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Anatole Ashraf
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November 19, 2025

Land Use & Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

This meeting was held in person and teleconferenced on Zoom

Land Use & Housing Committee Members – Present

Prameet Kumar, Karesia Batan (PV), Nicholas Berkowitz (PV), Danielle Brecker, Tannia Chavez (PV), Lisa Deller (PV), Morry Galonoy, Kenneth Greenberg, Sheila Lewandowski (PV), Bradford Leibin (PV), Lauren Springer, Michael Zoorob (PV)

Land Use & Housing Committee Members – Absent

Christine Hunter, Stephen Cooper

Community Board Members – Present

Eric Narburgh (PV)

Community Board 2 Staff

Debra Markell Kleinert, District Manager

MaryAnn Gurrado, Community Coordinator

Department of City Planning

Hye-Kyung Yang

Katie Crawford (PV)

Guests

Elan Peskin, 50-25 Barnett Avenue

Mathew Washington, 50-25 Barnett Avenue

Samuel Beaubien, Landmark Application

Dakota London, LIC HMP Capstone Project

Johanna Lawton, LIC HMP Capstone Project

Gil Lopez, Update Borden Avenue Street end and Dutch Kills Waterfront

Brian O'Connor

Ellie Lauderback, Council Member Won's office

“Serving the Communities of Long Island City, Sunnyside, Woodside, and Maspeth”

Prameet Kumar, Vice-chair of the Land Use and Housing Committee, welcomed everyone to the committee meeting.

Barnett Avenue - Discussion of Extended Construction Hours

Elan Peskin, representing Mega Contracting Group, the general contractor for construction on the building owned by Phipps Houses, along with Mathew Washington, Chief of Staff at Phipps Houses, provided the following information:

- They are requesting a letter of support from the community board to submit to the New York City Department of Buildings for an earlier Saturday start time.
- The New York City Department of Buildings issues Saturday work permits and defers to the community board's position when determining which hours to approve.
- Earlier hours would improve productivity and increase the chances of a project being completed sooner. With winter approaching, weather conditions such as heavy rain, sub-freezing temperatures, and snow could affect weekday work. Saturdays usually serve as a make-up day.
- Current construction hours are 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM on weekdays and 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Saturdays.
- They are requesting Saturday hours of 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM. If those hours are not possible, they are open to 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM or 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM.
- Louder construction activities are now less frequent as the project has advanced. Most of the work on Saturday would take place inside the building and would be quieter. Noise would mainly come from power tools and occasional deliveries. They expressed their openness to discussing limits on louder activities, such as landscaping during the early hours.

Additional Discussion Points:

- Ms. Lewandowski shared that it would be important for the construction team to speak with tenants about the extended hours and obtain their feedback.
- Mr. Kumar added that receiving a letter of support from the Tenant Association would make it easier for the committee to issue its own letter of support.
- Ms. Deller noted that the committee should obtain a letter of support from the Tenant Association before supporting the request.
- Mr. Peskin is receptive to an 8:00 AM starting time on Saturdays.
- Mr. Galonoy suggested that it may be beneficial to invite members of the Tenant Association to attend a Land Use Committee meeting to share their views on extended hours.

A motion was not made to support the extended Saturday construction hours. The committee noted that a letter of support from the Tenant Association at Phipps Houses would be helpful, but the committee will still make its own decision. If the Tenant Association opposes or does not provide a letter, the committee will still discuss and decide independently, taking tenant feedback into account.

Landmark Application – Discussion of Skylight Installation at 40-12 44th Street

Samuel Beaubien provided a PowerPoint presentation (Attachment One). He provided the following information:

- The skylight is designed to blend with the roof, preserving the building's external appearance.
- The skylight enhances interior spaces by providing ample natural light, reducing reliance on artificial lighting.
- The skylight's placement minimized its visibility from the street and rear walkway, maintaining the building's exterior aesthetics.
- Materials were selected to harmonize with the building's historic aesthetic while ensuring durability and functionality.

A motion was made by Mr. Kumar in support of the Landmarks Application, and it was seconded by Ms. Brecker. There were no oppositions and abstentions.

LIC HMP Capstone Project

Dakota London and Johanna Lawton, NYU Wagner students in the Master of Urban Planning program, provided the following information:

- They are working on a Capstone Project with three other students and one faculty advisor.
- Until March 2026, their team is partnering with New York City Emergency Management (NYCEM) to inform the development of a neighborhood mitigation plan for Long Island City (LIC).
- Their work includes creating an inventory of NYCEM tools and resources that can help residents and businesses reduce risks from natural and human-made hazards.
- They will offer recommendations for local disaster preparedness and risk reduction strategies.
- The students are in the early stages of this process.
- They bring expertise in urban planning and urban studies, along with skills in data analysis, mapping, and adaptation strategies.
- They want to create a plan with the community and hope to partner with CB2, and others interested in co-designing engagement and outreach efforts for the project.
- They plan to hold two meetings to gather community input on priority needs and identify who they should speak with.
- The students noted that they are working to identify what geographic area constitutes LIC.

