 adjacent to the garden to use only netting, rather
23 than shedding during construction so long as the
24 garden was closed and inaccessible during hours of
25 construction.

1
2 And transfer jurisdiction of
3 LaGuardia Community Garden and Time Landscape from
4 DOT to the Parks Department. New Yorkers for
5 Parks also believes Time Landscape should be
6 folded into the garden's GreenThumb license
7 agreement since the gardeners are already
8 maintaining it, and since it would be a greater
9 asset to community if it is publicly accessible.

10 Second, further strengthen the
11 maintenance and operations agreement. The
12 restrictive declaration for this plan incorporates
13 an agreement that lays out rules for governance
14 and oversight, compliance, and use for privately
15 owned public space on the northern block, but it
16 does not go far enough in its scope or
17 specificity. We would like the agreement to
18 encompass both blocks, as well as the publicly
19 owned strips adjacent to NYU's land, and
20 additional provisions should be added to cover
21 hours of access, closures, notification
22 requirements, permitting, enforcement, and
23 detailed standards of management, maintenance by
24 season, and repair.

25 And third, which you have, create

1
2 an annual maintenance budget requirement and
3 endowment fund. We can--you have that in your
4 testimony, thanks.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Next
6 person?

7 DAVID BOMKE: Good afternoon, David
8 Bomke, I'm the executive director of the New York
9 Energy Consumers Council. Thank you for the
10 opportunity to speak, and greetings to Facebook
11 friends who are sitting on the panel here. I'm
12 actually speaking in the capacity as the vice
13 president of diversity for the Manhattan Chamber
14 of Commerce and these remarks are being submitted
15 on behalf of Nancy Ploeger, president of Manhattan
16 Chamber of Commerce.

17 As you know, MCC is a membership
18 organization made up of businesses throughout the
19 borough of Manhattan and acts as a community
20 resource and voice for our local businesses. We
21 are writing in support of New York University's
22 NYU Core plan and I would like to tell you why MCC
23 and Manhattan-wide businesses support this
24 proposal.

25 I don't think anyone could imagine

1
2 NYC without NYU. From the chamber's point of
3 view, NYU's 16,000 employees and 55,000 students
4 provide economic lifeblood for our city. It is
5 estimated that NYU's Washington Square campus
6 directly and indirectly accounts for more than \$2
7 and a quarter billion in economy activity every
8 year and nearly 25,000 jobs. This projection can
9 only be amplified by its presence in other areas
10 of Manhattan.

11 While the impact is greater at
12 certain times of the year, the overall impression
13 and benefit can be felt year round. During spring
14 commencement, some 30,000 people spend time in the
15 Village and another 15,000 visit during fall
16 semester back to school days. And the university
17 hosts more than 50,000 prospective students and
18 families every year for information sessions and
19 tours. All these visitors shop, eat, relax, and
20 take in the sites throughout Manhattan--that means
21 they are spending money as local member businesses
22 and strengthening our city's economy.

23 MCC believes that NYU Core is
24 important for the economic future of NYC and
25 specifically Manhattan. In these tough economic

1
2 times, the creation of jobs, research dollars
3 flowing into the city, and investment in the
4 borough all make the NYU Core the right idea for
5 our members and for the City overall. MCC looks
6 forward to the next 20 years and we know that
7 great city's need great schools and this expansion
8 will continue to allow NYU to be a great
9 university for now and well into this century.

10 The MCC also values the long-term
11 vision and commitments incorporated into NYU's
12 2031 plan. This example of far-reaching
13 leadership sets a great example for all of us
14 doing business in New York City and builds on the
15 model of PlaNYC 2030. We hope that you will take
16 our comments and suggestions into consideration as
17 you review NYU's proposal. Thank you.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Next
19 person, keep going.

20 PHYLLIS BARASCH: Good afternoon,
21 Council Members, my name is Phyllis Barasch, I am
22 a trustee on the board of New York University, I'm
23 president of the Alumni Association, and I'm a
24 proud graduate of NYU's Stern School of Business.
25 I'd like to talk to you today about why the NYU

1
2 Alumni Association is strongly in support of the
3 plan before you that will expand and grow our
4 university to meet the educational challenges of
5 the 21st century.

6 We at NYU are fond of saying that
7 NYU is in and of the city. We are not only
8 located here, we thrive because we're located
9 here. We believe the city benefits greatly from a
10 growing and thriving university like NYU. This
11 connection to the city is not only true of the
12 students who live and study in the Washington
13 Square area, but also true for our graduates as
14 they begin to make their way in the wider world.

15 Many students are attracted to NYU
16 because it is located in New York City, and once
17 they graduate the vast majority stay here and add
18 their ambition, knowledge, and drive to make New
19 York City a better place to live and work. This
20 is not just guesswork. Look at NYU's graduating
21 class of 2011. According to our research, nearly
22 nine in ten graduates who got their jobs after
23 graduation stayed in the tri-state area and most
24 of them are working in the city. And they got
25 jobs in many different areas, reflecting the wide

1
2 educational experience NYU offers, including
3 entertainment, financial services, education,
4 marketing, nursing, and retail.

5 Why is this important? Because it
6 speaks to the vital role NYU plays in the economic
7 life of New York City. The city benefits greatly
8 from the intellectual capital that NYU attracts to
9 New York City. Just look at some of the recent
10 companies created by NYU students while they were
11 still at NYU: Foursquare, Pinterest, Def Jam
12 Records, to mention a few.

13 Just to finish--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE:

15 [Interposing] If you could sum up, we'd appreciate
16 it.

17 PHYLLIS BARASCH: Okay. As
18 president of the Alumni Association, I can tell
19 you that most of our alums stay in New York City
20 and remain part of the civic and economic and
21 cultural life of this city for their entire lives.
22 A better, stronger, growing New York University
23 makes for a more economically vital New York City,
24 and that is why I urge you to support NYU's Core
25 project. It is not only a benefit to the

1
2 university, it also benefits us as a city. Thank
3 you.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Thank you.
5 Next person.

6 CONSTANCE ROBINSON-TURNER: Good
7 afternoon, Chairman Weprin and fellow Council
8 Members, my name is Constance Robinson-Turner and
9 I am the Program Administrator for NYU College of
10 Dentistry's Mobile Dental Van. Thank you for
11 providing me with the opportunity to discuss some
12 of the work NYU does in the greater New York City
13 community.

14 Now in its 12th year of operation,
15 NYUCD's Smiling Faces, Going Places Mobile Dental
16 Care program continues to have a direct impact on
17 alleviating the crisis many low-income children
18 have in accessing quality dental care. The dental
19 van provides treatments at elementary schools,
20 child care centers, and at community events
21 throughout the city. Using state-of-the-art
22 equipment, the services provided include
23 examinations and necessary x-rays; preventive
24 services such as cleanings, fluoride treatments,
25 sealants, and oral hygiene instructions; and

1
2 fillings and simple tooth extractions. In
3 addition to the van, the NYUCD pediatric dental
4 clinics provide oral health care to children, and
5 many are treated free of charge. Throughout 2011,
6 over 12,500 children and adolescents citywide were
7 treated on the mobile dental van and at our
8 pediatric clinic.

9 As many of you know, we work to
10 coordinate with Council Members across all five
11 boroughs to schedule the mobile dental van in
12 school districts, bringing care to children in
13 federally designated, medically-underserved areas.
14 We truly appreciate the Council's continued
15 support of the mobile dental van program and the
16 pediatric dental clinic, especially the funding
17 for a new mobile dental van.

18 I speak about the mobile dental van
19 program today as it is just one example of the
20 great work NYU does through the city to provide
21 services and interactions among its students,
22 faculty, and staff, and the greater community.

23 As I mentioned, the mobile dental
24 van is just one example of the way NYU
25 collaborates with the City in a critical public

1
2 health partnership. By allowing NYU to grow both
3 physically and programmatically, the university
4 will be able to continue to provide and expand
5 upon the opportunities and services we offer to
6 the city. Therefore, I urge you to support NYU in
7 our efforts to expand and enhance the positive
8 impact we have on neighborhoods all across the
9 city.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

12 MALINA WEBB: Good afternoon,
13 Chairman Weprin and fellow Council Members, my
14 name is Malina Webb and I am a rising senior at
15 NYU. I'm also the chair of NYU student government
16 on the Student Center's Council and in this role,
17 although I may try, I will not pretend I know
18 everything about NYU, but I can speak from my
19 experience.

20 NYU students notice the lack of
21 space. As a resident assistant at a freshman
22 hall, I see students studying on the floor, in
23 abandoned corners of the basement level, and in
24 the dining halls. Even with these nontraditional
25 methods, I still hear complaints about the lack of

1
2 space. There is a need for more studying, group
3 meeting, and collaborative spaces.

4 I sat on a focus group last year
5 about community at NYU and many students echoed
6 similar thoughts, and stated that more common
7 space would encourage interaction and promote
8 community amongst the large student body. Come
9 finals and midterms, students in the library
10 jockey for space. If a student is not at the
11 library at the right time, you may have to wait
12 hours to find an electrical outlet for your
13 laptop. This may seem ridiculous, but during
14 these high traffic times, it is not uncommon. The
15 student body requires more space for academic
16 pursuits.

17 NYU also has a vibrant student life
18 and healthy protests and community events like
19 Strawberry Festival that do not go unnoticed by
20 the Village community. On these occasions, NYU
21 requires space to expand current extracurricular
22 programs and student activities, events that
23 benefit both the students and the community at
24 large. Some students volunteer and work in the
25 community, as I have my past three years here, at

1
2 places like God's Love We Deliver and many other
3 service organizations.

4 To continue on a personal note, I
5 babysit for many residents of the Village
6 community. I understand what it is like to live
7 near this university and I have seen many positive
8 impacts from my community interactions. Most
9 residents are happy to have an intelligent
10 babysitter who resides so close to home and is
11 readily available. Many of the kids in the
12 community look up to and aspire to be students at
13 NYU. The students are just looking to continue
14 doing what we have done as part of the university,
15 to continue to grow at this place of learning.
16 The university has been a part of the Village and
17 the Village is an integral part of the locational
18 endowment of the university.

19 Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
21 much, Malina. What year are you, Malina?

22 MALINA WEBB: Senior, rising
23 senior.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: You're just
25 graduating or you're coming into your senior year?

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Okay.

MALINA WEBB: Going into my senior year, yes.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Good, very nice to meet you, very impressive. Anybody have any questions? Everyone went, right? I apologize, I had a Mother Nature call that I may have missed one. Anybody? No? Ms. Brewer.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

[Interposing] Congratulations on being the head of the student government.

MALINA WEBB: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: There you go. If you want to work for a Councilwoman, I know a good one. No. Anyway, thank you all very much, we appreciate you taking the time, thank you for coming down.

I'd like to now call on the next panel, Ellen Horan, finally, Jim Walden, Sarah Soffer, Enid Braun--I'm not hearing here's-- Barbara Quart. Was everyone here? I realize, Ellen, you could have come up with a great scam of knowing there less in favor than against, put your name in there so I call you earlier. But I don't

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think you did that to me.

Someone's not here.

JIM WALDEN: Here.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right? We have four.

JIM WALDEN: Yeah, stay in the second seat.

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Well all right, so--

BARBARA QUART: So I was last called so I should--

JIM WALDEN: [Interposing] It doesn't matter, just--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Opposition, I'm just going to pull one off the top and hope I don't mess up. Is Sean Sweeney here?

MALE VOICE: He left.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: He left? Sean Sweeney left, but he was here in opposition. How about M.M. Felicity or Mimi Felicity? Felicity? No? Don't know that one, do you? All right, I'm going to call another name, Hal Bromm. Damn, I'm

1
2 taking the hint here. Okay. One more, one more,
3 let me try one more Wist Ponda, Ronda Wist?

4 FEMALE VOICE: She's here.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: She's here?

6 Oh, that's from--Ms. Ronda Wist, oh, okay. She
7 here?

8 [Off mic]

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right.

10 There you go, come on up to the front and come on
11 down, it's like the Price is Right. And so
12 whenever you're ready, we could start. You'll
13 take the last chair and you decide who wants to go
14 first. Remember to state your name and try to
15 keep it in two minutes otherwise we'll mess up the
16 whole system.

17 SARAH SOFFER: Good afternoon,
18 Council Members--

19 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Just press the
20 button. There you go.

21 SARAH SOFFER: Good afternoon,
22 Council Members. My name is Sarah Soffer and I'm
23 a lifelong resident of Greenwich Village.

24 One of the worst, but most easily
25 fixed, flaws in the 2031 plan is the expiration in

2025 of NYU's offer of land for a public school. This school is the plan's main benefit to the community, but this give back becomes another give me if the City does not exercise its option within 12 years. Instead of gaining a school, the community will get stuck with yet another large NYU building. To guarantee that the community gets some benefit, NYU should be required to deed the site permanently to the City as a condition of the City approving any part of this plan. Given scarce resources and the planning time needed, it is unlikely that the City would be able to build a school there by 2025. The DOE's recent acquisition, thanks to Speaker Quinn's leadership, of a building on Morton Street for a school might further delay a DOE decision to build another school in this neighborhood.

The costliness of a school on this site will also push it down the DOE's priority list. The site's small footprint will require a tall building, like the 7-story one in NYU's plan, necessitating costly elevators to ferry young children between lower floors and the required rooftop yard. Finally, the presence of more than

1
2 20 bars in the immediate vicinity will further
3 complicate DOE's building a school there.

4 Since the 2031 plan calls for the
5 City to deed to NYU an even larger piece of land
6 on the same block--the 20,000 square foot Mercer
7 Strip--the City should insist on public ownership
8 of the school site in return. Having already
9 offered the site for a public school, NYU can
10 hardly object to the City's wish to assure that
11 this offer benefit the community.

12 Finally, a deed transferring
13 ownership to the City should restrict any new
14 development on it to the construction of a public
15 school, ensuring against future privatization of
16 this community resource. The City would still be
17 free to decide whether to build a school, retain
18 the current supermarket use, or even transform the
19 site into open park space.

20 Any of these options would
21 guarantee the give back that this community is
22 entitled to and deserves.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

24 SARAH SOFFER: I'd like to add that
25 in 1963, when NYU acquired the southern super

1
2 block, that a promise was made to the community
3 that a school would be built within the NYU call
4 center spot--

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
6 I'm going to have to cut you off in a second.
7 Okay. Thank you.

8 SARAH SOFFER: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I appreciate
10 that. Next.

11 ENID BRAUN: Do you want to go
12 next?

13 [Crosstalk]

14 RONDA WIST: Yeah, okay, thanks,
15 thanks. Sorry I was late.

16 I'm Ronda Wist, senior vice
17 president of policy and advocacy at the Municipal
18 Art Society of New York.

19 We appreciate NYU's role as a
20 leading educational institution and a vital
21 economic engine that needs to expand its campus
22 within the parameters of a historic neighborhood.
23 We believe the borough president's efforts to
24 reduce the square footage and the City Planning
25 Commission's modifications are appropriate.

1
2 However, MAS continues to believe that a project
3 of this magnitude merits significant
4 reconsideration.

5 Neighborhood Context. NYU's height
6 reductions of the Bleecker and Mercer Street
7 buildings are welcome, however, we recommend the
8 height of the Zipper building be reduced to better
9 respond to the built environment. At the Houston
10 Mercer corner, the 299-foot tall building would
11 tower above the 8 to 13-story buildings located
12 directly across the street. The other portions of
13 the building, ranging from 85 to 208 feet, will
14 create dark, narrow corridors along Mercer and
15 Greene Street walkways.

16 Although the proposed below grade
17 space has been reduced to approximately 800,000
18 square feet, MAS recommends a further reduction to
19 better comply with the Zoning resolution's bulk
20 controls. These controls were designed to prevent
21 overcrowded streets and infrastructure and to help
22 ensure healthy, habitable interior spaces with
23 adequate levels of light and air.

24 Public Space. MAS believes that
25 this project presents an opportunity to re-imagine

1
2 the super blocks and enhance the community's
3 access to open space. We are hopeful that City
4 Planning's provision of an oversight committee
5 will help ensure that these public spaces are
6 redesigned in consultation with longstanding
7 community groups. We still believe that siting
8 the footprints of the Boomerang buildings off of
9 the corridors formerly mapped as Wooster and
10 Greene Streets would encourage pedestrian
11 circulation and re-knit the super blocks back into
12 the grid.

13 Finally, MAS believes that public
14 schools and other community facilities must be
15 planned on a borough-wide and citywide basis.
16 Although the proposed Bleecker building may be the
17 best location for a new school in Greenwich
18 Village, school site selection should not be part
19 of a developer's negotiation.

20 Beyond this application, it is
21 important for the City to consider large
22 institutions' expansion plans by addressing their
23 needs on a citywide scale. Almost done.
24 Exploring potential sites with the institutions
25 could help balance development throughout the

1
2 city, and identify areas where new development
3 would be most beneficial, such as downtown
4 Brooklyn.

5 An institutional planning framework
6 would also help alleviate pressure on local
7 communities, which are often left to grapple with
8 these issues in an isolated context.

9 Thank you for allowing MAS--

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]

11 Thank you, Ms. Wist.

12 RONDA WIST: --to speak. I'm

13 sorry.

14 ENID BRAUN: Hi, I'm Enid Braun,
15 I'm president and a founding member of LMNO(P),
16 the not-for-profit that raised \$200,000 that
17 created Mercer Street playground. It took eight
18 years and when it opened in 1999, our children
19 were too old to use it. We saw the project
20 through because we believed that citizen
21 engagement helps community in the city and that
22 the park would exist for future generations. We
23 argued then for these city-owned properties to be
24 transferred to the Parks department, but NYU
25 blocked the transfer. NYU's current disingenuous

1
2 support for park status for two of the public
3 strips obscures the fact that the playground will
4 cease to exist. A 375-foot long open space will
5 be become NYU's entry plaza with a little
6 greenery--a park in name only.

7 The Council should consider whether
8 publicly owned lands should be handed to a
9 developer with a dismal history of broken
10 commitments. Coles Gym, built in 1979, was
11 allowed by a variance approved by CB 2 because NYU
12 promised to alternative public space. Thirty-
13 three years later, NYU disregards this promise.

14 Just imagine 2045, when the last
15 non-NYU rent stabilized tenant in Washington
16 Square Village and most of the rest of us are
17 dead, when NYU decides to raise the then-
18 commercially zoned north block and then wants to
19 take the remaining tiny public land for new as-of-
20 right building footprints.

21 This ULURP, if approved, will
22 reduce already-scarce public open space and
23 destroy the neighborhood, as well as any faith in
24 process and representative government. I'd like
25 to just finish. I plead with you to stand with

1
2 Community Board 1, which welcomes the NYU
3 presence; Community Board 2, which opposes NYU
4 expansion in the central Village; a majority of
5 NYU faculty; the 1,400 member NYU clerical union;
6 many NYU students and alumni; along with current
7 neighbors, and those of us who gave years of hours
8 of sacrificed personal time and energy to preserve
9 and improve public open space.

10 ELLEN HORAN: I want to thank the
11 Council Committee for not losing my little white
12 slip. I'm Ellen Horan, vice chair of the
13 LaGuardia Corner Gardens. Our community garden
14 was one of the initial gardens in the GreenThumb
15 program over 30 years ago. I'm also the parent of
16 a 15-year old public high school student.

17 As a co-op owner on Lower 5th
18 Avenue, we gravitated down to the super blocks
19 because of the overcrowding in Washington Square
20 Park. The playground was cheek-by-jowl, as were
21 the other open spaces, mostly occupied by NYU
22 students. We used--when my child was young--we
23 used the Key Park, we used the Mercer playground,
24 and she read books under the cherry trees of the
25 Sasaki Garden.

1
2 As a community garden, we can
3 attest that the shadow studies that were submitted
4 were not complete, in fact, they did not do
5 studies that showed all the existing buildings
6 combined with the new buildings, which will place
7 entire streets in perpetual shadow, including all
8 of the open space. This will alienate the
9 community garden, even if there are measures taken
10 to preserve the garden during destruction, there
11 will never be sun again.

12 Should NYU be the stewards of the
13 reduced open space remaining, the open spaces they
14 currently steward have broken fences, dirty walls,
15 poor lighting, collapsed concrete, and derelict
16 play spaces. The Coles recreational rooftop,
17 which is 1.4 acres of zoned publicly shared open
18 space was closed for seven years, reopened in 2012
19 to appear compliant.

20 NYU calculates that their plan will
21 magically increase open space after they build
22 skyscrapers upon it. They have Greenwich Village
23 broken fences, broken promises, and broken
24 contracts. Please do not allow New York City
25 zoning precedence to be altered, vote no, and do

1
2 not give away our public assets. Ask New York to
3 go back to the drawing board and create a new
4 plan--one that will consider a non-residentially
5 zoned area for their high volume expansion and the
6 high tech infrastructure that their students need.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

8 BARBARA QUART: Barbara Quart,
9 Washington Place.

10 This community is totally united as
11 I've never seen in its sense that NYU's plans, the
12 monster new buildings with their bulk and density,
13 the carte blanche to hyper-commercialize my own
14 street, and our whole area are horrific and
15 totally destructive. The plan would forever
16 change the character of this historic, unique
17 neighborhood, and surrounding neighborhoods as
18 well, with wall-to-wall students where a vibrant
19 and diverse community currently exists, as in the
20 CB 2 report.

21 And then there's the commercial
22 overlay that NYU proposed for the so-called loft
23 blocks east of Washington Square Park, where I
24 have lived for 45 years with my family. Both CB 2
25 and the City Planning Commission rightly said no

1
2 to the zoning changes required for this. There is
3 no reason for rezoning but one: NYU wants to make
4 big, big money by renting its massive first and
5 second-floor spaces to late night bars,
6 restaurants, and destination shops--the last thing
7 we need on streets increasingly overwhelmed with
8 NYU-generated activity. Endless round-the-clock
9 deliveries, garbage removals, building
10 renovations, street excavations, on and on, but
11 still a residential neighborhood.

12 This nonprofit university whose
13 business should be knowledge is operating like a
14 huge real estate developer, and doing so with
15 massive spaces when it says it so desperately
16 needs space for classrooms, but it is planning to
17 rent out that space, massive space, for revenue.
18 This is not about space for education, this
19 battle, and I speak as a lifelong academic with a
20 Ph.D. from NYU's English department. There can be
21 no compromise on zoning change. If the zoning
22 protections we now have on the so-called loft
23 blocks were lifted, NYU would be given a blank
24 check, full power to do what it will--
25 commercializing far more extensively than it says,

1
2 and the result would decimate our lives.

3 This university has never
4 considered its neighbors, never, and it refuses
5 all compromise. So it's truly the university that
6 ate the city, or at least the Village. Please
7 don't let that happen. The Planning Commission's
8 no to the commercial overlay must not be reversed
9 and no to the whole destructive plan. Back to the
10 drawing board.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

12 JIM WALDEN: Chair Weprin, Members
13 of the Council, I really appreciate you having me
14 here and I wanted to speak about something that
15 goes right directly to Councilman Comrie's
16 questions earlier about how it can be that NYU can
17 sit here and say we've had a five-year process of
18 town hall meetings, and yet the community feels
19 completely isolated from the process. And you can
20 sense the anger and frustration is palpable, it is
21 uniform, it is unified, and it is understandable,
22 but I need you to understand that it only starts
23 with NYU, it goes beyond there.

24 It is true that the community only
25 learned the full details of this plan once NYU

1 submitted it for certification and the ULURP clock
2 started to run. The community members were
3 unified, they asked questions, they asked for
4 concessions, they asked for more information, and
5 they were stonewalled. And that is why the
6 Community Board unanimously objected, refused to
7 vote for, and opposed this plan. And the very
8 first time that NYU showed any willingness to
9 budge was when they struck some concessions with
10 the borough president in a process that was not
11 public, where the public was not consulted, where
12 they would not give information and details about
13 the plan, and then the Planning Commission
14 stonewalled the community again.

15
16 They asked for--the community--
17 asked for more time to understand the plan, more
18 information to help explain the new plan, the
19 revised plan, and a new EIS study to study the
20 environmental impacts. And at first, they were
21 hopeful with the Planning Commission because at a
22 hearing just like this one, there were sensible
23 and tough questions asked and there were demands
24 that NYU come forward with more information. And
25 do you know what happened? Nothing. There was no

1
2 follow up, the information was not provided to
3 central questions like, why is it that 200,000
4 square feet was removed underground and nothing
5 removed on top--I'll just be another minute--

6 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
7 No, well, less than a minute, please, 'cause we
8 didn't run the clock on you--

9 JIM WALDEN: I represent--

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --you're
11 already there.

