

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS

AND DISPOSITIONS 1

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC  
SITINGS AND DISPOSITIONS

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May 16, 2023

Start: 1:37 p.m.

Recess: 1:47 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - COMMITTEE ROOM, 14TH  
FLOOR

B E F O R E: Farrah N. Louis, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Carmen N. De La Rosa

Sandy Nurse

Sandra Ung

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS  
AND DISPOSITIONS 2

A P P E A R A N C E S

Lyna Saad, Senior Planner of Bronx Planning at  
the Department of Housing Preservation and  
Development

Thomson Kao, Senior Project Manager Division of  
the New Construction Finance at the Department of  
Housing Preservation and Development

Justin Donlon, Community Affairs Specialist  
Division of Government Affairs at the Department  
of Housing Preservation and Development

1  
2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Can we start the live  
3 stream, please?

4 HOST: Webinar has been started.

5 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you. Good  
6 afternoon and welcome to the New York City Council  
7 hybrid hearing on the Subcommittee on Landmarks,  
8 Public Sitings and Disposition.

9 Please silence all electronic devices.

10 Chair, we are ready to begin.

11 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: [GAVEL] Good  
12 afternoon. I am Council Member Farah Louis, Chair of  
13 the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and  
14 Dispositions.

15 I'm joined today by my Colleagues,  
16 Council Members De La Rosa, Ung, and Nurse.

17 Before we begin with today's agenda, I  
18 will recognize the Subcommittee Counsel to explain  
19 today's hearing procedures.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Thank you, Chair  
21 Louis. I am William Vidal, Counsel to the  
22 Subcommittee.

23 This meeting is being held in a hybrid  
24 format. Members of the public who wish to testify may  
25 do so in person or via Zoom. Those wishing to testify

1  
2 via Zoom are asked to register online, and you may do  
3 so now by visiting [www.council.nyc.gov/landuse](http://www.council.nyc.gov/landuse) to  
4 sign up. If you have already registered but have not  
5 yet signed into Zoom, please do so now and remain  
6 signed in until after you have testified.

7           If you have written testimony that you  
8 would like the Subcommittee to consider in addition  
9 to or instead of appearing before the Subcommittee,  
10 please email [landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov). Please  
11 indicate the LU number and/or project name in the  
12 subject line of the email.

13           In the event of any technical issues with  
14 today's meeting, we ask everyone for your continued  
15 patience as we work through them.

16           Chair Louis will now continue with  
17 today's agenda.

18           CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Counsel. I  
19 will begin today's meeting by opening the public  
20 hearing for an application submitted by the New York  
21 City Department of Housing Preservation and  
22 Development pursuant to Article 16 of the General  
23 Municipal Law to amend the project description of a  
24 previously approved urban development action area  
25 project. Preconsidered Application G 230031 CCX to

1  
2 replace the commercial space and reduce the community  
3 facility space with up to three additional units of  
4 affordable housing. Presenting this item on behalf of  
5 HPD will be Lyna Saad, Senior Planner of Bronx  
6 Planning, Thomson Kao, excuse me if I said that  
7 wrong, Senior Project Manager Division of the New  
8 Construction Finance, and Justin Donlon, Community  
9 Affairs Specialist Division of Government Affairs.

10 I'll remind anyone wishing to testify  
11 remotely, if you have not already done so, you must  
12 register online, and you may do that now by visiting  
13 the Council's website at [www.council.nyc.gov/landuse](http://www.council.nyc.gov/landuse).

14 Counsel, will you please administer the  
15 affirmation?

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: First, we invite  
17 HPD to come to the table.

18 Could you please raise your right hand  
19 and state your name for the record?

20 JUSTIN DONLON: Justin Donlon.

21 LYNA SAAD: Lyna Saad.

22 THOMSON KAO: Thomson Kao.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Do you affirm to  
24 tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the

1 truth in your testimony before the Subcommittee and  
2 in answer to all Council Member questions?

3 THOMSON KAO: I do.

4 LYNA SAAD: I do.

5 JUSTIN DONLON: I do.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Thank you. I  
7 just want to confirm that you do not have a  
8 presentation today, correct?

9 JUSTIN DONLON: Correct.

10 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. You may  
11 begin.