- Ms. Lawton shared that the projected risk analysis will be based on existing knowledge and publicly available datasets. She added that while these datasets do not always capture how people are impacted, depending on what specific issues are raised, such as flooding, extreme heat, and air quality, their team will look to see what available data there is, and they will take into account the human data level of the lived experiences.

Additional Discussion Points:

- Ms. Brecker asked whether the students spoke to Community Board 1, noting that a significant portion of Long Island City, including public housing, is in CB1. The students said that they had not planned to include CB1, as they are still determining the defined boundaries of LIC.
- The committee wants to ensure attention is given to Queensbridge Houses and Blissville.
- Ms. Lewandowski encouraged the students to hold three meetings. One meeting can take place in Blissville, one in Queensbridge or in the Ravenswood area, and another in the Long Island City waterfront area, such as Court Square or Hunters Point.
- Mr. Galonoy encouraged the students to reach out to LaGuardia Community College, noting that the college is deeply involved in the community and may even be able to host a meeting.
- Ms. Batan agreed on the importance of giving attention to Blissville. She noted that the community board had conducted its own resiliency studies and hopes they can be shared with the students.

Gil Lopez - Update Borden Avenue and Dutch Kills Waterfront

Gil Lopez, from Big Reuse and co-founder of several community gardens, gave a presentation on converting a parcel into open space for the community, which will provide various benefits. He provided the following information:

- The project location is where Borden Avenue’s westbound travel lane ends at Dutch Kills, and the area immediately to the southwest, which is under the Long Island Expressway. The site is at the intersection of three major greenways: the Borden Avenue Bike Path, the Review Greenway, and the Dutch Kills Loop.
- The parcel has been neglected for over 30 years.
- Community efforts began in 2020 to clean up the parcel. As a result, an informal skate park has been constructed there since 2020.

- He noted that the area closest to the water on one side is DOT's roadbed. On the other side is DOT land, which includes an elevated structure. He is unsure who is in control of the site underneath the expressway.
- Mr. Lopez shared that he spoke to Thomas Mituzas of the Blissville Civic Association. Mr. Mituzas expressed that parents in the area would like a playground, slide, or swings in the project area. Mr. Lopez is open to including that.

Requests for the Community Board

Mr. Lopez has the following requests:

1. Mr. Lopez wants the DOT roadbed, where a DIY / informal skate park has developed, to be transferred to Parks, so they can manage it.
2. In the area closest to the water, where one side is DOT roadbed and the other is DOT land with an elevated structure, he is requesting waterfront access for education and recreation. He would like the space to be managed and maintained by the Newtown Creek Alliance, which could provide stewardship and programming. The land can remain with DOT or be transferred to Parks.
 - The location is the only place in the Dutch Kills tributary where people can reach the water's edge via public land. Its proximity to LaGuardia Community College and several public schools within a 10-minute walk makes it ideal for creating a safe, green waterfront space.
3. Mr. Lopez is requesting that the area under the Long Island Expressway (LIE) be used as a community horticultural yard for community horticultural services, with a focus on street trees. He would like the land to be operated and managed by Big Reuse. He added that the land can remain with DOT under a license agreement.
 - This would allow for the creation of a resource center for green space projects and urban agriculture, where community gardeners, schools, and other greening groups can pick up mulch and soil.
4. Another request is for continued access for adjacent businesses. Businesses like Sparks Deli on Borden Avenue would still maintain easements for parking and access to their buildings.

A link to the Canva Presentation Mr. Lopez provided:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAG3wuWkUt4/uM2R3EGZE5vG6wJmQjsSDw/view?utm_content=DAG3wuWkUt4&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=uniquelinks&utlId=hfc36f244a4#1

Additional Discussion Points:

- Ms. Lewandowski shared that she attended meetings to create a better walkway on the 21st Street Bridge. During that process, it became clear that the bridge involved the city, state, and federal governments because of the Long Island Expressway. She added that the project area Mr. Lopez is discussing may also fall under a federal agency because it is located under the expressway. She noted that it would be important to receive a letter of support from city and state elected officials and noted that local congressional members may be open to supporting the effort.
- Mr. Kumar shared that in a previous meeting with the Parks Department, Parks indicated that they are actively looking at sites to acquire in CB2, although they are seeking to acquire privately owned properties. He added that the Parks representatives who attended that meeting could help Mr. Lopez's initiative by connecting him to DOT.
- Mr. Berkowitz noted that there may be similar sites to the one Mr. Lopez is discussing. He wonders if the area should be an active commercial waterway or if changes should be considered. He added that Congressmember Nydia Velázquez has discussed this issue. Mr. Berkowitz shared that the committee has conducted waterfront studies in the past and asked whether, as a convening partner, the committee should address issues like this comprehensively.
- Ms. Deller shared that years ago, someone proposed creating a restaurant under the Long Island Expressway. While the plan did not come to fruition, she noted that it is another example of a site that is out there.

