

In Re Public Hearing NYC - Mayor`s Office of Contract Services  
(MOCS)

September 12, 2022

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REMOTE PUBLIC HEARING  
FRANCHISE AND CONCESSION REVIEW COMMITTEE  
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Held Remotely  
Via Microsoft Teams  
Conference Call

September 12, 2022  
2:34 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING in the above-referenced  
matter, held via videoconference at the above time,  
before Sabrina Brown Stewart, a Notary Public of the  
State of New York.

In Re Public Hearing NYC - Mayor`s Office of Contract Services  
(MOCS)

September 12, 2022

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1 A P P E A R A N C E S :

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3 Mayor:  
4 ALLISON STODDART

5 Clerk:  
6 ALEXANDRE STAMOULIS

7 Office of Management and Budget:  
8 YVONNE QUINTIAN

9 Office of the Mayor:  
10 YA-TING LIU

11 Corporation Counsel:  
12 KENISHA SUTTON

13 Comptroller:  
14 JOHN KATSORHIS

15 Borough President of Bronx:  
16 MIRTHA CAMILLE SABIO

17 Borough President of Brooklyn:  
18 JOHN DOUGLAS

19 Borough President of Manhattan:  
20 TOMI VEST

21 Borough President of Queens:  
22 ALLAN SWISHER

23 Borough President of Staten Island:  
24 LAUREN LEFKOWITZ

25 Department of Parks and Recreation:  
PHILIP ABRAMSON  
ALEXANDER HAN

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1 MR. STAMOULIS: Hello. This is Alex  
2 Stamoulis, Clerk for the FCRC. Before we get  
3 started with the proceeding, I'd like to  
4 confirm that everyone can hear me clearly.

5 (Chorus of yeses).

6 MR. STAMOULIS: Thank you all.

7 Today's hearing is being held via  
8 Microsoft Teams conference call, and we ask  
9 that all attendees announce their names for  
10 the record each time they speak on the call,  
11 for ease of transcription.

12 If you are not speaking, we ask that  
13 you mute your microphone to avoid background  
14 noises during the call. Only one person  
15 should be speaking at any given time. I will  
16 direct, should there be any conflict.

17 Chair, we are ready to begin.

18 MS. STODDART: Thank you.

19 This is Allison Stoddart. Good  
20 afternoon and thank you all for being here.  
21 My name is Allison Stoddart, Chair of the  
22 FCRC.

23 The Franchise and Concession Review  
24 Committee remote Public Hearing will now come  
25 to order.

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1 Will the Clerk please call the roll?

2 MR. STAMOULIS: Mayor?

3 MS. STODDART: Allison Stoddart,  
4 present.

5 MR. STAMOULIS: Office of the Mayor?

6 MS. LIU: Ya-Ting Liu, present.

7 MR. STAMOULIS: Comptroller?

8 MR. KATSORHIS: John Katsorhis,  
9 present.

10 MR. STAMOULIS: Corporation Counsel?

11 MS. SUTTON: Kenisha Sutton, present.

12 MR. STAMOULIS: Office of Management  
13 and Budget?

14 MS. QUINTIAN: Yvonne Quintian,  
15 present.

16 MR. STAMOULIS: President, Borough of  
17 the Bronx?

18 MS. SABIO: Mirtha Camille Sabio for  
19 Bronx Borough President, Vanessa L. Gibson.

20 MR. STAMOULIS: President, Borough of  
21 Brooklyn?

22 MR. DOUGLAS: John Douglas, present.

23 MR. STAMOULIS: President, Borough of  
24 Manhattan?

25 MS. VEST: Tomi Vest.

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1 MR. STAMOULIS: President, Borough of  
2 Queens?

3 MR. SWISHER: Allan Swisher for Queens  
4 Borough President, Donovan Richards.

5 MR. STAMOULIS: President, Borough of  
6 Staten Island?

7 MS. LEFKOWITZ: Lauren Lefkowitz,  
8 present.

9 MR. STAMOULIS: Representative for the  
10 Department of Parks and Recreation?

11 MR. HAN: Alexander Han, present.

12 MS. STODDART: Thank you. This is  
13 Allison Stoddart again.

14 Welcome to this remote public hearing  
15 of the Franchise and Concession Review  
16 Committee. The hearing being conducted today  
17 has been publicly advertised in accordance  
18 with the New York City Charter and Concession  
19 Rules of the City of New York.

