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Anatole Ashraf
Chairperson

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October 15, 2025

Land Use & Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

This meeting was held in person and teleconferenced on Zoom

Land Use & Housing Committee Members – Present

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

Land Use & Housing Committee Members – Absent

Nicholas Berkowitz, Stephen Cooper, Lisa Deller

Community Board Members – Present

Anatole Ashraf (PV), Camille Gray (PV), 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

Guests

Alfonso Lopez, Bureau of Public Affairs & Communication at NYC DEP

Kate Edden, Bureau of Engineering Design and Construction at NYC DEP

Terrell Estes, Bureau of Environmental Planning & Analysis at NYC DEP

David Lee, Bureau of Environmental Planning & Analysis at NYC DEP

Shelton Getter, Assistant Director of Leasing and Acquisitions at DCAS

Daniel Bishm NYC DEP

Calogero Cutaia, NYC DCAS

Jorgi Dhima, NYC DCAS Energy

Anthony Argento, CB2 District Resident

Peter Karaolis, CB2 District Resident

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

Christine Hunter, Chair of the Land Use and Housing Committee, welcomed everyone to the committee meeting.

Newtown Creek CSO Storage Tunnel Project Information:

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) provided a PowerPoint presentation (Attachment 1) on the Newtown Creek CSO Storage Tunnel Project. The presentation included background information on the project, its scope, and forthcoming ULURP actions and schedule. The following points were shared:

- The project will extend across multiple community board districts, including Queens Community Board 2, Queens Community Board 5, and Brooklyn Community Board 1.
- The project has two regulatory drivers:
 - A NYS DEC Order on Consent required DEP to provide a Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) for Newtown Creek. It was concluded that controlling the four major outfalls with a storage tunnel would be the best solution for Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) reduction.
 - Newtown Creek was designated a Federal Superfund Site under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) in September 2010.
- The proposed solution is to construct a three-mile-long tunnel with a 50-million-gallon storage capacity. It will collect flow from four outfalls.
- The project is in the design phase, with a consent milestone completion scheduled for December 2040.
- The schematic system works as follows: where there is currently an outfall at the head of the branches of the creek, that outfall will be reconstructed to include a diversion chamber. The diversion chamber will divert the flow into a conveyance conduit, which will carry the flow to a new shaft. The shaft will then direct the flow underground to the tunnel. The tunnel will collect flow from each of these outfalls, which will end up at a new pump station.
- After a storm event, once the wastewater treatment plant is able to take the flow away from the tunnel, it will be pumped to the Newtown Creek Wastewater Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF).

ULURP Information for the CSO Storage Tunnel Project:

- The project will require two ULURP applications:
- Site Selection & Acquisition (PC)
 - ULURP #C260063PCY

- This ULURP would allow the City to acquire properties and site infrastructure on any non-City-owned properties. There are 49 properties in CB2 that could be subject to this ULURP for this project.
- It includes the site selection of a new City facility, the BB-026 Diversion Facility, and will allow construction of the CSO tunnel and the diversion facility, as well as approval for subterranean easements to protect the tunnel from physical damage.
- Site Selection Only (PS)
 - ULURP #C260064PSY
 - This ULURP would allow the City to site infrastructure on properties that are already City-owned. 4 Properties in CB2 could be subject to this ULURP for this project.
 - It will allow for the site selection of a new City facility, the NCQ-077 Diversion Facility.

Construction of the Diversion Facilities Information:

- Construction of the BB-026 Diversion Facility
 - The project will be located on Block 155, Lot 56, and Block 115, Lots 86 and 150.
 - The project will include a diversion chamber and outfall structure.
 - It will provide temporary maintenance of flow channels during construction and establish a gravity diversion sewer connection to a subgrade drop shaft in the City ROW.
 - Construction is expected to last approximately two years.
- Construction of the NCQ-077 Diversion Facility
 - The project will be located on Block 2575, Lots 26, 225, and 240.
 - A road will be closed on Railroad Place due to construction. Alternative access to the site will be provided by a temporary roadway opposite 57th Avenue, connecting to 49th Street.
 - The diversion facility will have a drop shaft, diversion chamber, outfall structure, tunnel overflow structure, flap gate chamber, approach channel, and the construction of a permanent odor control system in a below-grade vault.
 - Construction is expected to last approximately six years.
- Potential Impacts:
 - Potential significant adverse impacts are anticipated during construction, including traffic and noise impacts, as well as disruptions to surrounding roadways and pedestrian facilities.