12 JIM WALDEN: --over 600 people.

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Please.

14 JIM WALDEN: They deserve time.

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yeah.

16 JIM WALDEN: If you look over your
17 heads, you will see--

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
19 If they came, we'd give them the time.

20 JIM WALDEN: I apologize. If you
21 look over your heads, you will see Lincoln's words
22 that a process like this is supposed to be by the
23 people, for the people, and the process to date
24 was not for the people. And the Planning
25 Commission, whatever it intended to do, did not

1
2 address, let alone resolve, the serious questions
3 that remain with this plan.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

5 JIM WALDEN: And the residents--
6 excuse me, I'm sorry--the residents understand
7 that they can go to the courts, but they are
8 looking to you. Please restore their confidence.

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
10 much.

11 JIM WALDEN: I'm sorry for the--

12 [Applause]

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. No
14 clapping. Okay. Anyone have questions on the
15 panel before I let you go? No? All right, no,
16 thank you very much, thank you all. Ms. Horan,
17 I'm sorry.

18 All right, now this next panel is
19 in favor, again, give me a here when I mention
20 your name if you can: Larry Mead.

21 LARRY MEAD: Here.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Mary Brabeck.

23 FEMALE VOICE: She had to leave.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Anthony--she
25 left? Anthony Jiga.

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ANTHONY JIGA: Here.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Excellent.

Kenneth Penvel.

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Lauren Benton.

LAUREN BENTON: Here.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Beautiful. Allen McFarlane.

ALLEN MCFARLANE: Here.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: And I'll call one more, Dennis DiLorenzo. No? Here? Dennis?

DENNIS DILORENZO: Here.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. All right, and then this person not here. This is another one who wants [off mic].

FEMALE VOICE: Laurie, you organize the group, decide--

[Crosstalk]

FEMALE VOICE: George, you're the dean.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Shh, I know it's a long day, everyone's getting restless, I don't want to build the seventh inning stretch

1
2 in so if you have to go outside and take a little
3 walk, please do, but we want to get started, so,
4 panel, whenever you're ready. Okay. Make sure
5 the mic's on, state your name, and give your
6 testimony in favor of this project.

7 ANTHONY JIGA: Anthony Jiga. Good
8 afternoon, Chair Comrie, Chair Weprin, and Council
9 Members. My name is Anthony Jiga and I am the
10 vice president for budget and planning at NYU.

11 I'm here today to read into the
12 record testimony for Martin Dorff, the
13 university's executive vice president for Finance
14 and Information Technology and chief financial
15 officer.

16 Over the past two decades New York
17 University has acquired and renovated spaces at
18 its central Washington Square campus and other
19 locations at a rate of an estimated 200,000 to
20 300,000 gross square feet per year. The 2031
21 plans which call for development on NYU-owned
22 property and other parts of the city will require
23 resources that are consistent with the pace of
24 capital investment and financing that the
25 university has incurred over the past 20 years.

1
2 We will approach the financing of
3 these projects in the way we typically approach a
4 building project--with a mixture of philanthropy,
5 debt financing, which is a common practice among
6 universities taking on capital projects, and
7 working capital, as a capital project that is part
8 of a rolling capital budget and plan, which is
9 presented annually to our board because projects
10 such as these are planned, designed, and
11 constructed over time. The university leadership
12 and its board of trustees as a matter of fiduciary
13 responsibility does not approve building projects
14 for which a sound financial plan is not in place,
15 therefore, there should be no concern that a
16 building once begun would be stalled by lack of
17 funds to complete the work on that building.

18 It should also be noted that the
19 university's credit ratings are double AA three
20 and AA from Moody's Investor Services and Standard
21 & Poor's, respectively. This very high quality
22 rating provides additional assurance that the
23 capital markets will be available to the
24 university as part of its financing plans.

25 Finally, the attached letter, which

1
2 is distributed from NYU's chief fundraiser, Ms.
3 Debra LaMorte, outlines the university's success
4 in past fundraising and highlights the role that
5 philanthropy will play in this project. In fact,
6 the super blocks will provide an unprecedented
7 opportunity for donors to help with a major
8 capital campaign that they know will be vital to
9 the university's future.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
12 much.

13 ALLEN MCFARLANE: Thanks. Good
14 afternoon.

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Good
16 afternoon.

17 ALLEN MCFARLANE: My name is Allen
18 McFarlane and I am the assistant vice president
19 for student diversity at NYU and I'm here to read
20 the testimony of Dr. Marc Wais, he is the vice
21 president of student affairs.

22 Dear Chair Comrie, Chair Weprin,
23 Council Member Chin, and fellow Council Members,
24 thank you for hearing the case for NYU's growth
25 needs. I am here to outline six critical space

1 needs of the NYU student population.

2
3 Art Performance Space. Over and
4 over again, we hear from students who are
5 challenged by the inability to find appropriate
6 spaces for art, music, and theater performances.
7 Students pursuing the performing arts as an
8 academic field have some dedicated spaces
9 available to them, but even so, continue to
10 struggle with finding practice, recital, and
11 performance venues on or near campus. There is
12 also a substantial number of students in other
13 academic fields who feel passionately about
14 participating in amateur arts and performance
15 opportunities, and it is these students who are
16 the most pressed for adequate space.

17 Athletic Facility. The current
18 main athletic facility, Coles Sports and
19 Recreation Center, is more than 30 years old and
20 does not meet today's needs. The number of
21 students, faculty, staff, and community members
22 who utilize Coles and Palladium exceeds over 1
23 million patrons a year. Coles has served the
24 university and the community very well during its
25 time, but is now simply outdated.

1
2 Student Activities. This is
3 perhaps the area that feels the most critical to
4 those at NYU presently engaged with working with
5 students and student clubs and organizations. We
6 simply do not have enough available space to meet
7 the needs of 400 plus recognized student groups
8 seeking locations for meetings, events, lectures,
9 programs. The interest is there, the commitment
10 is there, the space is lacking. This severely
11 constrains the ability of students to meet in
12 casual academic groups and other informal
13 gatherings, there are not enough spaces on campus
14 where students can engage in quiet, but not
15 silent, group study, organize group social
16 gatherings, or simply have a place to relax and
17 rest on campus between classes. Many of the NYU's
18 students--more than 10,000 undergraduate and over
19 15,000 graduate students, professional students--
20 commute considerable distances to each school each
21 day. We hear very compelling stories of students
22 who have difficulty finding friendly places to
23 study between classes or simply eat lunch.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

25 ALLEN MCFARLANE: There are two

1
2 other areas, but it's in the testimony, and thank
3 you for your time.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
5 much, thank you. Next, please.

6 BRAD PENUEL: Chairman Weprin,
7 Members of the Council, my name is Brad Penuel,
8 since 2007, I have managed NYU's Center for
9 Catastrophe Preparedness and Response, CCPR, a
10 university-wide cross disciplinary center to
11 improve preparedness and response capabilities to
12 catastrophic events.

13 Before that, I worked as a graduate
14 student in the Institute for Civil Infrastructure
15 Systems, an interdisciplinary research center at
16 NYU's Wagner school. Given my experiences with
17 these centers and others that I have interfaced
18 with, I would like to give the Council a sense for
19 the physical space needs that operating a cross-
20 disciplinary research center entails.

21 The first thing to keep in mind is
22 that space needs of a cross-disciplinary research
23 center are dynamic and change over time. CCPR,
24 for example, promotes research that responds to
25 catastrophic events, therefore, after Hurricane

1
2 Katrina, we sponsored a number of quick response
3 projects that dealt with issues that this event
4 underscored. Some of these projects benefited
5 from the active engagement of graduate students
6 that needed work space for their research. Other
7 activities included sponsoring events, such as the
8 Hurricane Relief Deployment Training series for
9 the American Red Cross of Greater New York, at
10 which community members, as well as NYU students,
11 received training prior to their departure to the
12 Gulf to assist in relief efforts.

13 On the question of why should
14 cross-disciplinary research centers be located
15 within the Core, I would offer that, while each
16 center is unique and each organized and staffed a
17 bit differently, each center benefits from the
18 density of faculty and students present in the
19 Core. In my time, I've seen entire research
20 projects result from a chance meeting and
21 conversation between two faculty members from
22 neighboring schools, as well as have seen research
23 take novel directions as a result of doctoral
24 students from different disciplines working side-
25 by-side. It is true that technology is bridging

1
2 many communication gaps, but in cross-disciplinary
3 research where different disciplines must learn to
4 speak the same language in order for the research
5 to be successful, face-to-face interactions are
6 still critically important.

7 Thank you for your time.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, and
9 thank you for following the clock so well.

10 LAWRENCE MEAD: My name is Lawrence
11 Mead, I'm a professor in the politics department.
12 I appreciate this chance to testify.

13 The main thing I want to say is
14 simply that the space problems at NYU have been a
15 significant problem in my career at NYU, which
16 stretches back to 1979. There have been perpetual
17 struggles to get enough office space for my
18 department, which has grown by a fair amount, also
19 classrooms and also housing for faculty. I now
20 live in Washington Square Village, I've had to
21 move three times, my department has moved three
22 times, there is a struggle for space every day at
23 NYU. So when the administrators say that they
24 need space, they should be believed, they know
25 what they're talking about and we all suffer from

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that.

The other thing I want to comment on is that the extent of opposition to this plan does puzzle me--I'm speaking now as a political scientist, I want to find out why it is people are that upset. When I look at the community opposition--no, let me explain this--I look at the community opposition, they're saying that the plan would somehow rip up the fabric of the Village, seem to me that that fabric was ripped up decades ago when the super blocks were created, that's when the ripping occurred.

This plan involves a rearrangement of the super blocks, it's NYU's own territory. I'm puzzled that why earlier expansions of the university, which did involve taking fresh land like the recent expansion of the law school, for example, have not aroused the same upset. That's puzzling to me, that would have been the reason--the time to say that the community was being overrun by the university.

So I think their concerns about some aspects of this having to do with the dog run and the community park and open space, that's

1
2 legitimate, I think that really is their concerns
3 there, which I can see the point of, but
4 fundamentalist opposition strikes me as overblown.
5 This is really not an attack on the Village.

6 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. If you
7 can try not to antagonize the audience, next
8 speaker.

9 LAUREN BENTON: Thank you very
10 much. My name is Lauren Benton, Chair Weprin,
11 Council Members, I want to thank you for the
12 opportunity to testify. I'm a faculty member, a
13 member of the history department, former chair of
14 the history department, current dean for the
15 humanities and I'm the incoming dean for the
16 graduate School of Arts and Science.

17 Some people have suggested today
18 that NYU has exaggerated its space needs and what
19 I mainly want to say to you is that those needs
20 are very, very real and they are considerable, and
21 we're aware of them every day.

22 The Humanities division in the
23 faculty of Arts and Science has 16 departments,
24 four major research centers, over 300 full-time
25 faculty, thousands of majors and graduate

1 students, and many more thousands who take courses
2 in the Humanities, and we struggle every year.

3 Space constraints affect all our units, we
4 struggle in particular with classroom availability
5 twice a year when we're scheduling courses.

6
7 And I want to lay to rest the
8 Friday issue. I've had a good deal of time as
9 I've been waiting in the audience to e-mail to
10 colleagues and get the full information. We are
11 really fully booked on Fridays, we do have a
12 difference where the recitation sessions and
13 laboratories take place on Friday, but that
14 doesn't mean the classrooms aren't in use, and the
15 only hour we have some marginal availability at
16 this point is 8 a.m. on Fridays. We are fully
17 utilizing our classroom space.

18 Something that hasn't been
19 mentioned today and I wanted to put in a word
20 about is that we struggle mightily with the dearth
21 of appropriately configured classrooms. And as
22 dean for Humanities, this is something that has
23 affected my units. We don't have enough seminar
24 spaces, we don't have enough rooms that are
25 adequately equipped with computer facilities and

1
2 faculty and students are clamoring for these, and
3 we don't have enough office spaces for our
4 faculty. One of our leading departments has 20
5 faculty and 16 offices, and I think you can do the
6 math.

7 And finally, just let me mention
8 the need for graduate student space, laboratory
9 bench space, quiet study space, places to do
10 research that puts us at the cutting edge as a
11 research university. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,
13 Dean.

14 DENNIS DILORENZO: Chair Weprin and
15 fellow Council Members, thank you for the
16 opportunity to testify today. My name is Dennis
17 DiLorenzo, I am the interim dean and vice dean of
18 the NYU School of Continuing and Professional
19 Studies. I am here in support of the NYU 2031
20 plan.

21 NYU 2031 will enable the university
22 to continue its missions of being a highly
23 competitive research and teaching university with
24 students of the future and current workforce of
25 the professional and cultural industries that make

1
2 New York City one of the greatest intellectual and
3 professional capitals of the world.

4 NYU SCPS has a long and rich
5 history in serving the many industries that are
6 integral to the landscape of New York and, by
7 extension, the world. From real estate to arts
8 appraisal, NYU SCPS is responsible for training
9 and retraining the workforce that sustains the
10 professions that make New York a thriving,
11 competitive, professional, artistic, and
12 competitive city.

13 Educating a workforce whose success
14 requires highly advanced skill sets is
15 challenging. In our portfolio of noncredit
16 continuing education courses alone, we educate
17 approximately 28,500 students annually, we take
18 approximately 4,900 core sections. This is in
19 addition to the 21,000 undergraduates that the
20 university serves. When combined with the courses
21 that serves students in the school's 14 graduate
22 and 2 undergraduate programs, the physical
23 infrastructure requirements are significant.

24 We currently occupy space at three
25 major locations--7 East 12th Street, which is an

1
2 NYU-owned facility, 11 West 42nd Street, and 15
3 Barclay Street, the Woolworth building right
4 across the street, those spaces are both leased.

5 I'd like to dispel the myth that
6 there is this 10-minute walk between what is the
7 square and maybe downtown in the financial
8 district being a school that actually has space in
9 both areas. I can tell you that whenever we
10 schedule classes that are in the square and then
11 have to book a class in Woolworth adjacent, we get
12 at least 80% of the classroom and the faculty
13 member complaining that there is not enough time
14 to go from class to class. Between traffic on the
15 streets or our subways being unpredictable,
16 there's always an issue.

17 There you go.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
19 much. Anybody have a comment or question here?
20 Seeing--oh, Ms. Chin has a question.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yeah, I just
22 have a quick question for you, Dean DiLorenzo.

23 DENNIS DILORENZO: Yes.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So you're the
25 dean for the School of Continuing and Professional

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Study.

DENNIS DILORENZO: Absolutely.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Wouldn't you be the most appropriate school to not locate at the core--

DENNIS DILORENZO: No.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --because of people who are working and--

DENNIS DILORENZO: [Interposing] We occupy space across all of New York City, that is correct, but I will tell you that we are wholly dependent on classroom space at the core. We offer many courses that require use of the infrastructure at Washington Square, we are the school that fills in the gaps. If it was not for our ability to consume space at the square, we would probably have to cut our offerings in half, no question.

And I will tell you because we are the school that is able to look at other areas, we're always looking for classroom space. We offer 4,900 sections in noncredit continuing education alone, it is not easy identifying classrooms in New York City. I mean, I can tell

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2 you that. We are always on the lookout for
3 classroom rentals, we rent space at the
4 lighthouse, we rent space at Norman Thomas High
5 School, we rent space at the Manhattan Village
6 Academy.

7 I will say we try to consume as
8 much space as we can, but we're also having the
9 issue, the classroom space that is available in
10 New York City presents an issue. The
11 infrastructure for a high school doesn't meet the
12 needs of a highly competitive continuing education
13 program. So we are wholly dependent on space
14 being available.

15 Those gaps that everyone's
16 identifying whether it's in the evening or on
17 Fridays, on the weekends, our school fills in
18 those gaps consistently. It's one of the reasons
19 a lot of the classroom space is used and things
20 are not available.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay. So
22 your program are the one that's having classes on
23 Friday, Friday night, Saturday, and Sunday?

24 DENNIS DILORENZO: [Interposing]
25 We're not the only one--

[Crosstalk]

DENNIS DILORENZO: --we are definitely not the only ones, but we are certainly consuming space on Fridays, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay. Thank you.

LAUREN BENTON: If I can just add on Friday space, every single department in Arts and Science has classes running on Fridays, without exception. Laboratories run on Fridays, recitations, all language courses are offered on Fridays. We have full Friday utilization.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Thank you. All right, well thank you all very much. We're now going to move on to our next panel in opposition. I'd like to call up, and please say you're here, Scott Sommer.

SCOTT SOMMER: Here.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Jean Nevins. Ana Simo? Siho? No. Bo Riccobono, sorry about that. Is that a here? Bo?

BO RICCOBONO: Yeah, yeah.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Pat Albin.

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PAT ALBIN: Here.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I'm sorry,
what name? That wasn't here, I thought. Ann
Pettibone.

ANN PETTIBONE: Here.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Uh-huh, almost
lost her. Let me get one more here from the pile,
and Rachel Yarmolinsky, you here, Rachel? Don't
hear Rachel. Not here, is she here? Rachel?
Okay. All right, everyone, they're charging the
stage. No, okay, so whenever you guys are ready.

BO RICCOBONO: Yeah, hi. My name
is Bo Riccobono, I've got a lot of hats in this
ring, I'm the first vice chair of CB 2, I am vice
chair--vice president, actually, of SoHo Alliance,
and I have been and what was an adjunct professor
at NYU for about 11 years, a member of FASP.

I don't know how you intend to
clear up some of these discrepancies 'cause I am
actually quite moved, surprised by the number of
questions that seem to be refuted, directly
refuted. For instance, about the space, about the
Friday classes, I mean, this is not a court of
law, but perhaps there'd be some way that

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2 additional submissions could be asked for that
3 maybe we could get some objective answers to some
4 of these questions. Just my opinion.

5 The other thing I'd like to point
6 out is that the people who are, for the most part,
7 many of the people who are testifying for NYU talk
8 about the benefits that NYU--the presence of NYU
9 provide to the city, which is undeniable, we think
10 NYU is a great institution, we want it to stay
11 here, but we want it to stay here and we don't
12 want it to continue to grow here, and there's a
13 big difference. Yes, they do provide jobs, it's
14 an economic engine, and the necessity of growing
15 has just not been made clear, it hasn't been made
16 clear to any of us, and I think that's the issue:
17 It's not their presence, it's their increased
18 presence.

19 You know, basically, what I think
20 when I first saw those plans that came out, I was
21 absolutely shocked, you know, the Boomerang
22 buildings, the look of the models that they had,
23 and I thought they must be kidding. You know,
24 they can't build this Midtown Disneyland type
25 complex in the middle of Greenwich Village, they

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2 must be kidding. And you know, you wonder, you
3 have to question--that's a fast two minutes--you
4 just have to question what their overall mission
5 is, you know, is it academic, as the professors
6 have testified to, or is it some kind of global
7 need to expand for expansion's sake and to
8 increase their worldwide footprint for some
9 economic reason.

10 And I think the question of the
11 economic, again, you know, the Community Board and
12 the faculty group has asked repeatedly for a
13 business plan, President Sexton said that they're
14 well-financed, they've never been in better shape.
15 Can we ask for some proof of that? Maybe the
16 Finance Committee of the City Council can get
17 involved in that because, you know, what is the
18 truth? I really wonder, what is the truth? Thank
19 you, and I appreciate the time.

20 ANN PETTIBONE: Could I go?

21 MALE VOICE: Yeah.

22 ANN PETTIBONE: Okay.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

24 ANN PETTIBONE: Hi, Ann Pettibone.

25 I strongly urge you to vote no on this proposed

1 massive expansion plan.

2 Why? Because such an intrusion
3 will destroy public parks, gardens, and
4 playgrounds, replacing them with towers fit for
5 Midtown. These monster buildings are designed to
6 provide an enclosed or isolated thoroughfare,
7 created specifically to move thousands of new
8 students from the current NYU buildings
9 surrounding Washington Square to new dorms and
10 classrooms in the south super block.

11 Not to be ignored, this plan would
12 put severe pressure on small local businesses
13 because NYU proposes adding retail space along
14 these interior corridors, as well as along the
15 exterior city blocks.

16 Do we need any more drugs stores
17 and banks in the neighborhood? No. No to 2.4
18 million square feet of real estate development; no
19 to thousands of new students; no to 20 years of
20 construction; no to the destruction on an
21 irreplaceable precious jewel, New York City's own
22 historic Greenwich Village; no to the Sexton plan.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
24 much.
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2 RACHEL YARMOLINSKY: Hi, it's
3 Rachel Yarmolinsky, I live on Mercer and Bleecker
4 Street. And I wanted to bring it back a little
5 bit to the personal level, I think we've heard
6 extraordinary, intelligent, and moving testimony
7 from many people on both sides.

8 I moved to Greenwich Village five
9 years ago because I'd like to retire there and
10 spend the rest of my life there, and the idea of
11 spending the next 20 years in a construction site,
12 it's a very personal thing, it's not what I had in
13 mind for retirement. I'm also a little worried
14 about the value of my apartment, it was kind of
15 expensive, and I can't imagine who's going to want
16 to buy it once this thing starts. So I'm assuming
17 my values going through, you know, 2008 all over
18 again. And I'm not the only one, there's going to
19 be a lot of people in this bag.

20 I'm concerned about the children in
21 my building who are 1, 2, 3-years old who are
22 going to grow up, again, 20 years, they're going
23 to be 22 by the time these people stop building
24 next door.

25 So I can't imagine how any elected

1
2 official in a democracy by, for, and of the people
3 could pass a plan that would just make so much
4 trouble for the people who actually live there.

5 Now, if NYU wants to build a six-
6 story building across the street and do it in two
7 or three years, be my guest, I don't want to be
8 accused of NIMBY; I live in a city, there's
9 construction going on all the time. But I do
10 think 20 years amounts to cruel and unusual
11 punishment, I would not do that to my worst enemy.
12 And I don't see why my elected officials should
13 give my land and rezone a neighborhood to a
14 corporation that it really is going to do nothing
15 for me and ruin the life of all those around me.
16 Thank you.

17 PAT ALBIN: I'm Pat Albin, and I'm
18 the president of the Board of 505, and of course,
19 I'm here to defend the affordability of 505.

20 Five-oh-five is the only dedicated
21 affordable housing in the area. We are a creation
22 of a kind of union between NYU and the City in its
23 urban renewal projects of 1964. Both parties to
24 that union were committed to continued affordable
25 housing in the--morally, as well as economically,

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2 committed to affordable housing in the region. A
3 commitment to which also many of our public
4 officials have continually attested.

5 We were the price of that bargain.
6 That is, NYU got the land cheaply as long as we
7 were built.

8 In the current phase of our
9 negotiations, we have a lease--a reset of our
10 lease coming up in 2014, and at the current stage
11 in our negotiations, NYU's asks will destroy our
12 affordability and, thus, our diversity and the
13 rest that we bring to this neighborhood.

14 We call on the City Council--why do
15 we come to the City Council for remedy?

16 Obviously, it's our last chance for a remedy and
17 the last chance for us to bring affordability and
18 diversity to the area. It is also the City
19 Council's last chance to see that the City
20 fulfills its promises--its past promises and its
21 current obligations.

22 Oh, I'm sorry. Probably the best
23 and most authentic way to test the future behavior
24 and intentions of anyone is to examine past
25 actions. At the moment, we think that NYU's

1
2 behaviors with regard to 505 LaGuardia Place will
3 be a very good test of their good faith in the
4 future and the likeliness that they will commit--
5 that they will keep their commitments in the
6 future. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

8 Mr. Sommer.

9 SCOTT SOMMER: Mm-hmm, good
10 afternoon, my name is Scott Sommer, I'm the New
11 York subregional director for the United Auto
12 Workers, and we are very proud to represent the
13 2,500 adjunct faculty that teach at NYU, and the
14 1,500 who are under contract and recognized by the
15 university, and the 1,500 graduate employees who
16 also teach and do research at NYU who have been
17 engaged in, I guess, a now 14-year battle to
18 continually secure their union rights, having had
19 a contract and then, when the Bush Labor Board
20 stripped them of their right to have a union, NYU
21 decided to hide behind the Bush Labor Board and
22 refused to continue to recognize the union to this
23 very day. And we are back now in front of the
24 Labor Board again seeking union recognition.

