

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON LAND USE

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November 21, 2024

Start: 5:48 p.m.

Recess: 6:07 p.m.

HELD AT: COMMITTEE ROOM - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Rafael Salamanca, Jr., Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shaun Abreu
Joseph Borelli
Selvena N. Brooks-Powers
Amanda Farías
Kamillah M. Hanks
Crystal Hudson
Francisco P. Moya
Kevin C. Riley
Carlina Rivera
Pierina Ana Sanchez

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Gale A. Brewer

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Mic check, mic check.
3 The vote on Land Use. Today's date is November 21,
4 2024, in the Committee Room, recorded by Walter
5 Lewis.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good afternoon. Welcome
7 to the New York City Council vote on the Committee on
8 Land Use.

9 At this time, please silence all
10 electronics and do not approach the dais. I repeat,
11 please do not approach the dais.

12 Chair, you may begin.

13 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: [GAVEL] All right.
14 Good evening, and welcome to the Committee on Land
15 Use. I am Council Member Rafael Salamanca. I Chair
16 this Committee. I would like to welcome my esteemed
17 Colleagues who have joined us today. We've been
18 joined by Council Member Moya, Rivera, Chair Riley,
19 Brooks-Powers, Abreu, Majority Leader Farías, Chair
20 Hanks, Hudson, Sanchez, and Borelli. I would like to
21 welcome my esteemed Colleagues who have joined us
22 today. I also want to thank Chair Riley and Chair
23 Hanks for their work on our two Subcommittees.

24 Today, we will vote to approve the
25 modifications, LU 181, for the Citywide Text

2 Amendment proposed by the Administration, known as
3 the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity as the
4 proposal seeks to address the city's real and ongoing
5 housing crisis through a comprehensive update to the
6 city's framework of zoning rules governing
7 residential development. Just before the start of
8 this meeting in our Zoning Subcommittee, Chair Riley
9 discussed the Council's modifications in detail,
10 including our reasoning for making our proposed
11 modifications. A detailed summary of these
12 modifications has been provided for the Committee
13 Members in your briefing documents and in the
14 Committee Report and Resolution for this proposal. I
15 won't repeat Chair Riley's extended comments
16 describing the modifications the Council is making to
17 the proposal, except to emphasize that the Council's
18 modifications are intended to respond to the city-
19 wide ranging needs of our diverse neighborhoods all
20 across the city. We took our constituents' concerns
21 under serious consideration and balanced those
22 concerns against the very real need to respond to the
23 housing crisis in this city, which is disputably
24 facing.

2 In addition to our text modifications for
3 the proposal, I am pleased to also report that the
4 Council has been able to secure a wide range of
5 commitments by the Administration of 5 billion
6 dollars total, in which 2 billion are for housing
7 programs, 2 billion for infrastructure, and 1 billion
8 for increased agency capacity, which will include
9 extended opportunities for the creation of new
10 affordable housing, together with the preservation of
11 existing affordable housing, with substantial funding
12 commitments from the Administration to achieve
13 creating more deeply affordable housing.

14 We are going to take a quick pause for
15 technical difficulties. Our apologies, we had a
16 streaming issue, so we may have to begin soon again.

17 [GAVEL] All right. Good evening,
18 everyone. I am Council Member Rafael Salamanca. I
19 Chair this Committee. I would like to welcome my
20 esteemed Colleagues who have joined us today. We've
21 been joined by Council Members Moya, Rivera, Chair
22 Riley, Brooks-Powers, Abreu, Majority Leader Farías,
23 Hanks, Hudson, Sanchez, and Borelli. I am Council
24 Member Rafael Salamanca, Chair of this Committee. I

2 would like to thank Chair Riley and Chair Hanks for
3 their work on our two Subcommittees.

4 Today, we will vote to approve with
5 modifications LU 181 for the Citywide text Amendment
6 proposed by the Administration known as the City of
7 Yes for Housing Opportunity. As you know, the
8 proposal seeks to address the City's real and ongoing
9 housing crisis through a comprehensive update to the
10 City's framework of zoning rules governing
11 residential development. Just before the start of
12 this meeting in our Zoning Subcommittee, Chair Riley
13 discussed the Council's modifications in detail,
14 including our reasoning for making our proposed
15 modifications. A detailed summary of these
16 modifications have been provided for Committee
17 Members in your briefing documents and in the
18 Committee Report and Resolution for this proposal. I
19 won't repeat Chair Riley's extended comments
20 describing the modifications the Council is making to
21 the proposal, except to emphasize that the Council's
22 modifications are extended to respond to the wide-
23 range needs of our diverse neighborhoods all across
24 the city. We took our constituents' concerns under
25 serious consideration and balanced these concerns

2 against the very real need to respond to the housing
3 crisis in which the city is facing.