Link to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS):

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/dep/about/newtown-creek-cso-storage-tunnel-project.page>

DEP Representatives response to several Committee Members' Questions:

- While BB-026 AND NCQ-077 will undergo construction above ground and are in manufacturing zones, no public amenity space is anticipated in those areas. However, green infrastructure is likely to be installed on these project sites to manage stormwater on site.
- The CSO Storage Tunnel Project involves crossing a portion of private property within a 60-foot swath. None of the properties will be fully acquired, so property owners could still do geothermal on their property.
- While exact figures were not provided, DEP shared that the CSO Storage Tunnel Project is expected to capture 70% of the combined sewer overflow (CSO) that is entering Newtown Creek in a baseline year.
- The agency's modeling took into account future climate change projections, future development within the community, and used data from the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) for the regional growth forecast. Additionally, the model's baseline year is 2008, which experienced a lot of big storms and small storms, and 2024 and prior years were also taken into account.
- There are currently 25 to 40 CSO overflows per year at each of the four outfalls. The project aims to reduce those figures to 7 overflows per year at 3 locations and 10 overflows per year at one location.
- All of the contracts within this project are funded through DEP's ten-year plan.
- Since the project is driven by a consent order, DEP is required to meet all milestones. If DEP doesn't meet the state-provided deadlines, it will face fines.
- Ms. Batan expressed concerns about the CSO tunnel, noting that a tunnel between Queens and Manhattan had cracked. DEP representatives reassured her that the CSO tunnel will be filled approximately 40 times per year. The tunnel will be 22 feet in diameter, and it will not be completely. This will reduce pressure on the tunnel's exterior, which prevents cracking.
- For most of its length, the tunnel will be over 100 feet below ground. It is designed to withstand the geological and seismic conditions.
- Mr. Kumar, Vice Chair of the Committee, noted that the ULURP period for the project ends on November 23, 2025.
- DEP shared that there will not be any future ULURP actions needed for the project. However, there will be a public design commission process, which includes presenting the design to the community board and receiving input on anything that's

above-ground such as surface sites. They added that it will take several years for the designs to be available, as they will need DDC approval.

- A total of 99 lots were identified as potentially needed for the project, and 9 are City owned. DEP noted that they will try to negotiate with property owners and that eminent domain could be used as a last resort.

A motion was made by Prameet Kumar not to oppose, and all committee members were in favor. There were no oppositions or abstentions.

Court Square Parking Garage Solar Canopy Update:

Mr. Dhima of DCAS provided a PowerPoint presentation (Attachment 2) on the Solar Canopy Project, which included background information, renderings, project schedule, and additional details. He provided the following information:

- Mr. Dhima previously attended the January 2, 2024, Transportation Committee meeting, where committee members requested updates if there were changes on the project. He followed through on his commitment.
- The project location is 45-40 Court Square, Long Island City, NY 11101.
- The courthouse on the site is landmarked, but the parking garage is not.
- The project is supporting a NYC Law, which requires NYC to install 150 megawatts of solar power on City owned properties, including buildings and land by 2035.
- Project details:
 - The project involves constructing a solar canopy atop a parking garage.
 - There will be four level 2 EV charging stations (dual port) to charge 8 vehicles at a time.
 - The height of the canopy will be about 12 to 13 feet from the top deck.
 - The canopy is designed to blend with the building's architecture.
 - Simulations indicate that the canopy will generate about 475 megawatt-hours of power per year. 335.3 metric tons of annual CO2 emissions will be saved per year.
 - Estimated construction start date: 12/01/2025
 - Estimated Construction completion: 10/31/2026
- Existing light holes on the top of the current garage will be replaced with LED lighting, which is specified at 5,000 Kelvin.
- DCAS has reached out to local businesses near the project area to reduce the impact construction activities may have on them.
- Discussions between DCAS and LIRR will determine how far DCAS' project cranes may extend toward the end of the dead-end street.