25 We stand in solidarity with the

1
2 AFT, who was done here earlier today as well, and
3 also with the faculty, the Greenwich Village
4 Society of Historic Preservation, the affordable
5 housing activists, and the larger community that
6 is trying to save NYU.

7 I, like many of our members and
8 native New Yorkers, I actually was accepted to
9 NYU, but it was even too expensive for me in 1978,
10 I went to SUNY, and very proud. But we're here
11 today because this plan, while we recognize and
12 value NYU and recognize that NYU needs to grow and
13 expand, this is not the plan for growth and
14 expansion at NYU. It's grossly out of context
15 with the neighborhood.

16 I will not go through all the
17 details you've heard today, they've been presented
18 more eloquently by many of the other
19 organizations.

20 It would impose an undue
21 construction hardship on the campus community and
22 the larger neighborhood for the better part of two
23 decades, and it's fiscally unsound and would
24 result in large tuition increases, and we are
25 fearful would also jeopardize the fiscal health of

1
2 the university.

3 We also are in solidarity with our
4 union brothers and sisters who want union
5 construction jobs, and they can have them, and NYU
6 can supply and create them, they just don't have
7 to do it under this plan in this location.

8 Promises were made a long time ago
9 on those super blocks in order to get the zoning
10 variances that they got at that point in time and
11 those promises need to be kept, those promises
12 need to be honored. When I make a promise, when
13 we make a promise, we should honor them, and we
14 should all be living up to our good word.

15 In summation, New York is a city of
16 the social compact, we respect the rights of
17 workers, this is a union town. This is a
18 university that has shown that it will not shy
19 away from union busting. We should not be
20 granting benefits worth millions or billions of
21 dollars to a university at a time when it refuses
22 to recognize the rights of its graduate employee
23 workers to have a union. We call on the City
24 Council to say no to this plan, send them back to
25 the drawing board to come up with a better plan

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2 for the entire community, and to tell them to
3 respect the rights of all workers in New York
4 City. Thank you very much.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
6 Thank you all.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down,
8 please.

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
10 Anyone have questions for this panel? Anyone on
11 the panel? Mr. Levin.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Sorry, just
13 for the gentlewoman, chair of the co-op--

14 PAT ALBIN: Yeah.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: --I just
16 wanted to get your sense of the issues that you're
17 going to be facing. You're up for a renewal in
18 two years, is that correct?

19 PAT ALBIN: The renewal has to be
20 finished by 2014, but we're in negotiation
21 currently.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay. And
23 how--

24 PAT ALBIN: [Interposing] Excuse
25 me, it's not a renewal, it's a reset, it's not a

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new lease.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay. Thank you, thanks.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. I'm sorry--

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I'll withdraw the line of questioning, thanks.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: You're done? I'm sorry, I--

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Anyone else? Thank you all very much. We're now going to call a panel in favor of the project. I'd like to call up Mitchell Moss, Jules Martin, Paul Horn I think it is, Linda Arezzo, Tyra Liebmann, and Arlene Peralta. I don't know how many we got out of that panel, but you guys did not do good here-ing, you didn't go here.

ARLENE PERALTA: Here.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. That's better.

ARLENE PERALTA: I'm just submitting my testimony.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Excellent, is

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that you, Ms. Peralta?

ARLENE PERALTA: Yes, it's Ms. Peralta, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Ms. Peralta is submitting her testimony.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Anybody else has any statements?

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: And I appreciate that. Want me call more in favor? Okay. I may call also Hillary Ballon, Ballon. Sorry about that. Okay. If everyone can make their way to the front. Decide who's going to go first, once, twice, three, shoot, and then whenever you're ready, please start, state your name for the record.

LINDA AREZZO: Hi, my name is Linda Arezzo, and in deference to the hour, I cut this statement in about half.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Beautiful.

LINDA AREZZO: So I'm hoping you'll stay awake.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I hope it's still under two minutes, but go ahead.

LINDA AREZZO: I'll give it a shot.

1
2 My name is Linda Arezzo, I'm from the Brooklyn
3 International High School, a New York City public
4 school where all of our students are English
5 Language Learners, currently from 42 countries,
6 speaking 22 languages. Some have never seen a
7 microwave oven, an escalator, or a laptop
8 computer. Getting accustomed to cell phones,
9 flash drives, and the New York City subways comes
10 fairly easily to our kids. Negotiating the
11 complex systems of health care services and
12 medical care, not so much. Consequently, many
13 immigrant families simply manage with inadequate
14 medical care.

15 But for the last 12 years or so,
16 medical care and referrals for social services
17 have been provided to us by the NY--

18 [END TAPE 2]

19 [START TAPE 3]

20 LINDA AREZZO: --U Mobile Health
21 Van. With parental consent, their dedicated
22 professionals can see students right there at
23 school two days a week. Parents don't need to
24 miss work--and many of them would sacrifice their
25 day's salary if they did take the day off--and

1 students don't need to miss school.

2 Here are just a few examples of
3 cases handled by the Mobile Health Van recently:
4 98% of our students have up to the date
5 immunizations, many of them completed at school;
6 over 40 students received free eye exams and
7 eyeglasses, many for the first times in their
8 lives; dozens of uninsured teens were signed up
9 for health care onsite at our school; a 17-year
10 old boy was diagnosed with diabetes, trained to
11 perform his own daily blood tests and both he and
12 his mom were given nutritional re-education to
13 maintain his healthy blood sugar levels--all at
14 school; a 16-year old girl who had repeated bouts
15 of heart palpitations and fainting was sent along
16 with her family for a full evaluation by
17 cardiologists and neurologists. And a very ill
18 young man whose father lost his job and lost
19 insurance coverage for him as he turned 19 was
20 guided step-by-step through the insurance
21 application process, thus enabling him to get
22 life-saving brain surgery as he needed.

24 Perhaps you can put a price tag on
25 such things, I cannot, but, I believe, and I hope

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2 you do, that the future of this planet lies in the
3 hands of young people who you support with the
4 growth of NYU and the kids--excuse me, and the
5 kinds of collaborations throughout the city that
6 will allow the continuation and expansion of these
7 kinds of gifts of health care.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,
9 thank you very much. Next.

10 HILLARY BALLON: Hello, my name is
11 Hillary Ballon, a university professor of
12 architecture and urban studies, I teach in NYU's
13 urban planning program and my research focuses on
14 New York City. I have written about the history
15 of urban renewal, including the NYU super blocks
16 under consideration, and I appreciate the
17 opportunity to offer these comments, primarily on
18 the theme of density.

19 NYU 2031 should be seen in the
20 context of NYU's urban identity, its dynamism and
21 creativity, its ability to grow and to change.
22 The super blocks belong to New York's history of
23 change. They did not always look as they do
24 today. Originally, they were six small blocks,
25 the streets were bordered by mid-rise buildings

1
2 mostly used for manufacturing, and the area looked
3 something like SoHo. The urban renewal program
4 that Congress initiated in 1949 led to the radical
5 alteration of this environment. All the buildings
6 were demolished and the six blocks were fused into
7 the two super blocks.

8 A particular urban theory guided
9 urban renewal, and urbanism in general, for the
10 better part of the 20th century. The theory was
11 that urban life would be improved by increasing
12 the amount of open space in the city and replacing
13 the lineup of buildings along city streets with
14 freestanding structures surrounded by light and
15 air. The NYU super blocks are very fine examples
16 of this modern urban theory that rejected the
17 traditional New York pattern of high land coverage
18 and streets fronted by buildings that touch.

19 But in the 1960s, even as the super
20 blocks were taking shape, a new urban theory began
21 to take hold. This new version of the good city
22 championed by Jane Jacobs rejected the paradigm
23 of--in our time--

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
25 Don't stop, finish.

2 HILLARY BALLON: At our times, in
3 our times, a new urban theory is taking hold, one
4 that builds on Jacobs and is rooted in our
5 awakening environmental consciousness. This
6 perspective recognizes the efficiency of city
7 life. Over the long term, density, not dispersal,
8 is the most sustainable form of settlement.
9 Density has had a bad rap, it is closely related
10 to the historic success of New York, it is the key
11 to our signature skyscrapers, our commercial
12 opportunities, talent attraction, and diversity,
13 and it is now clear that density has
14 environmental, as well as economic and social,
15 benefits.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
17 much. Next, please.

18 TYRA LIEBMANN: Council Members, my
19 name is Tyra Liebmann, I'm the associate dean of
20 NYU's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public
21 Service and I have been asked by Dean Schall to
22 read her testimony.

23 Dean Schall says, I regret that I
24 cannot be here in person, but I do want to convey
25 in the strongest possible terms my support for

1
2 NYU's Core project. NYU-Wager is one of 18
3 schools of NYU and a school that is directly and
4 powerfully connected to New York City and New York
5 City government. Our nearly 1,000 graduate
6 students study public and nonprofit management and
7 policy, as well as urban planning and health
8 management and policy. Our faculty produce
9 research that has influenced policy locally,
10 nationally, and internationally. And our alumni
11 lead city agencies, work in City Hall, staff many
12 of you on the City Council, and, of course, are
13 equally active in New York City's nonprofit and
14 health care organizations.

15 Through our Capstone program, our
16 students partner with client organizations to
17 address challenges and identify opportunities, 75%
18 of those Capstone clients are New York City-based
19 nonprofits or government agencies. We are proud
20 of the results we produce in partnerships with
21 organizations that are tackling some of the city's
22 most pressing social issues, as well as our role
23 in helping to shape and analyze local policies.
24 We continue to attract stellar students, faculty,
25 and staff, and the issue of space is critical to

our ability to do so well into the future.

NYU created a plan called 2031, named for the year NYU reaches its 200th anniversary. The university was motivated to lay out our future needs of space in response to two pressures. The first was local community pressure, which had been observing our growth over the past ten years, a growth that is at the same pace as that projected in this plan, and asking us to say what we wanted to build here and where. We were also motivated by internal pressures. The needs of virtually every school for more space. NYU-Wagner, was and is one of those schools. I have--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. If you can just wrap up.

TYRA LIEBMANN: Yep, I'm wrapping--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: One sentence.

TYRA LIEBMANN: --up. I urge you to approve the NYU Core plan.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Very good, thank you. Next.

JULES MARTIN: Chairman Weprin and Honorable Members of the City Council, my name is

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2 Jules Martin, I'm vice president for Global
3 Security Consult and Crisis Management, and thank
4 you so much for allowing me the opportunity to
5 testify today in support of NYU's proposal to
6 develop new academic facilities in its core areas.

7 I know that there have been many
8 speakers so I would like to make two brief points
9 about the value of housing freshmen in our core,
10 and how New York University contributes to the
11 safety of the neighborhood.

12 I am charged with safeguarding all
13 members of the NYU community; however, the
14 university feel a special responsibility, of
15 course, to its undergraduates, and particularly
16 its freshmen. Each year, some 4,500 new freshmen
17 join the NYU community, the vast majority of them
18 coming from outside of New York City. They are
19 eager to be in our city, and as a long-serving
20 member of the New York City Police Department, I
21 know how lucky they are to come to a city as safe
22 as New York has become in the last 15 or 20 years.
23 But I also know how important it is for them
24 during the time of transition--the first year of
25 living away from home; really, the first year of

1
2 adulthood, to live in close proximity of
3 Washington Square. This is where their classes
4 will take place, where they will study for exams,
5 where they will participate in student club
6 activities, where they will use computers and the
7 library, and where student support services will
8 be concentrated. That is why living close to the
9 core is such a wise objective for our freshmen and
10 one that is reassuring to them and their parents.

11 I'd also like to take the
12 opportunity to tell you something about my public
13 safety officers, who these men and women
14 contribute, not just to the safety of NYU, but our
15 entire neighborhood. Altogether, NYU has over 300
16 trained, uniformed public safety officers--as
17 large or larger force of officers than many New
18 York City's police precincts. Every one of our
19 resident halls have public safety officers posted
20 next to the door 24 hours--on a 24 hour, 7 days a
21 week basis, and most of our buildings are--public
22 safety officers are posted at most of our
23 buildings early in the morning until late in the
24 evening.

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]

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Thank, you have to wrap up, all right?

JULES MARTIN: Okay. That trained, widespread presence not only enhance the safety of the New York University community, but it also enhance the safety of the larger neighborhood. Our public safety officers provide an additional set of calm, trained, professional eyes on an around-the-clock basis that ensure a quick response to emergencies.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Great, I think we got the point on that, thank you very much.

JULES MARTIN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Mr. Moss.

MITCHELL MOSS: Chairman Weprin, I want to say it's a privilege to be here, I testified before your late father when he was Chairman of Ways and Means and he was a champion of converting a golf course into Queensborough Community College. One of the great examples of a higher education champion and I'm delighted you're doing this today.

Let me say first--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
Kissing up will get you nowhere, but thank you.

1
2 MITCHELL MOSS: We like to honor
3 the great politicians from Queens. Let me then
4 simply say three things: One, this is not the
5 pristine village of Sarah Jessica Parker, of Sex
6 and the City, of Matthew Broderick, this is the
7 industrial village--

8 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down,
9 please, ladies and gentlemen.

10 MITCHELL MOSS: Can I get 30
11 seconds for being interrupted?

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: That's fine,
13 there may be a point of personal privilege in the
14 audience, but okay, we'll let that go.

15 MITCHELL MOSS: This area has
16 always been filled with large factories as a 1
17 million square foot building at 770 Broadway,
18 which was home of John Wanamaker. Let us be
19 serious, there are ten subway lines, which I've
20 indicated on this map here, within proximity to
21 the super blocks. There's an important
22 distinction between this industrial core and the
23 other part of the village. If you're going to
24 build buildings, you should build them near mass
25 transit and these are in close proximity to mass

1 transit.

2
3 Secondly, let me point out that the
4 buildings that NYU is going to have for faculty
5 are rental units. There is no way these buildings
6 will change the immediate area because you, the
7 landmarks preservation, and the City Council have
8 landmarked SoHo, the area to the east, the area to
9 the north where Alec Baldwin has a \$25 million
10 condo, so the restrictions will prevent any change
11 in the immediate surrounding area.

12 And let me end with one final
13 point. We have to realize one thing: Higher
14 education is one of New York's growth industries.
15 This is a chart listing firms that have abandoned
16 New York or gone bankrupt in New York. I have
17 copies for you.

18 The city attracts people who want
19 to come and study here, they want to live here,
20 this is the future of New York, and we have to
21 build for the future. Universities, in fact, are
22 part of our intellectual capital, they bring
23 people here, they stay here, and they add to the
24 vitality and the future of New York. Thank you
25 very much.

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.
3 Moss. Does anybody else have any comments or
4 questions?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Yeah, I
6 have a--

7 [Crosstalk]

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yes, Mr.
9 Comrie.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: I just have
11 a comment. It's good to see you, Chief Martin,
12 and--

13 JULES MARTIN: Thank you.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --glad to
15 see you're doing well and I'm glad to see that
16 you're protecting the students at NYU.

17 JULES MARTIN: Thank you.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: [Off mic]
19 at Mr. Moss--

20 JULES MARTIN: Thank you.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --I can't
22 say the same for Mr. Moss, have a good afternoon.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Uh-oh. Mr.
24 Levin.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: So I did

1
2 just want to comment on Mr. Moss, that on your Not
3 in New York List, there's Bear Stearns and Lehman
4 Bros., I don't think that they went out of
5 business--

6 [Crosstalk]

7 MITCHELL MOSS: [Interposing] Yes,
8 if you look at the--I recommend you actually
9 formally see that Lehman Bros. formerly declared
10 bankrupt, Secretary Treasury Paulson gave them
11 that freedom to do, and, in fact, that's how
12 they're formally listed, that's why they're in
13 court trying to reclaim their real estate assets.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right.
15 CBGBs may be back, so who knows. But anyway,
16 let's not--any other questions? I see none, thank
17 you very much for this panel.

18 I'd now like to call up the
19 following panel in opposition. I'd like to call
20 up Eve Liberman, Dr. Stephen Frantz, Judith
21 Callet, Howard--I'm sorry--Bader, Miriam Fox, and
22 defending his neighborhood, Matthew Broderick.

23 [Pause]

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I don't know
25 how many of those people are here. I know Eve

1
2 also has her brother here, so you guys could
3 somehow see if you could share a chair maybe. You
4 like each other, right? Okay. When the music
5 stops, everyone needs a seat, okay?

6 [Pause]

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --are all
8 here, right? There you go, Eve. Worth the wait?

9 [Pause]

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Well you ran
11 out of seats, you see, you missed it 'til the
12 music stops, oh, look at that, that's a real man.
13 All right, it's a big panel, I apologize. You
14 guys can decide who goes first, I don't like
15 making that choice. Eve, who do you want to go
16 first? Okay. Whoever Eve picks to go first. Uh-
17 oh, not you. I was sure she was going with you,
18 Matthew, well okay. Well you won by default.
19 Okay. Please state your name for the record.

20 MATTHEW BRODERICK: Whoa. My name
21 is Matthew Broderick, I live in the pristine
22 village of Alec Baldwin.

23 [Laughter]

24 MATTHEW BRODERICK: No, I don't
25 really. I'm here, I grew up in an apartment on

1
2 Washington Square North, I moved there when I was
3 four and it was two blocks from my apartment on
4 Ninth Street, where I was born, so I really am a
5 real Villager.

6 My friends and I used to play pick-
7 up baseball in Washington Square Park, and as we
8 got bigger, we were forced to find a real ball
9 field so we started playing in a dirt field that
10 was on Houston and Mercer Street, it was a big,
11 sandy field and we would all head up north from
12 there--up Mercer where there were two, I think,
13 basketball courts and we would play there, and
14 when it got cold, we played roller hockey on those
15 courts. And then we would skateboard. So for a
16 long time now, none of that land has been usable
17 by ordinary Villagers, it's been replaced by the
18 big gym for NYU. So that happened in my
19 childhood.

20 Also growing up on Washington
21 Square North, I looked at the southern part of the
22 Village, I had a perfect view of it, and I watched
23 all the enormous sterile buildings go up. And
24 there's nothing wrong with those buildings, I
25 realize, but they're not, in my opinion, villagey,

1
2 and they displaced human scaled, colorful,
3 irreplaceable pieces of the village.

4 And now there are plans to take one
5 of the last pieces of open-aired, sky-filled space
6 in the South Village--an area that already holds
7 the towering Washington Village, and the City
8 allowed NYU to build Washington Village only
9 because of promising that NYU--the promise that
10 they made to the City that it would be there in
11 perpetuity. And that promise now seems to be on
12 the verge of being broken.

13 And it's not that I don't like
14 change, there's been good changes in the Village--
15 I'm not mugged as often as I was--but some have
16 been heartbreaking. And for me, the worst thing
17 has been the general gradual destruction of things
18 that make the Village so attractive in the first
19 place. People still desperately want to live
20 here, but I'm not sure people will if the
21 quiriness and gorgeousness and humanist of the
22 Village keeps disappearing. NYU's expansion plan
23 is so massive that it's in danger of wiping out
24 the very thing that makes being here so unique,
25 and if that happens I wonder will students want to

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2 come here as badly. I don't see that it's so
3 great for NYU either, necessarily. So I'm here to
4 add my voice to those who want to protect the
5 Village and to keep it accessible. You can't
6 decide a land issue without considering the people
7 who live there, so I want to be part of that. NYU
8 made their wishes clear, and now I, as a neighbor,
9 am trying to make mine clear.

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

11 MATTHEW BRODERICK: Thank you for
12 your time.

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
14 much.

15 MATTHEW BRODERICK: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Eve, who's
17 next?

18 MALE VOICE: Here you go.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: You want to go
20 next? Okay. You got that, all right, just pass
21 it on.

22 HOWARD BADER: Hi, my name is
23 Howard Bader, I live at the corner of Bleecker
24 Street and Mercer, I've been there for 25 years,
25 I'm married with two kids. I also own a small

1
2 business, an environmental consulting firm, which
3 is in the same area. I am a current number of the
4 dog run at the corner of Mercer and Houston and
5 I'm a former vice president and a two-time board
6 member.

7 And I'm at the run every day and
8 I'm there every night, which, occasionally, the
9 dogs make a little bit noise at night and it's
10 kind of nice being where we are. We used to run
11 our dogs illegally on the NYU lawns to give them a
12 touch of the grass, and we got a lot of complaints
13 when there was even a little peep out of the
14 little pups' mouth, so I think moving it over is a
15 bad move.

16 In my opinion, this project is
17 being pushed by just a handful of powerful people
18 against the will of a community that just wants a
19 beautiful and decent community to live and raise
20 their families. If this project is relocated, the
21 job creation doesn't change; the money to be made
22 by the developers doesn't change, it just goes to
23 a different location. What really troubles me is
24 all the talk I hear, and I hear a lot of it in the
25 dog run, about how this is a done deal, people say

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2 you're wasting your time, this has already been
3 decided, and based on what I saw at City Planning,
4 it makes me kind of wonder.

5 But anyway, I think we're all
6 frustrated by the politics we see in Washington
7 and Albany by politicians that do not represent
8 the people, but instead their own careers and
9 special interest groups, and I hope this doesn't
10 become that. You as a City Council, this is your
11 chance to stop this, to end the cycle, and make
12 this a better world. As I look at the people in
13 here, the people that protested today, you know,
14 it's obvious they're speaking out of their hearts.
15 When I listened to the people who are pro-NYU,
16 they sound like robots to me, reading off a
17 script, okay? So, please, your legacy after you
18 leave office, and ultimately this world, is what
19 you leave behind. Maybe siding with the Mayor and
20 developers will help your career in the short
21 term, but it's not why you're here, you're here to
22 represent us, the people of Greenwich Village, the
23 people of New York City.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

25 HOWARD BADER: Please don't

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disappoint us.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, and I'm sure you get a good response on that one-- there you go. Even from the panel, even from the panel. All right, Eve.

SAM LIBERMAN: Hello.

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Say your name, make sure to your name--

SAM LIBERMAN: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --and then speak right into the microphone.

SAM LIBERMAN: Oh, hello, my name is Sam Liberman and--

EVE LIBERMAN: I'm Eve Liberman.

SAM LIBERMAN: We live at 505 LaGuardia Place and are wholeheartedly opposed to NYU 2031 and here are some reasons why.

EVE LIBERMAN: What I want to know is why can't 18 to 22-year-old NYU students take the subway or the bus to get to their school. As an 11-year-old who takes public transportation home from school, I think that it is crazy to have kids who are roughly eight years older than me not

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taking public transportation when I have to.

[Applause]

SAM LIBERMAN: I'm here to express my concern about how NYU plans to protect my home, 505 LaGuardia Place. We are a Mitchell-Lama co-op with 175 families living here, NYU owns the land under our building and wants to raise our rent. If they did, 505 would go from affordable housing to becoming housing only available for the wealthy. The people able to stay would have to turn their lifestyles around, which may be difficult or impossible.

EVE LIBERMAN: NYU has to stop puppeting and playing with people's lives and start compromising.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Wow, thank you. Look at that, like Nathan Lane, upstaged again, look at that. Next, please.

[Laughter]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Next, please.

DR. STEPHEN FRANTZ: My name is Stephen Frantz, and thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the faculty against the Sexton plan.

FEMALE VOICE: Louder.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: A little
louder--

DR. STEPHEN FRANTZ: Oh, I'm--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --follow Eve's
lead.

DR. STEPHEN FRANTZ: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yeah.

DR. STEPHEN FRANTZ: Well I'm
speaking a little bit different aspect here with
regard to at least one of the public health
aspects. I am the former director of the New York
State Department of Health's program that deals
with urban beasts, if you will, such as rats,
mice, and cockroaches.

Since 1976, the rats of New York
City have been among my subjects of behavior and
ecology research, as well as applied control
programs. In the interests of time, I'm going to
cut from what I've given you just to--the one
aspect of my prepared statement.

I have consulted on many
construction projects with regard to rats and mice

1
2 and other undesired wildlife. I just want to make
3 it clear that New York City rats have never met a
4 construction site they didn't like, and the
5 proposed 2031 plan is a mammoth, prolonged
6 construction site. The evacuations will be much
7 larger and deeper than the average dig. Major
8 construction and demolition greatly disturbs
9 habitats of the local resident rats. Some rats
10 will remain at or near the site because
11 construction sites provide plenty of food, water,
12 and shelter, and they will proliferate. Also,
13 rats will migrate into the surrounding
14 neighborhoods where increases in rat-human
15 encounters are likely to occur in our basements,
16 playgrounds, and on the streets. As you well
17 know, rats do damage and cause psychological
18 stress and disease, including dissemination of
19 asthma allergens.

