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COMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES

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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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March 23, 2021  
Start: 10:51 AM  
Recess: 11:02 AM

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING (VIRTUAL ROOM 1)

B E F O R E: Francisco P. Moya  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Diana Ayala,  
Joseph C. Borelli  
Barry S. Grodenchik  
Stephen T. Levin  
Antonio Reynoso  
Carlina Rivera

1 SERGEANT MARTINEZ: Cloud is underway.

2 SERGEANT SADOWSKY: Thank you.

3 SERGEANT PEREZ: Backup is rolling.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. And good morning  
5 and welcome to today's remote New York City Council  
6 hearing of the Committee on Zoning and Franchise. At  
7 this time, would all council members and council  
8 staff please turn on their video? To minimize  
9 disruption, please place electronic devices on  
10 vibrate or silent mode. Thank you Chair, we are  
11 ready to begin.

12 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. Good morning, I'm  
13 Council Member Francisco Moya, Chair of the  
14 Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. I am joined  
15 remotely today by Council Members Ayala, Rivera,  
16 Borrelli, and Brooks-Powers.

17 Today we will vote to approve Preconsidered LU's  
18 738, 739 and 740 for the Arverne East Proposal, which  
19 was heard by this subcommittee on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. And  
20 which relates to property in Council Member Brooks-  
21 Powers's district in Queens. The proposal seeks a  
22 zoning map amendment affecting a portion of the  
23 Arverne urban renewal area, from a C44 district to a  
24

1  
2 special MX21 mixed-use district, as an M14R6  
3 district.

4 A zoning text amendment to establish the new MX21  
5 district, and the designation of the Urban  
6 Development Action Area, and approval of the Urban  
7 Area Development Action Project. The proposed  
8 actions would facilitate a mixed-use development with  
9 approximately 1,650 dwelling units, including 1,320  
10 affordable, and 330 market rate units, 252,000 square  
11 feet of commercial space, 22,000 square feet of  
12 community facility space, 10,000 square feet of  
13 manufacturing space, 3.3 acres of privately owned  
14 recreation and open space, 15 acres of public open  
15 space, and approximately 1,765 parking spaces.

16 Council Member Brooks-Powers is in support of the  
17 proposal. But before I recognize Council Member  
18 Brooks-Powers, I'd also like to acknowledge that we  
19 have been joined by Council Members Levin and  
20 Reynoso. And with that, I'd like to one, welcome you  
21 Council Member to the City Council. It's great to  
22 meet you and congratulations on this project that you  
23 have right in front of you. What a way to start off  
24 your first week at the Council. So, I'd like to turn  
25 it over to you Councilwoman for some remarks.

COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you so much Chair Moya. It's a pleasure to be here. So, today the Subcommittee will vote on the Arverne East Application Project, which has been a decades-long planning process. The proposed actions before the subcommittee will facilitate the construction of the Eastern portion of the Arverne urban renewal area, by designating the central portion of the urban renewal area as a nature preserve. And a new mixed-use district to facilitate the construction of a brewery.

I want to recognize the hard work and dedication my predecessor, now Borough President, has put into this project. This project was initially contemplated as a mixed-use development that was 80% market rate and 20% affordable. The first phase, including two buildings, will include approximately 500 affordable housing units, with 100 units set aside for families earning between 40% and 50% AMI. 100 units set aside for families earning 30% AMI and 75 units for the formally homeless population.

The applicant has agreed to meet the goal of 30% of the project. Contracts are given to MWBE's and an emphasis on local hiring within the Rockaway Peninsula in the zip codes nearest the project site.

1 The applicant has also committed to working in good  
2 faith with local labor unions during construction and  
3 operation of the project site. The applicant is also  
4 committed to working with our office and other local  
5 stakeholders, to identify the best use of the 22,000  
6 square footage of floor area reserved for community  
7 facility uses.  
8

9 I look forward to bringing the local community  
10 together to identify what use would be the highest  
11 benefit for the Rockaway community. I'm pleased that  
12 the administration has committed to working with my  
13 office to address the urgent need for new healthcare  
14 on the Peninsula.

15 The recent actions by The New York State  
16 Department of Health to potentially convert Saint  
17 John's Hospital into a micro hospital, underscores  
18 the need for greater capacity. Having the second  
19 deadliest zip code on the Rockaway Peninsula, which  
20 was hardest hit by COVID, and prioritizing  
21 preventative healthcare measures and additional  
22 emergency capacity, are all sorely needed.

23 There are also - excuse me, sorely needed  
24 amenities to ensure we do not see the same inequities  
25 in how much harder COVID affected low-income

1  
2 communities and communities of color in a future  
3 health crisis.

4 I look forward to expediting the siting of this  
5 facility. And I will fight to see this project is  
6 responsive to the needs of the community. We are  
7 quite honestly at an inflection point, when we see  
8 this new development, and families still fighting to  
9 make ends meet. Far Rockaway is beautiful, resilient  
10 and determined. The residents have absorbed so much  
11 from Superstorm Sandy to this global pandemic.

12 We welcome all those who recognize our thriving  
13 community and wish to invest, reside, and become a  
14 fabric of the community. But we must be serious  
15 about more than 80 acres of city land to ensure we  
16 leverage it properly.

17 I have and will continue to fight for diversity,  
18 inclusion and equity. Strengthening the broadband  
19 infrastructure to shrink the digital divide, and a  
20 holistic community benefits agreement. These are  
21 important ingredients that are not found here at this  
22 time. But the developer team that consists of LNM,  
23 Bluestone and Triangle Equities, have committed to  
24 working with my office to ensure that these  
25 aforementioned issues and more are addressed post



2 on a wide range of issues facing our respective  
3 communities and the city as a whole. Thank you,  
4 Chair Moya.

5 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. And once again,  
6 congratulations to you on this project. So, I now  
7 want to call a vote to approve the Preconsidered LU's  
8 738, 739 and 740, relating to the Arverne East  
9 Development Proposal. Counsel, can you please call  
10 the role?

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair Moya?

12 CHAIRPERSON MOYA: I vote aye.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Levin?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I want to thank  
15 and welcome Council Member Brooks-Powers. Welcome to  
16 the Committee and welcome to the Council. And thank  
17 you for your diligent work on this land use matter in  
18 your first days on the job. And I commend you, and I  
19 vote aye on all.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member  
21 Reynoso?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Congrats to  
23 Council Member Brooks. I just want to say this is a  
24 very busy first day. You did a great job. Looking  
25 forward to working with you. And I vote aye on all.



COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Ayala?

COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Sorry, I'm having difficulty here. I also want to welcome Council Member Brooks-Powers. Congratulations on your first day. I am really excited to work with you. You did great and I also vote aye.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Rivera?

COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Congratulations to the new Council Member. And really, really happy to have you in the Council now. Big deal today and I proudly vote aye on all.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Borrelli?

COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Thank you and welcome to our newest colleague and congratulations on a busy first day and I vote aye.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, the vote currently stands at six in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no abstentions. The vote will remain open as we wait for Council Member Grodenchik.

CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Great, thank you.

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COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member Grodenchik on a vote of the land use items. How do you vote?

COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you Arthur. Thank you Mr. Chairman. I vote aye on all.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair Moya, the vote is seven in the affirmative, zero in the negative, and no abstentions. The items are approved for a recommendation to the Full Land Use Committee.

CHAIRPERSON MOYA: Thank you. And that concludes today's business. I would like to thank the members the members of the public, my colleagues, Subcommittee Council, Land Use, and other council staff, and the Sergeant at Arms for participating in today's meeting. This meeting is hereby adjourned. [GAVEL]. Thank you.

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 15, 2021