4 In addition to our text modifications for
5 the proposal, I am pleased to also report that the
6 Council has been able to secure a wide range of
7 commitments by the Administration of 5 billion
8 dollars, with 2 billion dollars for housing programs,
9 2 billion dollars for infrastructure, and 1 billion
10 dollars for increased agency capacity, which will
11 include expanded opportunities for the creation of
12 new affordable housing, together with the
13 preservation of existing affordable housing, with
14 substantial funding commitments from the
15 Administration to achieve, one, creating more deeply
16 affordable housing, two, supporting the expansion of
17 affordable home ownership opportunities, including
18 down payment assistance and help for existing
19 homeowners, three, strengthening affordable housing
20 preservation, including substantial funding
21 commitments to support NYCHA and Mitchell-Lama
22 developments, all of which are critical to the
23 affordable housing which hundreds of thousands of New
24 Yorkers live in today.

2 We have also expanded funding for tenant
3 protections. Substantial funding for infrastructure
4 enhancements throughout the city have been secured,
5 including sewer upgrades and new improvements,
6 including flood mitigation infrastructure, including
7 green infrastructure. These investments will be
8 focused on the neighborhoods with the highest and
9 more urgent need, with the goal of ensuring the
10 City's infrastructure is in good state of repair
11 while also being able to absorb new growth.

12 Agency capacity will also be increased
13 for additional staff to support the proposals we are
14 voting on today, including the Department of Building
15 and HPD staffing for inspections and enforcement, and
16 DCP for planning studies that support community-
17 driven neighborhood planning processes.

18 For more details, for details of the
19 funding and capital commitments the Council has
20 secured from the Administration, it will be posted on
21 the Council website.

22 Today, we will also be voting to approve
23 LUs 185, 186, and 187 for the Port Authority Bus
24 Terminal Replacement Project in Council Member
25 Bottcher's District in Manhattan. The proposal

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2 includes a zoning text amendment, zoning special
3 permit, and changes to the city map to facilitate the
4 reconstruction of the Midtown Bus Terminal and the
5 future development of commercial building above the
6 new terminal building.

7 At this time, I would like to welcome my
8 Colleagues who might wish to ask questions or make
9 remarks.

10 Seeing none, I will now call for a vote
11 with the support of the local Council Members to
12 approve LUs 185, 186, and 187, and to approve with
13 modifications 181.

14 Will the Clerk please call the roll?

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
16 evening. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call
17 vote, Committee on Land Use. All items are coupled.
18 Chair Salamanca.

19 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Aye on all.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Moya.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: I vote aye.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
23 you, Council Member Moya. Brooks-Powers.

24 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Council Member
25 Powers, how do you vote?

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Can you
3 hear me?

4 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Yes, yes.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: I would
6 like to abstain on the City of Yes, and vote aye on
7 the bus terminal.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Abstains on city
9 of...

10 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Council Member
11 Powers, can you please repeat your vote?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Abstain on
13 City of Yes, and I vote yes for the Port Authority
14 project.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
16 you, Council Member Brooks-Powers, we got it. Thank
17 you. Rivera.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Permission to
19 explain my vote?

20 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Council Member
21 Rivera to explain her vote.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Thank you, Chair
23 Salamanca, for your leadership. I want to thank the
24 speaker for being a housing champion, for seeing that
25 all of our neighborhoods are distinct and all

2 deserving of a plan and opportunity no matter how
3 modest to address our housing shortage while also
4 securing unprecedented financial commitments. I want
5 to thank City Planning, the Mayor's Office, HPD, and
6 a special thank you to the City Council Team for
7 their hard work on the City of Yes for Housing
8 Opportunity Proposal. I'm voting in favor of the City
9 of Yes proposal today because we cannot forego this
10 moment. In negotiating and in my hopes of ultimately
11 getting to yes, we have and must continue to consider
12 our vacancy rate is less than one and a half percent,
13 rents are at astronomical levels., working class New
14 Yorkers are telling us they are leaving because of
15 high housing costs, and we are on track to lose
16 additional seats in Congress after the next census
17 because of out-migration. We are addressing this now
18 with the City of Yes. I know more than most how much
19 guff some will give you when you make a tough
20 decision, but I believe we have to take a much longer
21 view of what our Districts and City need to survive
22 and thrive now and for constituents in the future.
23 With this plan, we are addressing the fact that the
24 city is woefully behind in housing production. With
25 this plan, we will produce more housing than all

2 rezonings under the last two Mayoral Administrations.
3 This plan's production is comparable to 10 Gowanus
4 rezonings. So yes, we have been through the motions
5 and yes, it's about time. This is the largest unit
6 creation in recent history. And with that, I vote aye
7 on all.