20 For these reasons, among many
21 others, the City Council must not approve the 2031
22 plan without first conducting a full public health
23 review. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
25 much. Ladies?

1
2 MIRIAM FOX: Hi, I'm Miriam Fox, I
3 live at 505 LaGuardia, and I've lived in the area
4 since 1960, so my concerns are both community
5 concerns and personal concerns. And I'm really
6 very appreciative of the Council and the meeting
7 here, that it's clear that you're still reflecting
8 on the consequences of the decisions that you're
9 going to make here. To me, you're our Supreme
10 Court.

11 You already know every argument for
12 and against these plans, what hangs in the balance
13 is keeping a balance between corporate NYU
14 interests and policies that serve the population--
15 the residents, students, and visitors. NYU itself
16 has shown a bunker mentality from closing public
17 access to the gardens, both from LaGuardia Place
18 and from Mercer Streets, and to planning an
19 academic underground bunkers in these buildings.

20 In regard to the 505 land lease
21 held by NYU, 505 is a Mitchell-Lama building.
22 Mayor Bloomberg's administration worked with us to
23 guarantee our staying in the Mitchell-Lama
24 program, which means reasonable carrying charges
25 for middle income and low income residents. It

1
2 certainly would fly in the face of his intentions,
3 should NYU put extraordinary financial pressure on
4 us. NYU has other options--offers right here
5 downtown; we do not.

6 I respectfully hope you seriously
7 curb NYU's gobbling up the modest amount of air,
8 light, and space that currently grace this
9 neighborhood. When is enough? Please vote no to
10 the expansion in its current form. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

12 JUDITH CALLET: Okay. Hi, my name
13 is Judith Callet, I'm a resident of Bleecker
14 Street, just two blocks away from the super
15 blocks. I was resident chair of the Bleecker Area
16 Merchants and Residents Association, so I had a
17 lot of dealings with both residents and merchants
18 during my time.

19 I want to speak--there is--everyone
20 is speaking about the next 20 years. Our area has
21 already lived through 13 years of construction
22 from NYU, so this is an additional 20 years. Our
23 merchants have suffered greatly from the
24 construction of NYU--they block off streets, they
25 redirect traffic--and some of them didn't survive,

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2 some of the merchants, and some are just now
3 recovering from the--they have had construction
4 from Mercer Street to McDougal street on every
5 single block, so it has affected our area greatly.
6 And that's since 1999, when they did the
7 demolition on the Loeb Student Center.

8 I also want to let the Committee
9 know that I have--I don't understand how the
10 Greenwich Village, Chelsea Chamber of Commerce did
11 a survey. They did a survey the article was in
12 the Villager on April 5th, 2012, and they reported
13 that the Chamber of Commerce did a survey and
14 handed out information about the NYU 2031 plan.
15 The zip codes that they sent these surveys to were
16 10010, 10011, and 10003, totally neglecting 10012,
17 which is our area. None of the merchants that I
18 spoke with--on my own, not anything to do with the
19 block association--none of them had received any
20 survey. So they are not for this construction.
21 They are not for the commercial space on the next
22 two blocks. We have several areas and several
23 empty spaces in ours, if anyone--NYU wants to do,
24 be commercial, they can come to the empty spaces.

25 And also we also have no hospital

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in our area. And adding to the--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
No, don't start now with that.

JUDITH CALLET: I know, but adding
to the population--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yeah.

JUDITH CALLET: --and cutting off
the major thoroughfares where the first responders
use mainly Bleecker, Houston, Mercer, all of
those, LaGuardia, it's a great concern to our
area, and--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
Okay.

JUDITH CALLET: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Great. Thank
you very much. I want to thank this panel very
much, and I apologize for any offense anyone took.
I'm sure there was none.

Eve, you're okay? Okay. Good.
You want to stay for any other testimony?

EVE LIBERMAN: Where should I put
my stuff?

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: You can give
that to that gentleman right there.

2 FEMALE VOICE: Okay. Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you all
4 very much. Good job. All right.

5 [Pause]

6 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Next panel in
7 favor with a tough act to follow: Lilly Padilla,
8 Carol Mandel, Allison Leary--

9 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down,
10 please.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Any of these
12 people leave yet? Jeff Blank and Jesse Bueckert,
13 Rueckert, and then I have Susan Hilfertise,
14 Hilferty, I don't know how many they are still
15 here. These are all in favor, I hope we have
16 enough room for all of you.

17 All right, we're making progress
18 and I do appreciate the cooperation. We don't
19 serve dinner, I just want to be clear. Across the
20 street, there's a Starbuck's.

21 All right, whenever you're ready,
22 pick who wants to go first, and just start, just
23 state your name, remember, for the record.

24 [Pause]

25 JESSE RUECKERT: My name is Jesse

1
2 Rueckert, I'm a rising--there we go, my name's
3 Jesse Rueckert, I am a rising senior at NYU and
4 the College of Arts and Science here to testify in
5 support of the NYU 2031 plan.

6 One of the most rewarding things
7 about my experience at NYU has been the
8 opportunity I've had to engage intimately with the
9 New York City community, particularly the
10 underprivileged. For the past year and a half
11 I've had a university-funded internship at the Ali
12 Forney Center for homeless LGBT youth, where I've
13 worked on expanding community awareness of, and
14 service to, our city's homeless youth.

15 One of my major projects this year
16 was creating a student advocacy group to actively
17 work to support the homeless youth community.
18 Unfortunately, despite high student interest in
19 the issue, organizing meetings, projects, and
20 activities with on-campus volunteers was made
21 extremely difficult by the lack of university
22 space. With hundreds of students, clubs, and
23 organizations on campus and extremely limited
24 amount of meeting spaces, it's often literally
25 impossible to find appropriate space without

1
2 reserving it months in advance. Although my
3 advocacy group was able to complete several
4 fundraising and awareness projects during the
5 year, there were many opportunities for us to host
6 lectures, conferences, and other large community
7 events that we were forced to turn down due to
8 lack of space. The university provided our group
9 with an incredible amount of opportunity, support,
10 and guidance, but our ability to effectively serve
11 the community was severely limited without the
12 space to fully utilize the university's resources.

13 I know I speak for many of my
14 fellow students when I say that one of my favorite
15 things about NYU is its unique semiotic
16 relationship with the Village and the city at
17 large. And that one of the most valuable
18 experiences I've had--I've gained from NYU has
19 been becoming a part of this New York City
20 community.

21 Expanding existing university
22 spaces would allow us to build more dynamic and--a
23 more dynamic and meaningful relationship with the
24 surrounding community, making our university and
25 our city a better, stronger places to live and

1
2 learn for all of us. Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

4 [Pause]

5 LILLY PADILLA: Good afternoon, my
6 name is Lilly Padilla, I moved to New York City
7 from Oakland, California in 2007 to attend New
8 York University. I received my bachelor's degree
9 in Metropolitan Studies last year in 2011. I'm
10 now a New York City resident and live uptown in
11 Council Member Melissa Mark-Viverito's district.

12 During my undergraduate work at New
13 York University, I had the opportunity as a work-
14 study student in the Office of Community Service
15 to work with hundreds of nonprofit agencies in
16 public schools. I worked as a community service
17 liaison, leading students in their service
18 initiatives; I painted homeless shelters; we did
19 parks; stirred soups; visited seniors; and tutored
20 inner-city youth.

21 It was in large part these
22 experiences that led me to a career in education.
23 I am currently a public school teacher in New York
24 City teaching fellow and just finished my first
25 year on Wednesday--I teach kindergartners with

1
2 autism in the Bronx.

3 When I was at NYU, I was also
4 involved in dozens of activities every semester,
5 working in an office which provided advisement to
6 community service student clubs. The biggest
7 challenge I faced during these assignments was
8 finding a place to hold activities. Students are
9 always scrambling and competing for spaces to host
10 programs. NYU is greatly in need of space near
11 Washington Square to continue to serve the
12 organizations to which students bring so much
13 talent. We have to start planning nearly 18
14 months in advance just to ensure we have spaces,
15 and even then, we only secure about half the space
16 we need.

17 I know it appears the university
18 has a lot of real estate, but when I would try to
19 find a study spot in Bobst Library, I would
20 sometimes walk around for an hour before I could
21 find a desk, as someone mentioned earlier,
22 especially during finals time. The university is
23 over capacitated in every building. Any student
24 will tell you, walking from the library at 2 a.m.
25 when you're tired and distracted to a dorm 20

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2 blocks away can be unsettling. Trying to get from
3 a class on Mercer and Houston to a class on East
4 12th Street in 15 minutes is a bit hectic and
5 going any further would be impossible. I had to
6 tell my professors oftentimes that it wasn't a
7 personal offense when I was late to class.

8 I'm here today proud and grateful
9 for the education and experiences provided by NYU
10 and aware that the university desperately needs
11 more space. I'm here to ask the City Council to
12 please the support NYU 2031 and ensure that future
13 classes have the rich opportunities and
14 experiences I have had, and that we can continue
15 to support our nonprofit neighbors and friends.
16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, and
18 we'll send Melissa your regards.

19 [Pause]

20 SUSAN HILFERTY: Hi, my name is
21 Susan Hilferty, I am the chair of the Department
22 of Design for Stage and Film at NYU's Tisch School
23 of the Arts. I'm a designer for the stage, I work
24 on Broadway, all over the world, but my career is
25 rooted in the off-Broadway realm, where I continue

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to work even as we speak.

The Department of Design for Stage and Film at NYU Tisch, where I am chair, is one of the two top rated graduate theater design programs in the country. We have made it so while being housed in temporary quarters built in the sixties that were never meant to be permanent.

We have no faculty offices; we have no dedicated student workspaces as every other graduate design and architecture program in this country has; our classrooms are in use 18 hours a day, seven days a week. In fact, it's 24 hours a day, but my students aren't allowed to tell me. We need space to match the community where we reside--the heart of off-Broadway. We do not need or want big or fancy, we need to match our neighbors like La MaMa Theatre, Classic Stage Company, New York Theatre Workshop. Our footprint is small. We need efficient, well-designed theater spaces that function as the training arena for the next generation of theater artists. We are already resourceful and self-contained--all sets and costumes are made on location. It is not about big trucks coming and going. We are made in

1
2 and for the Village.

3 The New York Theatre movement was
4 born in this neighborhood. The Astor Place riots
5 in 1849 revolved around which of two actors was
6 better than the other in acting and major roles of
7 Shakespeare. Our faculty in the university
8 Village dislike construction, but understand the
9 need for space is more pressing. Our students,
10 alumni, and faculty work in all of the theaters of
11 this neighborhood; we are part of the fabric of
12 this community; we deserve a place to work that
13 keeps us here. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
15 Who's next? Who else, who was going when? Okay.
16 All right.

17 CAROL MANDEL: Okay. Hi, and thank
18 you, good afternoon. I did, my button's lit up,
19 but...

20 I'm Carol Mandel, I'm the Dean of
21 Libraries at New York University, and I think you
22 just heard, you know, about the demands on library
23 space at NYU. I'll give you some facts and
24 figures.

25 In an age of online access, you

1
2 might expect that fewer students use libraries,
3 but I think one visit to Bobst would tell you that
4 this is not the case. Study and research are at
5 the heart of the learning process and space for
6 intellectual productivity is an essential
7 component of a university education, and we are
8 really pressed for that kind of space. Just a few
9 indicative statistics: We see more than 10,000
10 visits to the library every day during the
11 academic year, every day. We have a limited
12 number, for example, of oversubscribed study
13 rooms. Students reserved these rooms over 37,000
14 times last year--that's study groups working over
15 37,000 times. And of course, we've just heard why
16 these spaces need to be proximate to classes and
17 they need to be proximate to where students live.

18 A standard rule of thumb for a
19 university is that it should provide study seats
20 for one-quarter of its student population. At
21 NYU, that would mean we'd have over 9,600 seats in
22 the library, and yet, the library provides fewer
23 than 3,000. And our study seats are typically at
24 81% capacity during the school year and, of
25 course, at exam time, you all know what it's like

1
2 at exam time and I'm stepping over you during that
3 time on the floor.

4 We're continually seeking ways to
5 increase reader capacity: We're moving lesser
6 used volumes to off-site facilities all the time,
7 we're reorganizing space through renovation, but
8 the more we renovate, the more demand there is for
9 our study seats. It's just the way students need
10 to work in this day and age.

11 So we're just one pretty obvious
12 example of why increased space for NYU would
13 really change the educational experience for
14 students. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

16 ALLISON LEARY: Good afternoon, I'm
17 Allison Leary, executive vice president for
18 operations at NYU. Part of my responsibility and
19 includes the eventual construction--thank you--the
20 eventual construction of these buildings, and I am
21 also responsible for the management of the
22 residential buildings that are most adjacent to
23 the construction sites.

24 I'm here to talk about the efforts
25 we have already committed to undertake to help

1
2 preserve the quality of life for residents on the
3 super blocks during the construction periods. I
4 would like to note that, while some of the
5 construction periods does span 20 years, it is the
6 case that each individual resident will be
7 directly exposed to only the portion of
8 construction that is most adjacent to their
9 specific residence, and this, of course, is of
10 much shorter duration than 20 years.

11 Let me outline some of the extra
12 efforts the university intends to take over and
13 above our already existing construction work rules
14 by first describing the steps to be taken within
15 the residents' apartments. To reduce the
16 potential for noise within people's homes, which I
17 should note will only be a factor during the
18 actual hours of construction, we will be
19 installing noise reducing windows before any
20 construction begins. The new windows will be
21 permanent improvements that will provide ongoing
22 benefit to residents long after the construction
23 projects are completed. We will also be
24 addressing the potential for noise transmission
25 via the air conditioning units through one of two

1
2 ways: Either by installing special covers
3 designed for this specific purpose, or replacing
4 the units themselves with units that provide
5 better performance in this area. The specific
6 solution will depend on the existing conditions at
7 each apartment and the option that provides the
8 best solution. Please note that these actions
9 will be taken for all residents, both NYU
10 affiliates and non-affiliates alike.

11 Moving to the construction sites,
12 we will be taking a wide range of mitigating
13 actions that include limiting the hours of
14 construction primarily to weekdays and there will
15 be limited work performed on weekends or holidays.
16 I should note that when work occurs on a weekend,
17 it is usually mandated by outside agencies,
18 usually to avoid business or traffic disruption
19 during the workweek.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Great, thank
21 you. Margaret? Anybody? Questions? No. Yeah,
22 go ahead, can you get over to that mic? Okay.
23 One second.

24 [Pause]

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: So did he know

1
2 Matthew Broderick was in the room? I was just
3 curious--Mitchell Moss? I don't think he--he knew
4 he was in the room or not? I was curious about.
5 Was that a coincidence or he knew? He had to
6 know, right?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Just on the
8 construction--

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Go ahead,
10 Margaret.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --the
12 construction mitigation, so when you were talking
13 about for NYU and non-NYU residents, were you
14 looking at the super block there, like where the
15 gym is across the street, those are not NYU
16 resident, like let's say the buildings on Mercer
17 Street?

18 ALLISON LEARY: Right.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: That's going
20 to be facing the Zipper building?

21 ALLISON LEARY: Right.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Are you going
23 to work with those resident to mitigate the noise
24 too?

25 ALLISON LEARY: Yes, that is part

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of our plan.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So the windows or whatever you're--

ALLISON LEARY: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --going to install will--

ALLISON LEARY: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --also cover them?

ALLISON LEARY: The windows, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay. All right, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right, well thank you very much. Couple things, first, we are no longer going to be accepting now any new people coming in to put on the list. They were still coming in, believe it or not. And then these following people left testimony in opposition: Ann Arlen, it looks like Hugh Gran, Hugh Gran, Dr. William--I'm sorry--Fabricius, Jean Standish, Jacob, it looks like, Ryvkin, in opposition.

And then in favor: Mary Brabeck, Jacqueline Gulstone, and--

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MALE VOICE: Anstiss Agnew.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --Anstiss--

MALE VOICE: Agnew.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --Agnew. All right. Now we have a new panel in opposition. Right? Yes. Sylvia Rackow, wow, finally, Allen Horlen, you know who you are? Are you here? Allen, I can't read the letters, what do you think? Katherine Schoonover? Allen A. Horland, anybody know him?

FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Is he here?

FEMALE VOICE: I haven't seen him.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. He might have left. Ralph Swain.

RALPH SWAIN: Here.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: John Kriskiewicz, glad when I mess up their name, they're not here, that's good. Jonathan Pearlroth?

MALE VOICE: He had to go.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: He had to go? Okay. And Jeffrey Rowland. There we go, Jeffrey. Now I really apologize to all of you for making

1
2 you wait. You know, we have a big pile, we're
3 trying to go through them, and we're still in the
4 nine o'clock's. How many more we got? Let me ask
5 Evan Mason, is Evan here? Oh, Peter Liberman was
6 just--was Eve's brother, right? Okay. Kevin
7 Gallagher.

8 KEVIN GALLAGHER: Here.

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Come on
10 up, Kevin. Don't be angry now, come on. Sorry.
11 All right, I'm sorry. You should be angry before
12 you get called up. We have a big pile still, so
13 I'm sure some people have left. I reiterate, if
14 you want to just leave your testimony, we'll take
15 it, read your name into the record. But the stack
16 is still reasonably large, I will admit, I just
17 broke that news to my wife. All right. Stop
18 engaging the crowd 'cause everyone starts skelling
19 [phonetic] at me, but I will--all right, whenever
20 you're ready. Who wants to start? Why don't you
21 start on the end? Yeah. I don't know what I got.

22 SYLVIA RACKOW: Hello, my name is
23 Sylvia Rackow, I live at 505 LaGuardia Place, and
24 I'm the chair of the Committee to Preserve Our
25 Neighborhood.

1
2 I'll give you my testimony and I'll
3 try to make, you know, kind of brief summarize
4 things.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Good.

6 SYLVIA RACKOW: We are talking
7 about here a private university, not a public one,
8 which is asking for public land to be given to
9 them. It is unfortunate that the City Planning
10 Commission should think that it's okay to give
11 public land, those strips along Mercer, to NYU.
12 As a taxpayer, I'm appalled. I'm appalled about
13 Brooklyn, the MTA building, that it's only going
14 to cost them \$5 a year, all right?

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I think it's
16 only \$1.

17 SYLVIA RACKOW: One dollar, excuse
18 me, \$1. Okay. I'd like to talk about the public
19 land. The public land is ours; the public land is
20 not theirs. And as Matthew Broderick pointed out--
21 -and I remember, I'm in my eighth decade and I've
22 lived all probably 40, 50 years in the Village--as
23 Matthew pointed out, he used to play on a sandlot
24 down there. I remember that sandlot, lots of kids
25 played there.

1
2 In terms of the zoning, I was at a
3 Community Board meeting at which one of NYU's, I
4 believe one of the architects or somebody there,
5 said to us, well when we create that campus inside
6 Washington Square Village, the first two floors we
7 will make retail shops because it will be good for
8 our students. So they would like the inner part
9 of the four buildings, as well as the outer
10 probably, the first and the second floors,
11 probably they'll put Wal-Mart or Kmart or, you
12 know, a branch of it over there. So--

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Sylvia, I got
14 to get you to wind up.

15 SYLVIA RACKOW: Oh, sorry. It's
16 hard for me to wind down.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

18 SYLVIA RACKOW: Okay? All right.
19 As far as the 505 lease, a rumor has been given to
20 us that they are asking for \$3 million a year as
21 our annual rent for that lease. That would be
22 approximately \$1,500 per apartment, approximately.
23 There are people in the building who don't--
24 they're on Social Security, they don't get \$1,500
25 a year.

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CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
All right, Sylvia, I'm going to cut you off only
'cause we have to keep moving, but we--

SYLVIA RACKOW: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --understand
about the 505 issues and the important--

[Crosstalk]

SYLVIA RACKOW: [Interposing] Okay.
But the zoning--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --we've heard
a lot of importance about keeping it affordable.

SYLVIA RACKOW: Okay. The zoning,
we don't--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Right.

SYLVIA RACKOW: --want to you to--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

SYLVIA RACKOW: --vote to give them
retail, to give them commercial space, they'll
take over the world.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
Sir, how are you?

RALPH SWAIN: Very good. My name
is Ralph Swain, and thank you all for letting me
testify.

1
2 I want to preface my remarks by a
3 question that Chairman Weprin, that you asked
4 earlier about access. At 20 past 6 last night, I
5 went to walk through the Sasaki Gardens and both
6 western gates were chained and padlocked. So much
7 for access.

8 I came here from Arizona, but I'm a
9 former resident of New York City and a regular
10 visitor of New York City, and I come to you, not
11 as one voice, but three voices. My own, as the
12 nephew of Hideo Sasaki, and those of his two
13 daughters, Rin Sasaki and Ann Sasaki who are in
14 California, could not make the trip today, but I
15 have appended their brief statements to my written
16 testimony.

17 The three of us are in unison with
18 the deep desire that this Committee will do the
19 right thing to prevent the destruction of the
20 Sasaki Garden. My late uncle was a gentle and
21 humble man who would be a bit embarrassed with the
22 strident voices that are being raised over this
23 issue, but he would also be saddened to learn that
24 there is a strong possibility his work of love may
25 obliterated.

1
2 This landmark garden represents
3 earlier work of a man whose firm in a few short
4 years would become a world-class award-winning
5 landscape architectural company. It represents a
6 loving husband and father who taught more than 20
7 years at Harvard, chaired the landscape
8 architecture there for 10. He was the first
9 recipient of the American Society of Landscape
10 Architects Medal, among many other awards. Okay.
11 He believed that it was the responsibility of all
12 developers to find ways of incorporating the
13 interest of all parties by exploring alternative
14 solutions to keep people happy and satisfied.

15 The Sasaki Garden is a testimony to
16 my uncle's love. Favorable action on your part
17 will preserve Hideo Sasaki artistic integrity.
18 Ladies and gentlemen of the Subcommittee, the
19 Washington Square Village Sasaki Garden is unique
20 and a treasured space, please don't allow it to be
21 destroyed.

22 Thank you.

23 SYLVIA RACKOW: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,
25 sir.

[Applause]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Let's go.

Quiet hands. Next?

JEFFREY ROWLAND: My name is

Jeffrey Rowland, a founding member of LaGuardia
Corner Gardens. I invite you all to visit us
before you vote on this proposal, and I thank you,
Council Member Chin, for having done so.

Today I speak in opposition to the
NYU 2031 plan focusing on one of its serious
problems. Why didn't NYU request the community
garden and the landscape to be remapped as
parkland? Mapping long sought by the gardens.
NYU's plan calls for other strips to be mapped as
parks, why not in front of the land they offer for
a public school?

By 2025, the SCA will decline to
build it because the upcoming Trinity Hudson
Square ULURP rezoning offer is going to be better.
Trinity proposes to build core and shell of a
school at Duarte Square six short blocks away.
It's naive to think that the SCA will spend for
two schools located so close. The SCA will choose
the one that costs the City the least, and, after

1
2 all, NYU is not offering to build the school and
3 Trinity is. So NYU fully expects to gain back the
4 use of that land.

5 Which brings us to why they have
6 deliberately left out mapping that portion of the
7 DOT strip that sits in front of the land. I
8 believe that in 2025 NYU will ask again for the
9 City to modify the super block so they can do on
10 LaGuardia Place as this plan will do on Mercer
11 with the so-called Zipper building. To build on
12 the DOT strip and move some of that space in
13 toward the center of surrounding buildings, thus,
14 creating a second enclosed campus plaza like the
15 one the plan calls for with the destruction of the
16 Sasaki Garden. And by financially imperiling the
17 residents of 505 building, Silver Towers can
18 become another NYU exclusive courtyard.

19 This plan--this part of the plan
20 alone demonstrates NYU's contempt for the
21 community and the Council Members. They think
22 that you will be fooled by this false offer of
23 land, which they don't expect to have to deliver
24 on. And after all, none of you will be in the
25 Council in 2025 to punish them for their deceit.

1
2 Make the plan include mapping
3 LaGuardia Corner Gardens and the Time Landscape as
4 parkland now and forever and protect these
5 community assets in perpetuity.

6 Thank you for your time.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

8 Sir?

9 KEVIN GALLAGHER: Hi, my name is
10 Kevin Gallagher and I live at 77 Bleecker Street.
11 I thank you for letting me speak today and I thank
12 everybody else who has spoken today, many of whom
13 represent many, many people.