20 We want to be sure that anyone desiring  
21 to be heard has an opportunity to do so. We  
22 are registering individuals now for later  
23 testimony. Those registered will be called  
24 upon to testify after their calendar item has  
25 been called.

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1 All persons wishing to speak, must now  
2 provide their name, affiliation, indicate  
3 which calendar item they wish to testify on  
4 and whether they are for or against said  
5 items to the Clerk at this time.

6 Alex, do you want to list who you have  
7 already registered?

8 MR. STAMOULIS: Yep. I have a  
9 Christina Hadjicharalambous. Again,  
10 apologies if I have mispronounced that, and  
11 an Elizabeth Lorris Ritter.

12 Is there anyone else who wish --

13 MS. HAUSTHOR: Hi, yes. My name is  
14 Eileen Hausthor, and I'm going to testify for  
15 Commonpoint, Queens that's taking Alley Pond.

16 MR. STAMOULIS: Okay. Give me your  
17 name one more time. I'm terribly sorry.

18 MS. HAUSTHOR: Eileen Hausthor.

19 MR. STAMOULIS: Eileen Hausthor. Okay.

20 MS. FUCHS: Hi. My name is Macayle  
21 Fuchs from Council Member Paladino's office,  
22 and I will also be testifying for  
23 Commonpoint, Queens.

24 MR. STAMOULIS: Okay. Could I have  
25 your name one more time. I'm sorry.

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1 MS. FUCHS: Sure. It's Macayle Fuchs.

2 MR. STAMOULIS: I'm sorry. Someone has  
3 background noise. If you could please mute  
4 yourself. Otherwise, I'm going to have to  
5 disable your microphone. I'm terribly sorry.

6 All right. So, currently, I have  
7 Eileen Hausthor and Macayle Fuchs for Council  
8 Member Paladino, testifying on Alley Pond.  
9 Elizabeth Lorris Ritter also testifying on  
10 Alley Pond -- no, I'm sorry. On Row New  
11 York.

12 MS. LORRIS RITTER: No. No. No. No.  
13 No. This is Liz Ritter. I'm testifying on  
14 behalf of Row New York.

15 MR. STAMOULIS: Yes, I'm sorry.

16 MS. LORRIS RITTER: I mean, on behalf  
17 of the -- in favor of that project.

18 MR. STAMOULIS: Understood.

19 And I'm sorry. Christina, could you  
20 just confirm which item you're testifying on.

21 MS. HADJICHARALAMBOUS: Yes, that's  
22 fine. This is Christina. I'm testifying for  
23 Alley Pond, Queens.

24 MR. STAMOULIS: Okay. Great.

25 MS. PATE: There's one more here.

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1 MR. STAMOULIS: Yes, one more.

2 MS. PATE: Sky Pate (phonetic), and I  
3 would like to comment on Row New York,  
4 Sherman Creek.

5 MR. STAMOULIS: Okay. Sky Pate.

6 MR. SPARROW: And one more. Daniel  
7 Sparrow, Council Member Linda Lee for Alley  
8 Pond.

9 MS. CUSCIONE: Hi, I'd like to put my  
10 name in.

11 MR. STAMOULIS: I'm sorry. If I could  
12 just have the last person for the Council  
13 Member. I didn't quite catch your name.

14 MR. SPARROW: Daniel Sparrow.

15 MR. STAMOULIS: Daniel Sparrow. For  
16 Alley Pond, correct?

17 MR. SPARROW: Yes.

18 MR. STAMOULIS: All right. Thank you.  
19 And who spoke next?

20 MS. CUSCIONE: Hi. My name is Marcy  
21 Cuscione, and I'd like to go with Commonpoint  
22 Queens, Alley Pond.

23 MR. STAMOULIS: Okay. Marcy Cuscione,  
24 Alley Pond. Thank you very much.

25 Is there anyone else who would like to

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1 testify?

2 (No response).