8 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Riley.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Aye.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Abreu.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Farías.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: I vote aye on all.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hanks.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: I vote no on Land

16 Use item 181 and aye on all the rest.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hudson.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: I know it's late,

19 but I would like permission to explain my vote.

20 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Council Member

21 Hudson to explain her vote.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Thank you and good

23 evening. Since entering office, I've brought nearly

24 1,000 new units to my District. I'm now working to

25 bring another 4,000 through a community-led rezoning

2 of Atlantic Avenue or Aim Up. In fact, my District is
3 eighth out of 51 for producing the most affordable
4 housing units across the past decade and that's a
5 record I'm proud of. Yet some parts of our city
6 haven't produced anywhere near this amount of
7 housing. There are some neighborhoods that have
8 barely seen one new building go up in recent years.
9 It's clear some communities are doing their part to
10 address the housing crisis and others are not. While
11 every neighborhood and district is different, we
12 can't keep relying on the South Bronx or Northern and
13 Central Brooklyn to build us out of this crisis. We
14 need everyone to do their part. This first-of-its-
15 kind citywide text amendment does the bare minimum in
16 creating more opportunities to build housing,
17 including the deeply affordable housing this Body so
18 passionately cares about. It gives communities and
19 developers alike new options to consider when
20 planning a new project and, let me be clear, these
21 options are just that, options. Nothing considered in
22 this zoning text amendment requires developers or
23 homeowners to build anything. There's still
24 significant opportunity for input through the ULURP
25 process to ensure any project delivers what

2 communities actually need, but with City of Yes, we
3 create an option for more affordable housing units
4 via Universal Affordability Preference or UAP, an
5 option to remove unnecessary and costly parking
6 mandates that could create a financially feasible
7 pathway to increase affordability beyond MIH, and an
8 option to build ADUs that can provide older family
9 members the opportunity to age in place. If we don't
10 maximize our opportunities to build, rents will only
11 continue to rise and push out longtime community
12 residents, especially older black and brown New
13 Yorkers who live on fixed incomes. I urge my
14 Colleagues to stand up for all New Yorkers and do the
15 bare minimum in addressing our housing crisis by
16 voting for this proposal, and I'd like to commend the
17 Speaker, her Staff, and especially the Planning and
18 Land Use Division for securing 5 billion dollars for
19 more housing, infrastructure, and headcount for
20 critical agencies. I vote aye on all. Thank you.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Sanchez.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Permission to
23 explain my vote?

24 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Council Member
25 Sanchez to explain her vote.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you, Chair.

3 It takes an incredible amount of courage to do what
4 you think is right, especially in the face of
5 opposition. Voting no may be a far easier option for
6 many on City of Yes, but in my perspective, we have a
7 duty, a responsibility to do everything in our power
8 to deliver for New Yorkers. For my community, the
9 housing crisis means tenants at the brink of
10 eviction, unable to stay in the neighborhoods that
11 they call home, struggling to put food on the table.
12 That's our daily life today, but let me be clear, as
13 Housing Chair, New Yorkers from all over contact me
14 about the housing crisis every week. While building a
15 little more housing in every neighborhood, as
16 proposed and modified today in the City of Yes for
17 Housing text amendment, while that may ease the
18 housing crisis in the long term, zoning reforms
19 introduced are not enough to meet the moment. That is
20 why I'm so proud of the tremendous work the Speaker,
21 her Staff, the Council in partnership have done
22 together to secure 5 billion dollars of additional
23 investments relating to the Speaker's City for All
24 Housing Plan, a plan that is a response to, in
25 addition to zoning, what are we doing to help New

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2 Yorkers right now, deeper housing affordability,
3 homeownership opportunities, preservation
4 opportunities, improved neighborhood infrastructure.

5 While the full vote on ZHO is forthcoming on December
6 5th by the full body, I'm hopeful that my Colleagues
7 take the next days to think holistically about the
8 modifications and the investments that the Speaker
9 was able to secure on our behalf. This is the most
10 pro-housing plan in New York City history, City of
11 Yes for Housing with City for All. With that, I vote
12 aye on all today.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Borelli.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: No on 181 and aye
15 on the others.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Land Use
17 181 has a vote of eight in the affirmative, two in
18 the negative, and one abstention. Land Use items 185,
19 186, and 187 have a vote of 11 in the affirmative,
20 zero on the negative, and no abstentions. All items
21 have been adopted as described by the Chair.

22 Mr. Chair, that is a full Committee.

23 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you. That
24 concludes today's business.

25

2 I would like to thank the members of the
3 public, my Colleagues, Land Use and Council Staff,
4 and Sergeant-at-Arms for attending today's hearing.
5 This meeting is hereby adjourned. [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date November 22, 2024