A motion was made by Ms. Lewandowski to support the requests made by Mr. Lopez, and it was seconded by Mr. Greenberg. There were no oppositions and abstentions.

- Mr. Kumar will draft a letter.

Department of City Planning Update:

Hye-Kyung Yang, and Katie Crawford from the Department of City Planning (DCP) provided the following updates:

- OneLIC was voted on by the City Council on November 12, 2025.
- Three modifications were discussed at the public hearing, and DCP provided additional details.
 1. Text modification in section 117.
 - This text edit allows flexibility in tower width to support more efficient building forms, in areas such as the DOE waterfront site.

2. Height modification by Queensbridge Houses.
 - This lowers the height zone to 350 feet within 100 feet of the M1R61R10 district along 21st Street. This modification is a direct response to public concerns about shadows affecting Queensbridge Houses.
3. MIH Options.
 - The Council made typical MIH adjustments. They are referring to options 1 or 3 along the waterfront sites. Option 3 would be allowed on inland sites, including along 44th Drive and north of Queens Plaza North and the Court Square area.

Committee Member Updates and Questions Related to OneLIC

- Mr. Kumar noted that Council Member Won posted a breakdown of commitments she secured. He added that he is not sure through what mechanism the money would be received beyond the city budget.
- Ms. Brecker noted that the city budget process is 8 months away and expressed concern about the commitments, as they are not guaranteed.
- Ms. Lewandowski shared that, knowing how the city budget works, and with the question of how much of it is capital and how much is operating, this commitment could be parsed out over 10 or 20 years. She noted that budget constraints from the federal and state governments are a concern. She added that while \$2 billion sounds nice on paper, if we get all the people and the community does not receive the requests outlined in the community board's nine pages of stipulations, it would be a real crisis.
- Mr. Greenberg asked how progress on projections, such as the number of jobs to be created, will be compared with actual outcomes.
- Mr. Zoorob shared that there is a statutorily required neighborhood rezoning commitments tracker available online. He noted that it shows commitments and spending progress for past rezonings, such as Atlantic Avenue, though it does not show jobs versus projections. He encouraged committee members to check the OneLIC tab once it becomes available.
- Ellie Lauderback, from Council Member Won's office, shared that Council Member Won is working to establish an oversight committee to provide updates on OneLIC. She encouraged people to apply on Council Member Won's website to serve on the oversight committee, which will help ensure that commitments are followed. Ms. Lauderback noted that Council Member Won may attend December's CB2 Board meeting to provide a full report on the negotiations and commitments for OneLIC. She added that a commitment tracker for OneLIC will go live in 2026.

- Ms. Deller noted that since OneLIC has been approved, she would like to know whether DCP has spoken with developers about their timelines and which projects might move first. DCP responded that they do not know which developer will go first.
- Mr. Greenberg asked whether the new school planned for the Plaxall site on 46th Avenue will use the existing structure or be demolished to build a new one. DCP noted that they have not been involved in those discussions.
- Ms. Deller asked about the next steps for the DOE building. DCP said they would get back to her with the specifics on the date and time for the next steps.
- Ms. Batan said it would be helpful for the community board to ask EDC to attend the December meeting. She said she wants to make sure EDC is treating the ultimate RFP for the entire public site as something that is not informed solely by the somewhat restrictive parameters of the DOE Building RFEI. She requested an update and noted that she would like for EDC to conduct more community outreach to understand what the community wants for the entire public site beyond the DOE building. Other committee members agreed to follow up with EDC to receive an update.

Additional Updates

- The committee has officially submitted its vote for the Newtown Creek CSO tunnel.
- Two additional rezonings are found on ZAP:
- 21-31 46th Avenue
 - Mr. Kumar believes this site is the TD Bank near MoMA PS1. DCP shared that the project is not ready to be certified yet, but it's getting close and should be on the radar in the coming months.
 - Mr. Kumar noted that some community members had previously attended a meeting to oppose this project and emphasized the importance of inviting them so they can share their thoughts.
- 50-02 Queens Boulevard (PC Richards site)
 - DCP noted that it is making its way through the process on an elongated timeline and may advance by spring 2026.
- Mr. Galonoy asked whether there were any updates on the block on Greenpoint Avenue between 46th and 47th Streets, noting that the entire block is vacant, except for one establishment. Mr. Galonoy is unsure if anything is being planned for the site. DCP responded that nothing has come in for that location.
- Ms. Lewandowski asked whether a budget has been created to develop the DCP map that was approved by referendum, and what the timeline is for that project.

DCP stated that the Charter Review Commission report includes a specific timeline, with 2029 as the target year for implementation.

A motion was made by Mr. Berkowitz to adjourn, and it was seconded by Mr. Greenberg.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Rafael Nava