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# Community Board No. 2

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Anatole Ashraf  
Chairperson  
Debra Markell Kleinert  
District Manager

January 21, 2026

## Land Use & Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

***This meeting was held in person and teleconferenced on Zoom***

### **Land Use & Housing Committee Members – Present**

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

### **Land Use & Housing Committee Members – Absent**

Tannia Chavez, Stephen Cooper, Lisa Deller

### **Community Board Members – Present**

Patrick Martinez

Eric Narburgh

### **Community Board 2 Staff**

Debra Markell Kleinert, District Manager

MaryAnn Gurrado, Community Coordinator

### **Department of City Planning**

Katie Crawford

Colin Ryan

### **Guests**

Jasper Wu, ZD Jasper

Nick Liberis, Archimaera

Ellie Lauderback, Council Member Won's Office

Angel Gil Orrios, Thalia Spanish Theatre

Karla Perez

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

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

#### **44-17 Greenpoint Avenue – Update**

Jasper Wu, the developer, and Nick Liberis, the architect, provided an update on construction activity at the former Bliss Theater site. The PowerPoint Presentation (Attachment 1) included a map of the zoning area surrounding the site, as well as residential density and illustrative renderings. They provided the following information:

- The site is well served by public transportation; it is in close proximity to multiple bus lines and the 7 train.
- The site is currently zoned as an R6A district.
- After discussions with the Department of City Planning (DCP) and given the site's proximity to Queens Boulevard and rezonings to the east, including R7X rezonings, the proposed rezoning would be a mix of R7X and R7A.
- The building will be divided into two zoning districts. The R7X portion of the building, located along Greenpoint Avenue and portions of 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue, has a maximum allowable building height of 145 feet, with a proposed height of 115 feet. The R7A portion of the building has a maximum allowable height of 115 feet, with a proposed height of 75 feet. For a more detailed visual description, see Attachment 1.
- The building will have rooftop green space accessible only to tenants.
- On the ground floor, the applicant proposed retail space, with the possibility of a community facility at a corner location, as well as an additional programmed community facility. There will be two residential lobbies, one located on 45<sup>th</sup> Street and another on Greenpoint Avenue.

#### **44-17 Greenpoint Avenue - Committee Discussion with the Developer**

The Committee expressed the need for arts and cultural space in the district and provided several suggestions for the building's development. They shared the following:

- The developer shared that they are open to giving something back to the community through the development. They noted that this could include a dedicated or discounted space for use but expressed concerns about who would operate and influence it.
- The architect and the developer acknowledged that they've had brief discussions with Council Member Won's office about the building's development. The committee will contact the Council Member's office to seek clarification on the development, including the opportunity for cultural space.
- Sheila Lewandowski noted that the community has lost significant arts and cultural spaces that make Long Island City vibrant. She emphasized the need to have a dedicated space for arts programming and suggested that the developer work with

Karesia Batan, Chair of the Arts and Culture Committee, to explore options for creating an art space in the development that could be condoned.

- A committee member noted that in several developments, community spaces have been replaced with additional residential units to increase housing, which remains a critical need. The member added that internal amenities, including gyms, can reduce community interaction, as residents have fewer reasons to leave their buildings. The architect responded that, under the City of Yes written deductions, people “basically get five percent of the total gross,” and indicated that communal space and amenities are not taking away from residential units.
- Christine Hunter noted that in Sunnyside, planted strips are commonly found along sidewalks in front of buildings north and south of Queens Boulevard. She requested that a planted strip be incorporated along the sidewalk of the building. Morry Galonoy agreed and added that incorporating a planted strip would set a precedent, as this would likely be the second residential building along Greenpoint Avenue in the past ten years. The developer requested the committee to provide examples of planted strips.
- The architect confirmed that the proposed upzoning would trigger MIH. They are pursuing MIH Option 1 or Option 2.
- Prameet Kumar, the Chair, indicated that the Committee has generally professed an interest in deeper affordability and encouraged the developer to keep this in mind.
- The developer stated that they are not building to the maximum height allowed under R7A because sometimes the same number of units can be created at a lower height. The developer noted that height is typically prioritized when views are present, which is not the case at this site. The Chair responded that the Board has expressed a preference for a greater number of units.
- Ms. Hunter reminded the developer of their conversations about the building having a street-level display that would enable passersby to understand the historical significance of the Bliss Theater. She said she was under the impression that the display would be on site at street level and would like it to be near the residential entrance or at the break between the commercial and residential areas.
- The developer stated that seats and railings of the Bliss Theater have been preserved, and that there are plans to preserve the column at the front of the theater. He noted that they are open to returning these items to the community.
- Nick Berkowitz suggested that the Committee consider issuing a letter of support to allow the building to have a higher level of zoning to create taller, more family-friendly units. The developer stated that they would accept the letter.
- Mr. Berkowitz noted that several individuals present at the meeting currently run or have run arts organizations. He added that the Community Board has rapidly approved

projects with co-applicant models in the past. He mentioned meeting attendees with experience running arts organizations, including Karesia Batan of the Queensboro Dance Festival, Kenny Greenberg, Angel Rios of Thalia Spanish Theatre, and Sheila Lewandowski, former executive director of the Chocolate Factory Theater.