12 JUSTIN DONLON: Good afternoon.  
13 Referencing prior Resolution 1014 which was approved  
14 by the City Council on July 23, 2019, regarding City-  
15 owned property located at 784 Courtlandt Avenue in  
16 the Bronx, HPD respectfully requests an amendment to  
17 the prior Resolution.

18 The original project proposed the  
19 construction of one building containing a total of  
20 approximately 20 dwelling units, approximately 2,278  
21 square feet of commercial space, and approximately  
22 6,265 square feet of community facility space on the  
23 disposition area.  
24

The amended project has increased the number of rental dwelling units from approximately 20 units to approximately 23 units, reduces the community facility space to approximately 2,025 square feet, and removes the commercial space, but is otherwise the same as the original project.

Accordingly, HPD is requesting that the Council make the following actions:

Find that the present status of the disposition area tends to impair or arrest the sound growth and development of the municipality and that the proposed urban development action area project is consistent with the policy and purposes of Section 691 of the General Municipal Law.

Action two to approve the designation of the disposition area as an urban development action area pursuant to Section 693 of the General Municipal Law.

Action three to approve the amended project as an urban development action area project pursuant to Section 694 of the General Municipal Law.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you for your presentation.

2 I have two quick questions. The first  
3 one, could you please clarify why the original  
4 program was not feasible and how the changes  
5 requested today will better ensure a successful  
6 project?

7 THOMSON KAO: The original program for the  
8 building was generally less efficient than the  
9 updated design. The original program included a large  
10 community facility space that entailed significantly  
11 more construction cost per square foot and by right-  
12 sizing the space to what we're proposing now it will  
13 make the budget more efficient.

14 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. Do you have  
15 an update that you could share with us today  
16 regarding the community space?

17 THOMSON KAO: The only update we really  
18 have is that the community facility space will be a  
19 relatively small single-story space now. There is no  
20 particular tenant or use contemplated for the space  
21 at this time, but that will be selected by the  
22 developer as the building nears completion.

23 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Is HPD as well as the  
24 developer willing to work with the Council Member and  
25 the community regarding that space?



2 THOMSON KAO: Yes, we are.

3 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you. I now  
4 invite my Colleagues to ask questions. Anybody have  
5 questions?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER: I have one, but I don't  
7 know if you said it. Can you restate why the  
8 reduction in community facility floor area happened?

9 THOMSON KAO: Yeah, essentially it is to  
10 make the project more financially efficient. The  
11 community facility under the previous design was  
12 relatively large in proportion to the rest of the  
13 building, and it spanned multiple floors, and that  
14 means that it would've cost significantly more per  
15 square foot to construct than the revised version.

16 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: No more questions? No.  
17 All right. This applicant panel is now excused.

18 Thank you so much.

19 Counsel, are there members of the public  
20 who wish to testify on this item?

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: No, Chair, there  
22 is presently no one signed up online to testify and  
23 there is no one in the room to also testify.

24 If there are any remote public  
25 participants who wish to testify and have not already

1 done so, please press the raise hand button now. If  
2 you are here with us in person, please see one of the  
3 Sergeants-at-Arms to first fill out a speaker card.  
4

5 Confirmed once again that there is no  
6 one online to testify or in the room.

7 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: All right, being that  
8 there are no members of the public who wish to  
9 testify regarding Preconsidered Application G 230031  
10 CCX, the public hearing is now closed.

11 Next, we will vote on the application we  
12 just heard, but, before we vote, I would like to take  
13 this time again to recognize any of my Colleagues who  
14 have questions or remarks regarding this item we  
15 heard today which is supported by the local Council  
16 Member.

17 I now call for a vote to approve  
18 Preconsidered Application G 230031 CCX. Counsel,  
19 please call the roll.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Chair Louis.

21 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: I vote aye.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Council Member  
23 De La Rosa.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER DE LA ROSA: Aye.  
25

1 SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND  
DISPOSITIONS

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2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Council Member  
3 Nurse.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Aye.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Council Member  
6 Ung.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Thank you. There  
9 are no other Council Members present. Four voted in  
10 the affirmative approving the application.

11 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: Thank you, Counsel.  
12 That concludes today's business.

13 I would like to thank the members of the  
14 public, my Colleagues, Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use  
15 Staff, and Sergeant-at-Arms for their participation  
16 today.

17 This meeting is now hereby adjourned.

18 [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 May 20, 2023