

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND
FRANCHISES

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April 10, 2024
Start: 11:23 a.m.
Recess: 11:31 a.m.

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

B E F O R E: Kevin C. Riley, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shaun Abreu
David M. Carr
Francisco P. Moya
Lynn C. Schulman

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is an audio
3 recording for the vote on Zoning and Franchises.
4 Today's date is April 10, 2024. We're located in the
5 14th Floor Hearing Room. The recording is done by
6 Rocco Mesiti.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and
8 welcome to the New York City hybrid hearing of the
9 Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises.

10 Please silence all electronic devices at
11 this time.

12 Chair, we are ready to begin.

13 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [GAVEL] Good morning,
14 everyone, and welcome to a meeting of the
15 Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. I am Council
16 Member Kevin Riley, Chair of the Subcommittee. This
17 morning, I am joined by Council Members Moya, Abreu,
18 Schulman, and remotely by council Member Carr.

19 Today, we will vote on one proposal,
20 Willets Point Phase II.

21 Before we begin, I recognize the
22 Subcommittee Counsel to review the hearing
23 procedures.

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2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Thank you, Chair
3 Riley. I'm William Vidal, Counsel to the
4 Subcommittee.

5 This meeting is being held in hybrid
6 format. Council Members who would like to ask
7 questions or make a statement should either indicate
8 so verbally or, if participating remotely, by using
9 the Zoom raise hand function. The Chair will
10 recognize Members to speak.

11 We ask all participants for your
12 continued patience should any technical difficulties
13 arise.

14 Chair Riley will now continue with
15 today's agenda items.

16 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Counsel. As
17 we heard at last month's public hearing on March 12,
18 Willets Point Phase II is a transformative project
19 that will bring to New York City its first stadium
20 dedicated to soccer, or should I say football, and
21 create hundreds of units of much-needed affordable
22 housing. This project consists of LUs 30, 31, 32, 33,
23 and 34. Together, these actions will transform
24 Willets Point, which for decades was a hub for auto
25 body shops, into a new neighborhood. This re-

2 envisioned neighborhood will have altogether over
3 2,000 residential units anchored around the stadium
4 and a hotel, which will form an expanded sports
5 complex with the Mets Stadium. To achieve this
6 proposal, the applicant team, which consists of the
7 New York City Economic Development Corporation in
8 partnership with the Queens Development Group and
9 City Football Stadium Group are seeking five actions.
10 The first action is a text amendment to modify the
11 Special Permit and other needed approvals that
12 currently apply in the Special Willets Point
13 District. This text amendment is needed to reflect
14 the particular aspects of this unique proposal. The
15 second action is a Special Permit pursuant to the
16 amended text to allow the proposed buildings. The
17 third and fourth actions are Special Permits to allow
18 the proposed stadium and hotel uses. The last action
19 is to amend the City's map to elevate the surrounding
20 street to make the re-envisioned neighborhood more
21 resilient.

22 Council Member Moya has been a champion
23 of this project for many, many years and fully
24 approves this proposal, and I will now like to give
25 the floor to Council Member Moya to give his remarks.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Thank you. Good
3 morning. Thank you so much, Chair Riley, and to all
4 my Colleagues who are here today. I am very excited
5 to be here to discuss an important project that will
6 greatly benefit our community, not just in Queens,
7 but in the City of New York. When I became a Council
8 Member in 2017, I promised to make affordable housing
9 a top priority, and that's exactly what this project
10 delivers. Today, we are voting to approve 1,400 units
11 of 100 percent affordable housing which means homes
12 that people can actually afford and many units
13 reserved for low-income seniors and formerly homeless
14 individuals combining with Phase I that is already
15 under construction to total 2,500 units of affordable
16 housing. This is definitely a huge step in solving
17 the housing crisis that is hitting our city, but we
18 are creating more than just housing here. The plan
19 also includes a new 650-seat elementary school to
20 relieve overcrowding at nearby schools, there will be
21 new open spaces, retail stores, and a 250-room hotel.
22 The ground jewel will be the first privately financed
23 electric soccer stadium built with 100 percent union
24 labor with 35 percent M/WBE goals. These additions
25 will generate over 1,500 permanent jobs and 14,000-

2 plus construction jobs. We're not just building homes
3 but economic opportunities for thousands of New
4 Yorkers struggling to make ends meet.

5 I want to take this opportunity to thank
6 Speaker Adams. I also would like to thank Mayor Adams
7 for his partnership and his support and his vision as
8 well as to the New York City Football Club who, like
9 me, never stopped believing that Queens would be
10 their home, to my brothers and sisters in labor, our
11 partners at EDC, the Queens Development Group, and
12 the dedicated community leaders in the Willets Point
13 Task Force whose support is essential for this
14 project that checks every box, affordable housing,
15 good jobs, economic growth, and community benefits.
16 This truly is a game-changer for New York, and I want
17 to say thank you to the entire Land Use Staff here at
18 the New York City Council for their dedication and
19 years of working on this project and with me as well,
20 and I also want to, in particular, thank my Chief-of-
21 Staff, Meghan Tadio, who has done a tremendous job in
22 making this happen. This would not have been realized
23 without you, Tadio, so thank you for that, and thank
24 you, Chair, for the opportunity to be here and vote
25 in the affirmative.

2 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Council
3 Member Moya, for bringing our city much-needed
4 housing.

5 Members of the Subcommittee who have
6 questions or remarks about today's items should use
7 the raise hand button now. Counsel will announce
8 Members in order that they raise their hands.

9 Counsel, are there any Members who have
10 any questions for this project?

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Just confirming
12 now, Chair.

13 No questions from online participants.

14 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Counsel.

15 I now call for a vote to approve LUs 30,
16 31, 32, 33, and 34 relating to the Willets Phase II
17 proposal.

18 Counsel, can you please call the roll?

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Chair Riley.

20 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Aye.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Council Member
22 Moya.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: I proudly vote aye.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Council Member
25 Abreu.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Aye.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Council Member
4 Schulman.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Permission to
6 explain my vote?

7 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Permission granted.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: I've known
9 Council Member Moya for many, many, many years, and
10 he has had a dedicated focus on making this area
11 something that we can look at, a diamond in the rough
12 so to speak, and he saw the potential for it, and now
13 we have this awesome project that's going to bring
14 housing, going to bring a lot of economic development
15 and a lot of union jobs, and everything else to this
16 area, and I want to congratulate you on this effort.
17 I mean it's just amazing. It just shows you how
18 government can work. It takes a while, but this is
19 government at its finest. With that, I proudly vote
20 aye.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Council Member
22 Carr.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Aye.

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2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Chair, these
3 measures pass by a vote of six in the affirmative,
4 none in the negative, and no abstentions.

5 CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Counsel.

6 That concludes today's business. I would
7 like to thank the members of the public, my
8 Colleagues, Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use and other
9 Council Staff, and Sergeant-at-Arms for participating
10 in today's meeting.

11 This meeting is hereby adjourned. Thank
12 you. [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 6, 2024