

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND BUSINESS LICENSING

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October 16, 2019
Start: 3:13 P.M.
Recess: 3:17 P.M.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm.
16th Fl.

B E F O R E: RAFAEL L. ESPINAL, JR.
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Justin L. Brannan
Margaret S. Chin
Peter A. Koo
Karen Koslowitz
Brad S. Lander
Keith Powers

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

2 [sound check] [pause] [background
3 comments/laughter]

4 CHAIRPERSON ESPINAL: Okay, then. [gavel]
5 Good afternoon. My name is Rafael Espinal. I'm the
6 Chair of the Committee of Consumer Affairs and
7 Business Licensing. I'm joined today by my
8 colleagues in the Committee. We have Justin Brannan
9 from Brooklyn, we have Peter Koo from Queens, we have
10 Margaret Chin from Manhattan, and we have Keith
11 Powers from Manhattan and we have Karen Koslowitz
12 from Queens. Today the committee will be voting on
13 Proposed Intro 1657-A sponsored by Council Member
14 Brannan that looks to prohibit street vending on
15 certain streets in Dyker Heights beginning on
16 Thanksgiving until New Year's Day. Street vendors are
17 crucial to the fabric of New York City adding
18 vibrancy and diversity to the retail food landscape.
19 They also contribute markedly to the city's economy.
20 Although data is hard to come by, a 2012 study
21 concluded the direct effect of street vendors could
22 be estimated to be more than \$101-16,000-sorry.
23 16,000 jobs, \$78.5 million in wages and \$82 million
24 to the economy. Street vending is also a vital
25 source of income for many people especially newly

2 arrived and long-term immigrants. Traditional brick
3 and mortar outlets are typically cost prohibitive for
4 people entering the market, but street vending offers
5 an entrepreneurial alternative and an avenue for
6 economic independence. Despite their benefits,
7 street vending in New York City is also contentious
8 as the most densely populated city in the country,
9 street and sidewalk space in New York is a rare and
10 valuable commodity. However, vending is usually not
11 a problem in the predominantly residential
12 neighborhoods that lack the traffic. An exception to
13 this is Dyker Heights during the holiday season. It
14 has become a tradition for residents of this
15 neighborhood to adorn their homes with festive lights
16 and decorations. The event has become so popular
17 that over the last few years that it now attracts a
18 whopping 150,000 visitors each season, and with these
19 crowds, of course, come with the savvy street vendors
20 keen to capitalize on our increased foot traffic.
21 While we admire their entrepreneurial spirit, we have
22 to make sure that the residents of Dyker Heights can
23 still go about their regular day to day activities.
24 Unfortunately, we have heard numerous complaints
25 about food trucks blocking driveways, vendors

2 operating illegally, increased garbage, fumes and
3 pollution from vendors' trucks and carts. For this
4 reason, Intro 1657-A seeks to establish street
5 vending restrictions in parts—in parts of Dyker
6 Heights during this particularly busy time, and I
7 encourage my colleagues to join me in voting in the
8 affirmative for this bill. Before I call the roll,
9 I'm going to ask if my colleagues have any words to
10 say on the bill.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON ESPINAL: Council Member
13 Brannan.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Thank you,
15 Chair. I just wanted to thank Chair Espinal and
16 Speaker Johnson for shepherding this legislation, and
17 hoping that we can bring some relief to residents in
18 time for Christmas this year, which is right around
19 the corner. Thank you very much.

20 CHAIRPERSON ESPINAL: Thank you, Council
21 Member Brannan. With that said, I will now call the
22 vote. Mr. Clerk, can you please call the roll.

23 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk,
24 roll call vote Committee on Consumer Affairs and
25

2 Business Licensing. Introduction 1657-A, Chair

3 Espinal.

4 CHAIRPERSON ESPINAL: I vote aye.

5 CLERK: Chin.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Permission to say a
7 few words before I vote.

8 CHAIRPERSON ESPINAL: Yes.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair. I
10 want to take this opportunity as a reminder that
11 systemwide reform for vendor enforcement and
12 licensing is possible and remains my top priority.
13 Intro 1116, which I'm proud to sponsor will not only
14 created a dedicated enforcement unit, it will also
15 create a street advisory board to make policy
16 recommendation related to street vending that will
17 support vendors as well as the brick and mortars,
18 pedestrians and residents that they share the street
19 with. I hope to have the continued support of my
20 Council colleagues to once and for all make vendor
21 reform a reality, and I'm proud to support my
22 colleague, Council Member Brannan on his legislation.
23 I vote aye.

24 CLERK: Koo.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye.

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2 CLERK: Koslotwitz.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: I just want to
4 say that I love Dyker Heights and I go there every
5 Christmas to see the beautiful lights, and I am happy
6 to vote aye.

7 CLERK: Brannan.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Again, with
9 thanks to Chair Espinal and Speaker Johnson for-for
10 helping get this done, and with an invite-standing
11 invite to all my colleagues of the new and improved
12 vendor-free hopefully Dyker Lights. I vote aye.

13 CLEEK: Powers.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: I will take you
15 up on that tour, and I heed your wishes to make this
16 street by street and block by block of Dyker Heights
17 a better place to spend the holidays. So, I will
18 vote aye.

19 CLERK: By a vote of 6 in the
20 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,
21 the item has been adopted by the committee.

22 CHAIRPERSON ESPINAL: Thank you to my
23 colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Clerk. With that said,
24 this meeting is adjourned. [gavel]

25

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 October 21, 2019