Additional Discussion Points

- Mr. Galonoy noted that he has been made aware that, in some outdoor spaces, certain orange-colored lighting is used because it is believed to help deter crime.
- Ms. Brecker noted that DCAS should inform residents near the project area to inform them that they may be affected by construction, such as noise issues. She added that the Court Square Civic Association should be kept informed.
- Ms. Lewandowski urged DCAS to post signage in advance to notify garage users and nearby residents about upcoming construction and any related developments, such as street closures.
- DCAS stated that the notices will be posted in the garage at least one to two weeks before construction, and that the agency will continue to coordinate with the community on the project's developments.
- Although Mr. Dhima attended the meeting only to provide an update, Ms. Lewandowski made a motion to provide a letter of support for the project, and it was seconded by Mr. Galonoy. Though no other committee members voted. After discussions Mr. Kumar made a motion to write a letter not to oppose the project, and all committee members were in favor. There were no abstentions.

ULURP Update:

Katie Crawford and Hye-Kyung Yang of DCP provided the following updates:

- OneLIC is still under review by the City Council. After the initial subcommittee vote, any changes that were voted for will be presented to the CPC and then presented to the City Council for a full vote. Whatever changes are adopted by the City Council will be incorporated into the final plan.
- DCP confirmed that it made a change to the 750-foot height limit across the street from Queensbridge Houses. The area is proposed to be mapped as M16R10, a paired district, with a 750-foot height limit.
- Summary of CPC Modifications
 1. The special sign regulations that currently exist in the Queens Plaza Subdistrict will be maintained. Those regulations will also be applied to the Queens Plaza West Subdistrict that will be created by the proposed zoning changes. This means that signs such as neon signs on residential buildings won't be allowed.
 2. A light obstruction area certification was removed from the proposal because the flight instruction area is outside of the rezoning area.
 3. Waterfront Access Plan (WAP) Requirements cover parcels along the waterfront. Initially, DCP in the application text indicated that Con Edison was only going to be subject to the waterfront path, and didn't have to adhere to all WAP

requirements, such as the supplemental public access area, upland connections, or visual corridors. DCP modified the text to include the New York Power Authority (NYPA) to be subject to the same conditions as Con Edison.

4. The street frontages located adjacent to the short supplemental public access areas are now going to be considered wide streets. In technical terms, those are currently considered narrow streets, so this is a technical edit.

Additional Discussion Points

- Committee members expressed reservations about CPC 3. A committee member said they were expecting the maximum amount of open space to the public but now it's being shrunk down to a sidewalk because of Con Edison. Other committee members noted that the changes in CPC 3 would create a narrow sidewalk, that is no longer continuous and may create safety issues. Committee members agreed to send out all letter to all electeds including the Council Member indicating their opposition to CPC 3.
- The P.C. Richards & Son site is working its way through the ULURP process. The proposal is for additional residential development, and P.C. Richards would remain as a tenant at the location.
- The subcommittee vote for OneLIC is scheduled for October 29, 2025. The full City Council vote is expected in November 2025.
- Ms. Batan expressed the importance of reiterating the committee's recommendation to establish an oversight task force committee to ensure the commitments in the OneLIC plan are followed.
- Mr. Galonoy shared that the area behind LaGuardia Community College, near Newtown Creek, is public land where a bulkhead is collapsing and a cement factory has encroached on the site. He noted that there was a press conference where elected officials and Community Board 2 members were supportive of the site becoming a public open space. However, no progress has been made. He believes CB2 and the Newtown Creek Alliance issued letters of support for this proposal a few years ago. He added that the site may qualify for the Parks Department's Walk to a Park Initiative to expand public open space in CB2.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Rafael Nava