

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION

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March 22, 2016
Start: 9:23 a.m.
Recess: 9:42 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City hall

B E F O R E:

KAREN KOSLOWITZ
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Inez E. Dickens
Brad S. Lander
Rafael L. Espinal, Jr.
Ben Kallos
Alan N. Maisel
Antonio Reynoso
Corey D. Johnson

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

Matt Drury
Director
Government Relations
New York City Department of Parks and
Recreation

2 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Meeting [gavel]
3 of State and Federal Legislation is called to order.

4 I'd like to at this time recognize my
5 colleagues; I have... to my left I have Council Member
6 Corey Johnson, Council Member Alan Maisel and
7 Councilwoman Inez Dickens and Danielle has... she's not
8 a council member, but she's a great person [laugh]
9 and Council Member Ben Kallos -- where is Ben?

10 Good morning. My name is Karen Koslowitz
11 and I am the Chairperson of the State and Federal
12 Legislation Committee.

13 Today we will be considering the State
14 Legislative Resolution in support of Senate Bill 6891
15 by Senator Hoylman and Assembly Bill A.9454 by
16 Assemblywoman Glick. This legislation is an act to
17 authorize the City of New York to discontinue the use
18 as city parkland of Christopher Park in the borough
19 of Manhattan and to convey the city's interest in the
20 real property to the United States for park,
21 monument, historic, or recreational purposes.

22 First I would like to -- I already did
23 that, introduce the members of the committee.

24 Christopher Park is an important symbol
25 to American civil rights. On June 27th, 1969, there

2 was rioting on Christopher Street; Christopher Park
3 became a symbol of the gay liberation movement. In
4 1999 the site of the Stonewall uprising movement, the
5 Stonewall Inn, Christopher Park, and the surrounding
6 neighborhood streets were placed in the New York
7 State Register of Historic Places and added to the
8 National Register. It is my belief that LGBT rights
9 are civil rights and that Christopher Park is an
10 absolute treasure to our city and stands as a symbol
11 for equality. For these reasons, I support the State
12 Legislative Resolution because I believe that the
13 United States as a whole should be able to share this
14 moment to the many people within the LGBT communities
15 that have suffered oppression.

16 Now I would like to invite any committee
17 members to say a few words -- Council Member Johnson.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you,
19 Madame Chair for holding this hearing on short notice
20 and I just wanna say that I am supportive of this
21 home rule message; I know that Senator Hoylman,
22 Assemblywoman Glick and our Congressman Jerry Nadler
23 have worked extraordinarily hard to get us to this
24 point and this is an important step at recognizing
25 some of the history that took place in Greenwich

2 Village and the surrounding area, so I am supportive
3 and I'm grateful that we're holding this hearing and
4 I would ask my colleagues to vote aye on this home
5 rule message. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: We've also been
7 joined by Council Member Brad Lander. I'd like to
8 call on Matt Drury, New York City Parks.

9 MATT DRURY: Thank you. Good morning,
10 Chair Koslowitz; members of the Committee of the
11 State and Federal Legislation Committee; Council
12 Member Johnson. My name's Matt Drury, Director of
13 Government Relations for the New York City Department
14 of Parks and Recreation. Thank you for inviting me
15 to testify in support of the Council's home rule
16 message in support of A.9454 and S.6891, legislation
17 that would authorize the transfer of Christopher Park
18 to the United States Federal Government.

19 Christopher Park and the surrounding
20 vicinity, locate in Greenwich Village in Manhattan,
21 is recognized by many as the birthplace of the modern
22 LGBT civil rights movement; as such, local and
23 national advocates have joined with elected officials
24 in support of a creation of a national park site to
25 commemorate its special place in the history of human

2 and civil rights. National parks and monuments can
3 be created by presidential designation under the
4 provisions of the Antiquities Act of 1906. The
5 Antiquities Act allows the president to establish
6 national monuments from existing federal lands,
7 meaning that a piece of real property needs to be
8 under the jurisdiction of the federal government
9 before any such designation can be made; as such, NYC
10 Parks supports the necessary actions which will
11 facilitate this designation; in this instance, state
12 legislation, to authorize the park's jurisdictional
13 transfer to the National Park Service.

14 Thank you very much for the opportunity
15 to testify before you this morning.

16 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay, I have a
17 few questions. Under the terms and conditions of the
18 deal that the Department of Parks and Recreation
19 negotiated with the National Park Service; will
20 Christopher Park remain accessible to the general
21 public?

22 MATT DRURY: So the framework between
23 National Park Service and NYC Parks is still under
24 discussion, but it's absolutely the intention that
25

2 the park will maintain its availability and
3 accessibility to the general public, yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay. Does the
5 National Park Service intend to do any development in
6 the park?

7 MATT DRURY: Development in what sense;
8 I'm sorry? Like...

9 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: To do anything,
10 any kind of modernization or...

11 MATT DRURY: I think there will be
12 discussions about, you know if there are maybe
13 capital improvements to the park or things that, you
14 know that... and that'll be a discussion between NYC
15 Parks and the Park Service, certainly something that
16 would be considered.

17 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Will they charge
18 any fees; will the National Park Service charge any
19 fees to be able to enter Christopher Park?

20 MATT DRURY: No; the intention is that
21 the park will remain very much as it is today in
22 terms of its general accessibility.

23 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: 'Kay, thank you.
24 Any other questions? Council Member Dickens.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Thank you Madame
3 Chair and thank you for your testimony. Good
4 morning. Will it be the City Parks or will it be the
5 National Park Service that will continue to maintain
6 the park, considering the historic nature of that
7 park?

8 MATT DRURY: Yeah, very much so. The
9 intention right now is that the New York City Parks
10 Department will continue the day to day sort of
11 operations -- maintenance; that sort of thing.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: New York City
13 will?

14 MATT DRURY: Correct.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Will there be
16 any possibility of reimbursement from the National
17 Park Service, since we're conveying the land to you?

18 MATT DRURY: Those discussions between
19 the Park Service and NYC Parks are ongoing now.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Council Member;
21 I think that that would be a good negotiating voice
22 [sic]. Thank you. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Any other
24 questions from my colleagues? With that, thank you

2 very much for your testimony. With that, let's take
3 a vote.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,
5 Committee Clerk, roll call vote Committee on State
6 and Federal Legislation. Chair Koslowitz.

7 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE CLERK: Dickens.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: Aye.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK: Lander.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Aye.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK: Kallos.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK: Maisel.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of 5 in the
18 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,
19 the item has been adopted.

20 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: Okay, I'm gonna
21 hold the vote open for 20 minutes so we have council
22 members on their way. Thank you.

23 [background comments]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: I vote aye.

25 [pause]

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2 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Reynoso.

3 [background comments]

4 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: I vote aye on

5 all.

6 COMMITTEE CLERK: Vote now stands at 6 in

7 the affirmative.

8 [pause]

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: Continuation roll call,
10 Committee on State and Federal Legislation. Council
11 Member Espinal.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: I vote aye.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK: Final vote in the
14 committee is now 7 in the affirmative, 0 in the
15 negative and no abstentions.

16 [pause]

17 CHAIRPERSON KOSLOWITZ: State and Federal
18 Legislation is now adjourned.

19 [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 April 9, 2016