14 I'm just a regular guy, I teach
15 middle school theater, not at NYU obviously, and I
16 have two small children--Sky, age 7, and Leo, age
17 5. A few years ago--or a number of years ago, a
18 book came out called Everything I Needed to Know I
19 Learned in Kindergarten. And I cite that now
20 because my son and my daughter at age 5 and age 7
21 know what's going on here, and it's a simple,
22 simple lesson. And they can teach NYU this simple
23 lesson.

24 A few months ago, I went with my
25 daughter to see The Lorax and when we came out of

1
2 the movie, she said, Dad, that's just like what's
3 happening here and I said, yeah. And I said that-
4 -and she said, well President Sexton is kind of
5 like, you know, the guy cutting down all our--
6 going to cut all our truffula trees down, and I
7 said, yeah. And so that's why she's come on the
8 marches with me and raised her voice and has
9 joined in this protest as well. And so I'm here,
10 not only speaking for my two children, but for all
11 of those children.

12 And forgive me for making it
13 personal and not including all of the lands, but
14 just that that playground we use so much, we use
15 it over 300 days out of the year. There are over
16 70 trees in that park that we look out on every
17 day and that provide oxygen and air for all of our
18 children. And the one word that is mentioned in
19 the movie is, unless. So I'm here because, unless
20 we speak out, my kids know that the bad things can
21 happen. So I'm here so that they can learn the
22 lesson that if you do speak out, good things
23 happen. So they know that Dr. Seuss is smarter
24 than President Sexton and I'm here for them, and
25 we speak for the trees.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Very good.

Wasn't worth the wait for you, but it was worth the wait for us. Well done. Next.

PETER LIBERMAN: My name is Peter Liberman, I'm not as eloquent as my kids, but I want to put a footnote on some of the comments that they made.

I represent 505 LaGuardia Place, where I'm on the board, which, as you know, is a 175-unit Mitchell-Lama co-op in the southern super block. I'd like to explain a little more clearly than we've heard today how the 2031 Plan endangers 505's affordability and survival.

Like all other Mitchell-Lamas, 505 must pay all its expenses, but is governed by HPD's income regulations. But unlike every other Mitchell-Lama co-op, 505 holds a 99-year lease, a ground lease with NYU instead of owning its own land. Under the terms of this 1964 lease, NYU can increase our rent starting in 2014--that's in two years--based on the market value of the land. NYU recently told us that they are legally entitled to an increase of \$3 million a year--\$3 million a year is an amount that would immediately bankrupt

1
2 505. Any increase would force our most vulnerable
3 residents out onto the street.

4 The 2031 plan compounds this threat
5 in two ways. First, up-zoning from residential to
6 commercial increases the market value of the land,
7 which in turn increases the rent NYU thinks that
8 they can charge.

9 Secondly, this ULURP submission
10 undercuts 505's ability to negotiate with NYU. As
11 a major leaseholder and building owner, 505 is a
12 party in interest to the 1964 Large Scale. So as
13 a party in interest, 505's prior consent is
14 required for its dissolution. NYU is attempting
15 an end-run around 505's rights.

16 Just like to quote quickly from
17 testimony being submitted by Jesse Masyr, a very
18 experienced land use attorney, quote, in all my
19 years in this business, I have never seen a large
20 scale plan that has been so significantly altered
21 without first obtaining the consent or waiver of
22 all parties in interest. This violates the zoning
23 resolution and sets a dangerous precedent.

24 The City must uphold its promise of
25 affordable community housing on this block going

1
2 back to the original urban renewal plan. We at
3 505, thus, urge the Council, require NYU to make
4 an ironclad legally binding commitment to 505's
5 long-term affordability as an absolute
6 precondition for approving any part of the 2031
7 plan.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

9 Okay. Great. You have a question? Diana, you
10 have a question? Oh, are you being talked out of
11 the question?

12 [Pause]

13 JEFFREY ROWLAND: Count the brown
14 and turn it down.

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Well thank you
16 very much, we're going to excuse you, thank you
17 very much.

18 SYLVIA RACKOW: Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: So I have good
20 news and bad news for everybody, the good news--

21 JEFFREY ROWLAND: Count the brown
22 and turn it down.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: There you go.
24 See what you started with the Dr. Seuss? Okay. I
25 have one panel left in favor only, that's the good

1 news. The bad news is we have 90 still in
2 opposition, although some of them may have left.
3 I mean, the bad news is just on time, that's all,
4 I didn't mean in people. But here, I'm going to
5 call now what is going to be the last panel in
6 favor and if anyone I missed, I'll call for them
7 to come up too. Annie Nelson, Natasha Stanislas,
8 Phoebe Kingsak, Rocco Puno, Anthony Drummond, and
9 Amanda Jimenez, Amanda. And is there anyone else
10 here in favor of the project who hasn't been
11 called up to testify? Anyone against want to now
12 speak in favor? No, I'm kidding. All right,
13 that's it for in favor. It's good, good start.

14 Sorry to keep the young people
15 waiting, although you guys didn't come as early as
16 everybody else, so I see it, I don't feel so bad.
17 But it's great to have you anyway. So whoever
18 wants to go first, you have two minutes, state
19 your name, figure out who's going first.

20 AMANDA JIMENEZ: I am.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right,
22 finally, a volunteer. Make sure to say your name,
23 you have two minutes. Thank you.

24 AMANDA JIMENEZ: My name is Amanda
25

1
2 Jimenez, and last month I graduated from NYU
3 Steinhardt School and consider myself to be
4 extremely lucky to have received the education and
5 experience that NYU currently has to offer. On
6 average, most NYU students are a self-sufficient,
7 motivated, and explorative group, whether it is
8 propelled by their need for adventure or their
9 need for additional resources and space.

10 Currently, there are some major improvements that
11 are desperately needed on campus in order to keep
12 students actively involved in the university.

13 Towards the end of the year, most
14 students head to Bobst Library to study for
15 finals. Despite its great size, it is simply not
16 large enough. I remember days where I would
17 circle the floors of the library for up to half an
18 hour during finals just looking for an empty seat.
19 Not being able to sit in on one of the only--in
20 the only communal building and have a place to
21 study on campus not only discourages students but
22 is a frustrating situation during a stressful
23 time. It also does not help create a sense of
24 community. Instead, it encourages students to
25 stay off campus during those times and study

1
2 elsewhere. The weeks surrounding finals and
3 midterms should be a time for bonding and growth
4 where students can be on campus all day and seek
5 each other out for support during stressful times.
6 There is a need for more study space and meeting
7 space on campus that is accessible to all students
8 where they can always rely on finding an available
9 study station.

10 As a Steinhardt graduate, I spent
11 most of my time on campus in the Steinhardt
12 building. Presently, the building has two working
13 elevators and my major alone has over 700 people.
14 Usually, I was running to and from my internships
15 to class. Trying to get to class became a
16 challenge once I was already in the building. The
17 stairways were packed getting to and from and you
18 could wait for up to 15 minutes in line trying to
19 get in the elevators. Some of classrooms were
20 cramped, even though most of my classes did not
21 have more than 22 people. As a student, I
22 shouldn't be worried about how long it'll take me
23 to get to my class once I'm already in a building,
24 it should be about making sure I'm there on time
25 and prepared. There is a need for bigger

1
2 classrooms, upgraded facilities, and amenities to
3 ensure that students spend their time focusing on
4 academic matters.

5 Just to wrap it up, I support NYU's
6 plan and I was a very happy student there.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

8 ROCCO PUNO: Good afternoon,
9 Chairman Weprin and fellow Council Members, my
10 name is Rocco Puno and I'm a rising senior. I
11 grew up outside New York and was extremely excited
12 to come to the city. I felt that I would be the
13 perfect student to deal with the complexity,
14 dynamism, and culture that the city is known for.
15 But one aspect that I discovered that I might not
16 have been prepared for was the issue of space.
17 When I first got to my apartment, it certainly was
18 not what I expected, but I figured I could manage.
19 When I entered the subway during rush hour for the
20 first time, that was certainly a pushing war. I
21 could deal with that. However, when it came to my
22 education and harnessing the skills that I came
23 here for, I needed that space.

24 Personally, as a representative of
25 the student government and my fraternity for

1
2 booking rooms, I've struggled to book space in our
3 own building. Everything from student elections
4 to chapter meetings, I've had to jockey my way
5 into getting space with organizations that are
6 just as deserving. I've gone through our
7 staircase and have heard some of the most
8 beautiful voices, but they are in the stairs
9 because there is no space for them to practice.
10 I've seen students forego club events simply
11 because there's no space to have them. I've seen
12 students commute up to midtown just to find a
13 place to study because the study space is all
14 filled up.

15 By the time this expansion is
16 finished, I will long be gone as a student, but
17 the reason why I want to see this happen is
18 because I want future students to not have the
19 difficulties we've gone through. I want students
20 to be able to hone the talents they were brought
21 here for. I want future students to have the
22 opportunity to be the best that they can be by
23 giving the space to do so.

24 I would like to conclude by
25 thanking you for lending your time to a 20-year

1
2 old. I hope that when you think about this plan,
3 you think about the student that it ultimately
4 serves. I have met some of the most dynamic and
5 interesting people at this school, and I hope that
6 we continue to attract that group by growing as a
7 university and, by extension, as a community.

8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
10 much.

11 PHOEBE KINGSAK: Hi, my name is
12 Phoebe Kingsak and I just graduated from NYU as
13 well from the College of Arts and Science.

14 I come before you all today to do
15 what I do best, which is share my NYU story. As a
16 campus tour guide, I act as a matchmaker for the
17 university, helping high school students find
18 their best college match. I've given countless
19 tours over the past four years in hopes of
20 reaching out to students who were just like me--
21 yearning for something more than I or anyone else
22 had planned for me.

23 At NYU, I was able to find a
24 community rooted in more than football rivalries
25 and green quads. I found my three best friends on

1
2 the first day that we moved in to our res hall,
3 with whom I still live today. I soaked in the
4 open-mindedness and opinionated air everyone
5 shared, far different from my suburban upbringing
6 in Dallas, Texas. I found students and friends
7 just like me, obsessed with school spirit and
8 looking for ways to impact the incoming classes.
9 I took on the roles as Welcome Week Captain,
10 summer RA, health educator, admissions ambassador,
11 all of which aimed to guide students to their
12 rightful path. Even more important than my love
13 for my school, I loved who I became more than
14 ever: A guide, a mentor, a positive result from
15 the endlessly supporting atmosphere NYU maintains.
16 Whether a student comes in wanting to be a doctor
17 or a filmmaker, NYU's resources allow them to
18 pursue their dreams and to create even new ones.

19 On every one of my tours, I explain
20 to the guests that for my college search, I wanted
21 a university that stood for more than school
22 colors and academic degrees. My college would be
23 a metonymy of my generation, my culture, my
24 nation. It would blend into the city and the
25 world a fusion of the infinite ideas and

1
2 possibilities this place possesses. NYU is the
3 epitome of all these things I wanted out of my
4 school and my four years as a college student.

5 I support the 2031 plan, not
6 because I'm asking for football fields and more
7 on-campus housing, I see it as an even greater
8 opportunity to spread pride to future students and
9 residents of New York City, to exemplify NYU as a
10 beacon of everything America has stood for since
11 its inception. We're a melting pot of so many
12 ideas, and with even more resources and space to
13 foster future minds, the next generation will be
14 even more Internet-savvy and I put have a lot of
15 potential. They'll appreciate the opportunity to
16 become their own person and value the faculty,
17 university resources, and the neighborhood which
18 they could do so.

19 Though my unforgettable time at NYU
20 has come and gone, there is still time to impact
21 the future endeavors and university life of the
22 next NYU students and future residents of the
23 area.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Very good,
25 take a breath. That was very impressive. Next.

1
2 NATASHA STANISLAS: Hello, my name
3 is Natasha Stanislas, I'm a recent alumna from the
4 Tisch School of the Arts, where I pursued a major
5 in Film and Television Arts, I'm also a native New
6 Yorker from the Bronx, New York. I chose NYU on
7 the promise that I would have countless ways to
8 connect with other--

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
10 Just speak closer to the mic, I'll give you those
11 five seconds back.

12 NATASHA STANISLAS: Thank you. I
13 chose NYU on the promise that I would have
14 countless ways to connect with other students in
15 my classrooms, in the residence halls, or in my
16 case, the Commuter Lounge, student clubs, the
17 campus Starbucks, and the Washington Square Park.
18 During my time at NYU, I commuted for well over an
19 hour, sometimes two, to make it to class, but when
20 I made it to Washington Square Park, I knew that I
21 was finally on campus.

22 What did catch me off guard was how
23 similar my time at this dynamic, urban, global,
24 concrete jungle of a campus reminded me of my high
25 school. I spent a great deal of time looking for

1
2 space. This week alone, I exhausted space just
3 looking to be able to read a book, but even during
4 finals week, as many of my fellow students have
5 attested, looking for space in Bobst Library can
6 be very difficult.

7 During a past stint as part of the
8 Commuter Student Council, we had to shuffle event
9 times and locations as spaces were increasingly
10 unavailable. Planning community service events
11 can get stressful, as student leaders have to
12 accommodate the realities of 20,000 students
13 attempting to use the same facilities and
14 resources at the same time.

15 Here at NYU, there is honestly an
16 energy and a go-getter attitude that resonates
17 around campus, which has encouraged me to discover
18 and develop my collaborative and creative
19 capabilities through my studies at Tisch. What
20 this school has done for me is introduce to me a
21 complex network of friends who all want to achieve
22 something great. I love being in a space that
23 allows me to be me, but that space is largely
24 metaphorical, as I find myself jostling with my
25 co-scholars for room.

1
2 The NYU 2031 Core Expansion Plan
3 would allow NYU to strengthen and enhance spaces
4 we already use. In doing so, I truly believe the
5 NYU community can spend more time serving
6 students, and the community.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
8 You're the last one, right into the mic.

9 ANNIE NELSON: Hello, my name is
10 Annie Nelson and I am speaking in favor of the NYU
11 2031 plan, and, like Natasha, I am a native New
12 Yorker. In the fall, I will be entering my senior
13 year at NYU and the past three years have been
14 extremely fulfilling, challenging, and enjoyable.

15 On campus, I serve as an Admissions
16 Ambassador and tour guide and this year as a
17 supervisor, I am finding it difficult just to book
18 space for me. Through this job, I have the
19 distinct pleasure of interacting with prospective
20 students who could one day be the future of NYU.
21 Because I am meeting with students that would be
22 attending NYU in a year or three years from now, I
23 am forced to be forward thinking. When giving
24 tours of the campus, I am excited to talk about
25 what NYU has offered me, but I am more excited to

1
2 talk about what NYU plans for the future.

3 I find that what I can speak about
4 with the utmost confidence with my tour groups is
5 NYU's global expansion. Having had experience
6 with NYU's study abroad site in Florence, I love
7 talking about how I was able to leave the country
8 for the first time because of the opportunity that
9 I received from NYU. Globally, NYU is expanding
10 and changing at an enormous rate which is
11 obviously in response to the growing global market
12 and environment. However, I feel as if our main
13 hub, our campus in New York City, has fallen a bit
14 behind.

15 We students are outgrowing our
16 current campus. Our ambition, intellectual
17 abilities, and passion demand space that we do not
18 currently have. The restructuring of the super
19 block area would truly release the tension caused
20 by the spacing issue and will remove obstacles
21 that I have faced in the past three years. It is
22 both disappointing and disencouraging when I set
23 out to complete a project and I am hindered by a
24 lack of space. My fellow students and I find it
25 quite difficult to reserve rooms for group study

1
2 work simply because of the discrepancy between the
3 amount of students and the space available.

4 With the approval of these plans,
5 NYU can continue to be a competitive and
6 successful institution that can comfortably
7 provide resources for students who would treasure
8 them. Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Well done,
10 with seven seconds to spare. Well thank you very
11 much, you are certainly a terrific representation
12 of the great education that people are getting at
13 NYU, I can't imagine a more delightful panel. But
14 thank you very much.

15 All right, now we're going to go to
16 the big pile of opposition. I'm going to read off
17 names, I'm going to read off a bunch of them since
18 some people might have left, I want to try to move
19 through this. Alison Greenberry, Gurn--

20 FEMALE VOICE: Greenberg.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Greenberg.

22 [Off mic]

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right,
24 Alison Greenberg was here in opposition. Paul
25 Edwards.

2 PAUL EDWARDS: Here.

3 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Come on up,
4 Paul. Jesse Kasowitz--

5 FEMALE VOICE: He left.

6 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --Jen Senko,
7 Sachiko Perfit.

8 MALE VOICE: Pettit.

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Pettit, okay.
10 It's my eyes. Eve Stuart. Eve, you here? Is Eve
11 Stuart here? Susan Taylorson. Susan Taylorson.
12 Mary Johnson, come on up. Mary Johnson?

13 MALE VOICE: Mary Johnson left.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Diana
15 Boernstein. No? I'm going to go a couple more.

16 FEMALE VOICE: Diana isn't here.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right, G.
18 Bedrosian, Bedrosian?

19 G. BEDROSIAN: Here.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yes, okay,
21 take your time. All right, that should be a panel
22 there. All right. All right, now you're
23 definitely going to have to say your names because
24 I don't know who ended up making it up here.

25 Please get comfortable and one of you grab the mic

and you can start.

[Off mic]

SUSAN TAYLORSON: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: And state your name, I'm going to excuse myself for one minute, but just go ahead.

SUSAN TAYLORSON: Okay. My name is Susan Taylorson, I live with my family in Washington Square Village in the super blocks and have lived there for over 30 years. I'm a member of the LaGuardia community gardens and the Washington Square Village Tenants Association.

I heartily oppose the misbegotten NYU 2031 expansion plan and urge you to do so too. Send NYU back to the drawing board. I believe I speak for all my neighbors in saying this.

What I especially oppose are the following: The destruction of the renowned and beautiful Sasaki Garden, cutting down hundreds of mature trees, any the effective ruining of the LaGuardia Community Corner Gardens from lack of sufficient light caused by the tall buildings.

I also oppose the destruction of one of the few ground-level children's playgrounds

1
2 in the Village, the so-called Key Park. I also
3 oppose the destruction of the existing fire lanes
4 that are the only means of ingress and egress for
5 fire trucks to the extremely long Washington
6 Square Village buildings.

7 I also oppose buildings so high
8 that most local residents will lose nearly all the
9 natural light in their apartments. I oppose, as
10 was spoken about by Sylvia Rackow, the taking of
11 public lands for private purposes. I also oppose
12 turning super blocks into a construction site for
13 20 years, creating unbearable noise, pollution,
14 and traffic for thousands of residents for 20
15 years in what is currently a highly livable, green
16 and leafy residential village neighborhood, and
17 turning it into a bleak and dark concrete jungle
18 of monstrous Boomerang and Zipper buildings.

19 The mitigation actions that were
20 spoken about by NYU's representatives do not help
21 anyone who would might want to go outside their
22 apartments.

23 Please oppose all these things too.
24 NYU's plan is an egregious land grab that rides
25 roughshod over the well-being of thousands of

1
2 residents of the super blocks, mostly rent-
3 stabilized seniors and faculty families. Please
4 zap the Zipper and ban the Boomerang. Yeah, I
5 implore you to just say no.

6 With all due respect, I'll just
7 close with this to Professor Hillary Ballon, the
8 NYU's urban studies expert, if density means no
9 air, no light, no green, no open space, I only
10 hope and pray that density is not the unstoppable
11 inevitable wave of the future. I implore you to
12 just say no.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you.

14 DIANA BOERNSTEIN: I'm Diana
15 Boernstein [phonetic] and I live--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA:
17 [Interposing] Diana, can you just lower the mic?

18 DIANA BOERNSTEIN: Yes, is that
19 right?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Fantastic.

21 DIANA BOERNSTEIN: Okay. Thank.
22 I've got very little to say because most of the
23 points I was going to make have already been made
24 much more eloquently than me. What? You can't
25 hear.

1
2 One of the points was the mystery
3 of the how many classes are on Friday, some say no
4 and some say many. Why is New York University
5 withdrawing apartments from Washington Square
6 Village? The strangely high cost of tuition, and
7 the unpleasantness of the NYU buildings on 3rd
8 Street, quite mysterious 'cause they've been very
9 expensive buildings.

10 I have had two encounters with New
11 York University, the first was in the early
12 seventies when New York University was undergoing
13 its near bankruptcy, I think, and four of us
14 bought a lovely building on LaGuardia Place from
15 the university, they had bought it and then
16 couldn't, apparently, couldn't afford to do
17 anything with it. And I've been living there, we
18 all have, we're all artists and all artist spouses
19 since then. And that was a wonderful encounter.
20 We now rent the ground floor to New York
21 University for a meeting space.

22 The second encounter is now, New
23 York University is planning a huge building which
24 is going to block off the light from my front
25 window, overlooking LaGuardia Place. They've

1
2 already blocked off the light from my rear window
3 with some very large structure there. And they
4 will remove the trees and the green strips which
5 we overlook, and a road which will--I'm sorry,
6 the--yes, we will be deprived of our view.

7 I am reminded--sorry, quickly--of
8 the Parkinson's laws, which I'm sure some of you
9 know about, but it's perhaps before your--in
10 England, Parkinson--it was the in war time, it was
11 written, Parkinson, a professor, found out that
12 productivity declines as new buildings especially
13 built for the purpose for which they were built.
14 And I fear that the newer buildings that NYU is
15 going to put up will have the same fate. When I
16 was at university at NYU or at Columbia, we had
17 fairly unpleasant quarters and we did extremely
18 pretty well, I think, and the more special
19 accommodations you have, the less well you seem to
20 do. So I just--

21 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA:

22 [Interposing] Thank you, Diana.

23 DIANA BOERNSTEIN: Thank you.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Next.

25 SACHIKO PETTIT: Good afternoon, my

1
2 name is Sachiko Pettit and I'm an NYU
3 undergraduate.

4 As a senior majoring in media,
5 culture, and communication, I've learned that
6 often what we hear reflects an agenda of powerful
7 interests. I discovered something off about NYU's
8 story when the administration promoted the
9 expansion plan as sustainable and environmentally
10 friendly. I decided to do a semester-long
11 independent study, which I have made copies for
12 the Council and discovered the environmental
13 destructiveness of the plan.

14 The NYU sustainability department
15 makes a big deal about environmentally friendly
16 policies. Promoting sustainability is a common
17 rhetorical move among universities nationwide,
18 which are undertaking major expansion projects.
19 Gerald Aiken, a postgraduate researcher at Durham
20 University, says of this propaganda tactic, what
21 appears to be a morally responsible institution
22 striving for ecological justice can often hide
23 very unsustainable practices.

24 Anticipating environmental
25 criticism of the plan, NYU took steps to

1 preemptively silence opposition. In 2006, the
2 administration began the expansion planning
3 process; in the same year, it created the
4 sustainability department to appear in
5 environmentally responsible. The next year, NYU
6 installed its cogeneration power plant facility,
7 advertising it as sustainable.
8

9 NYU claims that building in
10 Washington Square Village is necessary, as any
11 other location cannot be served by the facility.
12 So by creating the facility, NYU gave itself the
13 excuse it needed to keep construction within the
14 facility's narrowed bounds.

15 The environmental impact statement
16 is grossly inadequate. It ignores the destruction
17 of the local ecosystem and the effects of use of
18 rat poison on public health. It narrowly analyzes
19 the negative impact on air quality and does not
20 take into account the impact of the destruction of
21 green space and the worsening of traffic.

22 I urge the City Council to vote no.
23 NYU needs to go back to the drawing board and
24 create a more responsible plan in consultation
25 with faculty and students.

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Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you.

G BEDROSIAN: First initial G, last name Bedrosian, I live at 505 LaGuardia Place. And, again, everything that's already been said more eloquently and more concisely, but one thing I'd like to address is the walking away from the table thing.

This model has not changed in all those years. They didn't even make little fake little replicas that we could put in between and say, well maybe this building would be better over here or over here. I have a feeling they spent so much money on the present plan that there just isn't any way or any room to go back or to come up with a second one.

The landmarking, we know about that. The landmarking of the entire south village, which is also on the plate--on the ballot at some point, would really help control this type of expansion in the future. The landmarking of the IM Pei towers and plaza in 2008 was a fabulous decision by the City Council, and I think that this Council might be good to go down in history

1
2 also for doing the right thing by opposing the
3 rezoning and land use requests that are being put
4 before you today.