3 MR. STAMOULIS: And Marcy, could I ask  
4 you to mute yourself when you're not  
5 speaking. There's a bit of background noise  
6 coming in through your line.

7 MS. CUSCIONE: Just did it.

8 MR. STAMOULIS: Thank you very much.

9 Is there anyone else who wish to  
10 testify on either of the two items being  
11 heard today?

12 (No response).

13 MR. STAMOULIS: All right. It appears  
14 that no one else from the public wishes to  
15 testify at this hearing.

16 MS. STODDART: Thanks. This is Allison  
17 Stoddart again. Each speaker will be  
18 allotted approximately three minutes. When  
19 you testify, please restate your name and  
20 affiliation, if any. You may also submit  
21 written testimony to the Clerk, which will be  
22 made a part of the record.

23 Any written submissions must be given  
24 to the Clerk before the close of the remote  
25 public hearing via e-mail to

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1 fcrc@mocs.nyc.gov, that will be provided to  
2 the Committee after this hearing.

3 Will the Clerk please call the first  
4 calendar item?

5 MR. STAMOULIS: New York City  
6 Department of Parks and Recreation, Calendar  
7 Item Number 1: In the matter of the intent  
8 to seek Franchise and Concession Review  
9 Committee approval, pursuant to Section 1-16  
10 of the Concession Rules of the City of  
11 New York, to utilize a different procedure to  
12 enter into a concession agreement with Row  
13 New York, Inc. for the use, maintenance, and  
14 operation of rowing facilities at Sherman  
15 Creek, Manhattan, for a 20-year term.

16 MS. STODDART: We will take testimony  
17 from the public. But first, I would like to  
18 ask the members of the Committee if they have  
19 any statements?

20 MS. VEST: Hi, yes. This is Tomi Vest  
21 from the Manhattan Borough President's  
22 office. I'd like to make a statement, but I  
23 request to do it after the public testimony.

24 MR. STAMOULIS: Understood.

25 MS. STODDART: Okay.

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1                   Okay. Will the Clerk please call the  
2 next person who wishes to testify.

3                   MR. STAMOULIS: Elizabeth Lorris  
4 Ritter. Please provide your full name and  
5 affiliation for the record.

6                   MS. LORRIS RITTER: Hi. Thank you.

7                   My name is Elizabeth Lorris Ritter. My  
8 last name is Lorris Ritter. It's a double  
9 last name. I am the chair of Community  
10 Board 12 Park and Cultural Affairs Committee.

11                   When I spoke up earlier saying that I  
12 wanted to testify on behalf of Row New York,  
13 I want to make it clear I am not testifying  
14 on behalf of Row New York. I'm not  
15 affiliated with Row New York in any way, but  
16 I am testifying on this -- with regard to  
17 this matter on behalf of Community Board 12.

18                   Community Board 12 is on record as  
19 being in support of this project, and  
20 actually unanimous support of this project,  
21 which is the culmination of more than a  
22 quarter of a century of Community Board 12  
23 planning and desire to reclaim the waterfront  
24 along the Harlem River for rowing, that has  
25 been historical use of that land.

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1           And in the turn of the previous century  
2           and the century before, the 19th Century,  
3           there was -- the waterfront was dotted with  
4           scores of boathouses and we now have very  
5           few. Row New York has been doing incredible  
6           programming on behalf of New York City's  
7           children, including about 60 percent of their  
8           current population served out of the -- that  
9           has been served out of the Peter Jay Sharp  
10          Boathouse, which is soon to be towed away  
11          because it is outdated and essentially  
12          defunct.

13                 About 60 percent of the students served  
14                 in that program are from Community Board 12  
15                 and the surrounding areas of Northern  
16                 Manhattan. We have had -- Community Board 12  
17                 has had, as a capital priority for, as I  
18                 said, more than 25 years and half a dozen  
19                 borough presidents, the goal of --

20                         MR. STAMOULIS: One minute remaining.

21                         MS. LORRIS RITTER: -- increasing the  
22                         number of boathouses. So, Community Board 12  
23                         also has a very active interest in having as  
24                         many public bathrooms as possible. There are  
25                         currently two public bathrooms in the Sherman

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1 Creek area that are open to the public.  
2 There is a large new comfort station being  
3 built that's currently in construction and  
4 will be opened up later next year or in '24,  
5 that will have several bathrooms, including  
6 ADA compliant family bathroom.