- Ms. Batan stated that, in response to the OneLIC rezoning, she and others created co-applicant models that include arts organizations and noted that she will share examples with the developer.
- The developer shared that they are open to incorporating some form of community facility space, potentially at a discounted rate.

### **Department of City Planning Update**

Katie Crawford of DCP provided the following update:

- There will be staffing changes at DCP's Queens office. Katie Crawford will remain with DCP but move out of the Queens office, Feigele Lechtiner will take over as the community liaison. Colin Ryan will be working at DCP's Queens office. Feigele Lechtiner will be in charge of the 44-17 Greenpoint Avenue project.
- Katie will continue working on the project at 21-31 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the TD Bank site. She expects to discuss the project with Community Board members in March or April 2026. It appears that the project will be certified in the first week of March. Mr. Kumar, the Chair, noted that residents were previously opposed to the project and stated that he may reach out to them to inform them of the developments.
- The project at 21-31 46<sup>th</sup> is proposed to be rezoned from an R6 district to an R7X district with a commercial overlay. The applicant is proposing an 11-story mixed-use building that would be predominantly residential, with ground-floor space for commercial or community facility use. Parking is proposed to be in the building's cellar.
- The Walk to the Parks application remains on track and is expected to be placed on the agenda in February 2026.

### **Potential Committee Objectives for 2026 and Beyond**

The Committee discussed proactive actions they would like to pursue in 2026. They shared the following:

- The Committee will continue to play an active role in the OneLIC rezoning and advocate for the requests they previously made.
- Karesia Batan said that the Committee should be in close communication with EDC and the public site. She noted that an upcoming RFP related to a DOE building is expected to be released and stated that she would like the Committee to provide input beyond the DOE building.

- Danielle Brecker stated that, in relation to OneLIC, the Committee should advocate for state funding for transit-related initiatives and added that sewer funding is also important.
- Michael Zorob noted that advocacy for a neighborhood rezoning along Northern Boulevard and Roosevelt Avenue is important and stated that Council Member Won sponsored the Heart of the District Study to examine these areas. Mr. Kumar, the Chair, stated that he would like to continue pressuring elected officials to develop a more comprehensive plan and that the Committee should create a set of priorities outlining what they would like to see in those areas.
- Sheila Lewandowski suggested that the Committee develop a “real needs” checklist for CB2’s district, which could include information such as how much park space residents should have within walking distance. She added that the Committee could consider policies such as the Community Opportunity to Purchase Act and community land trusts.
- Christine Hunter said that CB2 should receive technical assistance and noted that institutions such as NYU may be able to provide pro bono support.
- Mr. Berkowitz noted that many organizations in the community are working in and around the waterfront. He added that he would like Gil to continue advocacy and suggested that the Newtown Creek Alliance and river keepers attend Committee meetings.
- Morry Galonoy said that he would like to examine how land use impacts pollution and the environment. He expressed that the Committee could, from a land use perspective, analyze the impact additional parks may have on pollution in CB2’s district. Mr. Galonoy added that he would like the Board to increase outreach with the community.
- Brad Leibin noted the lack of open space and greenery in the eastern part of CB2’s district and said it should be addressed.
- Anatole Ashraf, CB2’s Chairperson, noted that many of the Community Board’s committees’ goals and initiatives would be supported if the Engagement Committee is empowered.
- Karesia Batan shared that the City is expecting to release a plan to build housing on top of libraries.
- Mr. Kumar, the Chair, stated that he would like the Committee to monitor the waterfront parcel development. He noted that the RFP for Parcel E is currently live, while Parcel D remains in progress. He added that he would like the Committee to develop proactive ideas for the parcels.
- The Committee discussed the importance of proactively developing resident-led priorities for any future development in Sunnyside Yards.

- The Committee Chair requested that DCP provide monthly updates, including on the waterfront RFPs, the DOE building RFP, and the Newtown Creek CSO Tunnel. He noted that these updates would be helpful to the Committee.
- The Chair said that he would like to have a Vice Chair on the committee and encouraged interested committee members to reach out to him directly.

A motion was made to adjourn by Prameet Kumar, and it was seconded by Nicholas Berkowitz.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Rafael Nava