5 You know about the 505 tower, and
6 the public space, which basically doesn't need to
7 be renamed because it's already public space.

8 As one person testified, the
9 universities of the future might not even require
10 additional classroom space or living space as they
11 will be participated in a virtual manner or online
12 or on the Internet or long distance.

13 So all the facts and percentages
14 and square footage and all the experts have
15 already spoken, so I would just like to put into
16 the testimony with some passion and emotion that
17 the protection of the trees and the wildlife is so
18 important. And that this plan is a destructive
19 plan, literally, by destroying the building--the
20 Coles building and the supermarket, the Morton
21 Williams building, destroying them first in order
22 to rebuild. In today's society, conservation and
23 reuse is a value that must be embraced by
24 individuals, organizations, businesses, and
25 governments if we expect to move forward in an

1
2 economical and environmentally sustainable way in
3 all aspects of our life.

4 And we cannot bear the traffic that
5 will occur on Bleecker Street. I wrote a letter
6 to some of the Members of the Council and
7 described that in more detail.

8 But basically the cement in the
9 park next to Coles, the cement that's broken in
10 the park could be repaired and a few benches could
11 be put it in, and a couple of fences could be
12 knocked down and a few locks could be taken off
13 the gates, and all that would cost a couple
14 hundred bucks and it could be done in a week.

15 So, oh, also I was told to ask that
16 the City Council demand to see the actual business
17 plan and know exactly where the money is coming
18 from, which somebody else mentioned as well.

19 So thank you for giving the
20 opportunity to speak.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
22 Sorry about that.

23 Yes, sir.

24 PAUL EDWARDS: My name is Paul
25 Edwards, together with my wife, Marianne, we have

1
2 lived at 88 Bleecker Street for the past 35 years.
3 Additionally, along with my grandfather and
4 father, I am a graduate of NYU, so you might well
5 understand if I told you that I had mixed feelings
6 about NYU's 2031 plan.

7 On the one hand, as a member of the
8 community, I'm appalled by a plan that will
9 forever scar the neighborhood that I have called
10 home for most of my life. On the other hand, my
11 concern for my alma mater's future weighs heavily.
12 NYU maintains that if it is to grow its standing
13 as a stellar institution of higher education, then
14 this expansion is essential. Thus, you may be
15 surprised that it is for both reasons--my concern
16 for our community and for NYU--that I urge the
17 City Council to reject NYU's plan in its entirety.

18 For it is my sincere belief that
19 this plan will damage NYU as much as the
20 neighborhood. Why? While I was an NYU student in
21 the late sixties and seventies, NYU embarked on
22 another expansion that saw new buildings erected
23 at University Heights and Washington Square. The
24 new facilities created a substantial drain on
25 existing resources, leading to the sale of the

1
2 Bronx campus, jettisoning its engineering school,
3 the elimination and curtailment of student
4 activities including sports teams, and a near
5 bankruptcy of the entire institution. It was
6 decades before the school fully recovered.

7 Today, John Sexton's edifice
8 complex will surely lead the university down the
9 same path. NYU lacks the resources to integrate
10 these new facilities while maintaining its
11 financial stability. Already one of the most
12 expensive schools in the country, it will have no
13 choice but to raise tuition, residence, and other
14 fees to untenable levels. Even today, the
15 university is unable to provide meaningful
16 financial assistance to the overwhelming majority
17 of its students; if this plan is implemented, many
18 thousands of deserving students will be forced to
19 turn elsewhere.

20 Just as concerning is NYU's blind
21 eye to what all of us, in virtually every other
22 endeavor, intuitively understand: The world is
23 changing. As Stamford and Harvard have done, NYU
24 too should be investing in online programs that
25 will make education more accessible to all.

1
2 Instead, NYU 2031 will likely find its new
3 buildings obsolete well before the planned
4 completion of this project.

5 Again, I urge the City Council to
6 vote the best interests of both our community and
7 NYU, vote no.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
9 Thank you. Lot of [off mic] popping, much
10 clapping. Anything? No? Okay. Well thank you
11 very much. Okay. We're going to move to the next
12 panel in opposition. Thank you.

13 Howard Negrin.

14 HOWARD NEGRIN: Here.

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Good. Patrick
16 Gallagher, did he go already? No? Different
17 Gallagher? Patrick Gallagher, not here. Leonard
18 Quarry. All right, I see movement. Annette
19 Stover. Say here if you're here. RJ Levine,
20 Jeannine Kiely, Lorena Gill, Valborg--

21 VALBORG FLETRE LINN: Here.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --Fletre--oh,
23 thank you--Linn, Fletre Linn, right? Peter Von
24 Mayrhauser, you here, Peter? Peter? How about
25 Peter Davies?

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FEMALE VOICE: He left.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: He left too,
sorry about that. George Haikalis.

GEORGE HAIKALIS: Yes, sir.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right, Mr.
Haikalis, all right, we'll stop there. Thank you,
sir. Come on up.

[Crosstalk]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: --I'll take
them.

FEMALE VOICE: Oh, it's all just in
my notes.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Okay. No, don't
worry about it.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.
Whenever you guys are ready, Mr. Haikalis is on
his way up, he's going to join you, and then you
can start on this side or whoever wants to start.

VALBORG FLETRE LINN: Good
afternoon, my name is Valborg Fletre Linn, I live
at the corner of Bleecker and Lafayette, two
blocks from the proposed site of NYU's expansion
plan. I have lived here since 1978, so I've been
a neighbor of NYU for 34 years. My husband, two

1
2 daughters, and I have lived with NYU's growth and
3 expansion for that whole time. I'm here
4 representing myself and my family only. And my
5 neighbors, of course.

6 The current proposal is now, like
7 my neighbor, is planning to build a massive
8 McMansion that will interfere with my life and
9 affect the quality of my life. NYU is now
10 behaving like an aggressive bully taking over the
11 turf.

12 I believe in growth that is
13 positive for the community. I have lived with the
14 construction of the subway renovation at Bleecker
15 and Lafayette for several years, this outcome will
16 be an excellent improvement for the area and its
17 people when it is complete, so I believe in
18 progress. However, I oppose the NYU 2031 plan. I
19 believe NYU should accept offers to expand in
20 areas of the city that welcomes its new presence.

21 NYU is a respected academic
22 institution that should concentrate on education,
23 not real estate. Please let the super blocks
24 remain green for the health of the community.
25 Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: You're welcome. Who's next? Okay.

JEANNINE KIELY: My name is Jeannine Kiely, I'm a new member of Community Board 2, a SoHo resident and the mother of two young boys. I am here to insist that the City Council require NYU to preserve the Key Park and Mercer playground as they are configured today. I am submitting pictures of my children and others from the neighborhood actively enjoying these two parks.

The Key Park is a unique and valuable public open space, it is large, it is over half an acre, it serves multiple user groups designed for children 2 through 12 and includes open space for ball playing, running, and skipping rope. For families with multiple children of different ages, it is essential to have different uses in the same playground.

It is public and safe. To obtain a key, you simply need proof of address and a birth certificate, the same requirements used by public schools.

It is filled with trees. Twenty

1
2 tall mature trees and 17 smaller ones provide
3 shade on hot days, branches to climb, and homes
4 for caterpillars that my children love.

5 Mercer Playground also is a
6 valuable open space resource that serves all age
7 groups. Every weekend, my husband leads
8 neighborhood children in Saturday sports at Mercer
9 playground for free, parents participate along
10 with their children in soccer, wiffle ball,
11 football, and relay races. This is also where
12 neighborhood children learn to ride their bikes.
13 Future generations of families will need more than
14 a 6 to 8 foot park strip, concrete lunch plazas,
15 and a tricycle garden to do this.

16 If the City Council approves the
17 Mercer Street Boomerang and is unwilling to
18 preserve the Key Park and Mercer playgrounds as
19 they are configured, they must require NYU to do
20 two things: Commit to active green space minimums
21 and a large, multi-age active play space. Our
22 community cannot rely solely on an open space
23 oversight organization to fight for these changes
24 15 years from now, and a commitment to equivalent
25 playground space is not sufficient because this

1
2 can be met with a series of small playgrounds that
3 will not meet the needs of older children.

4 Council Member Chin and Committee
5 Members, our community needs your commitments to
6 these areas to preserve our active, open public
7 playground space. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, we
9 enjoyed the pictures.

10 LEONARD QUART: Leonard Quart, 14
11 Washington Place. I have just a short prepared
12 remark, but I wanted to say something about the
13 two urbanists who spoke for NYU before.

14 Yes, the city self-evidently is
15 based on flux, it's based on changed, but every
16 change isn't the successful one, every change
17 doesn't have virtue. And I was truly troubled by
18 the alluding to Jane Jacobs as a supporter of--
19 implicit supporter of the NYU plan. Jane Jacobs
20 is consistently used by almost every developer as
21 if they have reinvented urbanism in America,
22 though often what they're projecting are anti-
23 urban projects.

24 What I wanted to say was very
25 simple: NYU is a first-rate university and it

1
2 aspires for LEED status. It has continued to be
3 confused or blurred quality education based on a
4 commitment, in my perspective, to commitment to
5 creative teaching and to a intellectual responsive
6 student body with an imperial form of power,
7 expansion, and massive construction.

8 Branches in Singapore and Abu Dhabi
9 don't make for a strong undergraduate education or
10 the creation of a community, and neither does
11 shoehorning buildings on an every--egregiously
12 shoehorning buildings on every available piece of
13 land in the village with utter disregard for any
14 of its residents that may stand in its way.

15 The NYU plan is one whose wanting
16 ambition is unconscious and destructive all of who
17 must live within its reach and it ultimately seems
18 more aimed at monolithic edifice building than a
19 quality education.

20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,
22 sir. Whenever--

23 HOWARD NEGRIN: [Interposing] My
24 name is Howard Negrin, I'm president of the
25 Washington Place Block Association.

1
2 While I, like the overwhelming
3 majority of the village residents, I oppose the
4 entire ill-conceived and destructive NYU 2031
5 plan, I'd like to focus my remarks on the portion
6 of the ULURP of special interest to those of us
7 living in the blocks east of Washington Square
8 Park, the so-called and misnamed loft blocks, the
9 proposed zoning change to establish a commercial
10 overlay.

11 Briefly stated, the university has
12 proposed to change the zoning in a roughly six
13 square block area from the current R7-2 to the C1-
14 5 and to create a commercial overlay. Although
15 the decisions by the City Planning Commission on
16 the NYU ULURP in general were disappointing, we on
17 the loft blocks were pleased that the commission
18 eliminated the proposed commercial overlay, and I
19 hope that the City Council will make no effort to
20 restore a totally indefensible zoning change.

21 And I'd also add that this proposal
22 provides a window into the larger NYU--the
23 weaknesses of the larger NYU ULURP by being filled
24 with contradictions and inaccuracies. There are
25 manifold reasons for opposing this zoning change,

1 and I would very briefly indicate some of them.
2 One, NYU bases its ULURP in general on a supposed
3 need for additional space, but the proposed
4 commercial overlay not only adds no new academic
5 space, but uses existing space for nonacademic
6 commercial purposes. Two, NYU claims that our
7 streets need livening--a claim that will be met
8 with astonishment by area residents overwhelmed by
9 pedestrian traffic of university-related
10 personnel, constant deliveries, noisy waste
11 disposal trucks, never ending and intrusive NYU
12 construction projects, and university street
13 events that punctuate our year. Three, a
14 commercial overlay in general is most appropriate--
15 -I'll be finished in a second--most appropriate
16 for neighborhoods underserved by existing retail.
17 By no stretch of the imagination could an area
18 abutting one of the city's largest and most
19 popular shopping districts on Broadway, as well as
20 the heavily commercial 8th Street, and with 24th
21 retail establishments already grandfathered within
22 the proposed six block commercial area, be
23 described as underserved by retail.
24

25 I hope the Council will second the

1
2 action by the City Planning Commission. Thank
3 you, Mr. Chairman.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
5 George.

6 GEORGE HAIKALIS: Yes, my name is
7 George Haikalis, I have lived in Washington Square
8 Village for 49 years, so I'm a newcomer, I guess.
9 I'm a civil engineer and a transportation planner.

10 I strongly urge the City Council to
11 reject the proposed rezoning that would allow NYU
12 to greatly expand its campus in Greenwich Village.
13 Of course, institutions of higher learning in New
14 York City must expand and improve but this
15 expansion should be part of a citywide plan to
16 meet the needs of all of the residents of the
17 city.

18 The City Council should reject
19 NYU's plan that concentrates much of this
20 expansion in the core of the city. Instead, the
21 Council should request that NYU return with a new
22 plan that redirects its expansion to other parts
23 of New York City where growing numbers of young
24 people have far fewer learning opportunities. In
25 particular, NYU's recent merger with Polytechnic

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2 in downtown Brooklyn provides an excellent
3 opportunity to provide new outlets for the
4 performing arts, fine arts, and cultural
5 enrichment of the 2 1/2 million people who call
6 Brooklyn their home.

7 Furthermore, I would urge the
8 Council to reject a zoning change that establishes
9 an ugly precedent--removing the park from towers-
10 in-the-park complexes and replacing it with more
11 towers, in other words, towers within the towers.
12 There are dozens of similar residential
13 developments in Council districts throughout the
14 city that will be placed at great risk by this
15 Council action as a precedent.

16 Finally, on a personal note, NYU's
17 plan proposes to destroy the Sasaki Garden, a
18 sense of place that I and many of my neighbors
19 find a helpful respite from the clamor and fast
20 pace of the rest of Manhattan. It would indeed be
21 a reckless act of the City Council to allow NYU to
22 destroy this cherished public space.

23 Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

25 GEORGE HAIKALIS: Thanks.

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Thank
3 you, panel. I'm going to move on to, is that
4 Georgette Fleischer? Okay. Andrew Amer?

5 ANDREW AMER: Here.

6 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Annette Evans?
7 Rhoma Mostel, Anita Isola, Anita here? No? Alisa
8 Chazani.

9 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Anybody has
10 copies of their statement--

11 [Crosstalk]

12 RHOMA MOSTEL: [Interposing] Yes, I
13 do, yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Susan Freel.
15 Is that a yes? She left.

16 RHOMA MOSTEL: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I don't know.
18 Marilyn Stults?

19 MARILYN STULTS: Here.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right,
21 Marilyn. What did you say? I don't think we've
22 said it, it's a good strategy though, I don't
23 know, I'll look for you though.

24 [Crosstalk]

25 RHOMA MOSTEL: Thank you. Have to

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be on the end with my arm.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Go ahead, ma'am,
you can start.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Whenever
you're ready, just trying to see if we have--

[Crosstalk]

GEORGETTE FLEISCHER: I'm Georgette
Fleischer, I'm the founder of Friends of Petrosino
Square, we're a neighborhood association that
overlaps the Little Italy special district in the
eastern edge of SoHo, so we're just to the south
of the southernmost super block in question here.

And as I think all of you received
my phone messages from me on Monday, those in our
neighborhood association use the open space and
the green space in both of those super blocks on a
more than, you know, a few times a week basis.
The Sasaki Gardens, the beautiful community
gardens at the corner of Bleecker and LaGuardia
Place, that open plaza, that open, green plaza
with the Picasso sculpture rising out of it, these
are treasures that we enjoy on a regular basis,
and we really cannot imagine how we would live
without them. So that's the first point that I'd

1
2 like to make.

3 The second point that I'd like--
4 second set of points that I'd like to make is
5 responsive to some of the arguments that were put
6 forward or ersatz arguments that were put forward
7 by NYU today. I felt that the people who
8 testified--

9 [Crosstalk]

10 GEORGETTE FLEISCHER: --to raise
11 questions about whether the intention of this plan
12 is really to create space for academic endeavors
13 is a good point to raise, but even putting that
14 aside, I think that there's a question here, NYU
15 seems to be claiming that it must expand and that
16 it must expand in the core of the village. I
17 don't understand why it has to expand in the core
18 of the village, let it expand in the periphery.
19 What is wrong with expanding in Lower Manhattan?
20 What is wrong with expanding in lower parts of
21 Brooklyn?

22 Many of the things that were put
23 forward seem illogical to me as arguments. NYU is
24 claiming that it provides education and employment
25 for people of color. Of course, this is a very

1
2 wonderful thing to do. That it provides dental
3 and medical services for underserved populations,
4 this is also a very merit worthy thing to do. It
5 claims that it will be providing jobs for people
6 who need jobs, also merit worthy. Yet I do not
7 see why building in the core is necessary in order
8 to provide these goods. Building in the periphery
9 will provide these goods just fine.

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I got to get
11 you to wrap up, I'm sorry.

12 GEORGETTE FLEISCHER: To wrap up
13 already--

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I'm sorry.

15 GEORGETTE FLEISCHER: Okay. I
16 guess I'd like to pick up on Council Member Chin's
17 point earlier, which I really appreciated, about
18 the fact that NYU does have a history of reneging
19 on its promises to the community. I was at a
20 meeting with Ms. Hurley very early on, it might
21 have been the same one that was referred to by Bo,
22 where we were just sort of aghast at this plan,
23 and we were asked whether there was anything that
24 NYU could do for the community that might be of a
25 benefit to us, and many of us in the room swam at

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2 that time at the NYU Coles gym and we asked
3 whether that could be extended so it wouldn't just
4 be on Saturday or Sundays, but we could swim on
5 other days of the week. Yet they never followed
6 through on providing that for us. I swim at
7 Chinatown Y.

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. All
9 right, thank you.

10 GEORGETTE FLEISCHER: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

12 Who's next?

13 MARILYN STULTS: My name is Marilyn
14 Stults and I am the non-NIMBY here, I don't live
15 in the village, in fact, I live on the Upper West
16 Side, but I love the neighborhood and for over 20
17 years I conducted walking tours in the Village.
18 So I'm very familiar with its history and its
19 architecture and all the problems that NYU has
20 caused.

21 What you have seen here is not an
22 expansion plan, it's a plan for destruction. Not
23 since the days of Robert Moses has the Village
24 faced such a grave threat. For over a decade, NYU
25 has demolished and destroyed some of the Village's

1
2 most important cultural and historic sites and
3 replaced them with ugly, hulking buildings that
4 have no place in such an important historic
5 neighborhood. And now NYU proposes to maintain a
6 20-year ongoing construction site, which would not
7 only blight the streetscape of the Village, but
8 could endanger the health of its residents, many
9 of whom are NYU's own employees.

10 The financial district has
11 repeatedly begged NYU to expand there to help
12 Lower Manhattan rebuild after the devastation of
13 9/11, but NYU has refused. NYU claims that
14 expanding in the Village will help New York City's
15 economy, but in fact, it will have a negative
16 impact on New York City's tourist industry because
17 Greenwich Village, as I know from being a tour
18 guide, is one of NYC's most important tourist
19 destinations.

20 NYU could choose to be a valuable
21 partner and helping the NYC economy, but instead
22 it chooses to follow its megalomania of wrongful
23 expansion. I urge the City Council to reject the
24 NYU plan in its entirety and to help us preserve
25 Greenwich Village for ourselves and our people

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2 that come after.

3 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Next, please.

4 ANDREW AMER: Thank you, Council
5 Members. My name is Andrew Amer, I am president
6 of 200 Mercer Street Apartment Corporation and I
7 speak on behalf of my co-op in opposition to the
8 plan.

9 The courtyard entrance to my co-op,
10 which is home to 27 families is directly opposite
11 the entrance to Coles, right over there in the
12 southern block. The residents in my co-op
13 presently enjoy the light and air provided by the
14 strip, the public strips along Mercer, and our
15 families in our building enjoy the benefits of the
16 Mercer Park.

17 Regardless of what you've heard
18 from NYU about moving the open space to different
19 places and expanding it, the fact of the matter is
20 that the public space on the southern block of
21 Mercer is in fact being eliminated under this plan
22 in order to make way for the enormous Zipper
23 building, which will replace Coles and which will
24 extend over and consume those green strips. So we
25 lose all of our light and air from the green

1
2 strips along the southern block of Mercer, we lose
3 the low Coles building, and instead we get an
4 enormous structure that extends to the curb and
5 will cast our co-op and courtyard in the shadows.

6 Adding insult to injury, we have
7 now heard that we have to face the backside of the
8 Zipper building, and we will be opposite a loading
9 dock.

10 Let me be clear, no one from NYU
11 has ever gotten in touch with anyone from our co-
12 op to discuss this situation. President Sexton
13 mentioned that there are already large buildings
14 in the core, as if to suggest that that would make
15 it okay to add other large buildings, it actually
16 cuts the other way. The concept was a tower-in-
17 the-park, with the word park being the operative
18 word, there were commitments made to keep those
19 open spaces public, and we urge you to bear that
20 in mind and to oppose the plan to the extent that
21 it does not keep those public spaces.

22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

24 ANNETTE EVANS: Hi, I'm Annette
25 Evans and I live at Fort Washington Square

1
2 Village.

3 In 1950 the land was acquired for
4 Washington Square Village and the Silver Towers by
5 eminent domain. And the 2031 plan, with the
6 taking of public land and the environmental
7 underground impact of the underground space where
8 there's a stream that runs under it, will probably
9 destroy the Washington Square Village complexes
10 because it will be so deep and they will brace
11 that up with their bathtubs, but then the actual
12 Washington Square complex will probably crumble
13 and be destroyed. So, therefore, it is in fact a
14 de facto eminent domain.

15 It was originally a large-scale
16 development so it was at the highest density and
17 it was given density and height variances in
18 exchange for public access, accessible open space,
19 and a public school. The public school has been
20 promised, but reneged on on several times. The
21 publicly accessible open space is--actually it is
22 accessible, even though they say it's not; and if
23 it's not accessible, it's because NYU itself has
24 discouraged accessibility to the Sasaki Garden,
25 for example, because there were three lanes

1
2 leading from LaGuardia into the Sasaki Garden,
3 they gated the two north and south and the middle
4 entrance lane, they put an illegal, unauthorized
5 storefront. And in fact, that was in 1999, in
6 fact, the statue of Fiorello LaGuardia was placed
7 at the entrance as a grand entrance into the
8 Sasaki Garden--that was in 1994, and they closed
9 it off in 1999. They also put up signs in 1999
10 saying for tenants only; they took those signs
11 down in 2008--and I want to first thank Miriam
12 Kaplan for all the research she's done this--and
13 so now it is accessible.

14 And I just want to wind it up with
15 saying that the Key Park is also an important
16 valued treasure of the neighborhood for an
17 underserved children and families, currently 194
18 families have keys, 80 plus children are in three
19 schools and daycare facilities, and guests and
20 grandchildren use that playground. And also the
21 Key Park trees provide environmental benefits and
22 they are also part of the whole unified plan that
23 Mr. Sasaki made, not just for the garden, but also
24 for all the trees in the Key Park.

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

ANNETTE EVANS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

Ms. Mostel.

RHOMA MOSTEL: I'm Rhoma Mostel and I'm a member of LaGuardia Corner Gardens, which is a 30-year old garden, community garden on the super blocks. We're a Department of Transportation garden in a neighborhood very underserved by green space and certainly very little participatory green space. We're not talking about plazas with a planter with a stick in it. LaGuardia Corner Gardens should be granted parks protection in perpetuity. It's a great asset to the neighborhood.

Just people have mentioned many things today, I just want to succinctly review. The Community Board, Community Board 2, has voted unanimously against the NYU 2031 plan, which would wreak havoc on our neighborhood and our local institutions, including our gardens and playground. And it would make life intolerable for the children, the adults, and the elderly, and it would cause adverse health effects, some people, on the local residents.

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2 Of course, the NYU faculty itself,
3 as well as the workers, has opposed this plan--
4 you've heard great details on that, over 34
5 departments have adopted unanimous or near
6 unanimous resolutions against the plan. Many of
7 the local merchants, who have their own
8 association against this plan, oppose this plan,
9 including some of my favorite restaurants.

10 I urge you to vote no on the NYU
11 2031 plan. If this plan passes, it will go down
12 in history as one of the most heinous impositions
13 of power over the wishes over the community and
14 the faculty. You have a wonderful opportunity to
15 do the right thing and support the community--the
16 people who actually live and work and contribute
17 to the quality of life in our affected historic
18 neighborhood. Vote no on the NYU 2031 plan.
19 Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

21 Last, but not least.

22 ALISA CHAZANI: Hello, my name is
23 Alisa Chazani, I'm an NYU graduate and have lived
24 at Washington Square Village for 44 years, for
25 which I am most grateful. However, I adamantly

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oppose the massive NYU 2031 expansion plan.