7 And there is a bathroom that New York  
8 Restoration Project has, that if they are as  
9 concerned as they have said they are, with  
10 respect to public bathrooms, they are welcome  
11 to open that up to the public as well.

12 I am really hoping that the FCRC grants  
13 our concession request because it is the  
14 realization of a strong community priority,  
15 and it would be a -- as my great-grandmother  
16 used to say -- asunder, for there to be any  
17 further delays or --

18 MR. STAMOULIS: I'm sorry. That's  
19 time.

20 MS. LORRIS RITTER: I'm done. Thank  
21 you so much.

22 MR. STAMOULIS: Thank you for your  
23 testimony.

24 Next, we have Sky Pate. I'm sorry if  
25 I'm mispronouncing your name.

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1 MS. PATE: That's okay. Thank you for  
2 the opportunity to speak today. My name is  
3 Sky Pate, and I'm representing myself, but  
4 I'm also connected with several local  
5 organizations involving our parks and natural  
6 areas.

7 Well, it seems the approval of this  
8 project is mostly a formality at this stage.  
9 I have a couple of comments for the record.  
10 I admire Row New York's mission while still  
11 lamenting that through a less than  
12 transparent process, this project of some  
13 tens of millions of dollars has been allowed  
14 by the City and our community board to move  
15 forward without the inclusion of public  
16 bathrooms, making it now necessary to  
17 advocate for New Needs funding in upcoming  
18 fiscal years to meet the need for additional  
19 public restrooms for Sherman Creek Park.

20 Of our nation's hundred largest cities,  
21 ours rank among the lowest when it comes to  
22 public bathrooms per capita. It has rating  
23 in terms of public health, sanitation and  
24 environment. It is my sincere hope that the  
25 lessee will closely attend to requirements

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1 for cleaning and environmental concerns, as  
2 described in Article 5 of the license  
3 agreement. And that Parks, along with Row  
4 New York, will bear in mind the impact to  
5 sensitive wetland and shoreline nature when  
6 determining the removal of any trees and the  
7 destruction of bird and pollinator habitat is  
8 the course of construction and the  
9 replacement thereof.

10 It may not be feasible while entering  
11 into a concession agreement with a  
12 not-for-profit entity, but it would certainly  
13 be desirable if there were some ways to see  
14 that the licensee's excess revenues, if any,  
15 as described in Article 15 of the license  
16 agreement, could at least, in part, be  
17 directed in some fashion towards something  
18 that would directly benefit general community  
19 and particularly other users of the park, as  
20 would --

21 MR. STAMOULIS: One minute remaining.

22 MS. PATE: Thank you very much. I'm  
23 done.

24 MR. STAMOULIS: Thank you for your  
25 testimony.

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1 Is there anyone else who wishes to  
2 testify on this item?

3 (No response).

4 MR. STAMOULIS: I believe we've heard  
5 all public testimony on this calendar item.

6 MS. STODDART: Tomi, did you wish to  
7 speak?

8 MS. VEST: I do. Thank you so much,  
9 and thank you for letting me go at the end.

10 On behalf of the Manhattan -- of the  
11 (inaudible) Manhattan borough president, I  
12 would like to make the following statement  
13 regarding the concession agreement in Sherman  
14 Creek Park to Row New York.

15 First, we are happy to see this  
16 concession will result in increase access to  
17 the waterfront, while supporting recreational  
18 programs and services for the public and  
19 youth in particular. Row New York, Inc. has  
20 been impactfully (sic) training and  
21 supporting Manhattan youth for over 20 years  
22 and is an excellent operator for this  
23 concession.

24 The concession agreement contemplates  
25 significant capital improvements to the park,

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1 including the construction of docks, a  
2 boathouse and an ADA path to the waterfront,  
3 among other improvements.

4 We strongly support the agreement  
5 reached between Row New York and the  
6 New York City Parks Department to maintain  
7 access to the park during the construction of  
8 these capital improvements. We look forward  
9 to the expedient completion of this project.