Bigger is not always better. This humongous plan will alter the nature of our lives and community forever. As you know, four huge NYU towers with the same square footage of the Empire State Building, a plan in the heart of our historic village community and it will take its soul away.

Precious green space will be lost forever, flowering gardens will be demolished, birdsongs will cease, and lovely trees will be butchered. Currently, public space like the Sasaki Garden and the community garden on LaGuardia Place and park space on Mercer will be replaced by brick-and-mortar; traffic will choke the narrow streets; and subways stations will be beyond crowded; construction, pollution will darken our lungs and will place our children and elderly at risk. Construction noise will deafen us and mice and rats will occupy our homes for years to come.

Why does NYU need two decades for this unwanted project? Did you know that it took one year and 45 days--yes, 400 days--to build the

1
2 Empire State Building? And that was in 1930,
3 without all the current technological advances
4 that we enjoy today.

5 I plead you, Honorable Chairman and
6 Members of this commission, please do not keep the
7 cranes--please do keep the cranes, bulldozers, and
8 towers out of our community and vote no for this
9 destructive plan.

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

11 Okay.

12 [Crosstalk]

13 ALISA CHAZANI: One more sentence.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right.

15 ALISA CHAZANI: Last, but not
16 least, a village is a village, and Greenwich
17 Village must remain a village without NYU's big
18 footprint. Thank you for giving me this time.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

20 Thank you.

21 FEMALE VOICE: Can I just say that
22 we get--we sent everybody--

23 [Crosstalk]

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Talk into the
25 mic.

2 FEMALE VOICE: --a package from the
3 Sasaki--

4 [Crosstalk]

5 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Press the
6 button. Press the button.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Right.

8 ANNETTE EVANS: We gave everybody a
9 packet from the Save the Sasaki Garden Committee
10 yesterday that--

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

12 ANNETTE EVANS: --has a lot of
13 support and more details on it.

14 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Right, the
15 rally, I caught a piece of that actually.

16 I'd like to now call on Miriam
17 Kaplan, are you still here, Miriam?

18 MIRIAM KAPLAN: Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I apologize,
20 Miriam. Bryan Chandler looks like, Caitlin
21 MacLaren, say here if you're here, Jeanne Wilcke,
22 you here still?

23 JEANNE WILCKE: Here.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay. Jeanne.
25 Sonny Christopher, like that.

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SONNY CHRISTOPHER: Here.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: You're Christopher? Good. Valerie Krishna. Krishna, how many is that, one, two, three, four? One, two, three, four, five, all right. Okay.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Miss, right here. Miss, miss? Miss?

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yeah, oh, okay, she's showing us Sasaki, oh, you wanted to see Sasaki Garden, there you go. That's actually not... Okay. Thank you. Ms. Krishna, we're taking that out of your time. I'm kidding. Just kidding. But whenever you're ready.

MIRIAM KAPLAN: My name is Miriam Kaplan, I've lived in Washington Square Village for over 40 years.

I have several points that I want to make, and I won't be able to spend a lot of time on them.

[Crosstalk]

MIRIAM KAPLAN: Oh, oh, okay, I'm Miriam Kaplan, I've lived in Washington Square Village, oh, I've lost time already, okay.

FEMALE VOICE: Let her start again.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Just keep going.

MIRIAM KAPLAN: The first thing I want to say is, according to the zoning resolution, there are two purposes for residential zoning--there are several, but among them are to prevent congestion and to preserve the character of a neighborhood. This project will certainly increase congestion and it will certainly change the character of the neighborhood if the rezoning is permitted to go through.

Approving the rezoning would set a dangerous precedent. Every site in the New York City that was built according to tower-in-the-park paradigm would be vulnerable. Any developer who wanted to pop some more real estate into a site would have the precedent.

Secondly, I want to say, NYU, we've heard an awful lot that NYU is cramped for space. Then I want to challenge them. Why is it that NYU has increased its enrollment by 16% in the eight years from 2002 to 2010? And why is it planning a further increase of 11% in the years to 2031? And why, when NYU raised \$3 billion a few years ago--

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2 or was it 3 million, I don't remember--they hired
3 more faculty, and when they didn't have sufficient
4 space for them? It's like a man who runs up a
5 great big bill on his credit card and then, when
6 the collector comes, he asks his neighbor to pay.
7 And that's what the neighborhood is being asked to
8 do.

9 Oh, I'm out of time. I did want to
10 say--

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
12 Finish up quickly, it's okay.

13 MIRIAM KAPLAN: --I did want to say
14 Annette gave me credit for the information on the
15 open space, I wanted to clarify. Alicia Hurley
16 characterized the Sasaki Garden as private open
17 space, it's private space. The zoning resolution
18 does not clarify whether open space is public,
19 private, publicly accessible, privately
20 accessible, any of that, it just refers to open
21 space, and open space is anything that has the sky
22 above it as long as you're below 23 feet above the
23 ground. And so this is all publicly accessible
24 open space, just as the space on the southern
25 block is open space, that we traverse it going

1 north, south, and when we're going down to SoHo
2 and coming back. Okay. And that's that point--

3 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

4 MIRIAM KAPLAN: --and I have one
5 other point. NYU has defaulted on almost every
6 agreement it's ever been a party to. And I really
7 want--if any part of this is approved, I want it
8 to be that there are conditions in it that if NYU
9 seeks to modify the agreement in any way at any
10 time in the future, that there should be very
11 severe penalties for trying to change the
12 agreement because every agreement that NYU has
13 ever entered into, it has tried to--it has tried
14 and it has been successful in changing.

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

16 Next, sir.

17 BRYAN CHANDLER: Thank you for the
18 opportunity to address the Council, my name is
19 Bryan Chandler, I'm a 25 year village resident, I
20 have an MBA from NYU, and I have a 30-year real
21 estate finance career.

22 I want to state upfront that I'm
23 not anti-development, I am pro-business, and I'm
24 certainly an NYU support, however, I'm very
25

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2 against bad ideas for a narrow group of special
3 interests against the great majority of what
4 people want. I have four quick points in my time
5 that I feel need a little added emphasis today.

6 Number one, speaker after speaker
7 has said that NYU needs additional space. I'd
8 like to point out the obvious that that's a
9 management mismanagement problem created by the
10 NYU administration. They can solve the space
11 problem simply by admitting people that they have
12 actual space for, rather than misleading people
13 about what their academic experience is going to
14 be.

15 I've also heard endlessly about how
16 important NYU is and how many jobs they're going
17 to create. I want to point out the obvious again,
18 that there are no difference in the number of jobs
19 wherever this project is located. They could move
20 it a mere two miles downtown and create exactly
21 the same number of jobs without, I refuse to
22 believe, any damage to their academic mission.

23 Number two, speakers today, it was
24 very striking how the speakers today both for and
25 against this project very much represent the two

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2 camps. For the plan are people who will profit
3 personally or who were hired specifically and owe
4 their jobs to supporting this plan. Whereas,
5 against are people that will be harmed by this
6 plan.

7 Second, as far as people speaking
8 here, characterizing people speaking here, the
9 people with a deep commitment to the university
10 are in the against camp. Okay? The faculty knows
11 much better what should be done than an
12 administrator who is hired for a specific job and
13 may be there only briefly.

14 And I have to point out that the
15 hosts of the university is the community. The
16 students, there's no student alive today that will
17 benefit from a project completed in 20 years.

18 Finally, my most important and last
19 point. I've listened very carefully this hearing
20 and what's gone on, I think the Council has had
21 very good questions for the administration people
22 that sat here, the three administration people,
23 the very first point. I wonder, however, if the
24 Council Members feel that their questions were
25 properly, honestly, and straightforwardly answered

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2 by those administration people. As a member of
3 the audience, I think you got exactly the
4 opposite.

5 I came prepared with some good
6 examples of the faithless and deliberately
7 misleading way the current NYU administration
8 operates--

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
10 We're going to have to wait 'til the next hearing
11 to hear the examples--

12 [Crosstalk]

13 BRYAN CHANDLER: [Interposing] It's
14 no examples, there are plenty though, just to say,
15 I think you got the best one--

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Could be in
17 2031.

18 BRYAN CHANDLER --you got the best
19 one though, okay? You saw them not answer your
20 questions properly. No, they didn't, and, no,
21 they are not a trustworthy--they have not been,
22 maybe they will be, but they have not been a
23 trustworthy partner for the neighborhood, as Tom
24 Duane mentioned, to the begin today.

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

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2 BRYAN CHANDLER: Thank you very
3 much.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

5 JEANNE WILCKE: Hi, I'm Jeanne
6 Wilcke, I'm president of the Downtown Independent
7 Democrats. I'm also an NYU MBA graduate, and I
8 went to school downtown in the financial district
9 in the eighties.

10 Very interesting, yesterday the New
11 York Times arts section top article says For Arts
12 Institutions, Thinking Big Can be Suicidal and
13 then it goes to compare it also to the educational
14 institutions. Reasons that organizations will
15 build too much are overambitious trustees, self-
16 interested architects, and unrealistic financial
17 projections, according to the study by the
18 Cultural Policy Center at the University of
19 Chicago, not NYU. This issue, this is an issue
20 between confusing a want with a need, and this is
21 enormous, said their founder. Many institutions
22 recently expanded their buildings, in part,
23 because everyone else, had keeping up with the
24 Joneses. Now they're talking about \$300 million
25 at a pop in different institutions that now

1
2 struggle; here, we're talking 3 to \$6 billion a
3 pop. So I'd read that article and ponder over it.

4 I'd also like to mention that
5 Bloomberg News Architecture critic James Russell
6 last month said, nothing about this plan speaks to
7 the way the university will nurture the city, just
8 as the city nurtures it. Now Robert Moses did
9 very great things, but he was not infallible and
10 neither is NYU. SoHo and Little Italy, great
11 economic engines in residential neighborhoods
12 would not exist today, if Robert Moses had built
13 that elevated highway across. Washington Square
14 Park, a jewel of New York would have been
15 decimated, had Robert Moses built his highway
16 through it. The one project that Robert Moses did
17 get approved was the Washington Square Village
18 area. Now NYU wants to build the size of the
19 Empire State Building over this already overbuilt
20 area.

21 When first built, the agreement
22 with the people and then with NYU was first give
23 back light and air and green space in return for
24 allowing tall, massive buildings; and secondly,
25 these caveats, deed restrictions, and promises be

1
2 solemnly kept. NYU wants to renege, I warn the
3 City Council, this is a dangerous precedent.

4 Sacred are the covenants that private institutions
5 agreed to in exchange for the public giving up its
6 land. City Council must consider this application
7 in the context of the next 150 years, not the next
8 election cycle.

9 NYU's Board of Trustees is heavy on
10 real estate interests who donate the highest
11 amounts to candidates. In fact, NYU itself is in
12 the top 1% of all spending to lobby elected
13 officials.

14 Last point, NYU economics and
15 finance professors have raised alarm at the
16 financial risk being undertaken. The 2008
17 financial crisis was fueled by relaxation of
18 protective regulations and a blind eye to the good
19 of the people. Here, we see the same framework
20 being used to bully through changes in the zoning
21 and lifting of deed restrictions that were meant
22 to protect a community, yet may bankrupt the .

23 And let me tell you, two-thirds of
24 my business career--

25 [Crosstalk]

2 JEANNE WILCKE: --has been spent in
3 distressed real estate, so this resonates with me
4 very much.

5 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
6 much, Jeanne.

7 JEANNE WILCKE: I would just to ask
8 you to be pro--

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
10 You're taking advantage of our friendship here,
11 okay.

12 JEANNE WILCKE: Please be proactive
13 instead of reactive to this plan and go back to
14 the table with NYU and City Planning and come up
15 with something that works for both sides. Thank
16 you.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
18 Understood. Mr. Christopher.

19 SONNY CHRISTOPHER: Yeah, good
20 evening. My name is Sonny Christopher and I am
21 the general manager of the Washington Square
22 Hotel, I've been in the company since 1976.

23 On behalf of the Washington Square
24 Hotel and over 100 businesses and residents who
25 have joined our coalition, Villagers for a

1
2 Sustainable Neighborhood, we urge you to work with
3 NYU to improve upon the application.

4 Unfortunately, despite the recent improvements,
5 the current expansion plans remain out of scale
6 with the neighborhood.

7 The proposed commercial space in
8 the super blocks is unnecessary and could
9 overwhelm the small businesses throughout the
10 neighborhood. We recently conducted a survey on
11 the commercial vacancies of storefronts around the
12 proposed expansion site. Every block in the
13 affected area was profiled and the number of
14 vacant storefronts was recorded. Our report
15 revealed that the Village vacant storefronts has a
16 rate of 7.7%, which is over three times higher
17 than the vacancy rate in the city, which is 2%;
18 increasing the commercial space would put existing
19 businesses at risk; NYU students would not benefit
20 from any expansion of commercial spaces.

21 Therefore, we recommend removing the commercial
22 overlay in the super blocks to refrain from
23 overwhelming the community with commercial
24 buildings.

25 The planned buildings are still

1 completely out of context of the neighborhood.

2 The project is expected to bring in additional 10
3 to 12,000 people in the area, creating further
4 congestion of our sidewalks, streets, parks, and
5 subways. Consequently, we recommend the following
6 changes: Reducing the height of the--I'll be with
7 you in a minute, I will finish in a minute--
8 reducing the height of the Houston Street portion
9 of the Zipper building to no more than 162 feet;
10 reducing the height of the remaining portions of
11 the Zipper building and the Mercer building to
12 match the heights of the buildings on the east
13 side of the Mercer Street.
14

15 We want NYU to remain competitive,
16 we appreciate NYU's contributions to the economic,
17 civic, and educational fabrics of our city;
18 however, it is equally critical for NYU to
19 understand that it is part of a shared community
20 with the Village residents and business.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.
22 Christopher, appreciate it. Next.

23 VALERIE KRISHNA: My name is
24 Valerie Krishna, and I have Ph.D. from NYU.

25 The Washington Square Village

1
2 Garden was designed by the internationally
3 renowned and influential landscape architect,
4 Hideo Sasaki. In April 2011, the New York State
5 Historic Preservation Office declared the Sasaki
6 Garden and the entire complex eligible for
7 inclusion in the State and National Register of
8 Historic Places--a first step that can lead to
9 landmark status.

10 Now here's something most people
11 don't know, Sasaki's partner on the garden project
12 was Peter Walker, later of Peter Walker Partners,
13 that is the landscape architectural firm that
14 recently created the World Trade Center 9/11
15 Memorial Garden. What a connection. Sasaki
16 designed some of the nation's best known corporate
17 headquarters, urban spaces, and university
18 campuses. He modernized the concept of landscape
19 architecture through his interdisciplinary
20 approach integrating historical, cultural,
21 environmental, and social factors.

22 Sasaki was professor of Landscape
23 Design at Harvard and Chairman of Harvard's
24 Graduate School of Design. He served on the U.S.
25 Commission of Fine Arts and received the American

1
2 Society of Landscape Architects Medal, the first
3 person to do so. In Manhattan, besides the
4 Washington Square Village Garden, Sasaki designed
5 two smaller, much beloved spaces--Greenacre Park,
6 on 51st Street, where a stream tumbles over rocks
7 to meet a waterfall among woodland plantings and
8 magnolia trees; and the International Paper Plaza,
9 where a grove of redwoods, weeping cherries, and
10 magnolias bring a breeze and welcome shade to
11 nature-starved Midtown workers. Both of these
12 intimate spaces are cherished and meticulously
13 maintained, but the treasure that is the
14 Washington Square Village Garden is fated to be
15 demolished as NYU pursues its grandiose master
16 plan.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

18 Thank you very much. This panel is excused, I'm
19 going to call the next panel. Ruth Rennert, I
20 think it is?

21 RUTH RENNERT: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Milton Polsky,
23 Milton's here?

24 MILTON POLSKY: Yeah.

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yeah.

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RUTH RENNERT: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

Tejaswini Ganti and Son, Saahir? No? Robert Nickas. Mary Clarke, Denise Martin, Rosaire Appel, Apple, Leah Biehnke, Benka, are they here? Gworman--

RUTH RENNERT: I want to first use-

-

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --Noam

Dworman, Margaret Smith-Burke, some may be repeat names, Robin Rothstein, okay, Robin. Sylvia Rackow. Didn't we do Sylvia already?

RUTH RENNERT: She did, she spoke.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yeah, and Paul Rackow.

RUTH RENNERT: He wasn't here.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Oh, well we

got a card. Barbara Barone, Maurie Van Buren, didn't I say that name before too? I'm starting to imagine these things. Gabriel Willow--

MILTON POLSKY: Oh, Gabe Willow.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --Dr. Eileen

Ain, Paul Schinkel, all people against this, by

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the way, Harriet Belsky.

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Jeannette as Harriet Belsky. Diane Whelton, Clark Whelton, Sara Manofski, Romanoski, I thought I said. Ronna Texidor, there is she, I found you, I couldn't find you before, and then Godoy, G-O-D-O-Y, Monica, I think it is, Monica? Lois Rakoff?

LOIS RAKOFF: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right, let's go five, we'll stop at five. I hate to say I'm rooting for people not to be here, that's not true, okay? But I thought it was better than having five out of six here, I was surprised. Okay. Anytime you're ready.

ROBIN ROTHSTEIN: I'm going to start.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

ROBIN ROTHSTEIN: A number of these points have already been eloquently stated, so I'll be brief, I just want to reiterate them.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Please.

ROBIN ROTHSTEIN: Good afternoon, my name is Robin Rothstein, I am a concerned

1
2 resident and a member of Community Board 2.

3 As a member of Community Board 2's
4 NYU working group, I was charged with and spent a
5 number of months trying to get a handle on NYU's
6 promise of a public school to the community. As
7 an institution that continues to state that they
8 pride themselves on and are supportive of
9 academics, the manner in which NYU has offered the
10 public school is disappointing. NYU's alleged
11 promise only includes space for a school, as has
12 been mentioned, not a core and shell, and NYU has
13 not shown any proactive genuine interest in
14 working with the community to make this school
15 happen or assuring it can realistically make the
16 school happen in coordination with SCA and DOE.

17 In addition, as also has been
18 stated, NYU has selected for the public school a
19 site--I should first mention that the site
20 originally was going to have the school on top of
21 a dormitory, but I think, thankfully, that that
22 strange choice has been eliminated. But is also
23 at the moment will be directly across the street
24 from a large pub with outdoor seating, and also,
25 just a block, as also has been mentioned, from an

1
2 area saturated with bars. This is not an
3 appropriate site for an elementary school.

4 NYU has also stated that if the
5 school is not constructed by a certain time, as
6 also has been stated, that the space will revert
7 back to NYU. And I would like to make this point
8 that today is the very first time, the absolute
9 first time, under pressure from the City Council
10 with a question from Council Member Comrie about
11 whether or not this space would be able to remain
12 a space for the community if it did not become a
13 school--I don't know if you remember that from
14 this morning--and the answer up to this point has
15 been an unequivocal no, and I've been to, if not
16 all the meetings, most of them, but today was a
17 sort of a sheepish maybe. So I just, you know, as
18 we know, NYU has promised this public school to
19 the community in the past and has not come
20 through.

21 And in conclusion, it's my firm
22 belief that NYU's offer of a public school as part
23 of the NYU 2031 plan is disingenuous and strongly
24 suggest the disingenuous spirit behind the entire
25 2031 plan, and which you clearly heard, I think,

1
2 from NYU's testimony this morning. Thank you very
3 much.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
5 Thank you. Please try to keep it to two minutes,
6 thank you. Who's next?

7 RUTH RENNERT: Yes, hi my name is
8 Ruth Rennert, I live at 3 Washington Square
9 Village, and I'm the chairperson of the Sasaki
10 Garden Committee, and I have the best committee
11 ever.

12 But in addition to that, if you
13 have not been, or your fellow members have not
14 been, to the Sasaki Garden, they should not vote
15 on it 'til they have been there. Once you have
16 been there, you will fall in love with this space
17 and all it has to offer.

18 I've prepared a personal--
19 personally for each person here a little pamphlet
20 that's just from me and it's my thoughts, it has
21 nothing to do with the committee, the committee
22 we've all together spent weeks preparing what we
23 delivered yesterday to 250.

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Just for me
25 and Margaret though.

1
2 RUTH RENNERT: No, for every
3 member. Okay? You're welcome.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Those guys
5 too?

6 RUTH RENNERT: Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Oh.

8 RUTH RENNERT: So anyway, here I
9 underlined in orange where one of our members,
10 who's 79 years old and was not well enough to come
11 today, has taken over 2,000 photos, it's digital,
12 it's on your computer, I beg you to run through it
13 and you will see all the seasons there.

14 One of the most important
15 statements I want to say is that this 1 1/2 acre
16 Sasaki Garden, which NYU is proposing to take away
17 from us, 1 1/2 acres that's shared by 1,200
18 families in the immediate Washington Square
19 Village complex and then people come from all the
20 surrounding neighborhoods to visit, but we did a
21 little googling, thanks to the Internet, and the
22 first member on the board of trustees, this is
23 just one of his homes, and I want you to look at
24 the green space around it. Now this is what he
25 wants for his family, why should all of us have so

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much less?

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Got it.

RUTH RENNERT: It's totally unfair.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

Thank you.

RUTH RENNERT: You're welcome.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I'm not going to be--I'm going to stop being nice and not let anyone go over if they can't--

MILTON POLSKY: Hi.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --okay.

MILTON POLSKY: My name is Milton Polsky, I live at 4 Washington Square Village with my family for over 40 years now and I'm a proud member of the Save the WSV Sasaki Garden Committee with Ruth and others.

Most of the remarks I was going to make, being I'm one of the last speakers, I guess, have been covered very wonderfully by those in opposition to the NYU Sexton 2031 plan, as I am, but it gives me time to reflect on one of President Sexton's remarks earlier when he was said, unjustifiably and proudly, that in one year the faculty of NYU received the Pulitzer, the

1
2 Nobel Peace Prizes, and a Tony award. Well that
3 got me to thinking that maybe it's time for us to
4 have some awards, and I immediately, you know, and
5 I was also very proud of that, being a former
6 member of the NYU faculty, but as I say I got to
7 think about maybe some of our awards, such as my
8 wife should get an award for 20 years having to
9 suffer with a debilitating illness suffer and
10 endure 20 years of--no one has said the T word
11 yet--toxicity when she steps out of our apartment.
12 And my daughter, the same when she visits from the
13 clean air of Massachusetts, Northampton campus.
14 And my grandson and granddaughter who all suffer
15 the same thing for 20 consecutive years, plus
16 being denied at that time to visit the wonderful
17 Key Park playground and enjoy the wonderful
18 wildlife and nature's life in the beloved Sasaki
19 Garden.

20 Well and another thing President
21 Sexton says, well, he was--this is an
22 inconvenience, that's a direct quote,
23 inconvenience, nothing attached, sorry about that.
24 Well, I think it's not only an inconvenience, it's
25 inhumane what he said.

2 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

3 MILTON POLSKY: You know, I just
4 want to finish up. Change is good, I agree, when
5 it benefits people, but this benefits only the
6 greedy. That's the word to use, greedy
7 corporation, who wants to profit off us--

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
9 Thank you, thank you.

10 MILTON POLSKY: --the people.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.
12 Toxity and greed, toxity and greed, okay, thank
13 you, just keeping notes.

14 RONNA TEXIDOR: Hi, my name is
15 Ronna Texidor, I live on Thompson Street. As many
16 people know, I was just an ordinary person, but
17 NYU decided to rebuild the Catholic Center and
18 shook my bed a half a block away and they woke me
19 up. And there's a tiger, and yeah, now you got to
20 deal with me.

21 Now I have a solution. You run
22 through the computer all the students, you get
23 their names, all the classes that are needed, you
24 add them up; you count how many chairs you have.
25 The shortfall between how many chairs you have and

1
2 how many students need to go somewhere, and you
3 call your best friend Mike Bloomberg and you ask
4 him to rent you some cheap space and you put your
5 students in a beautiful rented place.

6 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
7 Talk into the mic.

8 RONNA TEXIDOR: I'm sorry.

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

10 RONNA TEXIDOR: You put your--

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: If you talk
12 loud enough, he could hear you.

13 RONNA TEXIDOR: I think they can.
14 You know, we have free speech rights, we can talk
15 as loud as we want wherever we want. I was at the
16 sixth precinct meeting.

17 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Heard that.

18 RONNA TEXIDOR: What I'm saying is,
19 if space is their problem, rent some space, rent
20 some space. Why are they killing us? They should
21 leave us alone. Leave us alone, go somewhere
22 else.

23 And poor Ms. Chin, she's under so
24 much pressure. The rest of you guys, this is what
25 I'd like to say--

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CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
She's tougher than she looks.

RONNA TEXIDOR: Yes, but she's got
to face us later, you all can leave us alone.

But what I'm saying is, please be a
hero. We need some heroes. Your own constituents
are not going to bother you. I bet there's not
one of you on the whole City Council who could go
home and say I voted no for NYU [off mic] will
say, what, what's NYU expansion? What about here?
What about this traffic light? Have you fixed
that traffic light?

Please be heroes, please. They can
find space. They can.

[Applause]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you. I
enjoyed that.

RONNA TEXIDOR: Oh, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Who's next?

LOIS RAKOFF: Lois Rakoff, I'm the
chair for CB 2 Education and Social Services
Committee.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Hello, Lois.

LOIS RAKOFF: And Robin is on the

1
2 committee as well and so is Jeannine. And I am a
3 resident of Greenwich Village and live around the
4 corner from where the construction will be. And I
5 hope to last for the next 20 years without having
6 any health ailments, which I do not have now.

7 But I do want to go to the
8 committee. When CB 2 Education asked the
9 representative from NYU if the land donated for
10 the public school would still be donated if other
11 parts of the ULURP were rejected, NYU first said
12 yes, and then took a literal breath and said no.
13 So there was a change just in midstream in that
14 sentence alone. The committee asked that the
15 adjoining dorm be eliminated so that the school
16 would stand alone, this is at the time, NYU said
17 no. The committee asked if the underground land
18 be donated for the school, NYU said no. When the
19 committee asked NYU that if the SCA and DOE
20 rejected the donated land for the Bleecker public
21 school, would NYU still donate the land to the
22 City in perpetuity. A neighborhood community
23 center could be built on the same site, NYU said
24 no, the land would revert back to NYU. I know
25 these are repeats. The committee asked if NYU

1
2 could produce a memo of understanding with the
3 SCA, DOE, or produce any e-mails or evidence of
4 conversation with these City agencies regarding
5 the school and the land site, NYU could not
6 produce anything and said no.

7 Furthermore--

8 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Uh-oh.

9 LOIS RAKOFF: Okay. Well that's
10 all right.

11 [Crosstalk]

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --bell rings
13 at furthermore.

14 LOIS RAKOFF: I'll just do it real
15 fast.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

17 LOIS RAKOFF: I'm a teacher, a high
18 school teacher--

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Oh, got it,
20 got it, got it.

21 LOIS RAKOFF: --my high school just
22 broke up in John Dewey High School, and I will
23 tell you that the students, not only the high
24 school students, but middle school students that
25 are 11-years old in our community travel, not only

1
2 buses, they take buses and they take trains, and
3 the 18-year olds and the 19-year olds that are
4 young adults cannot go like downtown or take a bus
5 or take a train or even the beautiful NYU buses
6 that are so fabulously colored purple, and they
7 certainly could go around. High school kids go
8 around borough to borough to high schools.

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
10 That's true, that's true. Thank you very much.
11 Thank you all.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Mark?
13 Mark?

14 [Crosstalk]

15 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yes, oh, you
16 have a question?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: No, I just
18 wanted to let the teacher know--

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Oh.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --from John
21 Dewey High School--

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
23 He's talking to you. Yeah.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: --I got a
25 call from the UFT about a half-hour ago that they

won the lawsuit to stop the Board of Ed from
breaking up the school so...

LOIS RAKOFF: Is this--really?

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Yeah, they
won the lawsuit, I don't know that--

LOIS RAKOFF: [Interposing] Oh,
that's really cool.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: So we'll
see what happens between now and September but
they won the lawsuit.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

[Crosstalk]

LOIS RAKOFF: [Interposing] Thank
you very much, thank you for that news.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Excellent.
All right, ready, next panel. Barbara Cahn,
Heather Campbell, Richard Goldberg, Mark Fiedler,
wow, Ray Cline, wow, Dr. Carmen De Lemos, you know
the rest, is he here or she here?

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Carmen? Yeah.
You got that stuff? James, is it Franklin? No,
James with a F, Franklin? It looks like Franklin
maybe, 505 resident. Carol Crawford, Johnna

1
2 MacArthur, a lot of 505 residents. How many you
3 have, four? Claudia Cara Levy. Claudia? Shirley
4 Whitney. Didn't I say that one too? Evette Stark
5 Katz, Kenneth Yee. Mr. Yee, no? Audrey
6 Bernstein. Yeah, I did this one, but Maria
7 Mizhquiri, definitely did that one. Choi Tse,
8 Choi? Mary Ann Arisman, Susan Lesser. Susan, no?
9 Call out if you--did I say your name? No. Merle
10 Holley. Glen Milstein?

11 GLEN MILSTEIN: Here.

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: All right,
13 come on up, Glen. You've been so patient all day,
14 I've been watching you. Patience is a virtue they
15 say, right? All right, we're going to have one
16 more panel after this, ladies and gentlemen. [Off
17 mic] start--

18 BARBARA CAHN: Okay.

19 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --while he
20 finds his way out of the thing, please--

21 BARBARA CAHN: Okay.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I am sorry, I
23 don't mean to be, I mean, rushed at the end, but
24 it's been a long day for all of us and we're
25 looking forward to hearing your testimony.

BARBARA CAHN: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Go ahead.

BARBARA CAHN: My name is Barbara Cahn, I am an NYU alumna, I am a resident of Greenwich Village for more than 30 years, and I'm a member of the LaGuardia Corner Gardens, which is the oldest community garden in the city, and I would like to speak up on its behalf today.

More than 30 years ago, a group of volunteer gardeners turned an empty lot--an eyesore--into an oasis of fruit trees, flowers, and organically grown vegetables. The garden is open to the public on weekends and evenings, local schoolchildren come to learn about gardening and the environment. The garden is home to many species of birds and it is a recognized monarch butterfly habitat.

Under the proposed plan, NYU would be able to use the garden as a staging site for construction equipment and even build underneath it. The proposed Bleecker building would cast the garden in perpetual shadow and the garden would be destroyed.

Manhattan Borough President Scott

1
2 Stringer, in his report on the NYU 2031 plan
3 wrote, the garden is a symbol of positive civic
4 engagement that should be preserved and celebrated
5 and maintaining its vitality in perpetuity should
6 be a priority. It's longer, it's on page 19, it's
7 in my written testimony.

8 I urge you to have the LaGuardia
9 Corner Gardens transferred to the Parks department
10 immediately, without giving NYU the right to dig
11 underneath it or park construction equipment on
12 it.

13 And lastly, I would ask you to
14 consider the impact of the proposed plan on not
15 just the--all the gardens--the Sasaki Garden, the
16 Time Landscape--but the surrounding area, which is
17 a longstanding residential neighborhood.

18 For months we've been told that
19 this is a done deal, that the City Council Members
20 are in the pockets of the NYU trustees and I urge
21 you to prove that this is not so and vote no.

22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

24 Well okay. Thank you.

25 HEATHER CAMPBELL: Hi, my name is

1
2 Heather Campbell, I'm a member of Community Board
3 2 as well, I'm a parent of children here in the
4 Village, and I'm a graduate of NYU-Stern. You
5 have a copy of my written testimony, which is what
6 I planned to say today, but I've had a lot of time
7 to think since 9 o'clock and basically what I've
8 been thinking about is--

9 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

10 HEATHER CAMPBELL: --why am I here,
11 and the reason I'm here--

12 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Please.

13 HEATHER CAMPBELL: --is because of
14 my two children. I'm representing my daughters,
15 Shelby and Tatum, who are 3 1/2 and 6-years old.
16 And they, similar to me, oppose this plan.

17 They're worried about having places
18 to go to play, air to breathe, sunlight on their
19 faces. If they were here, my 6-year old would
20 explain to NYU the difference between a need and a
21 want, she understands that difference, it's a very
22 specific difference. She'd also let them know
23 that she walks or scooters to school, which is
24 about a mile each way every day. If my 6-year old
25 can do it, I think some college students can do

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it.

And finally, my kids are pretty darn cute and my 3-year old is pretty much a ham, so I think that they would say this as well: NYU is here to stay, but this plan must go away. It's too big, you know it's true. You all know what you must do. They could grow but make it right, or we'll all lose all our light.

[Applause]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

Applaud, applaud, applaud. The Sergeant-at-Arms here? I get yelled at, but all right, go ahead, thank you very much, we like that, that was very nice.

MARK FIEDLER: Hi, I'm Mark

Fiedler--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]

You going to sing, Mark? Okay. No.

MARK FIEDLER: Could be persuaded, maybe.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Continue.

MARK FIEDLER: If there's time.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Stop kicking me.

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2 MARK FIEDLER: I'm a nearly 30-year
3 resident of Bleecker Street and I'm speaking on
4 behalf of BAMRA, the Bleecker Area Merchants and
5 Residents Association, which is the only such
6 organization in the area directly affected by the
7 NYU 2031 expansion plan. We serve an area that
8 includes both super blocks.

9 We've heard a lot of generalities
10 today about how the plan would be good for
11 business, how NYU is a great engine of economic
12 growth, but none of this answers the question why
13 all this growth has to take place in the, you
14 know, immediate Greenwich Village area. On the
15 contrary, most of the merchants that are members
16 of us feel that the 2031 plan will permanently
17 damage the area for local small businesses by
18 changing the character of the village, which is
19 what local merchants depend on for their customer
20 base. With the proposed changes, the Village will
21 become more of a generic college campus than a
22 historic neighborhood. The plan will greatly
23 reduce tourist traffic and will discourage those
24 who now come here by bridge, tunnel, and commuter
25 train.

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2 It will also reduce the number of
3 established career residents who may move away
4 from a boisterous student-filled environment.
5 These are the people who enjoy the more upscale
6 stores, entertainment, nightlife, et cetera, and
7 all the other unique attractions of Greenwich
8 Village. Further, the current flow of visitors
9 between SoHo and the BAMRA area will be disrupted
10 by changing the village into a college town.

11 The plan will change the types of
12 businesses that are attracted to the area. It
13 will tip the balance more towards the likes of
14 beer pong, body shots, and other things more
15 attractive to students. The balance is already
16 close to tipping to a factory town, dependent on
17 one institution. Once the college serving
18 businesses displace existing merchants, the local
19 residents will no longer have merchants that cater
20 to their needs. For long stretches of the year,
21 even the college serving business will have no
22 students to sell to.

23 There is already an excess of
24 retail space in the Bleecker area. Converting the
25 super blocks to add significant commercial space

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2 will take even more business away from those
3 struggling with high rents.

4 Our part of Greenwich Village owes
5 its unique charm to the mix of local residents,
6 students, and visitors attracts from the city, the
7 region, and the world. It can't survive the
8 massive expansion plan by NYU. We urge you not to
9 let that happen.

10 MARK FIEDLER: Thank you, Mark.

11 RAY CLINE: Hi there, my name is
12 Ray Cline, and I just wanted to let you know
13 there's--everybody said about everything. The
14 only thing I can do is quote the Bible and the
15 Bible says--

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Wow.

17 RAY CLINE: --one should not covet
18 someone else's ass. Well I don't think they
19 should covet--

20 [Laughter]

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]
22 I don't think that's a direct quote.

23 RAY CLINE: Well maybe, but I think
24 NYU should not covet our green space.

25 I moved from Hell's Kitchen, where

1
2 it was a pretty rough place, and I came here to
3 have a better life, you know, raise my daughter,
4 you know, enjoy married life, and now eventually,
5 with NYU negotiating of sorts with 505, I may not
6 even have a home.

7 So people on this Committee, you
8 all became elected because you wanted to do some
9 good, here's a chance.

10 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,
11 Ray, we will take that to heart. Okay. Our last
12 member of this panel.

13 GLEN MILSTEIN: Good afternoon, my
14 name is Glen Milstein, thank you all very much for
15 the time you've spent today and for the time
16 you're going to have to spend processing all the
17 information you got today. Thank you in
18 particular to my representative, Council Member
19 Chin, who met with me and with my family.

20 I'm an 11-year resident of 88
21 Bleecker at the corner of Bleecker and Mercer,
22 right across from Coles. I'm also a professor at
23 City College, a great institution with no faculty
24 housing and with students who embrace taking the
25 subway.

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2 As a master of irony, President
3 Sexton of NYU said he hoped that people would
4 think in terms of generations, that they'll recall
5 that spot in themselves where it's a worthy thing
6 to plant a tree under which someone else will sit.
7 I can get you the--he was quoted in a paper, I can
8 get you the quote. This wisdom of trees requires
9 two parts, one easy, the other difficult. As a
10 Peace Corps volunteer who served my country for 2
11 1/2 years in the Dominican Republic, I learned
12 that the easy part is planting the tree; the
13 difficult part is for subsequent generation to
14 guard and nurture those trees for future
15 generations. Because of the wisdom of the
16 previous generation, we now have mature trees on
17 Mercer Street, on Bleecker Street, and throughout
18 the Sasaki Gardens, under which we and our
19 children sit. Today, you are being reminded of
20 the most difficult part of your job. Many of you
21 are ardent activists; today your job is to be
22 guardians of our trees, for our children.

23 After a lung operation, my father-
24 in-law, Lionel Casson, an emeritus professor at
25 NYU, regained his health through daily walks

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2 'neath the trees of the Sasaki Gardens. As our
3 children, now aged 12 and 14, grew, they splashed
4 in the sunshine of what NYU promised would be a
5 well-maintained toddler water park right in front
6 of Coles. If they chose it, it would work. Our
7 children learned to ride bicycles in the LMNO(P)
8 Park--bicycles, not tricycles; they played for
9 years in the Key Park; my son learned to throw a
10 baseball in the IM Pei light dappled forest behind
11 Coles.

12 I'll make it fast. If you
13 surrender your guardianship, then the construction
14 of the Zipper building will rip out our city's
15 mature trees, will eliminate their shade and their
16 oxygen, and will permanently end a legal legacy of
17 health and well-being.

18 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you, Mr.
19 Milstein. I'm sorry--

20 GLEN MILSTEIN: Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --I got to cut
22 you off there--

23 [Crosstalk]

24 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --but thank
25 you very much, got the point. Thank you for the

singing, we appreciate it.

I'm going to call on the final panel, I think, let me just make sure about that. It's Christine Harrington, Barbara Backer, Stephen Lefkowitz, Peter Lang, Ann Kjellberg, Maureen Remacle, Judith Magida. Is anyone else here who hasn't been called? Is there anyone else here who wants to testify who has not been called?

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Uh-oh.

FEMALE VOICE: [Off mic] she had to leave--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: I understand, and I appreciate everyone's time they've taken today. And whenever you guys are ready, whoever wants to start, just state your name for the record, please try to keep it within two minutes. Thank you.

ANN KJELLBERG: Thank you, Council Members. Is it on? Thanks. My name is Ann

1
2 Kjellberg, I am the founding member of the Public
3 School Parent Advocacy Committee, in which
4 capacity I was participant in all of the
5 announcements involving--and the conversations
6 involving a public school in the NYU proposal. I
7 served on the Manhattan Borough President's task
8 force on school overcrowding, as well as being the
9 sole public school parent representative on the
10 Manhattan Borough President's task force on NYU
11 expansion.

12 I've submitted testimony to this
13 body many times on the crisis of school
14 overcrowding in the city and its pervasive and
15 damaging impact on the quality of education in New
16 York City. And for that reason, I welcome NYU's
17 commitment to public school construction and the
18 support it's had from our public officials, but
19 I'm speaking in opposition to this plan for two
20 basic reasons. One, that NYU's proposal for a
21 public school is insufficiently robust to ensure a
22 substantial and permanent public benefit from the
23 plan.

24 I outlined my reasons in my longer
25 written testimony, but in brief, they stem from

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2 the 2025 deadline on the beginning of
3 construction, on NYU's history of broken promises
4 regarding a school and other community benefits,
5 on the inadequate public process that went into
6 their very skeletal and insubstantial proposal,
7 and particularly in its reliance on SCA initiative
8 in making the school come to pass.

9 As members know, the present
10 overcrowding crisis that we're suffering with in
11 our schools is precisely the result of SCA
12 inaction, and any plan that relies on the SCA for
13 impetus is guaranteed not to occur. We need more
14 initiative out of NYU and our public officials to
15 ensure a school.

16 Secondly, the promise of a public
17 school is insufficient public compensation for a
18 plan that is so overwhelmingly opposed by our
19 community, which includes many public school
20 parents and children who are also members of the
21 community and will suffer from the loss of space.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you,
23 thank you.

24 PETER LANG: My name is Peter Lang,
25 I'm not on any chair board or a famous actor, but

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2 sometimes I do look like Jim Carrey when my hair
3 grows.

4 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yeah, I can
5 see that.

6 PETER LANG: I wasn't planning to
7 speak today, I didn't have any prepared
8 statements. I've been to these commissions before
9 and I just wanted to make some couple
10 observations.

11 This plan hasn't changed for a
12 number of years, although I've been to many of
13 these forums and there seems to be little input
14 that has been incorporated into NYU's plan. And I
15 understand, I graduated from University of
16 Pennsylvania and Chicago business school and I
17 understand the need to grow and build certain
18 spaces, but it has to be done thoughtfully, and it
19 has to be done correctly.

20 And when I was listening to NYU's
21 plan and their statements here, it was a little
22 disingenuous. They're not building on existing
23 footprints, they're building up and over, taking
24 over public land that is very much used by the
25 community, particularly the Mercer playground and

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2 the Sasaki park. And to say that it's going to be
3 used in the future by the other students or the
4 community members when it's essentially going to
5 be blocked off, there's not going to be open
6 access, as I've experienced with the gates being
7 locked currently.

8 And NYU is a good and important
9 aspect of the community, but the community is also
10 good for NYU. When they're doing the
11 calculations, it's a little bit disingenuous,
12 again, as I said, about the public spaces. They
13 use Washington Square Park, that's part of their
14 university essentially and that's not in any of
15 their calculations.

16 And then secondly, it is an
17 expensive endeavor that I don't think the NYU
18 faculty has and administration has really entailed
19 a detailed review of what this is going to cost
20 them.

21 And I have a personal story to
22 tell. My niece, who got into NYU three years ago
23 and also got into Fordham, was granted a full
24 scholarship at Fordham and only a partial
25 scholarship at NYU because they said they didn't

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have the money so...

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Yeah. Thank you. Next, please?

JUDY MAGIDA: Good afternoon, my name is Judy Magida and I live in Washington Square Village.

I don't know you, but I know our lives, our families, and our communities are entwined. My husband and I came to live in Washington Square Village about 40 years ago. What drew us there then and kept us here are the vast open skies and the splendid visions of nature that live and thrive on the super blocks. Beautiful flowers, trees, squirrels, birds, et cetera, have been incorporated into the fabric of our daily lives.

Over time, the community, not NYU, seamlessly wove it all together into the gracious arrangements that follow: The Key Park, a playground for children; the Mercer playground used by older children needing a place to cycle, skateboard, play ball; the Friends of LaGuardia Park, originally a barren strip of land used as a dump and to walk dogs, now is a land of ivy,

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2 trees, and flowers where a toddlers playground
3 featuring a dragon is emerging; the Bleecker
4 Street Corner Gardens is a loving work of
5 countless hands and bent backs; the Time Landscape
6 is a scene of raw natural beauty. Just beyond the
7 entrance to Coles gym is the shamelessly closed
8 playground and the quiet respect reflection space
9 home to a half dozen magnificent cherry trees.
10 Both are filled with glass, debris, and sunken
11 pavement--another obligation and promise made by
12 NYU to be maintained, but never kept.

13 The dog run, my membership spans
14 the lifetime of four great dogs. NYU wants the
15 dog run board to be quiet, to not oppose them, but
16 we, the dog run members, won't be quiet, we will
17 and we do oppose them.

18 Lastly, the Sasaki Garden, the
19 jewel in the crown, home to squirrels, sparrows,
20 migratory birds, butterflies, and glorious trees,
21 friends to yoga practitioners, tourists, students,
22 thinkers, and readers.

23 None of this just happened by
24 chance. It happened because of caring, dedicated
25 neighborhood people, local businesses, and

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2 community organizations with vision, respect, and
3 love for nature's beauty. This land is public
4 land, it must not be given to NYU.

5 In the three great religions, the
6 story of creation begins and is set in a garden--a
7 place of great beauty, just like the gardens, the
8 playgrounds, the open spaces that exists on this
9 super blocks, that will be destroyed forever.
10 Please be their champions.

11 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you.

12 JUDY MAGIDA: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
14 much.

15 JUDY MAGIDA: Yeah.

16 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: When you got
17 here this morning, did you think you'd be the last
18 person to speak, did you?

19 MAUREEN REMACLE: No, I knew it.

20 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Did you think
21 that was--you did think that, huh?

22 MAUREEN REMACLE: Yeah.

23 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: It was nothing
24 personal, I assure you.

25 MAUREEN REMACLE: I got here at 3

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o'clock this afternoon--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]

Oh, you came late, all right.

MAUREEN REMACLE: --worse.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: That's late, that was smart actually, look at that, all right. That's right, we try to do them in order once we had them, the problem was almost everybody was 9 o'clock, 9 o'clock, 9 o'clock.

Well go ahead, be our closing act.

MAUREEN REMACLE: Okay. I had some prepared remarks, but you know what, there's nothing I was about to say that somebody hasn't before, so I'm just going to talk totally off the cuff.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Okay.

MAUREEN REMACLE: We don't want to be sardines. You know--

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: [Interposing]

But just state your name.

MAUREEN REMACLE: Oh, my name is Maureen Remacle and I live diagonally across from the supermarket site. And as a matter of fact,

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2 let me say this, which was in my remarks, I live
3 in a building that James Fenimore Cooper lived in,
4 we spent half a million dollars for structural
5 work--let me take that back, my landlord spent it,
6 I'm a rent-stabilized tenant.

7 I cannot move they can go downtown
8 with their students. I can't leave. If I move,
9 I'm getting a closet in a basement in Crown
10 Heights, if I'm lucky. So I'm stuck there. I'm
11 scared to death my building is going to fall
12 apart. The buses coming by, the trucks, and then
13 they're going to do pile driving and excavation,
14 there's a stream underneath, who knows what's
15 going to happen with that.

16 We don't want to be the new set for
17 Soy lent Green, where when we're close to death,
18 they're showing us pictures of pretty landscapes.

19 They have a right to build some of
20 it, I'm going to be the first one in Greenwich
21 Village to say that. Nobody wants to give in, I
22 understand that. I understand that when the NRA
23 goes through those things about we want our, you
24 know, automatic weapons. I understand it when
25 people say no abortions any day or abortions up to

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2 nine months. You always try to take the extremes,
3 we've been taking the extreme.

4 They own the supermarket land, they
5 have a right to build something there, not
6 necessarily what they want, but something. They
7 own the Coles land, they have a right to build
8 something there, they already have something
9 there.

10 But they don't have anything in the
11 backyard of Washington Square Village and nothing
12 should go in there. That's putting sardines in a
13 can there. People will be looking into classroom
14 windows or whatever.

15 Teachers can commute from Queens,
16 people all over New York commute. They don't have
17 to live a block from where they work. And I went
18 to Hunter College High School, from the age of 12,
19 I took the subway from the Bronx every day. Their
20 students at 18, 19, 20, and whatever can do the
21 same.

22 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Thank you very
23 much.

24 MAUREEN REMACLE: Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Ladies and

gentlemen, thank you all very much for your
patience--

[Applause]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --as we sat
through this long day. Just a brief, you know,
we're not voting today, obviously. We're going to
be talking over the next few weeks with members of
the Community Board, Council Member Chin,
obviously, is going to be very involved in
discussions. So we did hear everything that was
said today, some much more interesting than
others, and really do appreciate everyone's
patience--

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: Wait, I am now
closing the hearing, because we could talk
afterwards, but I'm closing the hearing, and we
are going to adjourn this meeting--

MALE VOICE: Recess.

CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN: --recess this
meeting, excuse me, until further--later on we'll
pick a date, sometime probably in the next few
weeks will be another meeting. In the meantime,
there'll be discussions going on. So the

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Committee now stands in recess. I thank everybody

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for their cooperation, and the hearing is closed.

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Thank you.

C E R T I F I C A T E

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

Signature *Tammy Wittman*

Date July 23, 2012