10 However, we believe that these  
11 investments, while substantial, fails to  
12 address a significant community need, access  
13 to bathrooms for the public. To quote  
14 Borough President Levine, "The City's lack of  
15 public restrooms is an issue of equity,  
16 public health, sanitation and basic human  
17 rights."

18 It is reasonable to assume that  
19 improvements contemplated by this concession  
20 agreement will bring more people to Sherman  
21 Creek Park. More people would put additional  
22 pressure on the existing comfort station,  
23 which is already in need of upgrade. It is  
24 our hope that all parties to this agreement  
25 work to find a solution that will allow

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1 public access to the newly constructed  
2 bathroom. We also urge the Parks Department  
3 to continue to pursue stand-alone investments  
4 in meeting with these facilities.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. STAMOULIS: I believe that  
7 concludes all testimony on this calendar  
8 item.

9 MR. ABRAMSON: Alex, is there an  
10 opportunity for Parks to address before we  
11 move on?

12 MR. STAMOULIS: If the Chair wishes to  
13 allow Parks to address at this time, that  
14 would be fine. Otherwise, I believe the  
15 agency will have an opportunity to speak at  
16 the end of the hearing.

17 MR. ABRAMSON: Okay. Either way.

18 MS. STODDART: You can feel free to  
19 speak now.

20 MR. ABRAMSON: Thank you very much.  
21 This is Phil Abramson from the Parks  
22 Department. Thank you, everyone, for your  
23 testimony.

24 I just wanted to clarify that the Parks  
25 Department is indeed working to pursue a

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1 project to increase our restroom access at  
2 Sherman Creek, namely the reconstruction and  
3 expansion of an existing comfort station at  
4 the site. Parks has committed to seek New  
5 Needs funds to cover any remaining costs.

6 We feel this expansion will address the  
7 increased demands for public restrooms in the  
8 Park, and that process is taking place  
9 separately, but parallel to Row New York's  
10 boathouse project and, thus, is not  
11 specifically part of the sole source  
12 agreement before the Committee today.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. STODDART: Thank you.

15 Will the Clerk please --

16 MS. LORRIS RITTER: This is Lorris  
17 Ritter. I don't know if it's inappropriate,  
18 but may I just say thank you and that we're  
19 happy to add that to our capital priority in  
20 our upcoming session.

21 MS. STODDART: Thank you.

22 Will the Clerk please call the next  
23 calendar item?

24 MR. STAMOULIS: New York City  
25 Department of Parks and Recreation, Calendar

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1 Item Number 2: In the matter of intent to  
2 award a concession agreement to Samuel Field  
3 YM & YWHA, Inc. doing business as  
4 Commonpoint, Queens for the renovation,  
5 operation and maintenance of an indoor tennis  
6 court facility at Alley Pond Park, Queens,  
7 for a 20-year term.

8 MS. STODDART: We will take testimony  
9 from the public. But first, I'd like to ask  
10 the members of the Committee if they have any  
11 statements?

12 (No response).

13 MS. STODDART: Will the Clerk please  
14 call the next person who wishes to testify.

15 MR. STAMOULIS: Eileen Hausthor, please  
16 provide your full name and affiliation for  
17 the record.

18 MS. HAUSTHOR: Hi, my name is Eileen  
19 Hausthor, and I live in Bayside, Queens. And  
20 I am so thrilled that Commonpoint, Queens is  
21 taking over Alley Pond. We are avid tennis  
22 players here and we are so thrilled. And  
23 it's -- Commonpoint, Queens is the best.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. STAMOULIS: Thank you for your

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1 testimony.

2 MS. HAUSTHOR: Thank you.

3 MR. STAMOULIS: Macayle Fuchs, please  
4 provide your full name and affiliation for  
5 the record.

6 MS. FUCHS: Good afternoon. My name is  
7 Macayle Fuchs from Council Member Vickie  
8 Paladino's office. The Council Member is  
9 pleased to provide testimony in favor of  
10 Commonpoint, Queens.

11 Commonpoint has become an invaluable  
12 resource in our district, as well as the  
13 entire borough of Queens. Most notably for  
14 Council Member Vickie Paladino, Commonpoint  
15 offers a variety of services and programs for  
16 those who have disabilities, are experiencing  
17 mental health issues and for our aging adult  
18 community.

19 The concession stands will open up  
20 various opportunities for increased programs,  
21 such as the culinary vocational program that  
22 provides training for adults facing barriers  
23 to employment. I, myself, have tasted the  
24 talent and flavor of these beneficial  
25 programs.

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1           In addition, our district has a high  
2           demand for tennis and pickleball. I have no  
3           doubt that Commonpoint will impact our Alley  
4           Pond community in the most positive way  
5           possible, as they've shown in the past.

6           Thank you.

7           MR. STAMOULIS: Thank you for your  
8           testimony.

9           Christina Hadjicharalambous.

10          MS. HADJICHARALAMBOUS: Thank you. I'm  
11          Christina Hadjicharalambous.

12          So, I have a daughter who is six years  
13          old. She takes tennis lessons and some  
14          lessons that Commonpoint (inaudible) the  
15          family pool in Little Neck, as she really  
16          enjoys them and has made friends through the  
17          classes. And I think just having this Alley  
18          Pond concession for Commonpoint, Queens will  
19          just elevate those lessens even further.

20          Right now, since it's an outdoor court,  
21          they're only able to have lessons through  
22          November and then they move inside to the  
23          gym. So, having these additional courts will  
24          definitely just bring the tennis community  
25          that she has here much to higher level.

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1                   And just to speak on the longevity of  
2                   Commonpoint and how it's impacted me  
3                   for years. My little brother actually,  
4                   many years ago, took lessons at the Central  
5                   Queens pool. So, it just goes to show the  
6                   impact that they've had throughout, pretty  
7                   much generations now.

8                   So, thank you so much.

9                   MR. STAMOULIS: Thank you for your  
10                  testimony.

11                  Daniel Sparrow.

12                  MR. SPARROW: Yes, this is Daniel  
13                  Sparrow from office of Council Member Linda  
14                  Lee. Council Member Lee is pleased to have  
15                  Commonpoint, Queens come in for the Alley  
16                  Pond Tennis center. A letter of support was  
17                  previously sent in support of Commonpoint,  
18                  Queens coming in to fill the Alley Pond  
19                  Tennis spot.

20                  Thank you.

21                  MR. STAMOULIS: Thank you for your  
22                  testimony.

23                  Marcy Cuscione.

24                  MS. CUSCIONE: Hi. My name is Marcy  
25                  Cuscione, and I just wanted to say that I'm

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1 very happy that Commonpoint, Queens took over  
2 Alley Pond. I live in Bayside and it's  
3 really great as a tennis player, and I'm very  
4 happy about that and I just wanted to say  
5 that.

6 MR. STAMOULIS: Thank you for your  
7 testimony.

8 MS. CUSCIONE: You're welcome.

9 MR. STAMOULIS: We have now heard all  
10 testimony on this calendar item.

11 MS. STODDART: Thank you.

12 Before we conclude, I want to ask if  
13 any of the agencies presenting calendar items  
14 today have any statements for the record  
15 prior to the close of the hearing?

16 MR. ABRAMSON: No further comments from  
17 Parks. Thank you.

18 MS. STODDART: Thank you.

19 If no one else wishes to speak, that  
20 concludes today's hearing.

21 We ask that the reporter make the  
22 entire public hearing agenda, which was made  
23 publicly available and distributed at this  
24 hearing, part of the final record of the  
25 proceeding. The hearing is now closed.

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Thank you.

MR. STAMOULIS: Thank you, everyone.

(TIME NOTED: 2:57 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK)

:SS

COUNTY OF QUEENS)

I, Sabrina Brown Stewart, a shorthand reporter within and for the State of New York, do hereby certify that the within is a true and accurate transcript of the statement taken on September 12, 2022.

I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or by marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 21st day of September 2022.

*Sabrina Brown Stewart*  
Sabrina Brown Stewart

In Re Public Hearing NYC - Mayor's Office of Contract Services  
(MOCS)

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